



THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

Newsletter No. 91 September 2008

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Another newsletter – another change of format but not in the direction in which we were heading originally. Sadly we have lost the assistance that we had to enable us to include photographs in the previous issue and this one comes without illustrations. It is still the intention to proceed down that path but this issue is somewhat of a hybrid between what has been produced for a number of years and the last issue. A different plan is required to attain our objective and this will need a little time to assess the options and assimilate a new process before proceeding. Hopefully this will be achieved by the time the November issue is prepared. Watch this space.

The enhanced and restored Priory Park is now up and running. It has been officially opened during Prince Edward's visit and the celebrations extended through the Reigate Summer Music weekend. All who were invited to the opening ceremony enjoyed a good event but many who participated in the celebratory event had reservations about its success. The park is being well patronised and I have heard many complimentary remarks about the scheme. However there is an unfinished feel about much of the work which is reinforced by the retention of the protective chestnut fencing around many of the areas. There are certainly issues remaining over the lake including the design of the silt handling system on the water inflow and the aquatic planting. Let us hope that these matters can be quickly resolved.

The park restoration plans did not include any of the Priory School site and since the reopening of the park the school has submitted an application to fence off the access way between the Bell Street Car Park and the back of Morrisons. This appears to be an expensive way of replacing the existing vehicle barrier and is allegedly to improve the park and security for the pupils but, without the provision of a second fence to complete the enclosure, this second objective would appear to be unachievable. The timing of this application appears a little odd as it comes after the changes to the park have been completed and whilst a review of junior schools in the area is in progress.

Recycling or perhaps the lack of it has been a discussion point for some time. Although there are some facilities available within our area the provision of these, as always, involves both the borough council and the county council. This appears to limit what can be done and can also cause confusion to the users of the service. Despair not; the borough council is working on a **Recycling Blueprint** through which it hopes to increase the amount of household waste that is recycled to 60% by 2020. It is estimated that 70% of what is currently land filled is recyclable. The proposals, based on consultations held in June with individuals and organizations, will be put forward for public consultation shortly. The proposals will cover the methods used for door-to-door collection of waste including the separation of food waste which makes up 36% of what we currently put into our wheelie bins.

Most people will be aware that the county council has put forward proposals for the control of on-street parking within the Reigate town area. The proposals are based on an earlier (1996) consultation about parking in northwest Reigate and on numerous complaints received by the authorities about commuter and office-worker parking in residential roads and the ensuing chaos that results. Whilst welcoming the proposition that the problem should be tackled comprehensively and not in a piecemeal fashion as was previously the case, it is obvious from the published details that a little more thought was required. Without doubt the comments that the Highways Department has received will leave them in no doubt as to the potential errors in what they have proposed. Hopefully these will be corrected when the proposals are finalised but unfortunately they do not have a good record in this respect and tend to plough on with what they first thought of. Time will tell.

There will no doubt be similar proposals for Redhill when the plans for the future vision of the town centre become clearer and what impact these will have on road and rail transport within the town.

Colin Burbidge

(01737) 245264

SECRETARY'S NOTES

The Society's **Annual General Meeting** took place on 5th July at Redhill Methodist Centre. The President, Crispin Blunt MP, welcomed the forty or so members present, and opened the meeting. The existing Officers were re-elected: Colin Burbidge as Chairman, Claudia Payne as Vice Chairman, Charles Wragg as Hon Treasurer, and myself as Hon Secretary. Three members of the Council retired by rotation – Joyce Crosfield, Ray Lewis and Alan Smith. They were willing to have their names put forward again and were unanimously re-elected. Before closing the meeting, Crispin Blunt thanked the officers and others in the Society for their work and their commitment in striving for acceptable development in the Borough. He went on to point out the problems of road congestion, lack of school places and crowded trains. These issues and others needed solutions and the Society's input into their planning was essential. Crispin Blunt remarked that research by some of his parliamentary staff over the past two years showed that the electoral register had been increased significantly, and that with this rate of growth the register will have doubled by the year 2043. He remarked that in planning for the future the Borough was not the final arbiter and that the Government always had the ultimate say. He wished the Society well in their endeavours for the years to come.

