



# THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

Newsletter No. 101

December 2011

---

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Has it really been four months' since I was elected? Time seems to have flown by and things have been quite busy, especially as when I joined I was told the position was only to Chair a few meetings etc., not much to it at all!

Some feedback I have received is that members would like a profile of the new Chairman. Without providing a full curriculum vita, here are a few details of whom and what I am. I am a Chartered Engineer and a Fellow of the Institute of Civil Engineers (FICE) and have worked extensively all over the world, including the Middle East, former Soviet Union, India, Eastern Europe, South Korea and Wales, mainly on Oil and Gas related projects, but also some significant civil projects. My employer for these adventures was a very large American Construction Contractor, who is virtually unknown in the UK. After an assignment in Saudi Arabia I retired in 2008 to lead a quieter life, still waiting for that though! I am married with two grown children and three grandchildren, one in England and the others in Thailand.

I have managed to visit two of our committees, Architectural & Planning and Natural Amenities and to see what good work they are doing on our behalf. In the coming months I hope to sit in on the others.

Following the success of the Heritage Open Days, more details of which are given in this Newsletter, I would like to extend sincere thanks from me and the Society to all those volunteers who contributed to the many aspects that were necessary to achieve such an excellent outcome. In particular I would like to thank Michele Damer, as without her enthusiasm and drive the event would not have been such a success. I know Michele has been reviewing the whole 'lessons learnt' and is preparing for next years' Open Day and would appreciate your support.

At our recent Members' Evening our President, Nicholas Owen, presented the Civic Awards for 2010/2011. A total of five awards were made following a detailed review of each nomination by a selected committee, including an impartial architect. Unfortunately only three were

mentioned in the article published by the Surrey Mirror, but full details are given in the Architectural and Planning report later in the newsletter. We apologise to the forgotten two, but full details were provided to the Mirror.

For those members who were unable to attend the Members' Meeting due to the limited space, next year we will be selecting a larger venue so everyone can come.

Following the presentation of the awards we announced that nominations for the 2011/12 Civic Awards were being accepted. Nominations can be made by anyone, not just members of the Society, the only criteria are that the project must be completed before the final review in September 2012. If you have, or know of a nomination please let us have details.

As a result of our appeal for a volunteer in the last newsletter to look after our website, we are pleased to advise that Bruce Healey has taken this on and is currently in the process of taking over the management of the website and developing some improvements. Thank you Bruce.

One thing I have been promoting is closer links with our adjoining Societies, Dorking and Guildford. To date we have submitted a joint response to the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) as we felt a joint response will carry more weight for this important issue. As other issues arise we will be working with them and providing support as necessary.

As we understand that the Government will be monitoring responses to the NPPF consultation document (a count of 'for' and 'against') we also submitted a response in our name only.

We are looking at options to celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year and a small subcommittee has been set to explore these further. As details become available we will keep you informed.

If you would like to get more involved with the running of the Society, or feel you would like to be part of any of our committees then please feel free to call me, or any other officer, to discuss the matter further.

**Alan Mortlock**

**(01737) 244407**

## SECRETARY'S NOTES

Our **Members' Evening** was held at the Woodhatch Centre on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October. For the last two years this event has been oversubscribed, and this year we had nearly twenty members who were unable to get tickets. We are looking at other venues for next year, but several of the church halls will not allow alcohol so a suitable hall may not be that easy to find. Our President, Nicholas Owen, presented the Award winners with their certificates. These Awards are detailed in Gwyther Joyce's Architecture & Planning Committee's Report elsewhere in this Newsletter.

