

BVRA newsheet

from the Banstead Village Residents' Association

Vol. 32 No. 3 - Autumn 2016

Web: www.Banstead-BVRA.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As you will read later in the newsheet, the Local Plan (DMP) is now in the consultation period and is one of our most urgent priorities. It is so important that as many people as possible register their views individually. We hope that Mike's article assists you because, based on your feedback, the Council's display in the library was sadly not very helpful to the average member of the general public. By the time you read this we will have had the opportunity to inform the public from our stand at the Country Fayre on 18th September and publicity has been on our website since the consultation was launched. If you need help to formulate your reply, please contact us.

We welcome you to this latest newsheet which is a fore-runner to an enhanced format to be launched in 2017. This change is part of a natural evolution of the work the Committee does on your behalf and aims to bring us up-to-date in terms of how BVRA looks in both body, work and style without losing any of the quality we know you appreciate. What we *do* is most important but how we present it in an appealing way, particularly to attract new members, is also important.

Our website [www.banstead-bvra.org] is ably administered thanks to David Talbot and continues to evolve. We welcome your feedback about any content you would like to see. Currently, upcoming and or urgent events are flagged on the home page so please do visit regularly. We are using the web as a quicker and additional way to reach people in a way not possible with the 3 newsheets a year and continue to build a database of email addresses for the same purpose, eg communicating about the DMP, urgent planning news, contentious planning applications, etc. If you have an email address and would like to receive updates please email Banstead-BVRA@Outlook.com – your address will only be used by BVRA, will not be passed to third parties and will only be used for purposes relating to our work on your behalf; you can unsubscribe at any time.

We were pleased to see so many attendees once again at the AGM, and delighted to receive feedback about the format and timing. Next year we are planning for a venue change to the Priory School and a slightly earlier start at 7.30pm so that we can finish earlier enabling a short period for informal discussion and possibly refreshments after the meeting has closed.

The tea party held for Road Stewards in sunny July was a success with over 40 attendees who enjoyed tea and scones. We were able to thank them for their hard work on our behalf, update them on our activities this year and plans for the future, as well as receive their feedback. The Highways and Transport Sub Group has started to translate some of the priorities identified in the survey into its remit and has already responded to the Epsom Banstead Sustainable Transport Package (STP) consultation issued by Surrey County Council. We continue to utilise our close links with both local and county councils for any opportunity to flag up pavement and highways issues, of which there are plenty!

Please look out for our progress reports and latest plans on a number of our projects - The Winkworth Road access roads, the Winkworth Woodland Community project and our next village clean up. And finally, you will see elsewhere an article on behalf of the Banstead Business Guild about the Christmas event being arranged by the traders. We would welcome feedback on any of the above and if anybody is willing to spend a little time working on our committee, please do let us know.

Mike Sawyer and Sally Hull

INFRASTRUCTURE

If you not already confused, you will be by the end of this little article. It is all to do with the various parts of Surrey CC who are responsible for maintaining our roads.

There is Operation Horizon, a £100m scheme to resurface, repair or surface treat roads in Surrey over a 5 year period ending in 2018. In November last I was advised that Avenue Rd, Chalmers Rd, Grange Meadow and Harbourfield Rd were on the list. However a look at the web site now only lists Avenue Rd and then only if other roads in the Borough cannot be done for one reason or another – it is a sort of first reserve.

There is no list for surface dressing, but the season is now over. Back in June, it was noted that Chipstead Rd had been selected. Now that road had been completely repaired in 2009 and to an amateur was as near perfect as can be. Residents quite rightly asked if money is so tight, why is this being done when the entrance to nearby Wellesford Close is a roller coaster? After a series of weather delays tar and chippings were put down, that is bar one bit where a car was in place. This work is deemed to be required to prolong the life of the road.

There is also Pavement Horizon, a £20m restoration scheme due to finish in 2021/22, but don't worry, no Banstead pavements got on the list in the first year. Then there is the Localised Structural Repair Programme, details of which are agreed by the Local Committee. Beechfield, or actually the first 100yds, appears here.

Now in the last few weeks, quite a few roads have had extensive patching, sometimes getting quite close to the whole road as with Pembroke Close. Kenilworth Close has had the first 10yds done. Add to this list Colcokes Rd, Monks Rd and Garrard Rd and just today (Sept 6th) the entrance to Chilton Close just off the High St which required the road to be closed for a period. This type of work is co-ordinated by the Highways Inspectors Team. Late news – Fiddicroft Rd has also been patched.

Confused? You should be.

