

# BVRA newsheet

FROM THE BANSTEAD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION – TAKING ACTION TO SUPPORT OUR VILLAGE

Vol. 37 / 2 - Spring / Summer 2021    [Banstead-BVRA@outlook.com](mailto:Banstead-BVRA@outlook.com)    [www.Banstead-BVRA.org](http://www.Banstead-BVRA.org)

## **INTRODUCING BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSERVATORS** by Lucy Shea (Conservators)

If there's one thing COVID has shown us, it is the greater appreciation of the simpler things in life – Nature and the Great Outdoors. Living in Banstead we are spoilt with beautiful green spaces on our doorstep, but did you know that Banstead Commons Conservators are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of 1350 acres of the spaces we enjoy? Formed under a Parliamentary Act in 1893, Banstead Commons Conservators were tasked to protect Banstead Commons from the activities of Lord of the Manor. Whilst society and the local area has changed greatly over the 130 years, the role of the Conservators has remained essentially the same; to protect the integrity of the Commons from external pressures.



Banstead Commons consist of four main sites: Banstead Heath, Burgh Heath, Banstead Downs and Park Downs. Banstead Heath bordered by Tadworth, Kingswood and Walton is at 760 acres the largest of the four sites and perhaps, the most varied. The site boasts a mosaic of different habitats - traditional heath, grassland meadow and secondary woodland, which are all bursting with healthy invertebrate, mammalian and bird populations. A true jewel of the borough at all times of the year. The chalk grassland habitat found on Banstead Downs and Park Downs offer a different experience to the other sites with an explosion of spring flowers and the start of a continuing succession of butterflies through the year.

With approximately 30 miles of paths, permissive rides and bridleways to explore on Banstead Commons, we suggest you grab a packed lunch and see what you can discover on your next local adventure. Why travel further afield when there is so much to enjoy on your doorstep?

Banstead Commons Conservators plan to host Guided Walks over Banstead Commons this year. Follow us on Facebook for updates and events. For more information about Banstead Commons Conservators, please email [bansteadcommons@aol.com](mailto:bansteadcommons@aol.com)

### **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Executive Committee extends a warm invitation to all members of the Association to the  
**73rd Annual General Meeting to be held at:**

Banstead Preparatory School (formerly Greenacre), Sutton Lane, Banstead  
at 7:30pm on **Tuesday 21st September 2021.**

Our guest speaker is the chair of the Banstead Commons Conservators, Dr John Peacock and the subject is 'The role of the Banstead Commons Conservators'.

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR by David Talbot**

Welcome to our Spring / Summer edition of our newsheet. Life seems on the verge of getting back to something like normal after the months of lockdown and the onset of warmer weather.

Thanks to all our contributors, especially Banstead Commons Conservators for their article (see front page). Many thanks also to Ken Gulati who recently stood down as our councillor on Surrey County Council (and before that as our councillor on Reigate and Banstead borough council) after many years service. We thank him for all his efforts for our community.



We continue to improve our village trees, but due to restrictions on planting (please see article from Cliff Glanfield) we only had permission to plant three new trees, but Surrey County Council planted trees in two of these positions..!!

Our village continues to change with the Horseshoe undergoing significant change and with yet another bank branch closing in the High Street – please see my articles. Special interest articles - lepidopterists and archaeologists may be interested in the articles by David Gradidge and James Crouch.

It was sad to read about one of our residents losing their life in a house fire and perhaps worrying that our fire station is now only manned during the day time – please see the article from Catalina Vassallo-Bonner and please check your fire alarms.

For more details please check-out our website (address on front cover) and our newsheets - if you are not already a member of our organisation please join us (subscription just £3.00 per year). If anyone is interested in joining our committee and helping us support our lovely village, please contact us - our email address is shown on the front page. We would love to hear from you.

**Just a quick reminder that our AGM is postponed to 21<sup>st</sup> September, see the notice on the front page and huge thanks to the Banstead Commons Conservators for agreeing to speak to us about their work.**

## **INFRASTRUCTURE by David Gradidge**

Surrey County Council have updated their Operation Horizon programme to now include Salisbury Road and Wellesford Close for attention in 2021/22. However, Court Road in previous schedules, is now excluded much to the annoyance of residents as it is in very poor condition. Another road in need of urgent repair is Winkworth Road. The original road surface is concrete slabs laid down perhaps 90 years ago. The joints between the slabs are now very uneven and consequently very noisy and disturbing to all residents day and night. They were last repaired 10 years ago.

