



# THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

Newsletter No. 99

April 2011

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## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

You will be pleased to hear that the Society is no longer approaching the possible crisis point which was being predicted in the last Newsletter. My appeal for possible candidates for the positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman did not fall on deaf ears. We now have a volunteer to take on the post of Chairman: Alan Mortlock has been co-opted on to the Council and will be nominated for election at the AGM. In addition Susan Walker has also been co-opted to Council. It is proposed that I will serve as Vice Chair for the coming year.

This means that this is the last Newsletter in which I shall be writing this section which will take on a new style for the hundredth issue. So although from July I will be in a support role for the new Chairman I shall still be producing the Newsletter.

There has been continuing progress, as you will see from the Registrar's Notes, in moving towards our objective of universal electronic communication with the membership. Those of you whose email addresses we have received already will know that you can be updated on emerging issues and consulted about your views. The recent mailing on supermarkets in Redhill is an example of this. The more addresses we have the better this process will be. If you have an email address please consider letting us use it to communicate with you.

I draw your attention to the Treasurer's Notes which refer to the new subscription rates which now apply. If you pay by banker's order and have not yet amended the sum paid there is an amendment form included in this Newsletter for your convenience. **Do it now before you forget!**

The Society's Awards for this year will be presented at the Members Evening in October

and candidates can now be nominated. There is a form included in this Newsletter. As can be seen from the form, a great variety of subjects could be eligible.

I never apologise for mentioning the state of our roads. I am convinced that the more complaints that are made the more likely it is that some action will ensue so I continue to encourage as many people as possible to report road problems through [www.fixmystreet.com](http://www.fixmystreet.com) as a very convenient way of doing this.

This may not be the case for major road works of which we seem to be having more than our share recently. It is understandable that our utilities and infrastructure are in need of extensive renovation but, as a mere observer, it seems that there is never any great urgency over completing the works and the disruption caused to the local transport system is completely discounted. Be warned, there is more to come with bridge repairs on Reigate Hill and further gas main replacement in Reigate town centre. It could be a frustrating summer.

We have discovered a little known benefit of the Society's membership of Civic Voice to which I should draw your attention particularly if you are not members of either the National Trust or English Heritage. Members of the Society can take advantage of obtaining free voucher entry to National Trust properties and in addition, from 1st April, to English Heritage sites also. The voucher can be used between 1 April and 30 June and between 1 September and 31 January 2012 and is not transferable. To obtain National Trust vouchers follow this link:

<http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/nationaltrustcivivoiceoffer>

I do not yet have the English Heritage link but it presumably will be very similar and should be on the Civic Voice website by 1<sup>st</sup> April

Colin Burbidge

(01737) 245264

## SECRETARY'S NOTES

Our last Meeting of 2010 planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> December unfortunately had to be cancelled due to snow. We hope to invite Ros Black back again to give her talk on '**Duxhurst, Lady Henry Somerset's village for inebriate women**'.

On 27<sup>th</sup> January at St Mark's Church Hall we had a talk by Dennis Newland, entitled '**From Dolphins to Orchids; my British Wildlife**'. Mr Newland opened his talk by saying that he was not, as someone else had introduced him, 'an amateur naturalist' but that he is 'an amateur naturalist' - a major difference! He explained that his travels had taken him all over the UK and to many places overseas and that he was always ready with his camera to record the local wild life and flora. He then proceeded to give us many pictures of a wide variety of subjects, starting with Dolphins in the Moray Firth. He went on to various orchids and other wild flowers, butterflies, wild sheep and cattle, deer, sea birds, snakes, frogs, toads, etc. Altogether, an interesting evening.

Pippa Martin gave an illustrated talk on 24<sup>th</sup> February, and 70 people came to hear her at the Tanners & Woosack Room in the Harlequin. She entitled her talk '**The Redwing Story**'. This started in June 1929 when Philip Robinson gathered a few people together to discuss the building of a light aircraft. Among these few was John Lane, Pippa's father. They developed a 2 seater, side by side, aircraft in Croydon, and named it the Redwing. It was 22ft long and had a wing span of 30ft. It made its first flight from Croydon Airport in May 1930. Later in 1932 they brought its manufacturing down to Gatwick and began building there. This stay was short lived and in 1934 Gatwick was sold as it was not considered suitable for development into a full

blown airport! Construction was continued in Croydon. The first aircraft were sold for £575. Among the owners was the comedian, Will Hay. In all 12 were built and one remains today near Southampton where it is being restored.

