



# THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

Newsletter No. 102

March 2012

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## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Firstly I would wish all you a belated Happy New Year and hope the recent snow has not been too much of an inconvenience or hazard to you. Let us hope that has all passed and we can look forward to the spring. The sight of snowdrops showing their heads always seems to me to herald the spring and the daffodils finally confirm it.

Our last General Purposes Committee meeting had to be rescheduled due to the roads adjacent to my house being very hazardous, but this is a minor inconvenience compared to other peoples' problems.

However, I was able to attend the last meeting of the Redhill Committee, on a very cold winter's night. This did not deter the committee members attending along with a local council official. The main topic of discussion was the Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan (RTCAAP), more of which appears in the committees' report later in the newsletter. Again I was very heartened to see the dedication and passion from the committee members to do their best to ensure their options were included in the review.

As I mentioned in the last Newsletter we looked at options to celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and finally decided on commissioning a piece of street art to be placed in Priory Park.

We have agreed with local 6<sup>th</sup> form and further education colleges for submissions of outline proposals to be made later in the year and look forward to seeing their efforts. The Reigate and Banstead Parks Department were very excited about this work being placed in the park, which is very encouraging.

Another area that we have been reviewing is an update our website which would enable members and others to contact us easily and also find out more about what is happening. To this end we will be adding a Notice Board to the site so more relevant information can be posted. We are nearing the end of the development work, so please keep an eye on our website [www.reigatesociety.org.uk](http://www.reigatesociety.org.uk)

As the government is intent on devolving planning responsibility to local authorities it is getting even more important that we work with them to ensure that the local populations' thoughts and concerns are taken into account. To ensure that this happens I would encourage you all, both members and non members, to become involved with the committee you consider will best champion your concerns. When the updated website is unveiled you will be able to contact the relevant chairman directly, until then please feel free to contact me or any other Officer of the Society. If you are interested in the work we are doing but feel unable to join a committee then please consider getting involved as the more members we have means we can be more representative of local opinions and concerns.

We are starting to receive nominations for the Civic Awards 2012 but more are needed to ensure that we can recognise the noteworthy developments that we should be encouraging. If you have any nominations that you consider worthy then please submit them to us. Nominations can be made by members or non members and do not have to be part of the development team.

As the weather starts to improve and we look forward to getting out and about I would remind you of the offer about National Trust and English Heritage vouchers that are available through Civic Voice website. To obtain vouchers for English Heritage follow this link <http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/about/partners/english-heritage/english-heritage-civic-voice-pass/> for National Trust vouchers, follow this link <http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/nationaltrustcivicvoiceoffer>

Finally I would pass on a plea from our distribution folks: that if you have an email address then please let us have it, either through our website or by telephone, so we can send you an electronic copy of our newsletter and cut down on the number of hard copies distributed.

Alan Mortlock

(01737) 244407

## SECRETARY'S NOTES

On Thursday 1st December at The Priory School, Reigate, about 80 members came to hear Ros Black's talk, which was scheduled last year and cancelled due to bad weather. Her talk was entitled "**Duxhurst, Lady Henry Somerset's village for inebriate women**". In particular she spoke about Lady Somerset's interest in the world-wide temperance movement and her founding of the village of Duxhurst. This was a sheltered community for recovering alcoholic women and their children. The village was situated just south of Reigate, and flourished during the early part of the 20th century, but is no more. It has now been demolished and new properties built.

On 26<sup>th</sup> January 2012 about 110 people, a good number for a cold night in January, met at St Marks to hear Rosemary Hooker give an illustrated talk on "**An Archaeological Survey of Reigate Heath**". Rosemary told us that the survey started in 2009 and was carried out on the heath on behalf of the Surrey Archaeological Society. The survey is well advanced but not yet complete. She explained that they had not used current digital surveying methods as the terrain was more suitable for the traditional tape and compass. This also meant that volunteers were more appropriate. She told us that there about 100 barrows in Surrey of which there are probably 12 on Reigate Heath. These Bronze Age burial grounds have over many years been eroded by walkers, horse riders and more recently by golf buggies. Barrows are protected by English Heritage and, although there have been several surveys in the past, many on the Heath are now unrecognisable especially to the general public. Currently she told us that the car park on the east side of Flanchford Road is being reduced in size as the Barrow there has been severely damaged. Rosemary hoped that when the survey is completed, the acknowledged Barrows would be would have signage, so that the public, riders and golfers would know where to avoid.