After the formalities had been completed, Anna Cronin, Director of Policy and Environment in the Borough gave us a talk on the Current Projects in Planning and Regeneration. She reminded us that the previous Borough Development Plan had now to be replaced in a new format renamed the Local Development Framework. This would be overarching and not detailed and would take the planning up to the year 2026. The preferred options would be released for consultation by July/August 2008. The submission document would be sent to the Government by December 2008. This would lead to a public inquiry in the summer of next year. Horley, she explained, was further ahead in timing than Redhill, having started the process in 1994. It was expected that developers working in Horley would be contributing £90 million towards its infrastructure. She was optimistic for Redhill as it has a good location with the possibility of building new houses close to the railway station and with many

sites very suitable for commercial and leisure redevelopment.

Once again the Society is publicising and coordinating the Heritage Open Days in the Borough. This year we have 23 venues (18 last year) opening for all or part of the four days, Thursday 11th to Sunday 14th September. Leaflets and posters are being distributed as I write this newsletter. Also the Society will be manning the Medieval Undercroft on the Saturday, as we have for the past few years.

The **Members' Evening** will be held at the Woodhatch Centre on Monday 6th October at 8.00pm. It will follow the usual format: drinks, finger buffet, the presentation of the Annual Civic Awards and a talk. The talk, on The Holmesdale Building Society, will be given by Kevin Morgan who became its Chief Executive in 2004. The Holmesdale was formed in 1855. Its first Office was in Church Street Reigate where it remains to this day as an independent building society.

This is one of the more popular evenings of the Society's year. With numbers limited it is essential to apply immediately if you want to attend. Just fill in the form at the back of this newsletter, and send the whole page to me. Please include a cheque for £10 each (no increase on last year) and a stamped addressed envelope.

The winter series of Open Meetings starts on 6th November at Holmesdale School when John Howe will speak on **Mediaeval Reigate**. John is a long standing local resident and a member of the Reigate Society. He has made a study of pre-Tudor Reigate, about which there is little published information. The final meeting of 2008 will be held in the Redhill UR Church Hall on 4th December when Ian West will be giving a talk entitled "**Made of Clay – Surrey brickworks**".

There are three further Open Meetings planned for the beginning of next year. These are given in the enclosed Programme for 2008-2009. Details of other activities can be seen on our web site www.reigatesociety.org.uk which is full of information about the Society.

Michael Hellings

(01737) 245342

Email: mandmhellings@talktalk.net

REGISTRAR'S NOTES

We continue to welcome new members to the Society. Since the last Newsletter we have enrolled 8, including one new Corporate Member, they are: -

Dr & Mrs D M Forton
Ms J A Paxton
Mr & Mrs J N Scott-Malden
Mrs V Daw
Mr R M Dewar

The Corporate Member is: -

Reigate Priory Cricket Club

BUT - I am going to get on my hobby-horse - we are always in need of more members. There is always a slow but steady draining away of numbers as members leave the district, or resign, or we lose them for other reasons. It is imperative that we keep recruiting to build our numbers up again. Please help. If you know anyone who ought to be members, please persuade them. Just let me know and I can give you membership forms for them (or I can send one to them). BUT please do something. Thank you.

John Angel (01737) 242672

TREASURER'S NOTES

Let me remind you that the ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due from the 1st April 2008 and the MINIMUM RATES are as follows:

Individual Members	£5
Family Members	£8
Corporate Members	£25

Those of you who still pay by cheque or cash (Bankers Order forms are always available), please complete the Subscription Payment Form on page 7 of this Newsletter, and return it with your cheque (or cash) to me at the address shown.

Charles Wragg (01737) 210640

Email: charles.wragg@ntlworld.com

COMMITTEE REPORTS

REDHILL

Chairman: Gerry Moss

(01737) 765508

Most of the work of the Committee since the last Newsletter has been involved with the **Redhill Area Action Plan**. As stakeholders we attended the Visioning Day on 9 May and have responded to the May 2008 **Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan** document. These provided opportunities to reiterate points made in previous consultations.

The new Bus Station was welcomed but a number of faults such as flooding around the seating area during rain need attention. These are expected to be rectified by the contractors.

Plans for the redevelopment of the Redhill Station car park are at an advanced stage. We are hoping in the near future to be consulted by Berkeley Homes before the plans are finalised. One of our concerns is the importance of retaining the drop off area and taxi rank. Also a consequence of moving the long-term car park to a multistory building behind the Toby Carvery may create new problems. It will create additional congestion for traffic from the west passing under the railway bridge. Also to enter the multistory car park cars will need to cross the line of traffic coming down the hill.

ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

Chairman: Tom Godfrey

(01737) 243590

Over the last few months there has been a considerable reduction in the number of planning applications for the redevelopment of sites with blocks of flats and only two of note have come before the Committee recently, namely an ugly block of 5 flats on the site of Penn Cottage in Yorke Road and a Georgian style block of 6 flats in Pilgrims Way – a Residential Area of Special Control.

We are concerned about this latter proposal since, if granted, it will create a precedent for other schemes in this locality. This has already occurred in another Residential Area of Special Control, namely Beech Road, Reigate, where a block of flats, known as Allingtons, was granted on appeal where Beech Road joins Reigate Hill

and there is currently an appeal on the opposite side of the road, at a house called Raranga, for a large and dominant block of flats.

Otherwise, the only applications of note have been on land that is currently, or about to be, vacant. Such applications are the one by the East Surrey College for 92 dwellings on their South Campus (between Clarendon Road and Alpine Road, Redhill) which will become vacant as a result of the redevelopment of the College on the North Campus. There was also a smaller scheme for 40 new dwellings on the Mount Green estate in Beech Drive – off Reigate Road opposite the Police Station – where some vacant land and sites of lock-up garages were to be redeveloped. This has been refused but will no doubt return in due course.

Currently, the application causing us some concern is that put forward by the Priory School to fence off the access way between the Bell Street Car Park and the back of Morrisons. This is allegedly to provide a secure environment for the pupils of the school. However, without the provision of a second fence to complete the enclosure the object of the exercise would seem to be pointless.

The Committee has, however, been busy with considering various Policy documents. The first of these was the Issues and Options document on the **Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan** which set out the concerns about the future of the town and the way in which the Borough was addressing the problems. Your Redhill Committee took the lead on the Society's representations but we added some minor points. It was unfortunate that we were unable to make a co-ordinated response but the consultation period was only a month and the two Committee cycles did not match!

The Borough's next document was the **Preferred Options on the Core Strategy** for the Borough over the next 20 years. This is one of a series of documents that will make up the **Local Development Framework** and sets out the way in which the Borough is expected to change the objectives outlining the policies needed to achieve this change and the policies themselves. This document is for consultation until the 29th August 2008 – during the summer holiday period!

This document is not controversial being a fairly broad-brush approach. There are objectives requiring development to be sustainable and

environmentally friendly; the creation of a strategic corridor along the line of the A23; to improve the economic viability of the Borough; to protect the landscape; to work towards the "Hub" concept of Redhill and improve Horley town; the regeneration projects at Preston and Merstham etcetera.

This document was published on the 18th July 2008 and unfortunately for the Borough, the Department for the Communities and Local Government published the **Proposed Changes to the South East Plan** which had the effect of moving some of the goal posts.

Although this matter has been the subject of prior newsletters, it may be helpful to recapitulate particularly on the subject of housing.. The original **South East Plan** proposed a provision of housing in Reigate and Banstead for the period 2006 to 2026 of 7740 dwellings. The Panel, appointed by the Minister, to consider these proposals increased this to 9240 (an increase of 19.4%): The Secretary of State has now increased this to 11240 (a further increase of 21.6% or a total increase of 37.8%)! The whole of this added growth is for that part of the Borough within the London Fringe (i.e. north of an east-west line drawn through Salfords) where the total increase has been from 4740 dwellings to 8240 dwellings (an increase of 42.5%).

Part of this increase may be due to the fact that the Borough applied for and was granted £5.3 million for new infrastructure under the New Growth Points funding from the Government. *In return the Borough committed to provide some 5000 dwellings by 2016.*

The result would have been, therefore, that for the ten years from 2016 to 2026 under the previously recommended figures, the Borough would have had to provide 4240 dwellings. The reduction in the rate of completions in the post 2016 period from 500 dwellings a year to 424 was unacceptable to the Secretary of State and she therefore increased the rate. As mentioned above, this increase of some 2000 dwellings has been loaded on the northern area of Borough since the calculations have ignored the special allocation of 2600 dwellings in Horley. This is a result of remote civil servants being more interested in mathematics than the realities of the situation.

It is interesting to note that the Council's **Draft Housing Monitor** for 2008, indicated that the

figure of 9240 dwellings could be met, if unidentified windfall sites were included for the last eight years of the period. A windfall site is land that is already developed that comes forward unexpectedly so we will need a lot more of such sites!

