



# THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

Newsletter No. 103

September 2012

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

As you are probably already aware there has been a lot of action with the Redhill Town Centre Action Plan (RTCAP) and the two proposed supermarkets, plus another early proposal for a supermarket on the station car park. More details are given in the Redhill Committee section of this newsletter, but you can rest assured that these and the other Committees are working very hard on these issues. Also discussions have been held on the proposed road layout changes for the traffic in and around Redhill to endeavour to get the best option for cars, pedestrians and cyclists. I am very heartened to see how the Committee members of both the Redhill and the Architectural and Planning are developing relationships with Reigate and Banstead Council, thus becoming someone whose opinion is sought and considered.

The Heritage Open Day (HOD) for this year will soon be upon us, brochures will be distributed shortly giving more details. Again we will be manning the Undercroft as we have done for a number of years. The success of the HODs so far is the direct result of the hard work and enthusiasm of Michèle Damer and I would thank her for these efforts.

Since the last newsletter I have presented two talks on the Reigate Society, one to the Rotary Club of Reigate and the other to the RNLI ladies. Hopefully these will result in more members joining us, as unfortunately, our numbers have fallen slightly in the last year, possibly due to the financial situation.

Following the recent Priory Park Community Festival where our stall hosted a quiz related to local features with a prize of £20 plus a year's subscription to the Reigate Society we are pleased to announce that a correctly completed entry, which was returned to us by Sarah Finch was, selected from the winners draw.

Congratulations. It was pleasing that a significant number of member application forms were distributed, let us hope these turn into new members. Although you can also download a membership form from our website (<http://www.reigatesociety.org.uk>) or contact any of the Society Officers.

A number of applications for this year's Civic Awards have been submitted and will have been reviewed and judged by the time you receive this newsletter, ready for an announcement later in the year. These applications cover a wide range of subjects, as we are looking for anything that shows care and consideration for the built environment. We are also lucky, again, to have an external judge from Guildford to ensure impartiality with the reviewing panel.

Although the nominations for 2012 are now closed we will be looking for 2013 nominations, so if you know of something you think worthy of submission then please let us know. The only requirement is that the project must be complete. If you want any more details then please contact the Chairman of the Architectural and Planning Committee, Gwyther Joyce.

I was hoping to give some more details of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary options but as of writing we have not received the submissions we were seeking. Hopefully in the next newsletter I will have an update.

Finally I would again make the plea for members still getting hard copies of the Newsletter to consider getting it emailed to them. If you wish to do this then please contact any Officer of the Society. Also if you wish to get more involved with the Society to help maintain our role as the local Civic Society then please get in touch.

**Alan Mortlock**

**(01737) 244407**

## SECRETARY'S NOTES

At the AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> July I became Honorary Secretary of the Reigate Society, taking over from Michael Hellings who has done a tremendous job for the Society for the past 11 years. I shall do my best to match up to his skills but no doubt a few mistakes may creep in. Please do correct me and keep me on track.

The **Priory Park Community Festival** on June 30<sup>th</sup> opened to a rather wet and windy start but later on in the day the sun shone. About 90 people visited the Society's stand, took Quiz sheets away to complete, and chatted with those society members who were helping. The returned completed Quiz sheets were fewer in number than hoped for – was it too difficult? The winner with the most correct answers was Sarah Finch. This Community Festival provides an opportunity for the Reigate Society to tell the wider public how the Society was formed and what it continues to do. It is very worthwhile and is a good way of attracting new and active members.

You can also have a bit of fun and do the Quiz which you will find in this Newsletter.

The 60<sup>th</sup> AGM took place on 12<sup>th</sup> July in the Woodhatch Centre and was well attended. The AGM business was correctly completed. The following, allowed their names to be put forward for appointment or re- appointment, and had been proposed and seconded by the General Purposes Committee prior to the meeting. They were elected by a show of hands: Alan Mortlock - Chairman, Colin Burbidge -Vice Chairman, Michèle Damer - Hon. Secretary, John Angel - Hon. Registrar, Charles Wragg - Hon. Treasurer. Also re-elected to Council were John Cumberland, David Paxman, Ian Stronge and Sean Hawkins. Michael Hellings was also appointed to Council. Barrie Clark and Denis Turner stood down. We thank them for all their hard work.