The Tanners' and Woolsack Room in the Harlequin was the venue for the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> February. John Pulford's talk on "**The History of Brooklands**" took the assembled audience of Reigate Society members and guests through the history of racing and record breaking at Brooklands. Illustrating the talk with a PowerPoint display and interesting tales of some of the air and motor racing legends and their achievements. Brooklands has enabled development in both the motor and aviation industries.

The track built by Hugh Locke King had the first banked circuit for racing and testing vehicles. The

track is set in 350 acres and is 2½ miles long on the outer circuit and speeds of 120mph were regularly reached. The straight section is ¾ miles. The track was facilitated by the natural contours of the land which made for good spectator viewing. The original organisation of the racing was strongly based on horse racing with drivers wearing silks and there was a staggered shot gun start.

During WW1 Brooklands closed to motor racing and was requisitioned by the War office. In 1915 Vickers Aviation set up a factory there. In 1926 Henry Seagrave established Grand prix racing.

The track has seen motor racing, motor cycle racing and cycle racing. Both men and women raced but not against each other. Before the track was opened for racing S.F.Edge set a 24 hour record in his green Napier which stood for 17 years. He covered 1,581 miles with an average speed of 66mph. Other famous names associated with racing at Brooklands, included both male and female drivers, George Stanley (60mph record), Percy E Lambert (100mph record), Malcolm Campbell, Count Trossi, Dorothy Leviitt, Jill Wilson and Jennifer Innes. The circuit closed in August 1939.

The meeting ended with a question session. There is a very informative website at [www.brooklandsmuseum.com](http://www.brooklandsmuseum.com)

The final Open Meeting of the winter will be on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March in the Reigate Community Centre, behind the Methodist Church in Reigate High Street. Libby Green will be talking 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 we will have an illustrated talk about the history of the Church based on the squares of the tapestry. It will be our first talk to be held in the new Reigate Methodist Community Centre.

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).

The **Priory Park Community Festival** will be taking place again on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June. The Reigate Society will again be involved and Michèle Damer will again be coordinating and publicising the **Heritage Open Days** event in the Borough on behalf of the Society (see separate item on page 4).

**Michael Hellings**

**(01737) 245342**

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

## TREASURER'S NOTES

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS will be due from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 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 already. Please be sure that your Bank has the correct instructions for the payment of your subscription.

There is a payment form on page 7.

**Charles Wragg** (01737) 210640

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S NOTES

**Good News.** We have enrolled 8 new members since my last report. This is a great improvement over that report when we had only enrolled one! Please keep up the recruiting for me!

The new members are:-

<b>Mr &amp; Mrs J Austin</b>	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs D Gore</b>
<b>Mr &amp; Mrs F Wilcox</b>	<b>Mr J Jennings</b>
<b>Mr S Ballingal</b>	

Thank you to those members who responded to my request in finding David Goode. All is well and contact has been re-established.

May I remind you that Subscriptions are now due for 2012-13 and also remind you that the rates were increased last year (see Treasurer's Notes). I have been sending out Bankers Order

Amendment Forms to many members. Did you send yours off to your Bank, in time for this year's payment?

I have suggested to our Chairman that the title of 'Honorary Registrar' should be modernised to 'Membership Secretary' and he has agreed that this title will be use in future. The title of 'Registrar' was appropriate back in the 1960's but is now rather 'old hat'. I hope that no one has any strong objections.