Generally, pot holes seem to be getting repaired, but in my opinion, the work is below standard and will need more attention very soon.

The changes proposed for the crossing by Tesco have been amended - it is now proposed to convert some of the parking into a loading / unloading bay and convert the taxi ranks into parking spaces.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION by David Gradidge**

Not for us yet, but further afield councils in Somerset, Cumbria and North Yorkshire have submitted various plans to remove the two tiers of local government. Not surprisingly, the County Councils there want one large unitary authority, whilst the five or seven second tiers of local government have proposed splitting the counties into two smaller areas. No decisions. All these areas are much smaller than Surrey.

## **PLANNING MATTERS by Catalina Vassallo-Bonner**

A constant trickle of applications for single storey and two storey extensions as well as tree work continues to arrive. Currently, we have no obligations to respond to either local or national policy documents and there is no further news on the government's planning changes of last year.

We are waiting for the proposed planning application for Wellesford Close. Levanter Developments sold their interest to Shanly Homes earlier this year. Levanter were proposing to build 30 dwellings on the site. Shanly have not indicated exactly how many they are considering. Some years ago, the council refused to allow the building of eighteen houses, a refusal upheld at appeal.

I have been asked whether the hoardings put up on building sites must have planning approval. As these are temporary, planning permission is not needed unless flags or other embellishments are to be added. Hence the Garratts Lane site hoarding appeared and the McCarthy and Stone site on Bolters Lane is awaiting permission for its flags *etcetera*.

With the summer approaching and residents wishing to spend more time outside the question of bonfires arises. Reigate and Banstead has no by-law forbidding bonfires. Rather it asks its residents to be aware of their neighbours by lighting fires away from houses; not lighting fires when there is wind, damp or in the evening; telling the neighbours a fire is proposed so that laundry can be taken in and they can make their own arrangements not to have their time outside spoiled. Residents are reminded not to light fires with petrol or other combustion assistants and not to burn plastic or other materials that give off poisonous fumes. It is an offence however to allow smoke from a fire to drift across the highway.



## **THE CHANGING FACE OF OUR HORSESHOE by David Talbot**

Our Horseshoe is undergoing significant change with a new block of retirement flats replacing our old Priory school, the old Bentley centre being redeveloped for sheltered housing and the ambulance centre is also being redeveloped.

## **THE COST OF ENTERING LONDON by David Gradidge**

Many of you may be aware of the proposal by the Mayor of London to impose a charge on cars and other vehicles entering the old GLC area. It would be a basic £3.50 but £5.50 for some. It would come into force in 2 years time or may not happen at all.



The implications are obvious for the many who work in Sutton or Croydon etc. It would cost you to visit St Helier or The Royal Marsden, it would cost you to go shopping in whatever is left after all the closures, it would cost you to take children to school or visit relatives, or, like me to get my car MOTd. We don't have a vote.

Apart from the sheer aggravation, there are wrinkles. For instance, if you go down past the station to the Epsom tip, you go into Sutton on the way there and on the way back, so 2 journeys. Of course you can avoid it. The same if you go on the M25, for near Heathrow it is briefly in London. Will they have cameras everywhere?



**The BVRA Newsheet is supported by;**

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## **BANSTEAD VILLAGE IN BLOOM by Marion Hayns (BViB )**



**A PLACE TO SIT!** - One of the most popular requests that we received whilst garnering your views on the refurbishment and upgrade to the Lady Neville Recreation Park was the provision of more seating! We would welcome your support in our endeavour to see many more benches in the park. Around £350 will enable us to purchase a low maintenance, heavy duty bench made from recycled plastic with an engraved plaque of your choice. Please get in touch with us if this is something that interests you.

We need your support in securing a new climbing frame for the Lady Neville Recreation Ground. We recently applied for a grant of £40,000 from the £1 million SCC Community Fund for a new and fully accessible climbing frame, which will form the centrepiece of the proposed refurbishment of the children's play area. We're pleased to say that our application has almost got through to the second stage in the process, and we're now asking you – our community – to show your support for our application by going to our website ([www.bvib.co.uk](http://www.bvib.co.uk)) and giving us a 'thumbs up' by clicking on the link there. (Editors note – also available on the BVRA website.) The more thumbs up we get, the more likely we'll be successful in the next round. Thank you on behalf of BViB

In the meantime, we have already begun planning for the autumn when we intend to plant a large number of spring flowering bulbs under the trees in the park to provide some welcome colour early next year.

