

BVRA newsheet

from the Banstead Village Residents' Association

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WELCOME TO OUR NEW STYLE NEWSHEET. We hope you will like the new style, with the same format, same articles and same authors—just a few pictures to help explain what's going on and a change of stationery (to white paper) to accommodate the pictures.. We welcome your comments— see above for email details.

CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA by Marion Hayns

As you will have seen if you were there, Banstead High Street was alive with anticipation and excitement on Thursday Dec 1st when Father Christmas arrived on his sleigh to switch on the Christmas lights. Large numbers of visitors to the Orchard had been serenaded earlier by youngsters from the Woodmansterne Junior School Choir and entertained by young dancers from the Carol Anne Dance Academy and up and down the High Street there was something going on to appeal to everyone. Many of the shops stayed open and were crowded with customers looking to take advantage of the discounts on offer to bag an early Christmas present.



Huge thanks must go to Michelle from the Natural Way who, as a member of the Banstead Business Guild, spearheaded the very successful event, raising the profile of the High Street and in so doing brought the whole community together. Hopefully this will now become an annual event in Banstead's calendar!

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR by Sally Hull and Mike Sawyer

Welcome to 2017 and the 'new look' newssheet. We hope you agree it is fresh, easy-to-read and enhanced by relevant photographs, without losing quality and content – we welcome your feedback. Many thanks to Marion Hayns and David Talbot for taking over newssheet management after Mike Sawyer's 12 years in the editor's chair.

As you will know from our updates during 2016, the BVRA committee has undergone quite a few positive changes throughout the year; we have welcomed new committee members, created sub-groups now actively setting about agendas that developed from the member survey and commenced a number of projects such as the Winkworth access roads traffic calming, Clean for the Queen and the Winkworth Woodland Community Project, not to mention the Local Plan (DMP) Consultation of which more elsewhere in this newssheet. The Clean for the Queen project, which took place twice in 2016, and the Woodland Project have led to our involvement in the proposed Banstead in Bloom being run by others. One sub-group is addressing ways in which BVRA can evolve into the 21st century without losing core values or accessibility to all members. Areas being examined include electronic availability of the newssheet, where desired, and possible alternatives to means of subscription collection. As always we remain grateful to our active group of volunteer road stewards but would welcome further offers of help so that we might expand our reach and fill the inevitable vacancies as they arise.

Finally, we were delighted to support the Banstead Business Guild with the Christmas Community Event on 1st December which was very well attended and with most of the retailers and businesses on the High Street taking part. We will be working with the Guild during 2017 to enhance the Christmas lighting so look out for news of this on our website and in the next newssheet. We are very grateful to Richard Saunders for his generous donation towards the costs of producing this year's newssheets.

A date for your diary—Please note that we have changed the time and location for the 2017 AGM which will take place at the Priory School, Bolters Lane on Tuesday 23rd May, commencing at the slightly earlier time of 7.30pm. This is intended to assist in an earlier finish, leaving time for informal chat over light refreshments. The formal notice will follow in the next newssheet. The new location offers some additional benefits including the nearby parking. We look forward to welcoming you and hearing your views.

It only remains for us to wish you, on behalf of BVRA, a belated but happy and prosperous New Year.

PS Please make use of our website (www.banstead-bvra.org), and our other developing links to Facebook where we will be posting more and more up to date information as it becomes available on important – and even sometimes urgent – matters that arise between newssheets.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION ANNUAL POPPY APPEAL by Allan Parsons



The magnificent sum of just over £42,000 was raised by the residents of Banstead and Nork last November. The bulk of this money came from collections at Asda and Waitrose supermarkets where volunteers manned the displays in 2 hour stints. If you have time to spare in the last week of October or the first week in November to support this vital charity the area organiser Allan Parsons would love to hear from you. You can email him at allan_p123@outlook.com or call him on 01737 211082. Thank you.

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UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN by Mike Sawyer

As you may recall, we were distinctly unimpressed with the council's efforts to explain and describe their proposed development options and policies affecting our Village – hence the display we held in the Orchard to bring the impact of these to a wider audience. We were most encouraged by the public response, and by the number of comments posted to the Council.

Many of the Development Management Plan proposals we can support, particularly their emphasis on Green Belt protection in our area.