David Gradidge

EPSOM BANSTEAD SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT PACKAGE

This is a joint project between Epsom & Ewell Council and our own Council to improve links between the 2 areas. It covers cycling, pedestrians, bus services and rail. Nothing for the motorist! It is a bid for funding to cover most of the cost of the proposals. In summary, as far as the Village is concerned, they are -

A rather tortuous cycle/pedestrian route is proposed starting from the High Street thence via the Horseshoe, crossing over the A217 and ultimately reaching Banstead Station. We would support the proposed A217 crossing from Burgh Wood adjacent to the footpath past the ambulance depot off The Horseshoe on safety grounds. Much used by school children from Nork etc. There is already a petition for this crossing. As far as cycling to Banstead Station, we stressed that the station is not up to the standard expected by rail users and until major improvements are made an increase in use is unlikely.

Enhancements to bus services. Rather than cosmetic improvements to bus shelters and electronic information boards, the hourly service 166 to Epsom Hospital was deemed to be totally inadequate. A Sunday service was required as well.

Now the council have put out a questionnaire, and the responses were very much in line with our comments with route 166 coming top.

David Gradidge

STOP PRESS

Lady Neville park wins the Silver award in the small park category of the “South and South East in Bloom” competition—part of the Britain in Bloom campaign.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Hengest Farm – appeal and new application. We objected to an application for 8 new houses on this site. The council refused the development, but the developers have gone to appeal. We have lodged our continuing objections and await the outcome. In the meantime the developers have applied for a modified scheme for 7 houses and we have again objected. The council’s decision is awaited.

Land at Wellesford Close - We supported the council’s refusal of a previous application for houses on this site, which is designated as urban open land, and the development was rejected on appeal. We have asked the council to change the designation to green belt (it adjoins 600 acres or so of green belt) but they have declined; furthermore they are now proposing to remove its open land protection. We await details of any proposals.

High Street:

Former Lotus Room - The new owner has submitted details of his proposals for a fish restaurant with ancillary take away, and we await the council’s decision.

Former Collingwoods Radio - Again, new owners have submitted a revised application for a restaurant extension – but with a delicatessen in the front.

Dominos Pizza - The developers have made a “premises application” under licensing laws to extend the closing hours by an hour or more each night. We believe that these extended hours would cause unnecessary extra late night noise and aggravation for the local residents. We have therefore objected to this application which will be heard on September 15th.

Mike Sawyer

SURREY LOCAL WASTE PLAN CONSULTATION

Surrey County Council aims to be sustainable in waste management and is consulting on its proposals for waste facilities, and is asking residents to respond by completing an online questionnaire at: surreycc.gov.uk/newwasteplan or to request a copy by calling 0300 200 1003.

Mike Sawyer

BANSTEAD BUSINESS GUILD

The Banstead Business Guild has been formed as an initiative, aiming to bring local businesses together for the good of the High Street and wider community. The group is made up of businesses with a physical link to the High Street and also other business people who may live locally and who share an interest and enthusiasm for the agenda. Our intention is to grow the guild so it becomes a sustainable membership organisation that has real influence over the future of the High Street including funding the Christmas lights.

Our fees for annual membership are priced at £50 per membership organisation and all of the revenue generated from membership fees will be ploughed back into fund initiatives that improve the High Street. You will also be able to advertise on the website.

We welcome all companies and individuals who feel that they have something to offer the group or alternatively you may feel as though you are unable to commit to meetings, but recognise that your membership in any form will help the local community and economy. Please visit our website to find out more: www.bansteadbusinessguild.co.uk

Eddie Humphreys (email eddy.humphreys@alexanderhousefs.co.uk or mobile 07841 160711)

PLANNING – CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES (DMP)

You may have seen the Council's travelling exhibition in the Library. Unfortunately the display carried little indication of the nature of the developments proposed for our Village, and comment forms ran out. We have serious concerns about some of their proposals and would urge you to make your views known directly to the Council in writing. This consultation has potentially far reaching consequences for *your* Village – every voice counts.

Some issues have been already decided in previous consultations and are now contained in the Core Strategy (CS). These include 2,500 sq metres of additional shopping space (now reduced to 1,300 sq m), and 180 new dwellings in, or close to, the Village centre (area not defined).

Dealing with these in detail (with references to the DMP)

1. RETAIL POLICIES

Firstly, we believe that Banstead is a **VILLAGE** with a High Street of predominantly small shops. It is NOT a Regional Hub like Redhill, nor an historic Market Town like Reigate. It has a small local population, but attracts from a wider area (mostly north of the M25) due, we believe, to its Village "feel" and balance of small shops. Not all policies that would work for Redhill and Reigate would be appropriate for Banstead. We still dispute the need for the level of retail development proposed, especially as it is now to be mainly for comparison shopping, the very type of shopping where the trend is for on-line shopping.