Michael Hellings was presented with a framed photograph, of a north westerly view of the North Downs from Reigate Town Centre, as a token of appreciation for all the work he has done, and enthusiasm he has given to the Society.

A lively and interesting talk about the Dorking Museum, given by Kathy Atherton, followed. The Dorking Museum, situated off West Street behind the antique shops, will be re-opening this autumn. Look out for further information on their website [www.dorkingmuseum.co.uk](http://www.dorkingmuseum.co.uk). The

ethos of the Museum is “making Dorking history relevant to today”. The Museum is a community endeavour run by knowledgeable volunteers. The Museum received a £500,000 endowment enabling works to be carried out to improve the museum space. Archive material can be safely kept on site. The Museum receives on going financial support from the Dorking and District Preservation Society. Local History Society books are sold in the museum and a wealth of diverse collections are housed within its walls. The collections and archive material cover Dorking, Box Hill, Brockham, Betchworth, Wootton, Abinger, Capel and Ockley. Interesting exhibits include a mammoth tooth, a dinosaur footprint, a collection of Wedgewood, a 17<sup>th</sup> century shoe found up a chimney, newspapers from 1880's and photos of the prep school run by Laurence Olivier's father. The talk was well illustrated by a slide show and appreciated by the audience.

Nicholas Owen, President of the Reigate Society, gave an entertaining speech thanking Kathy Atherton and her colleague for a most informative talk and wished them success for the future.

**Heritage Open Days 2012** starts on 6<sup>th</sup> September here in the Borough and ends on 9<sup>th</sup> September. Brochures are now being distributed. If any members living in Tadworth, Banstead, Kingswood, Chipstead or Merstham would be able to do a brochure drop to specified retail outlets in those areas I would love to hear from them. The Reigate Society is manning the Medieval Undercroft again this year - perhaps you could offer some time on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> September? If so Michael Hellings is who you need to contact for that. 01737 245342.

**Members' Evening** is on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> October 8pm in the Woodhatch Centre and entrance is by ticket. Please complete the form on the final page of this Newsletter. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Open Meetings** start on November 7<sup>th</sup> at the Baptist Church, Sycamore Walk, Reigate RH2 7LR with the opening talk given by Lester Hicks on “Reigate Stone and its History”.

**Michèle Damer**

**(01737) 243513**

**Email: [heathfieldstables@dial.pipex.com](mailto:heathfieldstables@dial.pipex.com)**

## TREASURER'S NOTES

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS were 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 order may well have heard from the Registrar about changing the instructions to your bank already. Please be sure that your Bank has the correct instructions for your subscription payment.  
There is a payment form on page 7.

**Charles Wragg**

**(01737) 210640**

## REGISTRAR'S NOTES

Well we managed to enrol 8 new members since the last Newsletter. BUT this is less than the number of members who defaulted on subscriptions last year and had to be taken off the list of members. PLEASE find some more members for me.

The new members are:-

**Mr J Watson**

**Mrs I St Louis**

**Mr & Mrs R P Cotterell**

**Mr & Mrs T Cooke**

**Mr & Mrs L Prime**

I told you last time that we had decided to change the name of my office to Membership Secretary but we have found that the title of Honorary Registrar is written into the Constitution. So for now we will continue to use that title.

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

Now an URGENT APPEAL.

At the AGM I announced that I intend to retire at the next AGM (2013). By that time I will have done thirteen years as Registrar following my

twelve years as Honorary Secretary.

The APPEAL is therefore for a member to volunteer to take over this office. It is NOT onerous. It involves keeping the records of the membership and arranging the distribution of the Newsletters. All the systems are in place and only need running. The requirement is for an orderly mind and access to a computer. It takes me, on average, less than two hours a week, taken at my own pace, in my own time. Office management or secretarial experience would be perfect but not essential. The appeal is being made now so that the incomer could have nearly a year to shadow me and learn the job.