The Awards giving was followed by an illustrated talk by Alex Hunter on "**The Gentlemen of Gatton and Merstham**". His talk covered from the 6<sup>th</sup> Century to the present day which he divided into nine sections. During the Saxon times, which he chose to call the 1<sup>st</sup> section, there were battles with the Vikings fought in the area of Battlebridge Lane. Both Gatton and Merstham were mentioned in the 1085 Domesday Survey. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage, when a gentleman called Timperley owned Gatton, he managed to establish two parliamentary seats for Gatton, making it one of the first Rotten Boroughs. Gatton's influence declined in Tudor times, his 3<sup>rd</sup> section, during Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries. Alex took us through the Stuarts and the Civil War until in Hanoverian times when Colebrook, chairman of the East India Company, bought Gatton. His 7<sup>th</sup> stage brought us to the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century when the Joliffe brothers built the first public iron railway, passing through Merstham. Monson's Gatton was his 7<sup>th</sup> stage when the inventor, Noble, first demonstrated the use of dynamite in one of the Merstham quarries. There was the famous mustard man, Coleman, who owned Gatton from 1888 to 1942. His final 9<sup>th</sup> section included names well known to us such as Sir David Lean and Ronnie Biggs.

The first of our series of Open Meetings this winter was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November at Holmesdale School. Carolyn Burnley showed her latest video titled "**Reigate Priory – another Chapter**". This outlined the history of the Priory from 13<sup>th</sup> century with its owners William de Warenne; through to its being bought by Reigate Borough and Surrey County Council in 1947. The video explained how Land Use Consultants, who were recently briefed to restore the Park, referred back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century's designs of Lady Henry Somerset. These plans resulted in the present

improvements. More about Carolyn Burnley's work and other videos can be found online at [reigatehistory.co.uk](http://reigatehistory.co.uk).

On Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December at The Priory School, Bell Street, Reigate, Ros Black, whose scheduled talk last year was cancelled due to the weather, will give her talk "**Duxhurst, Lady Henry Somerset's village for inebriate women**". This is based on her recent book about the life of Lady Henry Somerset. Ros focuses on the village Lady Henry built at Duxhurst, south of Sidlow, which became a charitable community. Those who went to the November meeting will be reacquainted with Lady Henry Somerset.

On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January at St Mark's Church Hall, Alma Road, Reigate, Rosemary Hooker will give a talk "**An Archaeological Survey of Reigate Heath**". Starting in 2009, survey work was carried out on the Heath on behalf of the Surrey Archaeological Society. Rosemary will explain the conclusions that have been drawn and describe some of the previously unrecognised features which were found.

On Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February Allan Winn, will talk on "**The History of Brooklands**". This will be in the Tanners & Woolsack rooms of the Harlequin. Brooklands is known as the birthplace of British motorsport and aviation, and Allan, Museum Director of Brooklands, will portray its past and present.

The last of this winter's talks will be on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March. It will be our first meeting to be held in the new Reigate Methodist Community Centre, which recently received one of the Society's Civic Awards. The entrance is behind the Methodist Church in the High Street, Reigate. Here Libby Green will give a talk about "**St. Katharine's Restoration Tapestry**". St. Katharine's Church is a 13<sup>th</sup> century church and the oldest remaining building in Merstham. The tapestry has been made by members of the church in aid of the restoration fund and the illustrated talk will be about the history of the Church based on the squares of the tapestry.

All these Open Meetings start at 8.15pm and are given on your Programme cards. Details of these and much more can also be seen on the Society's web site [www.reigatesociety.org.uk](http://www.reigatesociety.org.uk).

**Michael Hellings**

**(01737) 245342**

**Email: [mandmhellings@talktalk.net](mailto:mandmhellings@talktalk.net)**

## SECRETARY NEEDED

As our present Secretary has decided to retire after many years of sterling service we are seeking a replacement.

The position will involve working alongside our other Officers in a generally administrative capacity. Knowledge of, and access to, email, Word, Excel are necessary, although not to a very high skill level.

As is usual for such a position a methodical and ordered approach is needed to enable the administration of the Society to be carried out efficiently.

The current Secretary has indicated that he will be able to help the new incumbent into the job and a period of transition is envisaged.

If you feel you can help us with this important task then please email, or call us.