Secondly, shoppers' parking in Banstead has to be convenient, cheap and available. There is a proposal to relax parking standards and not require new developments to have on-site parking in Town Centres. We strongly oppose this for our Village. Parking in the residential roads off the High Street is already solid during working hours, and getting more challenging during the evening, and High Street parking is frequently "challenging".

Thirdly, the Village is rated as a sustainable location with good public transport and cycling facilities. This is illusory, and most shoppers currently have to come by car – and if the High Street is to flourish they will have to come by car for the foreseeable future as there is no prospect for improved public transport. To reduce the availability of convenient parking would result in fewer visits and retail decline. This is not moving forward, and we believe that, since the council dropped its plan to secure a new public car park at the eastern end of the Village it should acknowledge this reality.

We therefore ask that Banstead Village policies reflect these needs.

2. EXTENDING THE RETAIL AREA – RET 2

We remain unconvinced that any large scale further retail development is justified, but that any increased need can probably be accommodated by way of extensions to existing properties, or "pairing" of existing shops. We believe that it is both unnecessary and wrong to extend the retail area onto part of the Horseshoe. **We ask that the redevelopment of the Library and Clinic should only be considered in the context of any wider redevelopment of the Horseshoe area for community uses, and not as a retail extension to the High Street.**

3. BARCLAYS BANK TO THE POLICE STATION – BAN 1

This is an area that has long been identified as a logical possible extension to the retail area, and the council argues that this could satisfy a large part of its new retail space target. It does, however, contain a number of community and service uses whose relocation must be an important consideration; and the appearance of the "houses" is significant to the character of the Village. The site includes Christ Church which has been much extended already (at great cost), has planning permission for further developments and would appear to be a significant barrier to the financial viability of securing development.

We ask that the valued uses be recognised and doubt that this proposal is either necessary or desirable.

4. THE HORSESHOE – BAN 2

Several of the buildings and uses in this proposal area are of value to the wider community and should be retained or, if large scale redevelopment is contemplated, replaced. In particular the existence and protection of open spaces and mature trees throughout this area must be prioritised.

We do not accept the need to redevelop the former playing field site (in Bolters Lane, to the north of the Priory school). It is currently (and properly in our view) designated in the local plan as Urban Open Land (UOL), and it is proposed elsewhere to give it the equivalent protection as Urban Open Space (UOS), so do not accept that it should feature in the current proposals.

It is clear that some sites in Banstead will need to be redeveloped to meet the plan's housing targets of 180 new dwellings (by 2022) in the Banstead Village area (undefined), but it is not clear from the information so far produced that UOL/UOS would have to be sacrificed in this cause. We do not believe that the case for large scale redevelopment in the Horseshoe, rather than smaller piecemeal developments, has been made.

Finally, a mechanism for securing the funding for any agreed replacements from this, and any other developments displacing valued community uses has not been identified. We do not see how this can be done without cross-subsidies (probably unlawful) so most, if not all, replacements are likely to have to be self-funded.

We ask that the scale of these proposals be substantially reduced, and existing uses that are of such value to the attraction of the Village centre be protected.

5. THE COMMUNITY HALL – BAN 3

The Hall and car park were built nearly fifty years ago on land owned by the council, paid for by donations to the Community Association by local residents, local societies, and some loans and grants from the Council. It is held on a fifty year lease and operated by the trustees of the Community Association. It is very well used by the wider community, and a very highly valued Village asset, next to a Grade II listed building. What has not been recognised is that the car park is essential to its use, frequently at or near capacity. To meet Core Strategy policies CS 5, 7 and 10 we believe that it would be necessary to replace the car parking along with a new building. Indeed we argue that more, not less, public parking is needed at this end of the Village. It is hard to see how this could be achieved on the current site, or that it would be financially viable to do so on any (unidentified) alternative site. This position is made more critical by the proposal to reduce parking standards in the Village centre – a proposal to which we strongly object, especially now that the plan makes no reference to enhancing public parking.

We ask that this proposal be withdrawn in its present form.

6. THE ORCHARD

This is currently UOL (Urban Open Land) and is being redesignated UOS (Urban Open Space). However, the entire Orchard and cemetery (all one entity in terms of value both to the community and the character of the Village, and including All Saints Church) has up to now been excluded from the Town Centre Boundary in the local plan. The line has now been re-drawn to include the High Street frontage of the Orchard, and the Church Institute, in the retail centre. It is still proposed to retain their protection, but this seems to be a totally unnecessary change and possibly a hostage to further adverse changes in the future.