Our response to the Council focused on the perception of Banstead as a VILLAGE, not a town, and in particular a number of policies including parking that may be appropriate for a large retail centre but would have major adverse implications for our smaller centre; the lack of justification for any large scale retail development; for extending the “town centre” boundary into The Orchard and over Bolters Lane to encompass the Library and Health Centre; the undesirability of redeveloping the Community Hall and much of the green area in and around the Horseshoe; the need to protect and enhance the “green wedge” running from Banstead Downs up Bolters Lane, through the Horseshoe, Gartons Field and beyond; the need to continue the protection of three significant sites as urban open space; and to recognise the need for protection of the remaining large trees when development proposals come forward. We also sought recognition of the scale and quality of several of our residential areas and asked for them to be given some design status – not to prevent development, but to seek to have any new buildings or extensions respect the scale and character of their surroundings.

We recognise that the Council has had to accept targets for the numbers of houses to be built in the Borough and that this requires additional homes in our area. Our comments were aimed at seeking protection for the viability, character and appearance of our Village and its valued resources, rather than objecting to any or all developments.

The Council's planners have now assembled their analysis of all the comments received and we have asked for a meeting before their recommendations are submitted to their Planning and Executive Committees for a decision on the final proposals that will go out to the last stage of consultation in the late spring or early summer. We hope that your and our views have been understood and will be acted on. We will keep you informed.

CLEAN FOR THE QUEEN by Marion Hayns



Hopefully you are beginning to notice the improvement in our road and traffic signs as you travel through the village – it is now possible to read them! A team of intrepid volunteers met again on a damp and misty November morning and did a sterling job in litter picking and washing down the mildewed directional signs. As you will have read elsewhere in the newssheet Banstead is entering into the Britain in Bloom competition this year and so your help will be invaluable as we blitz the highways and byways prior to the judging in mid June. The intended date for the next spring clean will be June 10th and we intend to meet up in the Car Park at the Community Hall at 9.30 as usual. Please make a note of this date in your diaries now, it will be wonderful to see as many

of you there as possible so that we can cover the entire village. Bags, gloves and litter pickers will all be provided.

WINKWORTH WOODLAND COMMUNITY PROJECT by Brian Ranson

Over three days in November, ten of the project members worked hard to plant 18kg of daffodil bulbs, 500 English bluebell corms, some Lily of the Valley and snowdrops into the various suitable habitats to suit each plant. Also during these days further work was done to keep the public footpath clear along Winkworth Road. The daffodils were planted along the Winkworth Road grass verge and into the grassy corner by the mini-roundabout and should look a treat come springtime.

The bluebell corms were planted around trees within the central area and this should develop into a lovely bluebell glade in years to come and the Lily-of-the-Valley and snowdrops were planted into shaded areas along the footpath that runs through the plot. A large quantity of primroses donated to us by the conservation group of St Mary's Church, Caterham were also planted, some along the footpath and more into the cleared space next to the mini-roundabout, hopefully more of these will be donated later this year.

As well as the bulb and flower planting, ground was cleared and 210 hedging saplings obtained from the Woodland Trust were planted in such a way as to form a "Wild Harvest" hedge. These all being species of tree which develop fruits which wildlife can feed on in the autumn and winter. Rowan, blackthorn, hazel, dog rose and crab apple were planted in double rows and hopefully in a few years time we will see the "fruits" of our labours.



Winkworth Woodland Community Project has signed up to be part of the "Banstead in Bloom" competition later this year so hopefully these efforts will go some way to beautifying our lovely village. New members are always welcome, please contact me at brian.bvra@gmail.com or on 01737 215 869.

BOLTERS LANE—GAS WORKS by David Gradidge and Catalina Vassallo-Bonner

This article is prompted by the plan for essential works to replace the gas pipe line in Bolters Lane and the latest information it contains was accurate when we went to press on Monday 9th January. Sub contractors KLT working for SCC have confirmed that the work is to be carried out in 3 sections, namely from Winkworth Road to Ashley Drive, and from Ashley Drive to Castleton Drive and finally from there to Kingsley Avenue.

Since the existing gas main is located in the middle of the road the work cannot be controlled by traffic lights for reasons of Health and Safety and we understand that traffic is to be prevented from travelling in a north bound direction from the High Street down Bolters Lane. Traffic flow will still be able to travel up to the High Street in a southerly direction from Winkworth Road and through traffic will be prevented from travelling round the Horseshoe, access only will be permitted.

These works are due to start on Monday January 30th and last for 9 weeks and a circular diversionary route will be set up to take traffic along the High Street, down Sutton Lane and thence into Winkworth Road whilst these are taking place.