If you have ANY queries about subscriptions OR membership, please call ME, not the Treasurer

**John Angel** (01737) 242672

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

## HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

September 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> 2012

Letters will be going out next week to all those who participated in the Reigate and Banstead Borough Heritage Open Days 2011 event. If anyone knows of a suitable venue or event organiser (walk, talk etc.) who could be approached to participate in this year's Heritage Open Days, Mrs Michèle Damer, the Reigate Society's HODS co-ordinator, would be very pleased to hear from you. She can be contacted by telephone 01737 243513 or email: [heathfieldstables@dial.pipex.com](mailto:heathfieldstables@dial.pipex.com). There must

be more than 24 suitable venues in Reigate, Redhill, Merstham and Horley which could be included. The society is looking forward to co-ordinating another successful event this year. For further general information about Heritage Open Days log on to

[www.heritageopendays.co.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.co.uk)

The Society is looking for someone to take over the role of HODS coordinator in 2013. If this is an area where you feel you could use your talents please contact Michele Damer who would be very happy to have an informal chat. Please use the contact details above.

## **ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING**

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

The aims of the Architecture and Planning Committee in protecting all aspects of the built fabric in our Borough are seemingly facing greater challenges as new legislation from Government is drafted which will soon pass into legislation. This may encourage householders and developers to maximise re-development of any site. Unfortunately we are seeing an ever increasing number of this type of proposal which typically requires demolishing a house or using part of the garden and replacing it with a development which more often than not is high density. While acknowledging the need for more housing, the A&P Committee is making every effort to fight any inappropriate and excessive overdevelopment wherever it occurs.

Major planning issues include the Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan which was recently published in the Surrey Mirror. This presents many challenges for the Society and the Redhill Committee are very ably dealing with this. A&P are working with Redhill helping wherever possible. The future plans include a new multiplex cinema on Marketfield Way car park. The previously reported Sainsbury development and ASDA continue to follow due process.

Looking at the bigger picture, we are participating in the Borough's Core Strategy consultation on the long-term framework for development to 2027 which sets out policies to protect and improve towns, villages and countryside in our area.

The completion of the refurbished footbridge on Reigate Hill provided an opportunity for A&P to be featured in the local press, when we agreed to an interview which was reported with a picture in the Surrey Mirror soon after the bridge works was finished.

The committee is taking a growing interest in Priory Park and has developed a working relationship with the Parks Manager and have also contacted the 'Friends of Priory Park'.

We were not so lucky with last years Civic Awards when in the absence of a reporter we supplied photographic and written material to the Surrey Mirror but were only given a brief mention. This year we will hopefully manage to get better coverage. Of course it is never too early to enter nominations for the upcoming awards and I would like to remind everyone to consider submitting nominations for potentially worthy schemes. There is a nomination form attached to this Newsletter.

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## **REDHILL**

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

### **Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan (RTCAAP)**

The RTCAAP plan carries the vision: "Redhill will be a thriving town centre which is a prominent commercial location, a competitive retail destination and a great place to live" The Plan also says: "The challenge is now to ensure that these carefully crafted words are translated into meaningful change on the ground in Redhill town centre." What does the plan offer?

The first part of the Plan is devoted to a consideration of the many development sites within the town which will deliver at least 15,500 sq m of comparison shopping floor space and 7,000 sq m of convenience shopping; there will be at least 700 new homes and up to 7,000 sq m of office / flexible small business space. There

are no less than eleven development sites.