According to the local press the Borough are intending to protest strongly against the latest figures but it would appear that they have set themselves an uphill struggle with the commitment under the **New Growth Points** funding.

Lastly, the ominous part of the statement is the reiteration of the comment about the Green Belt, as follows:

“Smaller scale local review of the Metropolitan Green Belt boundary should be undertaken as required at Redhill/Reigate, ...”

With only a relatively short time between the publication of this voluminous document and the press date for this newsletter, it has been possible only to pick out the headlines. It will, no doubt, be necessary to return to this subject

This document is available for consultation until the 24th October 2008 and can be viewed on <http://www.go-se.gov.uk>

NATURAL AMENITIES

Chairman: Colin Burbidge

(01737) 245264

Waste Disposal

Part of the Copyhold site is to be used as a recycling centre but the destiny of the remainder of the site is not yet known. Apparently the site lies within the area covered by the **Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan** so its ultimate use may be influenced by the final recommendations of that document. Both Copyhold and Earlswood are included in the **Surrey Waste Plan** so there could be competition between the two sites as far

as recycling is concerned.

Minerals Plan

A public consultation on the published plan was conducted between April and June of this year. Analysis of the results is apparently scheduled to take a further year!

Woodhatch Park

The park is still suffering from vandals and steps are being taken to reduce the number of vulnerable items which cannot be easily observed by passers by. A grant has been obtained from the borough council to replace the roof covering of the gazebo with a shatterproof material.

Reigate Heath

The management plan is working well and additional funding has been obtained for 'Environmental Stewardship' of the heath. An archaeology sub group is now operating. The Environment Agency has appointed new consultants to investigate further the reasons for the loss of the wetlands area.

Earlswood Common

Although the Management Group is lacking an appointed chairman the group is still functioning. There has been further planting of aquatic plants in the lower lake which was funded by Thames Water. Land Management Services is drawing up a draft management plan which will include ways in which Redhill Common, New Pond Farm and Pettridge Wood might be integrated with Earlswood Common in the future.

The chain pond in Somerset Road is heavily infested with a frost-tolerant duckweed which will be difficult to eradicate. The Conservation Volunteers are due to have a working party on this site in early September but this is primarily to deal with overgrown bushes around the perimeter.

Watercolour/Nutfield Marsh

Work on the wildlife area has not yet been completed by Linden Homes due to the current recession in the building industry.

The Reigate Society

President: Crispin Blunt MP

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

CORPORATE MEMBERS

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

	Address	Business
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
Coomb Care Foundation	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
James Knight & Sons	8-10 Bell Street RH2 7BG (242195)	Drapers & Soft Furnishers
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 ¹ / ₂ to 11
Malcolm A Pink	17 Rushetts Road RH2 7RQ (221625 / 248455)	Safety Policies, Audits & Inspections, Accident Investigations, Risk Assessments etc
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
The Reigate Tailors Ltd	38 High Street RH2 9AX (245268 / 245566)	Men's and Ladies' Outfitters
TWM Solicitors LLP	40 West Street RH2 9BT (221212)	Solicitors
White & Sons	24 High Street RH2 9AY (222600)	Independent Estate Agents, Surveyors & Valuers

Booking form

THE OCTOBER MEMBERS' EVENING
On Monday, 6th October 2008
At THE WOODHATCH CENTRE
7.30 pm for 8.00 pm

For ticket(s) please complete the top half of this form and send the **WHOLE PAGE** as soon as possible with your remittance and a **STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE** for the return of the ticket portion to:

Michael Hellings,
53 West Street, Reigate RH2 9BZ
Tel. 01737 245342

Name (s) Tel. No.....

I/we apply for..... tickets @ £10.00 a head Total £

I would like a map (tick if required)

Cheques should be made payable to the Reigate Society

THE OCTOBER MEMBERS' EVENING

7.30 pm for 8.00 pm Monday, 6th October 2008

Name(s) Ticket No(s)

.....

To be held at the Woodhatch Centre, Whitebeam Drive, Reigate

This ticket covers admission and the buffet with a glass of wine (or soft drink)

Subscription Payment / Banker's Order Form

NAME(S)

ADDRESS

I enclose my subscription for 2008 / 2009
(Cheques should be made payable to 'The Reigate Society')

Individual
Family
Corporate

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

I also enclose my subscription for 2007 / 2008

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 91)