Our last Open Meeting of the winter will have occurred by the time you receive this Newsletter. Sean Hawkins has entitled his talk '**Some famous Reigate connections**'. It will be on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March in Redhill UR Church Hall in Hatchlands Road."

The **Annual General Meeting** will be held at the Woodhatch Centre on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July. The speaker and subject will be announced nearer the time.

All the 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 Society will again be organising the **Heritage Open Days** in the Borough. These will occur from 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> September. Michèle Damer will again be masterminding it as she did so successfully last year. Anyone who can suggest new venues for opening please get in touch with her or me, and we will follow this up. Last year we eventually had the cost of the printing paid out of the Councillors' Community Awards. We are hoping to keep the costs down this year, maybe by finding a sponsor or advertising.

We understand that the **Priory Park Community Festival** will be taking place again on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June. I expect the Society will have a presence there but the formal decision has yet to be taken.

**Michael Hellings**

**(01737) 245342**

## TREASURER'S NOTES

Let me remind you that the ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and the **new** MINIMUM RATES are as follows:

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

There is a payment form on page 7.

There is also a form on page 7 to enable you to **amend** your **banker's order** if you have not already done so. The completed form should be sent direct to your bank and NOT to the Treasurer

You are reminded that the rates have changed on **1<sup>st</sup> April 2011**.

**Charles Wragg**

**(01737) 210640**

**Email: [charles.wragg@ntlworld.com](mailto:charles.wragg@ntlworld.com)**

## REGISTRAR'S NOTES

We come to the end of another financial/membership year, and we lose some defaulting members for non-payment of subscriptions. However, we are still enrolling new members and since the last Newsletter we have welcomed two new Ordinary Members and one new Corporate Member. They are:

**Miss C Vaughan**                  **Miss S Harrison Reigate**  
**Heath Golf Club**

This recruitment rate is not good enough! Why aren't you bringing in new members for me? The present balance is a slow fall in overall numbers and this must not go on! Please talk to some of your friends into joining us. I expect they really support our actions but feel that 'they' can do it, and just leave it to us. We need to maintain our numbers to allow us to influence events in the area.

I am pleased to say our appeal for e-mail

addresses has been successful, and we currently have about 130 addressees who receive their Newsletters in this way. If you would like to be included, please let me have the address. You can put it on your subscription payment slip and the treasurer will pass it on.

Which reminds me, as you will find elsewhere in this Newsletter, our subscription rates have been increased, so if you pay by Bankers order, please advise your bank to amend the instruction. We have included an Amendment Request form in the Newsletter.

If you have any queries about your membership /subscription status, please call **ME**, not the treasurer. Please carefully note my e-mail address below, as it was wrong in the last Newsletter.  
Thank you.

**John Angel**                                  **(01737) 242672**

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

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING**

**Chairman: Tom Godfrey                  (01737) 243590**

In the last Newsletter, I warned of the coming of new legislation which was supposed to have a new approach to planning. The Decentralisation and Localism Bill was introduced in December with the intention of shifting some power from central government into the hands of individuals, communities and councils. It is part of the Big Society!

There are six objectives

- Lifting the burden of bureaucracy
- Empower communities to do things their way
- Increase local control of public finance
- Diversify the supply of public services
- Open up government to public scrutiny
- Strengthen accountability to local people

In my view, there is little impact on planning in our area which has not been already mooted, in

other words the abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies, otherwise known as the South East Plan. We still have the substantial bureaucracy of the Local Development Frameworks with all the subsidiary documents many of which are subject to Central Government scrutiny. Furthermore, the concept of neighbourhood planning with referendums, to create Neighbourhood Development Plans is more likely to be useful in rural areas rather than urban ones.

It is however a substantial change with the Bill running to 207 clauses and 24 schedules and should have some benefits if the objectives are met.

Locally, consultation took place ending mid February on the Issues and Options to be considered in the Development Management and Site Allocations Development Plan Document. This is the document that details the policies in the Core Strategy and puts flesh on the bones. This was a substantial exercise in box ticking with options to put forward various suggested policies, Unfortunately, there was no information

on the Site Allocations element of the document and the Borough asked for suggestions for developable sites! The draft version of this document will be interesting.

You will remember we were also promised a further consultation on the Redhill Area Action Plan last October but this has still not happened. We are told that the programme has slipped because of the new legislation.

On current applications, the Tesco application has been refused by the Borough and four reasons have been given, as follows

1. The out of centre location
2. The inadequacy of the housing provision
3. The risk of flooding in the absence of evidence to the contrary
4. Design by virtue of the building's dominating impact

We shall have to wait and see if Tesco appeal.