Could you do this job for the Society? Do you know someone else who could do it? Please contact ME and we can discuss the job in more detail! Or give me someone else's name. We must have someone to take over quickly!

**John Angel**

**(01737) 242672**

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

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

**Chairman: Gwyther Joyce (01737) 245264**

Looking back at the 2011 A&P September report it is interesting to see the way matters are developing in Reigate and Banstead. Key issue was the Decentralisation and Localism Bill in favour of development which became law much to the concern of many across the country. This was meant to allow local communities to control their local affairs. Also we referred to the Redhill Aerodrome planning application which did not

receive planning approval at the time. Today, we appear to be about to reap the consequences of these two episodes with RAL's re-submission of the Aerodrome application on July 30<sup>th</sup> this year and no doubt they are very optimistic in getting it passed despite the new application having very few changes when compared to last years proposal. Issues concerning significant harm to Green Belt land due to a major increase in

aircraft noise nuisance from up to 77 very light jet and turboprop aircraft movements per day potentially for 365 days a year remain unchanged from last year and a real threat. RAL's claim to provide a significant number of new jobs in the Borough are considered to be totally unrealistic and a carrot for the planning authorities. However connecting the Localism Bill to Redhill Aerodrome application does illustrate our problem. No real feedback or representation has taken place over the new application, and virtually no consultation with the public, including none to the Reigate Society. The A&P Committee will make representation as we did last year and continue our stance in strongly objecting to the project.

Redhill remains a very significant area of development under the Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan. While we applaud the intentions of the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council the reality is that many of the applications for schemes which will significantly impact the urban landscape of Redhill for the next 30 years do not achieve the expected standards for the 'greening' of Redhill, the appropriate quality of architectural design of buildings or the full integration of the developments proposed. An example of this is

the most recent ASDA design which A&P have already made critical comment on. A&P are working with the Redhill Committee to help achieve a better level of development for the town, however we are restrained by the planning process which only allows A&P to comment after submission of the application, when pre-submission discussion between Council and developer has already established an agreement on design. Our concern over this unacceptable situation has been brought to the attention of the Borough Council and will be pursued.

Our Civic Awards programme has progressed well this year with eight nominations offering a real variety of projects. It is always good to receive so many proposals. The inspections have taken place and as usual the awards will be declared later this year.

Progress with the Society website is ongoing and as mentioned in the previous A&P Newsletter it is intended to place planning application reports as well as the Civic Awards on the web-site as of September this year. We are running tests with the Society webmaster to ensure this will work as planned.

## REDHILL

**Chairman: Gerry Moss (01737) 245264**

### **Redhill Road System.**

Some members may have seen the recent letter in the Surrey Mirror concerning the Redhill Roads. This should also be of interest to those living in Reigate.

Those with longer memories may recall that The Society objected to the proposals of the Tribal Urban Preferred Option which, in short, was to set up traffic lights instead of the three roundabouts so as to restrict the volume of traffic entering the town. That failed because it was finally realised that long queues outside of the town would cause many drivers to seek other routes and the most obvious one was thorough Reigate. The Society objected and asked for independent consultants to be appointed to look at alternatives. The Borough did just that, though in something of a hurry, and then over the months from January to July this year, proceeded to decide to undertake a feasibility study on the Second Option, "The Balanced Network".

This option traded some of the benefits from changing Cromwell Road, St Matthews Road and Queensway to two way working for benefits mainly for cyclists. These involved reducing the size of the Station roundabout and removing one of the inward lanes from the east under the

railway bridge, which substantially reduces the efficiency of the road network.

Option One, "The Highway Network Option" was admitted to cope better with the volume of through traffic but the report suggested that the benefits from Option Two were substantial and that little by way of Highway efficiency was being given up by NOT choosing Option 1. However, closer study suggests that Option 1 deals far more effectively with traffic volume than Option 2. In fact, when one looks at the detail the almost certain outcome is that by 2016 congestion would be back to current levels, but now, instead of being confined to Princess Way during the rush hours, it would also extend through the Queensway to Cromwell Road system.

