



The Civic Society
For Reigate & Redhill
www.reigatesociety.org.uk



QUARTERLY
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JUNE 2024

EVENTS IN REIGATE & REDHILL

- 14-16 June Reigate Summer Festival
12-14 July Pub in the Park, Reigate
22 Sept Run Reigate

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RS CHAIR NOTES – PIPPA MARTIN

As recorded in the minutes of the last Council meeting on 5th February I have accepted the Chair of the Society for one year. It is my hope that the Civic Society will raise its profile in the Borough and will during the year enlist a new and younger membership. To this end we must print a membership form with attractive images of Reigate and Redhill stating our aims and objects to foster appreciation and pride in our surroundings and the environment of the Borough as laid out in our Constitution. I have discussed this with Chairmen of similar societies, the general public, tradesmen and colleges and meeting a favourable response.

On Saturday 11th May I was invited to Founders Day at the Royal Alexandra and Albert School and spoke to many guests and visitors. None had heard of the Society! We plan to have a presence at the Festivals in Reigate in May and June. We were invited to find a member to talk on the history of the Borough to the residents of Wray Common Nursing home and recruited the home to membership. As the Society has to be apolitical I invited Rebecca Paul the conservative candidate for the General Election to coffee and talked at length about the aims of the Society. When we have a membership form she will join. Subsequently I have spoken to her on several local issues.

The Borough Council plans a £3m park refurbishment plan north of Redhill and south of the M25 set to open in January 2025.

The Environment Agency reported serious spills of sewage in Earlswood and Horley by Thames Water Company.

On Monday 18th March there was an excellent Zoom meeting on the bridges of London and on 20th May Alan Mortlock spoke at the Reigate Community Centre 7.30 on the History of Gatton Park. This meeting was well attended.

SECRETARY'S NOTES – JANE ARTIS

Next Open Meetings to be held on Zoom or Face to Face as noted

24th June 2024 AGM & Members' Meeting

Date of Next Council Meeting

10th June 2024 Reigate Community Centre

NEWS IN BRIEF

Borough's 50th Anniversary this year

New Reigate Summer Festival in June – the Society will have a Display upstairs in the Old Town Hall (Caffè Nero) on June 15th.
Helpers needed to talk to visitors about the Society

ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING GROUP – TIM LEE

Planning applications & developments

APC continue to meet monthly to discuss live planning applications. One application is part of a consultation for a Surrey County Council proposal for a new school at the former care home on Park Hall Road in Reigate. The APC feel that the construction of a new school facility on the site is positive as it will bring together a needed facility that is currently spread over several other sites and that the design is for a modern, brick-built building that will not impact its residential setting on a currently disused site. On the negative side, the school will bring an increase traffic levels both for local residents and on Reigate Hill and there will be an increase in noise for local residents at certain times of the day.

The news that M&S is going to be moving out of the Belfry is a concern for the future of the Redhill shopping centre. The fear is that there will be a struggle to find alternative companies that will be willing to pay the relatively high rental rates to fill such a large floor area. In the same way as the light has been designed, the Belfry will likely need to diversify into different uses to keep up levels of footfall.

The New Priory School

Currently there is no sign of a fresh planning application due to be submitted for a new school on the Surrey County Council site in Woodhatch.

The Civic awards 2024

The APC are still awaiting nominations for this year's award for projects completed recently or in the recent past that our members deem worthy of nomination. We would ask all members to consider this and send in any nominations in the next few weeks.

Projects can range from outstanding buildings to public sculptures, and we will draw up a short list from the nominations to be judged later this year

New chairperson required:

Following last February's sharing of what the APC does, we are always looking for new members with interest and ideally experience working in the planning, engineering, architectural and landscape design industries. As well as new members the call still remains for a new Chairperson.

The new Chair preferably needs to have experience working within the construction, design, planning or environmental areas and is passionate about protecting and future proofing the quality of the built and natural environment and heritage of the past for future generations.

Please reach out to me if you are interested in joining the committee and also taking on the role of chairperson.

THE REIGATE PRIORY MUSEUM

Some members may be wondering what has happened to the Reigate Priory Museum, or, if you are new to Reigate, whether there is a museum here at all. A brief update therefore is necessary to clarify this matter.

The Reigate Priory Museum was founded in 1973 by Audrey Ward, a teacher at the school, as an integral part of the school and as part of the wider Reigate Priory Museum Society. It became a busy local museum with changing exhibitions, promoting an understanding of both the historic Priory building and its successive owners, and the history of the town. The Museum has a large collection of items relating to both local and social history, with an important collection of costumes, many given by local people. Exhibitions have always been presented in the Priory's 19th century Palladian-style library, the Museum's display room, to which there is a separate purpose-built entrance at the west end of the building. The most historic part of the building is the Holbein Hall with its staircase and spectacular murals, restored 20 years ago at the initiative of the then Mayor of Reigate. The Museum has an obligation to conduct members of the public to view the Holbein Hall on certain days in the week & on special occasions. The Museum's current long serving curator is Eileen Wood.