Please refer to our website for further updates. We are hoping to meet with KLT, who are currently working in Lambert and Palmersfield Road to establish the rest of their 2017 programme and we will keep you informed as to their progress on our website.

SANDERSFIELD ROAD TREE PLANTING PROJECT by Cliff Glanfield



In common with a number of roads in Banstead, Sandersfield Road had many unsightly tree stumps left after dead trees had been removed. In February 2016 residents got together to get the stumps removed and plant replacement trees. SCC eventually agreed to grind out the remaining stumps but there was no budget for tree planting. Councillor Ken Gulati kindly donated £1,000 from the Members' Allocations funding and residents raised £1,700. Eleven cherry trees were planted on the 8th November. Thanks to Terry O'Neill of Surrey County Council for arranging for the stump grinding, Surrey County Councillor Ken Gulati for his financial support and Tim George Tree Services Limited. This was a good example of local authority and residents working together to improve the local environment

and is hopefully the forerunner of further such schemes.

THE SPREAD AND SPREAD OF YELLOW LINES by David Gradidge

The reason for this article is the proposal by Surrey CC to paint a single yellow line outside the surgery in Woodmansterne Lane so losing 7 or 8 vital spaces in constant use during surgery hours. I hope numerous complaints have been made either by letter or online, but given the ridiculous deadline of January 2nd to register, many will have missed out. If this proposal is not withdrawn, it will be the subject of a petition to the Local Committee.

Each year, Surrey CC produces a parking review that is considered by the Local Committee. This is a joint committee between Councillors from Surrey and Reigate & Banstead. They meet 4 times a year. If the proposals are approved and it seems they generally are, notices are posted on lamp posts detailing the changes. Maps are posted on The Surrey CC website, and these give a better idea but not the fine detail.

The reasons for these further restrictions vary. They rightly include improving access for emergency vehicles and for refuse trucks. (This has happened recently in Courtlands Crescent). There are also safety reasons where double yellow lines (DYL) are painted on junctions to improve visibility. Most would likely not object to this either. Then we move into the next reason which is to improve traffic flow. This happened in Sandersfield Road where parking is now only allowed on one side. Yes, bigger vehicles can get by with less agro, but cars also go faster. In Wilmot Way proposals were both opposed and welcomed (and I am not sure what the outcome was). Whatever the reason it will result in a further loss of spaces so moving the problem on to another road just that bit further away. This brings me to the latest proposals of which one is retrospective and there are three new ones. The retrospective 'proposal' - In Garratts Lane, parking suddenly started to cause major trouble. This was due to new restrictions elsewhere. DYL were put in place promptly and problem solved – or was it?

The three new proposals.

1. On the slip road opposite M & S where one space will be removed on the immediate access. Probably justified.
2. At the junction of Lyme Regis Rd and Ferndale Rd with the A217, and along the A217 stretching as far back as the junction with The Gables. This is to improve visibility and safety on exit to the A217. Note that it does not include the stretch outside the petrol station where visibility is nearly always dangerously restricted.
3. Park Rd and Woodmansterne Lane. The proposal is for DYL to appear on Park Rd from the War Memorial as far as the Community Centre on both sides. On Woodmansterne Lane it is for DYL on the south side from The Well to just past the surgery and where restrictions don't already apply. On the north side they would be outside The Well House. SYL would be outside the church and OUTSIDE THE SURGERY.

The justification for this is to improve traffic flow. Everyone knows there is a problem, but this is not the way to solve it.

OTHER PLANNING UPDATES by Mike Sawyer

1. Hengest Farm, Woodmansterne Lane

For whatever administrative reason (still to be ascertained) at the Council, we were not made aware that this application was being submitted to the Planning Committee with a recommendation to approve until one of our Councillors alerted us to it a couple of days before the meeting.

We were, however, allowed to address the Committee with some of our concerns (only some, as there is a 3 minute time limit). Unfortunately, none of the points we raised were then addressed by the Officers (including a request for deferral), so the ensuing debate was of restricted factual value. Despite this, and despite not having any Banstead Village Councillors on the Planning Committee these days, there was strong questioning from a number of councillors, particularly from neighbouring wards. This resulted in a split vote of 9 in favour of granting permission vs. 8 against. What made this more galling was that an Addendum report had been issued, but was hidden behind another item, and this was missed by a number of Councillors as well as by me. I wonder how many of the many objectors were aware of the meeting as the report did not appear on the application website?