Furthermore the study on which these findings are based finds that through traffic, which is the majority of traffic using this road system, will not increase before 2016, and only made its projections for that period in relation to increased demand from developments. By the time the Action Plan is put into effect 2016 will be almost upon us so the projections will be out of date almost from the outset. With economic recovery, traffic, including through traffic, may be expected to increase substantially.

The plan is certainly not fit for purpose.

### **Asda Planning Application**

The other area of concern is the Asda planning Application. The Borough has done well to attract the interest of Asda and the Cromwell road site is the right place for this further supermarket which will provide competition for the Sainsbury Super Store. We are told that demand is sufficient for both.

However, the Redhill Town Centre Area Action plan (RTCAAP) is past its first public consultation. It contains many fine words and has the vision that "Redhill will be a thriving town centre which is a prominent commercial location, a competitive retail destination and a great place to live." These fine words are supported by much detail on scale, design and greening to show that the intention is to transform the attractiveness of the town.

We have reported that The Society's view is that the Sainsbury planning application fails to provide sufficient by way of soft landscaping (a single hanging creeper), and insufficient addition to the attraction of the nearby public realm. So how does Asda match up to the aspiration?

The Asda elevation to High Street seeks to reflect the glass palace impression of Kingsgate, which is fine if you consider Redhill is suited to glass palaces. However, the elevation to Cromwell Road is designed mainly to mask the car parks at the higher levels and produces a most uninviting frontage quite out of keeping with The Belfry.

Much has been made of the need to connect this southernmost part of the town with its core but making the road two way with problems associated with two way entrances to Asda and the Belfry will make this a difficult road to cross. There are no pedestrian bridges to the Belfry and whereas there will be travelators to the car park levels, to get to ground floor and the town, you will need to take stairs or lifts. Outside you will need to compete with traffic turning to Marketfield Road to cross to the centre. The clear inference is that Asda wishes its customers to come by car without viewing the outside, to shop and depart without bothering with the rest of the town. Our

objections to the Application point out that whereas the ambition of the plan should be to encourage shoppers to do their wider shopping also this is an out-of-town store in all but location.

Assuming the vision of the town is to be achieved the general growth in numbers of customers and the desired vibrancy of the town will result in shoppers seeking a wide variety of specialist shops. This application replaces thirty outlets on the ground floor with six.

There is little improvement to the public realm and no more than a fig leaf to greening. We have made suggestions which might change that. But at this point, on the evidence of Sainsbury's and Asda there seems to be very little to suggest that Redhill is to be transformed to an attractive place people will want to visit.

### **The Station Car Park**

Proposals to replace the car park to the west of the station with a Waitrose at the north end about the same size as Asda, a few other retail outlets and a much improved pedestrian entrance to the station are being promoted. However, to drop-off or park you will need to pass under the bridge and cross Redstone Hill to a multi story car park adjacent to the Toby Carvery Restaurant. Those who use the station during the rush hour and trying to catch a train will understand how impracticable it would be to make that last move in a very busy road. Unofficial drop-offs will no doubt further congest the roads. I hope to have more detail by the next newsletter.

On a personal note may I say I take no pleasure in writing these criticisms of the plans for Redhill. I would dearly like to support a Council initiative. The points we raise are far from rocket science yet the answers are never in the documents we see. Rather we experience promotion too often apparently with little merit.

**Harry Ingram (Secretary)**

## **TRANSPORT**

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

**Our London neighbours have LEP's similar to our LEP (local enterprise partnership) based in Chichester and named "Coast to Capital" in our case this includes West Sussex. Croydon and Epsom and Ewell.:-**

**The South London group** report maintains that

the lack of transport infrastructure has constrained employment and that the figures quoted on page 21 indicates that 18.6 % of the population is inactive.

The development proposals listed include an expansion in South Croydon adjacent to the A23, Sutton, Biggin Hill, Kingston and

Chessington.

It is also understood that the South London group has decided to join the GLC LEP rather than establish their own LEP.

- The Reigate Society Transport Committee in conjunction with the other committees has produced reports that draw attention to concerns that the proposed population expansion within the borough and SE area will need housing and local work places and support facilities if;-
- Full employment is the objective together

with export led growth.