As readers will be aware the main enlarged supermarket will be Sainsbury's in the Warwick Quadrant. The whole of the Santander offices will be demolished. The second supermarket is planned for the Cromwell Road site just south of the Belfry and ASDA will provide competition in the food market. Some believe the superstore will drive away the smaller outlets and that may well be the case. Few town centres today contain much other than the normal chains. The other significant site is Marketfield most of which is owned by the Council. This site is in a prime retail position in the centre of the town and opposite the Belfry and its use is central to the success of the regeneration. Here it is hoped will be sited a multiplex cinema, not quite the Crawley offer but a substantial improvement on the single screen in the Harlequin. It will also contain larger retail stores. Other sites are: Liquid and Envy (residential and retail); Station car Park (residential and retail); Colebrook (residential and community use); Longhead (community and

residential); Gloucester Road (residential / office); Redstone Hill along the track (residential office and business); Royal mail (residential office and business) and Brighton Road (long term retail)

The second half of the plan is called 'Crossing Cutting Themes'. Perhaps it should have been Cross Cutting Themes. Anyway, it sets out the themes of what it is hoped to achieve across the whole town: a vibrant town centre; a sustainable travel town; a great place to live; a green town centre. Under these headings are the dreams for the future much of which the Society approves. The snag comes with the challenge set out at the beginning. Achieving the Vision will not be an easy task by any standard.

Traffic is not dealt with in the plan but is emerging later as a result of the suggestions from the specialist consultants, as pressed for by your Society, and appointed by the Council to discover further possibilities not suggested by the County Highways department. This report will envisage making St Matthews, Cromwell Road, Queensway and London Road North two way and this would take much town and Western traffic away from the Princess Way/ Marketfield Way ring road which are subject to congestion at peak periods. It may also give rise to a better pedestrian crossing from the station. But I shall leave this until we have seen the report and studied it in detail.

There is clearly a mountain to climb to realise the vision. Redhill faces severe competition from Crawley, Croydon, Sutton, Dorking and Tesco at Hookwood. Most shopping towns have been in decline for some years now from competition from out of town shopping and the Internet. The current down turn does not help. Furthermore for many Redhill has a poor image as a place to go to shop. This is central to the Plan. The question then is does the plan address these challenges sufficiently to succeed?

First, consider the assets. Redhill is a transport hub. It is a railway junction and a bus centre. It is also at the junction of the A23 and A25 and close to the M23 and M25. This is why it is chosen for development. Redhill does have many spaces to be developed perhaps through having been neglected over so many years. Other towns do not have such space. Associated with this it has a comparatively large amount of parking. Other towns do not have that.

The plan envisages improvements in both rail and public transport. It is not as opposed to the car as the previous Tribal Urban plan. However,

on parking there is a hang over from the last plan. In short, parking is seen as surplus to requirements given the necessary traffic management policies. Those policies plan to reduce parking space and raise the price of parking to force travelers on to public transport. This is a long story for which there is not space here but the critical issue is that to address the acute problem of regeneration it would be better to make the maximum use of the parking asset rather than dispose of it. The advantage of out of town shopping is ease of access and free parking. To restrict parking opportunities and raise its price is to increase the comparative advantage of the out of town shopping from which Redhill and Reigate suffer so much. Furthermore, it seems to be accepted that long term parking is required for London commuters and, given the numbers which also commute into the town to service the offices, restrictions there can only be adverse. Indeed, the question: "Who actually are you trying to force on to public transport and can it fit their needs?" is a good one. I have yet to hear a satisfactory answer. The choice has to be made. Do you want regeneration or do you want to keep people out of the town? The Gloucester Road car park, which in the Plan is allocated for other purposes, should be retained.

Mary Portas in her review of town shopping generally laid emphasis on the need to attract people in for other than shopping purposes. This has been recognised by the intention to build a cinema complex in Marketfields. But is it enough? Can you, for example, have a successful shopping centre without a Department Store? But what is really required is something which will distinguish Redhill from its competitors and make people want to come there. Making Redhill a Green Belt town and changing its profile for the better has long been Society policy and we are pleased to see there is much in the plan for planting. However, it is largely ad hoc and left to when the development areas are planned and has nothing on a cohesive change in the public realm at the outset of the plan to transform the image of the town. It is all if and when and, one might add, "if ever".