## **BUTTERFLIES by David Gradidge**

You may not have seen many butterflies in your garden, but don't despair - Banstead Downs and Park Downs are both places to see a wide variety of the less common species. Surrey as a whole is still good for butterflies and especially so on the chalk downs. What you need to see them is patience, binoculars, perhaps a little guide book and, of course, a warm sunny day. Walk slowly and leave the dog at home! You will also need to know a bit about when to go. I give some brief details of these species and where and when to expect to see them.



**May** - Grizzled Skipper (small and lively) and Dingy Skipper (more on Park Downs. Just as lively).

**June** - Brown Argus, Green Hairstreak (but difficult to spot), Small Blue (Banstead Downs only) - very small. One of few places in Surrey where this can be seen

**June and July** - Dark Green Fritillery (used to be scarce but in incredible numbers last year) and Marbled White (rare in Surrey until mid 1990s, now common)

**July and August** - Chalk Hill Blue (male; really beautiful). One of the few places in Surrey where this can be seen, Silver Washed Fritillery (Banstead Downs only) - small numbers.

**August** - Brown Argus, Silver Spotted Skipper. (Park Downs only) - A real national rarity only on Park Downs since 2000. Flies fast and low, Purple Hairstreak (Banstead Downs only) - difficult to spot - at top of Oak trees).

Now, if you are very, very lucky you might see: White Admiral seen on Banstead Downs in 2019, Brown Hairstreak. I saw one in Banstead Wildlife Field in August. Could appear in your garden. Purple Emperor where Banstead Woods touches Holly Lane, but seen in Oaks Park last July.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGS by James Crouch (Plateau - your local archaeology group )**

Those of you who have enjoyed watching the recent film 'The Dig', about the Sutton Hoo excavations, or the Channel 4 back-garden archaeology series 'The Great British Dig' might like to know that your local Surrey Archaeological Society group are looking for Banstead village residents to take part in a project to discover more about how Banstead developed between prehistoric and medieval times. If you would like to help us tell the story behind our village, please email James on [james.crouch@btconnect.com](mailto:james.crouch@btconnect.com) or call him on 01737 361541.

## **TREES by Cliff Glanfield**



You may recall from the previous newsheet that we had permission from Surrey County Council (SCC) to plant three trees on the grass verge in Banstead, where the locations were not compromised by the location of underground utilities. Well, we've managed to plant one of these, a Honey Locust, on Croydon Lane South near to the Winkworth Road Roundabout [see photo pictured left]. Before we could plant the others on Park Road near to the Well, two other trees of different species to those we proposed mysteriously appeared [see photos pictured below]. After making extensive enquiries we have established that these were in fact planted by SCC, but we know not whether by accident or

design. The more trees the better, but we need better cooperation from SCC and its contractors to understand how we can develop a clearer tree planting strategy for our village.

Once we can establish that the SCC revised tree planting process is actually workable, we will be preparing a programme of tree planting on verges through-out the village, in locations where utilities permit and subject to available funds. On this latter point, we understand that Nork Residents Association has managed to obtain Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding for ad hoc verge tree planting. This is no mean feat as CIL funding sits at the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council level, whereas all the permissions are at the SCC level. We will be investigating to see if this potential funding could be tapped.

Regarding stumps, I have a list of the remaining ones throughout the village and, given the SCC still apparently have no budget to do this, intend to prepare a programme of stump grinding using an SCC approved contractor to carry on where we left off last year.



## **BANSTEAD BUSINESS GUILD by Councillor Nadean Moses**

The Banstead Business Guild is a voluntary voice that exists to promote and enhance the village. If you run and own your own business and want to get involved, we would love to hear from you; we will keep you up to date with what's happening on the High Street - be informed of charity music and sporting events up and down the High Street, keep up to date when needing to put on extra staff, longer working hours, putting on window display competitions or fundraising.

With the Guild you can be connected to the WhatsApp Crime reduction group, so you can keep up to date with what's happening on the High Street and be aware if any criminal activity is taking place you can be the first to know about it. Our police officer for the High Street and PCSO are also part of this group. Be connected with Banstead Community WhatsApp group for lost items, local info and ideas.

The Business Guild appreciate that it's been a hard year for us all in a variety of different ways. Together we can make all the events a storming great success. Let's get networking with other business owners, charities event organisers and share ideas on Zoom. The Membership is £100 pa and goes towards the Christmas lights and event. Or make a donation please get in touch ([info@bansteadbusinessguild.co.uk](mailto:info@bansteadbusinessguild.co.uk)).