Alan Mortlock, Chairman 01737 244407 [mortlockar@gmail.com](mailto:mortlockar@gmail.com)  
Michael Hellings, Hon. Secretary 01737 245342 [mandmhellings@talktalk.net](mailto:mandmhellings@talktalk.net)

## TREASURER'S NOTES

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS were due from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and the current MINIMUM RATES are as follows:

Individual Members	£8
Family Members	£12
Corporate Members	£25

The rates changed on **1<sup>st</sup> April 2011** and those of you paying by bankers should have changed the instructions to your bank.

There is a payment form on page 7.

**Charles Wragg** (01737) 210640

## REGISTRAR'S NOTES

I am disappointed to have to report that since the last Newsletter we have only welcomed two new members. Where are all the new members that you were supposed to find for me?

The new members are:

**Mr & Mrs A Sandford**

There is a matter with which I need your help please. I am having trouble in contacting David Goode, who is one of our Past-Presidents. He moved to Bath a few years ago and he is not now

responding to attempts to contact him at the address we have been using for him. Does any member have any information that might help us? If so, please call me. My phone number and e-mail address are below.

If you have ANY queries about subscriptions please call or e-mail ME.

**John Angel** (01737) 242672

**Email: [johnangel170@btinternet.com](mailto:johnangel170@btinternet.com)**

## HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

This is the 5<sup>th</sup> year that the Reigate Society has co-ordinated the publicity for Reigate and Banstead's Heritage Open Days' event and hopefully all members of the Society were aware it was taking place! The Undercroft in Reigate was opened and manned by various committee members and members on the Saturday of the event. So many visitors commented that they regularly walk past the building above the Undercroft but have no idea what lay hidden below.

Twenty- four other venues in nine towns/villages in the Borough took part. Many, not only opening their doors to the public, but put on special events as well, exhibitions, recitals, tours led by volunteers with specific knowledge and some also provided refreshments as well.

On the whole the visitor footfall was up on last year's with those venues taking advantage of all the various publicity media available doing the best. The Brochure and Poster were designed and collated by a member and printed by CIP. The Society's web master uploaded the brochure onto the Reigate Society's website in June. The

brochure was also on the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council web site near the date of the event, and all venues registered with Heritage Open Days were featured on their web site too. The Surrey Mirror highlighted the event twice in their newspaper as did the Borough News.

The 3,200 brochures and 200 posters were distributed firstly to all the venues; then to Libraries and Help Shops in the Borough and then to 53 commercial outlets in Reigate, Banstead, Kingswood, Horley, Redhill, Buckland, Tadworth, Chipstead, Walton on the Hill and Dorking.

We thank Surrey County Council Local Committee (Reigate and Banstead) who contributed funding for the printing costs of the brochures and A4 Posters, and also all the volunteers who gave of their time and enthusiasm and who made the event possible.

The 2012 event takes place from 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> September. If anyone knows of suitable venues which could be include please contact the Society. The initial contact to venues is made in March and copy for the brochure needs to be received by the middle of May.

Michèle Damer

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

**Chairman: Gwyther Joyce (01737) 249434**

The end of summer has brought us to the annual Reigate Society Awards, which we all look forward to with great interest, and for me, the more so as it was the first occasion in which I had the opportunity to guide the process through its various stages.

This year, the A&P adjudicating team of four included two architects one being a guest from the Guildford Society. We drove to each location inspecting each project carefully from inside and out. Discussions were held with owner or agent to get a better understanding of the project and how it had evolved from concept through to completion.

The team took a complete day to survey all sites as we had received seven creditable nominations. The offerings were generally of good quality resulting in five very worthy awards winners, and unusually, three have been given to church related schemes being Redhill Baptist

Church refurbishment, the new Reigate Baptist Church & Community Centre in Woodhatch, and the rebuilt Reigate Community Centre at rear of the Methodist Church on Reigate High Street. All being fitting architectural additions to their neighbourhood as well as contributing significantly to their communities.

Additionally an award was given to the successful restoration work carried out on the beautifully detailed Victorian town house at Chart Lodge in Chart Lane Reigate and also to Earlswood Community Recycling Centre where the facilities in providing a service to our community have been hugely improved.

Details of the judge's statements on all five successful projects can be viewed at our web site.