2. Land at Wellesford Close

This is the piece of land next to the large Green Belt area of the former L & G site that the Council intend to release from open land protection in the DMP proposals. We have asked for this protection to remain, and for it to be redesignated as Green Belt.

A housing developer has bought the site and undertaken a series of clearance and access preparation works, to the consternation of the local residents. If you have been down Wellesford Close cul-de-sac you would understand their concern! The developers have listened to some of these concerns and installed blocks to limit the chance of illegal access. They had suggested meeting our planning sub-group, but before that could be arranged they decided to halt preparation of a planning application until the outcome of the DMP review, which we take to be a marginally hopeful sign. We will keep you informed if the position changes.

3. Croydon Lane – the cemetery proposal

We have been informed that the owners have appealed against the Council's refusal of permission. The appeal will be by way of a Public Inquiry, time and place yet to be decided, but any further comments were due to be made by 17th January (by email or in writing), now extended to 31st January (this date was extended at our request due to the Christmas and postal disruptions). We have confirmed to the Inspector that we will attend to make our views known. Please see the note on our website for more details.



FLY TIPPING by Marion Hayns

Sadly, fly tipping is one of the scourges of our age. If you discover any illegally dumped material or indeed cars the Joint Enforcement Team (JET) from Reigate & Banstead Council are the people to contact. Their online reporting form is easy to navigate and once reported items are usually removed within 3-5 days. Just type in www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk and follow the link to Joint Enforcement Team.

PRISON UPDATE by David Gradidge

Downview prison has had a varied history. It opened as a women's prison in 1989. Then without any warning it was closed in 2013 and would supposedly become a male prison. There were even rumours that it would become an open prison but nothing happened except the spending of some £m. Questions were asked last year, but the prison service stated they had no plans to open it as a male prison. I suggested in a previous article that they could not staff it.

Then in November 2015 it was announced that Holloway prison would close in July 2016 with the prisoners going to Downview and another prison. Downview has a capacity of 355 and the first 200 moved in May. Downview were advertising for 50 staff with applications closing on Sept 30th. I need to enquire further to find out whether the prison is at capacity, or if there are as expected, ongoing staff shortages.

POLICE UPDATE by Catalina Vassallo-Bonner

A meeting was held on Monday December 12th between members of the Banstead and District Federation of Residents' Associations committee, David Munro, Police and Crime Commissioner and Reigate and Banstead Inspector Angie Austin to discuss neighbourhood policing. Apart from assuring the committee that the 101 waiting time was down to 6 minutes it was obvious that the concerns of both guests was on the bigger picture of terrorism, vulnerable people, drugs and cybercrime. The demands of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary are such that it is the major crimes and vulnerability of certain members of the community that the police concentrate on. Crime across the settlements in this part of the borough is not on a major scale compared to others so resources are concentrated in the areas where there is most need. The meeting was useful as it allowed the committee to meet both David Munro and Angie Austin and make them aware of the problems as we see them. We have a new temporary Police Sergeant Patrick McCann. PS Mike Mann has moved to Mole Valley as a neighbourhood sergeant.

LATE NEWS by David Talbot

- **SCHOOLS MERGER**—Greenacre, the Priory and Bramley schools are to merge, with the Priory, Bramley and Greenacre senior schools to close from July 2017. We can give you no more news at this stage but will hopefully be able to update you with further developments in our next newsheet and via our website.
- **STREET LIGHTING**—Lighting to be switched-off in most side roads from midnight to 5:00 AM. More later.

ROADS STEWARDS by David Gradidge

As I write, about 68 % of the subs have been received, and as usual, I make my plea for the balance to be with me by the middle of March.

There are a number of vacancies for road stewards, so if you know anyone who might volunteer, I will be only too pleased to hear from you.

- The Orchard - 15 members
- The Oval – 24 members
- Thornfield Road & Chalk Pit Road – 27 members
- Commonfield Road (Part) – 49 members

In all cases, the subs have been collected for the current year.

David Gradidge 01737 353981

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

BVRA Committee:

Vice-Chairs: Mike Sawyer (355454) and Sally Hull (370050)
Treasurer and Road Steward liaison: David Gradidge (353981)
Secretary: Mrs C. Vassallo-Bonner (357882)

Group email: Banstead-BVRA@outlook.com

Local Councillors:

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council Ward Councillors:

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email: Cllr.Hack@reigate-banstead.gov.uk

Mr Eddy Humphreys, 20 The Oval, SM7 2RA

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Mr Sam Walsh, Melrose, 11A Longcroft Avenue, SM7 3AE

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Surrey County Councillor:

Mr Ken Gulati, Quetta, 25 Colcokes Avenue, SM7 2EJ

email: ken.gulati@surreycc.gov.uk

FUTURE EVENTS..