There are words recognising the importance of open public spaces but less on identifying the places. Nor is there anything to provide a "signature" for the town. There needs to be something which will make people want to come here to shop rather than go elsewhere. The Society's view is that there should be a small but quality town square sited opposite the

entrance to the Belfry in the High Street. This would be a place for shoppers and their young children to avoid, for a time, the hurly burly of the shops. It would be a place for the new residents of the town who will occupy the 700 new housing units to come out to from the confines of their apartments, and for office workers at lunch time.

To summarise, the plan contains much good intent and the Council deserves good marks for encouraging Sainsbury's to expand and perhaps for ASDA to come, but it depends too much on

the wishes of the developers and the current view of the retail market. Its purpose should also be to show by tangible objectives, such as a square and the intention to embark on a Council led "green decoration" of the town, that Redhill is in the actual process of change, that it will be actually a great place to live so that other ambitious retailers, now said to be reluctant will want to come in and have a part in it.

**Harry Ingram (Secretary)**

## **TRANSPORT**

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

Some recent developments may have an affect on transport, carbon emission and add to the global warming climate debate.

Oil companies have been successful in developing and building refineries that can convert gas to oil, combined with the discovery that quantities of gas can be released from the Jurassic geological deposits by the process of "fracking". This may ease the pressure on global oil supplies for our expanding population but add to what is described as the global warming problem.

These developments have to be related to the previous estimates for the remaining life of low cost carbon fuels, carbon emissions and the Government carbon tax designed to reduce fuel

consumption and carbon emissions both locally and internationally.

Transport is one of the major consumers of energy and forms part of the Governments policy of Export led growth some details of the amount of energy consumed by various forms of transport are given below.

Figures produced by Professor Mackay of Cambridge showing the approximate amount of energy consumed by the various methods of transport.

**Energy consumption** in kilo-watt hours to carry one tonne one kilometre;-

Air freight	---	1.6
Road freight	---	1.1
Rail freight	---	0.1
Shipping freight	---	0.05
Electric car	---	0.1

Approximate but a with a range problem.

## **NATURAL AMENITIES**

**Chairman: Colin Burbidge (01737) 245264**

### **Reigate Heath.**

The car park on Flanchford Road has been modified. This has been done partly to avoid further damage to the adjoining tumulus and also to better regulate the parking particularly of large vehicles. New signage boards providing information for visitors have also been erected and much needed repairs have been made to Bonny's Road.

Other work under the Management Plan continues and everyone involved with the heath is pleased to see that some of these tasks are once again involving the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers.

There has been a Public Consultation on the proposed Dog Control Orders which will be modified. if necessary, following consideration of the received comments and they will then introduced. Hopefully this will lead to improved behaviour of dogs and some of their owners when they use the heath.

The proposal to extend the working life of the Buckland Sandpits remains unresolved. The proposed extension was for five years and two years have now passed without the applicants supplying sufficient information to adequately satisfy all the concerns over the environmental impact of their proposals which would include measures to commence a rewetting of the SSSI. Let us hope that there can be a rapid resolution to this impasse which is surely leading to even greater deterioration of the SSSI.



<b>CORPORATE MEMBERS</b>
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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



### CIVIC AWARDS 2012

Nominations for this year's awards are now invited. These may be for any of the following categories:-

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>New buildings.</b>                  | <b>Conversions, improvements or adaptations.</b> |
| <b>Conservation and restoration.</b>   | <b>Schemes for exterior decoration.</b>          |
| <b>Street improvements or layouts.</b> | <b>Tree planting, gardens and landscaping.</b>   |

Name of proposer :..... Tel: .....

Email: .....

Name and address of project: .....  
.....  
.....

Contacts (e.g. owner, tenant, architect or agent):  
.....  
..... Tel: .....

Designer (if known): .....  
..... Tel: .....

Reasons for nomination: .....  
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Nominations to be sent to:-

**Gwyther Joyce,**  
***Chairman of the Society' Architecture and Planning Committee***  
**10 Priory Drive**  
**Reigate RH2 8AF**

by Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2012.