- That the use of personal transport and garaging is to be discouraged.
- It may be that these objectives can be achieved without extra through traffic and pollution in Reigate, contingency plans have been suggested, but so far there are no proposals for a Relief or Ring Road with park and ride facilities.
- The Minister has now appointed an Inspector to consider the local development proposals.

## NATURAL AMENITIES

Chairman: Colin Burbidge (01737) 245264

### Reigate Heath.

Work under the Management Plan continues and has included the scarifying of the area where the trees have been cleared to encourage heather growth which was undertaken by the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers.

Simon Elson will be providing guided walks around the heath as part of Heritage Open Days. The wet summer has helped germination on the cleared areas and the growth of new plants is looking very encouraging.

A volunteer group from Towers Watson has also been helping with maintenance tasks.

The proposal to extend the working life of the **Buckland Sandpits** is still before the planning authority and remains undetermined. It is believed that discussions over the measures thought necessary to minimize the environmental impact of the proposals, which would include a method to commence the rewetting of the SSSI, have been inconclusive. Two years have now passed since the five year extension was first proposed with the applicants apparently unable to satisfy adequately all the concerns over the longer term future of the SSSI. It would seem that the continuance of such an impasse might well lead to the extension being granted by default. If this hypothesis proves to be correct let us hope that, for the sake of the future of the SSSI, any further proposed extensions would be given short shrift and dismissed with, at least some, remedial measures put in place to commence the rewetting process.

### Priory Park.

The aquatic planting programme for the lake has been suspended pending clarification of the aims of the project.

There is no news concerning the application for a Right of Way between Bell Street and Morrison's car park but it is hoped that this issue will be resolved soon as it moves up the priority list of the applications being considered by the determining authority.

### Green Spaces.

The publication is awaited of the borough's Green Infrastructure Strategy document. This will be commented upon during the consultation period.

Following the successful collaboration on wildflower planting between the borough and local residents at Carlton Green the committee decided to encourage members to support the provision of wild flowers and corridors on suitable sites within the borough. It has come to our attention that the borough council may be considering such a management regime on parts of Wray Common and this approach will be supported.

### Recycling.

The borough's home recycling scheme has now started to be introduced. Press comments have so far appeared to indicate a mixed reception. We shall see how the scheme progresses over

### **The Reigate Society**

*President:* Nicholas Owen

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

*Hon. Secretary:* Michèle Damer, Heathfield Stables, Reigate Heath, Reigate, RH2 8AA. Tel: 01737 243513

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

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**Subscription Payment / Banker's Order Form**

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

**ADDRESS** .....

**Email** .....

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>I enclose my subscription for 2012 /2013</b> (Cheques should be made payable to 'The Reigate Society') (The rates are listed on page 3)	<b>Individual</b> .....
		<b>Family</b> .....
		<b>Corporate</b> .....

**Please send me a Banker's Order form for payment of future subscriptions.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>I also enclose my subscription for 2011 / 2012</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

## 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
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



**THE OCTOBER MEMBERS' EVENING**

**On MONDAY 8TH OCTOBER 2012 7.30P.M. for 8.00P.M.at the WOODHATCH CENTRE, REIGATE.**

**For tickets to this event please complete the top half of this form and return the WHOLE PAGE as soon as possible with your remittance and a STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE for the return of the ticket to MRS.M.DAMER, HEATHFIELD STABLES,REIGATE HEATH,SURREY RH2 8QR. There is a number limit at this venue**

**NAME:.....**

**Current Member of the Reigate Society.**

**TELEPHONE NO: .....**

**EMAIL:.....,**

**I/We apply for ..... tickets @ £10.00 a head. Remittance Total .....**

**Cheques should be made payable to the Reigate Society.**



**THE OCTOBER MEMBERS' EVENING  
MONDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2012  
7.30P.M. FOR 8.00 P.M.**

**WOODHATCH CENTRE, WHITEBEAM DRIVE, REIGATE**

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

**TICKET NUMBER(S).....**

**THIS TICKET COVERS ADMISSION AND THE BUFFET WITH 1 GLASS OF WINE OR A SOFT DRINK.**