The culmination of the process took place at the Members Evening on 10<sup>th</sup> October when presentation of Awards were made at the Woodhatch Community Centre with our President Nicholas Owen handing Certificates to each of the award winners.

Other than the Society Awards, we have been heavily involved in responding to the much publicised Government's draft National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF), Consultation Paper. The issue is that due to the sensitivity of many of our borough's villages and towns, many of which include conservation areas, together with the large amount of surrounding Green Belt land areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB), we believe the proposals contained in the paper will have a detrimental effect on our borough, potentially irretrievably damaging the future of our communities and their rural setting.

We have taken common cause in making our response to Government with neighbouring societies including Dorking and District Preservation Society and the Guildford Society which share a very similar setting to ours in being adjacent to extensive Green Belt land and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty while also being close to the North Downs.

We have endorsed each others responses in replying to the Government draft NPPF Consultation Paper.

Our Chairman has taken the lead in contacting

Dorking and Guildford Societies which has paved the way for A&P co-operation on the NPPF issue which should lead the way to more interaction and co-operation between our Society's in the future.

The Architecture and Planning Committee continue to respond to the Borough Council on planning and building proposals particularly the more significant ones. We are also currently responding on the Borough Core Strategies Outstanding Issues planning policy consultation document which sets out the long term framework for development in the borough.

And to close, I should mention the subject of street pavement café tables and chairs and A' board advertising mentioned in my last newsletter. I can confirm receiving a rather confusing response from Surrey County Council (to which I was directed by Reigate Borough Council) which states Surrey does not operate a blanket ban, as do some other councils, but leaves decisions on such matters to 'Local Officers' to be judged under various criteria. I will be seeking clarification and hope to give you an update in my next newsletter.

---

## **REDHILL**

**Chairman: Gerry Moss (01737) 765508**

Members will have been following the strategic plans of the supermarkets for Redhill. Tesco appears to have left the field and Sainsbury now has approval of its planning application. Asda believes it can make the Cromwell Road site, which Tesco rejected, work and has planned a store the size of the present Sainsbury's. Their shop will be open twenty four hours a day. So we are in the strategic stage of a battle of the Giants. Time will tell whether they sink each other, crush the rest of retailing or attract other retailers to a new grown Redhill, which is the Council plan.

### **Council Work Burden**

Meanwhile your Council officers are immersed in a very busy period by any standard. Angle Property has held its public 'consultation' on its plans for the old Liquid and Envy site. The ambition is for 50 apartments with some kind of retail store on the ground floor. Whether the roundabout can cope with a further working entrance during the day remains to be seen. SCC is the leader on a large bid to the government for the Local Sustainable Transport

Fund but these days with other plans afoot both authorities are involved. The results of this bid will be shared between Guildford, Woking and Redhill, and the main focus is economic growth and jobs.

The Redhill Regeneration Forum is making brave efforts to get some cohesion into the retail operations of the town including the funding of a town manager.

The "Outstanding Issues" of the old Core Strategy have now been to consultation and the next step is the new Core Strategy for the whole Borough.

But what this committee is most interested in is the next Redhill Town Action Plan expected early in the New Year. We have put in our papers and have hopes that our views will have some reflection in the new plan.

### **The Greening of Redhill**

In earlier letters I have laid stress on the need to make Redhill an attractive place. That is not so much regeneration as transformation, and I can feel the smiles as some of you read this. So many see Redhill as a town of "grot". Indeed, the Borough has set out to improve what it terms "grot spots", perhaps an unfortunate term.

You cannot be a member of a Planning Team or a representative Councillor or even an active member of the Reigate Society and see such an image as unchangeable. Even in this day when the all too pervading attitude may be to look after ones own interests, it just is not good enough for borough residents whether in Reigate, Banstead, Merstham or Horley to take any comfort from the idea that they live in a better place than their main town. The ambition to create a better place in Redhill is not only imperative to its growth but is quite achievable if the determination is there.