Unfortunately, in late 2010 there was a severe flood from the ceiling of the library, caused by snow and poor upkeep. The Museum was forced to close, and its contents hastily removed. Subsequent investigation by Surrey County Council revealed that many rooms in the historic south front of the building used as classrooms, including some upper rooms used by the Museum for storage of its collection, were unsound. A long period of work ensued to repair and make safe these areas, largely completed around the time of covid, at which time, understandably, the school requisitioned the Museum for distanced classroom space. Since then, the dilemma over plans for relocating the school - or otherwise - have prevented the Museum being allowed back into their own premises. The Priory buildings belong to the Borough Council, though SCC have a long lease on the building which includes specific permission for the Museum. Sadly, despite promises, neither the Borough, the County Council or the School can give any assurance for the Museum to reopen, and in consequence the Priory, the inhabitants of the town, and its visitors, are all deprived of the only Museum in Reigate. Surely not a situation for which our Elected Representatives, nor their Officers should feel the least bit proud.

The Museum Society continues to meet with a series of talks and indeed welcomes new members, and many volunteers will be needed to assist if and when the Museum is allowed to reopen. For more information please contact the Museum Chair, Claire Gwynne 01293 862353 email: reigatepriorymuseum@gmail.com

Michael Knight, Sean Hawkins, R&R Soc. Council members and Museum Trustees.

REDHILL GROUP – PIPPA MARTIN

Report of Redhill Committee of the R & R Society

The past months have been mixed for Redhill. The Rise and Light have been popular with both residents and visitors. The cinema has offered a wide range of films in the very luxurious auditoria. The market has struggled to keep an upbeat profile. Tony who ran the flower stall has given up but the Fosters who run the vegetable and fruit stall say they will introduce flowers. They also intend to open a farmers market in the pub which hosted the Vinci offices during the development of the centre.

The loss of the Harlequin and the library due to RAAC has been profound. The library reopened on April 22nd in temporary accommodation in the Consort Building owned by Surrey County Council. Roof repairs are being carried out on the old library building and there are plans for it to return next year. The Harlequin poses a different problem and detailed reports and discussions on viability are under way. The Chairman has pointed out to Council several times that live theatre and a community meeting spaces are vital to a thriving town. Live screening of National theatre, ballet and opera were a feature at the Harlequin. Schools, drama groups, music societies and concerts all performed there. The business guild held its meetings at the Harlequin.

There was a serious stabbing in the Quadrant last month and buildings were smashed in a separate incident. It is necessary that there should be areas in the centre where people can relax and enjoy a varied culture. The Busy Bean Café and Posidero Lounge provide food and drink and Park provides open space but the Borough must have live theatre. There are excellent concerts in the local churches but the Harlequin used to stage professional theatre and talks by renowned speakers.

The news that Marks and Spencer plan to pull out their key store in the Belfry is a big blow for Redhill. Retail stores are struggling and the Council has to do considerable replanning. Andy Nash still manages to keep the Belfry lively and has moved free table tennis into the Samuel the jewellers building and the Pound Shop has moved into the vacated Wilko premises.

On 20th March the Chairman, Pippa Martin, Helen Neve and Tim Lee met with Solum to discuss their revised plans for the Redhill Station. They viewed the new proposals which lopped off 3 storeys from the skyscrapers but were still totally unacceptable. Disturbingly Solum viewed Redhill as “low priority and very much the poor relation of Reigate”. The Chairman reiterated her proposal for a pedestrian bridge from the station to the centre of Redhill.

What is Happening with Reigate Level Crossing?

At present, the traffic situation at the level crossing is as good as it has been for many years. Pressure from the Transport Committee via the local Community Rail Partnership has eventually caused Network Rail to look at the operation of the crossing with the conclusion that there were no procedures and the signalmen were using their own interpretations of what should happen. Now, with a procedure in place for the last 18 months or so, Network Rail are claiming that the down time of the barriers has been reduced by one to one and a half minutes per hour. Coupled with a reduced road traffic flow and the reduction of the partly implemented 3 trains per hour service in each direction back down to 2, it is good(ish) news for motorists.