**Shop locally and keep our High Street thriving.**



## **THE CHANGING FACE OF BANKING by David Talbot**



The changing face of banking means that we are scheduled to lose another branch from our High Street in July with Santander joining a long list of banks that we have lost over the years. It seems like only yesterday that we lost the Halifax and NatWest branches in our High Street. So now we have just three banks remaining – Lloyds, HSBC and Barclays (all on reduced days / hours). We have a choice on where to bank – continue with the Santander account and travel to Sutton or Epsom, or switch to one of the remaining accounts and support our high street. Switching is easy for current accounts – not so simple for savings or passbook accounts – and quick, with switches in seven days.

It is also worth noting that the Post Office provide a means of depositing cash and cheques and a means of getting cash and balance information (but they are often busy) and that some shops (for example Waitrose) provide a cash-back facility when paying by debit card.

Looking further ahead, there is a move to set up a banking facility for all banks. OneBanks is designed to offer a shared branch and ATM infrastructure solution to the banking industry, targeted at communities and retail and small business customers in areas where banks have withdrawn branch coverage.

## **BANSTEAD'S NEW MEMORIAL BENCH by Marion Hayns (BVIB)**

I am sure that you will all by now have noticed the latest and very popular addition to our street furniture. This is a gift to the Village from his Members Allowance given by Councillor Ken Gulati, who is retiring after almost five decades of service to our local community. During that time he has served on both Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, first elected in 1973 and becoming Mayor in 1984-85. Latterly, he represented the Village on Surrey County Council from 2013. Thank you from us all Ken and enjoy your well earned retirement!



## **THE CHANGING FACE OF THE FIRE SERVICE by Catalina Vassallo-Bonner**

In 2013 two decisions were made: Surrey County Council reviewed the siting of some of its fire stations and the London Fire Service decided to close Purley Fire Station in the summer of 2014 and move the engines to Mitcham for two years to allow Purley to be rebuilt and upgraded. The loss of Purley, however temporary, created a major problem. Epsom and Sutton were now the nearest engines to our part of the borough and the Chipstead area was outside the eight minute standard response time. Burgh Heath was put forward as the ideal site but there was no land available.

Between October 2013 and January 2014 Surrey County Council held a public consultation on the siting of a fire engine in the near empty police station in Banstead which would allow the standard response time of eight minutes within a three mile radius to a fire. Public meetings were held and the decision that was reached was that a fire engine should be brought up from Epsom so that response times could be guaranteed. One of the reasons given was it was felt that this move would provide an opportunity to work with blue light partners and other agencies to co-locate to further integrate service provision and share information to generate efficiencies through shared spaces and networking.

Move forward to 2019, SCC held a consultation which decided that the Banstead fire station should be closed at night as part of its *Making Surrey Safer* programme in which seven county fire engines were removed from service at night as part of a move towards better prevention. At night, even with blue lights flashing, Epsom or Sutton Fire Engines would find it difficult to get to Banstead in eight minutes. Purley might take longer. The fact is that an elderly resident lost their life in a night time house fire in Holly Lane East last month. It took the fire engine fourteen minutes to arrive.

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU ALL HAVE WORKING FIRE ALARMS AS THESE CAN SAVE LIVES.**

## **FINANCES** by David Gradidge

The draft accounts will be subject to revision. Income is again reduced by over £1000 compared with "normal". Early in the year we donated £500 to each of three High Street charities helping the local community. The other item of note is over £1800 on tree replacement – nine stumps removed but only one new tree planted. Please see article from Cliff Glanfield.

## **ROAD STEWARDS**

by David Gradidge

It has obviously been a very difficult time for many road stewards as collection of subscriptions door-to-door has generally been out of the question. There is only one vacancy at the moment and it is proving very difficult to fill. This is for Barnfield and Flint Close off the High Street end of Sutton Lane. If you want to take part or know anyone who might be interested please contact me at dgradidge@waitrose.com

## **EXTRACT FROM THE ACCOUNTS**

	2020/21	2019/20
	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>		
Subscriptions & Donations	4712	4,586
	<u>4712</u>	<u>4,586</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Production of News Sheets	1216	1,232
Less contrib from Richard Saunders & Co	-300	-300
Hire of rooms	0	106
Printing, postage & stationery	160	124
Web Site	141	140
Subscriptions	160	71
Insurance	0	80
Sundry expenses	203	47
BVIB Wheelbarrow	64	0
Bench in Wildlife Field	296	362
Banstead Village Lights 2019		1,000
Other donations	2693	347
Tree replacement Fund	2000	750
Village Sign Fund	0	300
Excess of Income over Expenditure	-1921	327
	<u>4712</u>	<u>4,586</u>