No doubt you will have seen the press reports of the application by Sainsbury's for the construction of a retail food store of 15,093 sqm gross external floorspace, a hotel of 98 rooms, a gym and a multi storey car park of 927 spaces. This is a big store, at least twice as large as the Tesco proposal.

The Society is in course of considering the application with a view to submitting its comments to the Borough shortly. There is no objection in principle but there are concerns about traffic, the removal of the canopy to the library and the Harlequin, landscaping and the relationship between the proposal, the remainder of the NE quadrant and the rest of the town including the railway and bus stations.

You will have also noted in the press, that ASDA are proposing a store in Cromwell Road but details of this are still awaited.

Apart from these applications, there is little major activity in the housing market with the principal activity being for house extensions. There are one or two redevelopment proposals such as Brockmere in Wray Common Road that has been turned down by the Council and is now going to appeal and Yew Tree Cottage on Reigate Hill which is receiving its fourth application - down from 6 flats to 3 houses.

Lastly, I would remind members that we are coming up to the summer and will be asking for entries for the Society's Awards.

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## **REDHILL**

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

Core Strategy is to be revisited once again. That means that the Redhill Town Action Plan is put back further into the distant future. It would seem that the planning process has a continuous life of its own rather than being a process to bring about change. Indeed it could be the case, that with the Lidl site reaching completion, the war of the Supermarkets under way, and further delays as adjustments are made for changed Central Government policy, that plans will emerge only when all the available space has been allocated. The plan will become an account of recent history.

The new plans are both said to be approached from a "blank sheet of paper" but at the same time reference is made to "saving favourable aspects" for the future. This could be anti democratic. For example, the Sainsbury Planning Application is being used to fund the demolition

of the Canopy covering the stairs to the Library and Harlequin and their replacement by a form of covered stairway. It may well be that the replacement stairway is inadequate for purpose but by the time the town plans go to consultation the decision on the stairs may be a fait accompli if the planning permission is granted. So much for consultation.

Readers may recall from the last newsletter that the Society is advancing its views to Borough and Redhill Borough Councillors in advance of the formal consultation process. We have put forward our views on the Redhill road system, the right place for a town square, comments on design and landscaping and hope to be able to address the Redhill Councillors on these views in the near future. This is our strategy of trying for a hearing before plans have firmed up before formal consultation.

Although the plans to signalise the Station and Lombard roundabouts is clearly contrary to the interests of developing a town, I am now less

sanguine that they will be dropped. The County appears to be uninterested in regenerating Redhill if it means any adjustment to its policy of suppressing the use of the car. You will have read in the press the concerns that their parking policy is adverse to trade. What you will not have read is that this is only the tip of the iceberg. Should any of you meet a local County Councillor you might suggest that he looks into this question of County Road Policy as a means of advancing his chances of re election.

Those of you on our E mail list will be aware of the Redhill Councillors website, ([www.redhillcouncillors.co.uk/](http://www.redhillcouncillors.co.uk/) or just put Redhill Councillors into Google; it even works for me!). If you venture a few minutes of your time there you will discover graphs showing the result of the opinion poll concerning location and choice for a supermarket. The main story is that those who polled fancied Tesco neither on its chosen site or anywhere else. But the other details are very interesting as well.

The Tesco planning application has been rejected and we now await the result of any appeal.

The first Sainsbury store outside of London was opened in Redhill. Now we have an application for a superstore occupying the present site but extended to the Princess Drive, involving the demolition of the Santander offices.

The Sainsbury consultants gave a most instructive presentation to the Redhill Committee at the end of January before the public exhibition and before making their planning application. This gave us the opportunity to make our representations at a very early stage. Some of you may think this is too big a store and that it will flourish only at the expense of the other shops (15,093msq). Others will believe the present store is woefully inadequate and that the bigger store would be welcome. The fact is, even when we are lucky, we only get just so much choice.

The case for a larger store in this location includes the reality that it is located closer to the bus station and railway stations than any other site could possibly achieve. This gives it the best

chance of attracting customers who may come by bus or train and thereby reduce both congestion and adverse environmental effects of pollution through travel by car. At the same time ample parking will be provided so the final choice of how to reach the market (subject to County road Policy) will lie with the consumer.

We are now providing our views on the proposals through the planning mechanism. Notwithstanding the advantages of the site for access by public transport the very large parking provision recognises the reality that many shoppers will still come by car. They can only come via Princess Way and this means that the "scoot system" for controlling Redhill traffic planned to replace Lombard and Station roundabouts, would be even more inimical to the interests of the town and must be replaced by a better means of coping with traffic.