UNIVERSITY OF THE 3RD AGE by Christine Marston

U3A Banstead Area hold six open meetings per year with speakers on a variety of subjects, open to non-members at a cost of £2. "The Lavender Fields of Banstead" by Lorna Maye will be on Thursday 23rd February 2.30pm St Mark's Church Hall, Great Tattenhams KT18 5 RD. Also, as part of the Banstead Arts Festival, on Wed 3rd May at Banstead Community Hall, Park Road SM7 3AJ Ian Currie will be speaking on "Weather, Wildlife and Warming" the effects of climate change on wildlife. Entrance fee £6. U3A Banstead Area has over 60 interest groups for active retired people – see www.bansteadu3a.org.uk or call 020 8642 1781 or 01737 812646

BANSTEAD ARTS FESTIVAL 2017 by Marion Hayns

Make a note in your diary now of one of the highlights of the year! Banstead's annual 2 week May Festival kicks off on Saturday 29th April with the crowning of the May Queen in the Orchard. Over the years this event has hugely grown in size and content. Further details will follow with the publication of the free Festival brochure which can be picked up in many outlets around the village at the end of March or check out the website www.bansteadarts.co.uk. There is something to please all tastes as well as 2 very popular coach outings which are always over subscribed. Most of the events take place at the Community Hall in Park Road Banstead with 2 lunchtime concerts at All Saints Church in the High Street.

In the meantime there are 2 concerts remaining of our winter programme. Alexei Grynyuk, winner of the Vladimir Horowitz International Piano Competition will be performing on Sat 4th Feb and Trio Isimsiz will be performing works by Beethoven & Liszt on Sat 11th March

BANSTEAD VILLAGE IN BLOOM by Marion Hayns

We are delighted to say that this year Banstead is entering the RHS Nationwide Community Gardening Competition "Britain in Bloom" As far as we are concerned this ticks all the boxes since the competition focuses on community action aimed at improving the local environment. Areas of interest which are taken into consideration include conservation work, trees and wildflower meadows, community orchards, allotments, local schools and war grave maintenance. As you may know Banstead Community School, under the inspired leadership of Janet Marder won the South East School in Bloom competition in 2015 and a steering group comprising Janet and representatives from other interested local groups including ourselves has been formed to spearhead this initiative. Judging will take place from mid June and BVRA will be organising a **Mega Spring Clean on Saturday June 10th** prior to the judging when we hope as many of you as possible will turn out to ensure every corner of our village sparkles. Since this is the first year that we have taken part we are not intending to be too ambitious but all residents are urged to enter into the spirit of the competition by tidying up their front gardens and if you wish reflecting the colours of the plants in the High Street which will be white, purple and pink geraniums. There will be lots of publicity nearer the time in the library, local shops and the local press.

BANSTEAD COUNTRYSIDE DAY by Mike Sawyer

The Country Fayre is a much enjoyed family event, run very economically for the last two years by the local Scouts on a not for profit basis since the Downlands Project was unable to continue due to funding cuts.

Unfortunately it now appears that this year's event will not take place as expected because the scouts have been informed of a series of increased charges and requirements imposed by Reigate and Banstead Council that has made it financially risky and the event cannot be underwritten from Scout funds.

We have asked the leader of the Council if he can see a way to counteract these cost effects. If he can give a positive response we will update the news on our website. If not, and sadly, it looks as though the show will not go on!

At BVRA we wish to be supportive of Borough savings as well as of the Country Fayre, but do agree with the scouts that some of these "new" costs may well be inherent in the ownership and management of the land; so perhaps there is, at the least, some double counting. The concern must remain, however, that these new terms will have prevented any chance of this year's show being possible.

The goodwill of the Scouts has almost certainly been lost and the prospects of securing a new organiser in the light of these new terms must be remote. However, we hope for a speedy and satisfactory review of this demand in the hope that the Scouts, or some other organisation, might be persuaded to continue this very successful event which has become a popular part of the calendar in our area and should not be lightly placed in jeopardy. The Banstead Scouts will be happy to pass on all the paperwork etc if a team can be found to take on the event.