Successful towns need a character. Reigate struggles to maintain its image. Redhill, a railway town, has struggled with no image for at least the last fifty years. Yet both are in the middle of an attractive green belt and have, within their joint curtilage, many attractive commons and green spaces. It is a very pleasant place to live. The obvious image for Redhill is that of a Green Belt town. How can you achieve that?

Compared with the problems of maintaining, for

example, architectural consistency, the answer is cheap and easy. You need to green the town. Your Society has consistently argued for the appointment of a suitably qualified professional to undertake a survey of the town to identify both places where planting can take place and what planting will give the best visual result. We have put in a paper on this subject and by the time this goes to press will have put in another to illustrate the nature of such a survey.

Will Councillors adopt this idea? Well, the architect would cost money. Then the planting will need to be funded not all of which can be raised from developers under section 106. Of course there will be some maintenance and that will cost money. The resistance is almost palpable. And yet such costs are chicken feed, and without that you just don't get decent chickens. What is required is some concept of the needs of growth and the determination to implant them. Without that the borough does not deserve to succeed.

---

## **TRANSPORT**

**Chairman: John Chittenden (01737) 242328**

### **Highways & footways**

Surface repairs by the new Maintenance contractor 'May Gurney' are much appreciated but much needs to be done after which attention will need to be given to the repair of street furniture and the removal of vegetation that obscures road signs.

Off-street parking continues to be a growing problem and the difficulties arising from a lack of facilities are perceived as:

Parking on and obstruction of footway by vehicles, the provision of new signs and the growing number of refuse bins and boxes make it necessary for disabled and other pedestrians to move out into the carriageway with chairs and scooters – considered by some to be a dangerous practice.

The poor access for services eg. Sweeping, drain unblocking, with risk of flooding, repair of surface and maintenance including provision, painting, repair of signs, lighting and structures and the associated low productivity and high costs to the community that result.

Poor access for the emergency and waste collection services and reduced productivity caused by delayed access.

Recent examples of new developments without adequate off-street parking are WaterColour and Warren Road Reigate.

It is noted that in January 2011 government ministers stated that they were 'Removing national planning restrictions put in place in 2001 that required councils to limit the number of parking spaces allowed for residential developments.'

There is a reported increase in the use of cycles within our area but there is no improvement in the cycle lanes provided. The committee will keep the accident rate under review.

The committee is working closely with the Redhill Committee in commenting on the town centre regeneration plans and has submitted reports on Redhill traffic logistics, developing a sustainable framework for UK aviation, the Borough's draft core strategy. A draft report on waste disposal logistics and the Climate Change Act 2008 has been prepared.

**NATURAL AMENITIES****Chairman: Colin Burbidge (01737) 245264****Reigate Heath.**

Cllr. Steve Farrer has been elected the new chairman of the committee.

The new management plan has been produced. The heath users are being kept informed about the various required works being carried out and progress has been made with signage, dog bins and benches. Ensuring that people understand the reasons for carrying out various tasks is important. The committee is aware of the need for maintaining funding and is taking appropriate action.

70 volunteers from Canon together with Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers and the Council's Countryside team removed 5 tonnes of leaf litter from some of the tumuli on the Heath. Last year's clearing of organic materials from the Glade is bearing fruit.

There are now huge numbers of heather seedlings growing from the natural seed bank.

Jane Sevenoaks from Natural England had visited

the Heath and was expected to produce a report.

This is a lively hard working committee which tries to ensure the preservation and reclamation of the Heath whilst taking into account the views of the wide variety of Heath users.

The environmental impact issues of further **sand extraction** at Buckland are still being re-examined by Hanson following their application to extend the working life of the pits.

The condition of the lake in Priory Park is improving and the aquatic planting is expected to be finished next year.

It is anticipated that two new Local Nature Reserve designations are to be made in the near future: Redhill Common and Felland Copse. If this is confirmed this will reinforce the status of the Green Corridor which has Earlswood Common at its centre.