One curiosity of the application is the location of the entrance to the hotel which is at the apex of London Road and Princess Way. This may (or may not) provide the visual aspect desired, but is furthest away from both the stations and the car park. Hotel clients will have a very long walk from car, train or bus round the quadrant before they reach the sanctuary of their hotel. How did this escape the pre application discussions?

Similarly, the "offer" to fund the removal of the canopy and replacement stairs seems to result in inadequate access to library and Harlequin. Let us hope that these and other short comings may be ironed out during the planning process.

If this report suggests to you conditions of great uncertainty in the shape of the Redhill to come, you have it spot on. This really is an exercise in ducking and weaving as one tries to cone a passage through the planning process and the commercial opportunities. And it takes time. What is really required is someone with inspired imagination, understanding of the process and most of all energy and passion for a better future Redhill who will provide the leadership which at present is so clearly lacking.

**Harry Ingram (Secretary)**

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## **NATURAL AMENITIES**

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

Michèle Damer, the Society's Reigate Heath representative writes:

Work continues on the Heath in line with the Management Plan. There has been some

correspondence about irresponsible dog owners who allow, or don't notice, their dog fouling the Heath. Various suggestions have been put forward - Signage with a suitable message around the Heath, Dog wardens holding an education day on the Heath interacting with dog owners, more dog bins, introducing a dog

"licence" for using the Heath which would be attached to the dog's collar, enforcing a fine. All these suggestions are being discussed by email with the group. No final decision has been made yet and the discussion may be fairly prolonged.

The Friends of Reigate Heath are going to have a "Happening" on the Heath including, an Exhibition of information boards, old photos of the Heath, a Photographic and Painting Competition all held in the Cricket Pavilion, during the first week of July. During this period there will be a period Golf Match on the Golf Course and something on in the Heath Churches.

**Sand extraction** at Buckland continues despite the application to extend the working life of the pits having been refused. Hanson is expected to appeal the decision after re-examining the environmental impact issues.

**Priory Park.** There has been some activity in connection with the claim for a public right of way between the Priory building and Morrison's car park. A number of the people who submitted evidence forms have been interviewed by Surrey County Council Countryside Access staff. The evidence is now to be assessed. No imminent decision is expected.

There are still concerns over the lack of maintenance work being carried out on the Lake. A statement outlining the Society's aims and

policies on open spaces is in preparation for submission to the borough council. This will ensure that our views are made clear and are on record thus avoiding assumptions being made as to where the Borough may think the Society stands on countryside issues.

In December the Borough Council's Executive Committee approved the proposal for a major expansion of the Borough's **household recycling service**. Under the proposed plan there would be a full, weekly collection of five different recyclable materials, meaning that the majority of households should be able to recycle more than three quarters of their rubbish from the kerbside. The proposals also include an increase in the variety of products collected from the Council's recycling centres. Following this approval there was to have been a further series of public events and roadshows held around the Borough for people to comment on the Recycling Blueprint for the future of household waste and recycling collections but there has been no announcement of when this will happen. Presumably everything is dependent on whether or not there is sufficient funding available to set the system up.

#### **The Reigate Society**

*President:* Nicholas Owen

*Chairman:* Colin Burbidge, MSc., C Eng., 16 Brokes Crescent, Reigate, RH2 9PS. Tel: 01737 245264

*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

Amendment to Banker's Order

To: \_\_\_\_\_ Bank Plc

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

You are currently paying to HSBC Bank Plc (code 40-38-10), 18 High Street, Reigate, RH2 9BB for the credit of the Reigate Society (A/c No. 70690538) the sum of £\_\_\_\_\_.

Please amend this to pay £\_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ )  
Amount in words

starting with the next payment.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ A/c No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name (in full) \_\_\_\_\_  
Block Capitals please

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Subscription Payment / Banker's Order Form

NAME(S) .....

ADDRESS .....

Email .....

I enclose my subscription for 2011 / 2012  
(Cheques should be made payable to 'The Reigate Society')  
Individual .....  
Family .....  
Corporate .....

I also enclose my subscription for 2010 / 2011  
Individual .....  
Family .....  
Corporate .....

(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 99)

<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 2½ to 11
Ormerods	Suite 4 Chapter House, 33 London Road RH2 9HZ (0208 686 5000)	Solicitors
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



### CIVIC AWARDS 2011

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: .....

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

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

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

Reasons for nomination: .....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Nominations to be sent to:-  
**Gwyther Joyce,**  
***Chairman of the Society' Architecture and Planning Committee***  
**10 Priory Drive**  
**Reigate RH2 8AF**

by Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011.