However, there are clouds on the horizon. GWR are considering enhancing the rush hour service. They still have medium term plans for a full reintroduction of 3 tph with a published long term aspiration for 4 tph. A new body and Transport for South East have expressed a wish for inter-city services 'east of Guildford'. Further in the future, if the proposed south-east rail route into Heathrow is approved (this would run alongside the M25 mostly along a disused trackbed), this could further exacerbate the situation. With one of these services proposed to run from Guildford into Heathrow, it would be easy with bi-mode trains to envisage a Heathrow to Gatwick service via Reigate. So in the very long term there could be three times the number of trains over the level crossing as today albeit with a huge benefit for rail passengers.

It is quite possible that none of these services will materialise in the next few decades. But what if they do? What provision is being made for the road users if the rail traffic does increase significantly? The answer is absolutely nothing. There are no plans whatsoever to deal with the possible outcome.

The answer should be two studies; one into the traffic flow over the crossing and the second a review of a plan to abolish the level crossing either by a bridge or a tunnel. There was a study for a bridge some time back which decided that it was too difficult. But there has been new thinking since then and it is worth looking at again. So should these extra train services happen, there would be a plan of action with approximate costs.

The Transport Committee submitted question to Surrey County Council highways about making the pedestrian crossing near the level crossing traffic light controlled. Without going into detail (see the website [About>transport Committee](#) and click on the link to Reigate Level Crossing for the full story) the response from the Highways department was a poorly thought out set of reasons why this was not possible which we believe amounted to a 'please go away, we are not interested'. Attempts by the Community Rail Partnership to have a dialogue with the Highways department have been ignored which only strengthens our opinion about their complete lack of interest.

TRANSPORT group – BRUCE HEALEY (continued)

What is Happening with Reigate Level Crossing? (continued)

It is hard to predict the future. But to have absolutely no plans for moderate increases in the number of trains over the level crossing and the resultant traffic jams is culpable.

It is also significant that no air pollution studies have been carried out in the region of the level crossing.

Proposed Park Hall Road Alternative Provision (Special Needs) Campus

The Transport Committee has lodged an objection to the proposed Alternative Provision Campus in Park hall Road, Reigate on the grounds the unsuitable location from a traffic perspective. With the vast majority of the attendees arriving by road, Brokes Road is not a wide road and would become congested. The road would have to be made a non parking zone putting extra pressure on parking in Brokes Crescent in particular.

Reigate Hill already gets very congested and would become even more so as squadrons of vehicles arrive together. The west end of Brokes Road and Beech Road are private roads and would become 'rat-runs' to avoid traffic on Reigate Hill. The Park Hall Road site cannot accommodate many vehicles at the same time and grid-lock seems a likely outcome.

From a traffic perspective, this is a poorly thought out proposal.

WEBSITE & FACEBOOK- BRUCE HEALEY

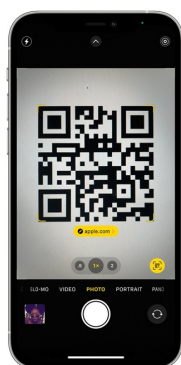
Facebook: presently has 787 likes and 872 followers.



<https://www.facebook.com/p/The-Reigate-and-Redhill-Society-100064867353379/>

Recordings of all past talks can be found here

https://www.reigatesociety.org.uk/meetings/meeting_notes.php



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GREEN SPACES GROUP (GSG) – HELEN NEVE

The Green Spaces Group has taken a short sabbatical to regroup. Members have been active, however, including RRS and individual responses to the development proposals to Redhill Station. We would be grateful to hear from anyone willing and able to take over our social media posts.

Our live links are set out below. For updates, please follow and like GSG on

<https://www.facebook.com/GSGReigateSociety>



<https://twitter.com/GSGReigateSoc>



<https://www.reigatesociety.org.uk/about/na.php>



<https://www.reigatesociety.org.uk/Walks/>



TREASURER'S REPORT at 28/05/2024 –ROBERT BOGIN

Net income for 2023-2024 ended at almost even. Membership income was at 18% down on last year. The net cost of the Civic Awards evening was £680. There was no HODS brochure other than a 5 page venue listing which was printed in house. The balance sheet figure as at 31/03/24 shows a healthy surplus. The 2024-2025 year has only just started so figures are not really relevant

REGISTRAR'S REPORT – ROBERT BOGIN

Number of paid up members stands at 356 comprising 94 single memberships, 115 family memberships, 20 corporate and 7 others. Thus a total of 236 memberships. This represents a reduction of around 5.5% over the last year.

CORPORATE MEMBERS.