## **USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS**

### **BVRA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**David Talbot** - Chairman

**David Gradidge** – Treasurer, Transport and Infrastructure

email: dgradidge@waitrose.com

**Martin Matt** - Secretary (interim)

**Catalina Vassallo-Bonner** – Planning

**Cliff Glanfield** - Data Records Manager

**Barbara Birch, Ben Martin, Brian Ransom, Melanie Ramsay and Richard Heath.**

Group email: Banstead-BVRA@outlook.com

## **LOCAL COUNCILLORS**

**Luke Bennett** – Surrey County Councillor  
email: luke.bennett@surreycc.gov.uk

**Nadean Moses** - Borough Councillor  
email: Cllr.Moses@reigate-banstead.gov.uk

**Eddy Humphreys** – Borough Councillor  
email: Cllr.Humphreys@reigate-banstead.gov.uk

**Sam Walsh** – Borough Councillor  
email: Cllr.Walsh@reigate-banstead.gov.uk

## **MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**

**Crispin Blunt, M.P.**

Westminster Office: 0207 219 2254

email: crispinbluntmp@parliament.uk  
Constituency Office: 01737 222756 Skinner House,  
38-40 Bell Street, Reigate RH2 7BA

## **FUTURE EVENTS**

### **Tuesday 21st September at 7:30 pm - BVRA AGM**

#### **Agenda.**

1. Welcome by chairman David Talbot.
2. Minutes of the 72nd AGM - summary distributed to members at the meeting.
3. Address from our guest speaker, Dr John Peacock chair of the Banstead Commons Conservators following which he would be happy to answer questions from the floor.
4. Report by the chairman.
5. Presentation of the accounts for the year – extract printed on page 7 of this newsheet.
6. Election of Officers, Secretary, Treasurer and Independent Examiner.
7. Welcome to our local Councillors, followed by Open Forum debate.
8. Any other business.

## **OTHER EVENTS**

Many of our events have been affected by the Coronavirus, but the following events are hopefully going ahead as we try to return to some sort of normality,

**Banstead Commons Conservators** are holding four guided walks across Banstead Heath (10:00 AM on Thursday 10th June and Friday 16th July), Park Downs (10:00 AM on Saturday 3rd July) and Banstead Downs (2:00 PM on Thursday 9th September).

**Banstead Horticultural Society** are holding a series of events: early Summer show (2:00 PM on Saturday 19th June), Afternoon Tea (2:00 PM on Wednesday 7th July), Summer Show (2:00 PM on Saturday 24th July), Autumn Show (2:00 PM on Saturday 11th September), Evening Lecture (7:30 PM on Friday 8th October) and late Autumn Show (2:00 PM on Saturday 6th November).

**Banstead Arts Festival** are holding two concerts: Chamber Music (7:30 PM on Monday 21st June) and Young Musicians' Showcase (7:30 PM on Saturday 26th June).

**Saturday 3rd July - Banstead Village Day** - The Orchard - Banstead Rotary. Opening by the Mayor at 10:30 am and closing at 3:00 pm. Street entertainment, competitions, children's trail, singers, magicians and much more.

**Friday to Sunday 3-5th September** - Banfest - Cricket Ground.

**September date and time TBC - Curzon Country Cinema** - programme to be confirmed.

**Saturday 6th November at 6:00 PM** - Fireworks - Cricket Club

**Thursday 25th November - Community Christmas Event** - Banstead Business Guild.



BANSTEAD  
BUSINESS  
GUILD

The event is for all the family up and down the High Street, with street entertainment, window-dressing competitions, big golden ticket, raffles, amazing shopping offers, and much, much more. The Orchard will have stalls, with the fantastic entertainment and this will also happen up and down the High Street.

Please note - all events are tentative - please see our website (address on front cover) for further details.

## **AND FINALLY – PHONE SCAMS** by David Talbot

There are many reports of people being scammed or bothered by dubious phone calls. It may be a good idea to enable caller line identity on your phone (so that you can see the number of the person calling) and install some sort of call blocker to minimise such calls. But please don't rely on the displayed phone number as this can be 'spoofed' by people wanting to trick you.