The Ancient Woodland Register is also being reviewed and expanded

**The Reigate Society**

*President:* Nicholas Owen

*Chairman:* Alan Mortlock, 3 Gatton Close, Reigate, RH2 0HG. Tel: 01737 244407

*Hon. Secretary:* Michael Hellings, 53 West Street, Reigate, RH2 9BZ. Tel: 01737 245342

*Hon. Treasurer:* Charles Wragg, 3 Weald Way, Reigate, RH2 7RG. Tel: 01737 210640

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Subscription Payment / Banker's Order Form

**NAME(S)** .....

**ADDRESS** .....

**Email** .....

- |                          |  |                         |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>I enclose my subscription for 2011 /2012</b><br>(Cheques should be made payable to 'The Reigate Society') | <b>Individual</b> ..... |
|                          |  | <b>Family</b> .....     |
|                          |  | <b>Corporate</b> .....  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Please send me a Banker's Order form for payment of future subscriptions.</b>                             |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>I also enclose my subscription for 2010 / 2011</b>  | <b>Individual</b> ..... |
|                          |  | <b>Family</b> .....     |
|                          |  | <b>Corporate</b> .....  |

(Please tick box applicable)

If you are not a member and would like to join please tick here

Please send completed form to:

Charles Wragg, 3 Weald Way, Reigate RH2 7RG

(NL 101)

## CORPORATE MEMBERS

Note that all addresses are of Reigate town and all telephone numbers have the code 01737, unless otherwise stated.

	<b>Address</b>	<b>Business</b>
Bakers Radio Ltd	6 Western Parade, Prices lane RH2 8AU (240543 / 242322)	TV, Electrical Retailers
Care Unlimited	Chaldon Rise Mews, Rockshaw Road, Merstham RH1 3DE (645171 / 646266)	Care Homes
Care Homes of Distinction Ltd	Wray Park, 55 Alma Road RH2 0DN (242778)	Care Homes & Property Development
Crow Watkin	14 Bell Street RH2 7BE (245886)	Independent Estate Agents, Surveyors & Valuers
Dunottar School	High Trees Road, RH2 7EL (761945)	
East Surrey College	Claremont Road, Gatton Point, Redhill RH1 2JX (772611)	
Iain Johnston	4 Chart Lane (244160)	Podiatrist
Michael Jones & Associates	Crossway House, 8 London Road RH2 9HY (245610)	Engineering Consultants – Building Services
Keymex Ltd	59-61 Bell Street RH2 7AQ (240171)	Domestic Appliance Sales, Service & Repairs
Holmesdale Building Society	43 Church Street RH2 0AE (245716)	Your local Building Society for all your mortgage and investment needs
La Barbe Restaurant	71 Bell Street RH2 7AN (241966)	Restaurant & Outside Catering
Micklefield School	10 Somers Road RH2 9DU (242615 / 224211 / 224212)	Independent Preparatory School for boys and girls age 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> to 11
Ormerods	Suite 4 Chapter House 33 London Road RH2 9HZ (0208 686 5000)	Solicitors
Reigate Architects	59 Nutley Lane, RH2 9HP (222099)	Architecture and Sustainability
Reigate Heath Golf Club	Reigate Heath, RH2 8QR (226793)	Golf Club
Reigate Priory Cricket Club	Park Lane, RH2 8JX (244477)	Cricket Club with senior & junior sections
Reigate Priory School	Bell Street RH2 7RL (245065 / 240229)	
Royal Alexandra & Albert School	Gatton Park, RH2 0TW (649050)	Boarding school for boys and girls ages 7 to 18
Stanton Construction	1 Castlefield Road RH2 0SA (227430)	Development & construction service to industry, public & commercial sectors
Stentor Music Co. Ltd	Albert Road North, RH2 9EZ (240226)	Manufacturers and Distributors of Musical Instruments
Stoneman Funeral Service	Doran Court, Reigate Road, Redhill RH1 6AZ (763456)	Funeral Directors & Memorial Craftsmen
TWM Solicitors LLP	40 West Street RH2 9BT (221212)	Solicitors
White & Sons	24 High Street RH2 9AY (222600)	Independent Estate Agents, Surveyors & Valuers