Adam's Gallery www.adamsgallery.co.uk 42a High Street, Reigate RH2 9AT Art gallery 01737-225677	Royal Albert & Alexandra School www.raa-school.co.uk Gatton Park, Reigate RH2 0TW 01737-649050 Boarding school for boys & girls aged 7 to 18
Crow Watkin www.crowwatkin.co.uk 14 Bell Street, Reigate RH2 7BE Independent estate agents, surveyors & valuers 01737-245886	Sawkings Architects Ltd www.sawkingsarchitects.com 1 The Quarry, Betchworth RH3 7BY 01737-845580 Chartered Architects
Dunottar School www.dunottar.surrey.sch.uk High Trees Road, Reigate RH2 7EL Independent co-educational school ages 11-18 01737-761945	Skin Architects www.skin-architects.co.uk Hope Lacy, 20 Ringley Avenue, Reigate RH2 7ET 01737-210457 Chartered Architects
Micklefield School www.micklefieldschool.co.uk 10 Somers Road, Reigate RH2 9DU 01737-242615 Independent prep school for boys & girls aged 2 1/2 to 11	Stentor Music Co. Ltd www.stentor-music.com Albert Road North, Reigate RH2 9EZ 01737-240226 Manufacturers and distributors of musical instruments
Rayners Commercial www.raynerscommercial.com 14a Bell Street, Reigate RH2 7BG 01737-222835 Chartered Surveyors and Commercial Property Agents	Stoneman Funeral Service www.stonemanfunerals.co.uk Doran Court, Reigate Road, Reigate RH1 6AZ 01737-763456 Funeral directors & memorial craftsmen
Reigate Architects www.reigatearchitects.co.uk 24 Holmesdale Road, Reigate RH2 0BQ 01737-243540 Architecture & sustainability	Unusual Expo www.unusualexpo.com Yorke Road, Reigate 07831-882527 Exhibition & Event Design
Reigate Grammar School www.reigategrammar.org Reigate Road, Reigate RH2 0QS 01737-222231 Grammar School	Touchstone Tonewoods www.touchstonetonewoods.co.uk Albert Road North, Reigate RH2 9EZ 01737-221064 Luthier supplies, parts, tools and tonewoods
Reigate Heath Golf Club www.reigateheathgc.com Reigate Heath RH2 8QR 01737-226793 Heathland golf course	TWM Solicitors www.twmsolicitors.com 40 West Street, Reigate RH2 9BT 01737-221212 Solicitors
Reigate Priory Cricket Club www.reigatepriorycc.co.uk Park Lane, Reigate RH2 8JX 01737-244477 Cricket club with senior & junior sections	White & Sons www.whiteandsons.co.uk 24 High Street, Reigate RH2 9AY 01737-222600 Independent estate agents, surveyors and valuers
Reigate Priory School www.reigate-priory.co.uk Bell Street, Reigate RH2 7RL 01737-245065 Junior school	Wray Common Nursing Home www.wray-common.co.uk Wray Common Road, Reigate RH2 0ND 01737-240563
Robinsons www.robinsonsbm.com 1 Bancroft Rd, Reigate RH2 7RP 01737-229200 Chartered Surveyors, Commercial Property Sales, Lettings Lettings, Valuation & Management	WS Planning & Architecture www.wspa.co.uk 5 Pool House, Bancroft Road, Reigate RH2 7RP 01737-949872 Chartered Town Planners and Chartered Architects Full design and build service

President: Nicholas Owen

Acting Chair:

Pippa Martin

Email: pm.sg@ntlworld.com

Tel: 07801 372523

Secretary:

Jane Artis

Email: janeartis@hotmail.com

Tel: 07831 269866

Acting Vice Chair

Christine Ingram

Email: h.ingram2@ntlworld.com

Treasurer & Registrar

Robert Bogin

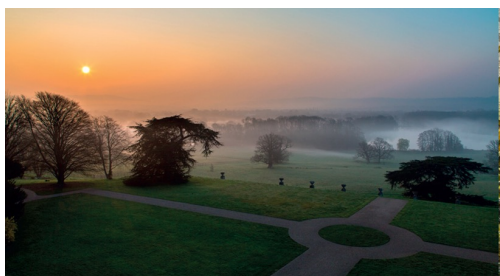
Email: robertbogin@gmail.com

Tel: 01737 248018

GATTON PARK OPEN DAYS

12.00-5.00 pm

Many of these days feature activities for children but there is plenty of space to walk and enjoy the open spaces. Gatton Hall is open for the sale of refreshments.



2 June

7 July

4 August

1 September

6 October

3 November

1 December



<https://gattonpark.co.uk/visit/opening-times/>

REIGATE CAVE TOURS



Guided Tours of both the Tunnel Road Caves and Barons' Cave will be available in 2024 on dates below *Unfortunately the Barons' Cave is really not suitable for those with significant mobility difficulties.*

8 June

13 July

10 August

14 September

Pre booking is essential



https://reigatecaves.org.uk/?page_id=28