We ask for the blue Town Centre boundary line in plan RET2 to revert to its present position.

7. REVIEW OF URBAN OPEN LAND (UOL)

There are several pieces of land which have been subjected to a designation change (from UOL to UOS) most are considered to be suitable for continued protection (which we strongly support), with the following exceptions:

Greenacre School, Sutton Lane; We ask for it to be designated as UOS.

Banstead Community Hall car park – see comments at 5. above;

“Small areas around the Horseshoe” – Presumed to be within the BAN2 redevelopment area.

Land at Wellesford Close – We ask for the site to be redesignated as UOS.

Banstead Hall fields - We ask that it be withdrawn from the BAN 2 proposals.

PLEASE MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN TO THE COUNCIL BEFORE 10th October by either:-

Writing to: Policy, Town Hall, Castlefield Road, Reigate RH2 0SH

Or email: LDF@reigate-banstead.gov.uk

More details at: http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/info/20270/development_management_plan

And please let us have your comments at banstead-bvra@outlook.com

Mike Sawyer

WINKWORTH ACCESS ROADS -TRAFFIC CALMING PROPOSAL – UPDATE

Progress has been slow since last May's update but things are starting to happen.

Surrey County Council (SCC) praised the proposal as it explains the problems clearly. SCC accepts our traffic monitoring of last May reflects the scale of misuse and will now validate vehicle speed and numbers of vehicles mis-using the access roads over one week.

On 9th August Councillor Ken Gulati and myself met the SCC Highways Engineer [HE] responsible for the speed survey. She explained that there was a high demand for traffic calming measures and monitoring but limited funding. We stated that as ours was a very long term, persistent problem sufficient resources should be made available to conduct the monitoring properly. We stated that inadequate monitoring would mean our proposal being rejected without proper research into the scale of the problem.

With the mediation of Cllr Gulati, SCC agreed to provide three monitors and a fourth funded by Cllr Gulati if the quoted costs were reasonable. A firm has quoted and we await Cllr Gulati's acceptance of it. I am hopeful that Monitoring should begin in early October.

The HE will assess the results plus other aspects of the proposal and then make a recommendation to the SCC and R&B Local committee. We encouraged the HE to investigate cost reducing alternative materials that may produce a lower total cost of our proposal whilst still staying within its recommendations.

To improve the safety of Winkworth Road Zebra crossing, Cllr Gulati offered to fund the cost of "Halo" Ultra Bright Belisha beacons. We will also be lobbying for the Zebra crossing to be mounted on a road platform, as this would inhibit the speed of vehicles leaving the roundabout in anticipation of the 40mph zone that actually starts 150 metres further down Winkworth Rd.

Hopefully we will be able to report further progress in our next issue.

Brian Ransom

PRISON UPDATE

Downview Prison reopened in May as a Women's prison. More in the next issue

David Gradidge

POLICE UPDATE

In the absence of any direct contact from the Police, regrettably there is very little to update you about.

We are disappointed that despite attempts to re-establish the excellent contact, both in person with the neighbourhood team and via electronic communications, previously enjoyed with the police until last year neither BVRA nor any of the other local Resident Associations have been able to have any form of constructive communication. Changes of senior personnel seem to have led to a more reactive approach to dealing with local groups. The occasional attendance at our committee meetings or email updates about local crime are now sadly lacking. We recognise time and financial constraints on the police force but the usefulness of intelligence from the public has been stressed in the past. A proactive approach enabled us to communicate with members about crime or security concerns as well as relaying local concerns to the local neighbourhood team.

The Federation of Residents Associations is taking this matter up directly with the police on behalf of the local Residents Associations and we will keep you informed of any response.

Obviously if you have any concerns about crime or your safety you should still use the 101 telephone number, or in an emergency call 999.

Sally Hull

UPDATE TO THE WINKWORTH WOODLAND COMMUNITY PROJECT

Formed in February 2016, Winkworth Woodland Community Project adopted the triangle of land adjacent to Winkworth Road and Bolters lane. Supported by BVRA, Surrey CC and R&B councillors our aim is to improve this route into our village by planting native English woodland trees and flowers to diversify from the invasive species currently within the plot. Already we have cleared up rubbish, replaced a rotten footbridge and removed the rampant brambles and Norwegian Maple saplings to create a woodland glade full of Bluebells.

This autumn season as well as our ad-hoc group sessions we will also invite the public and we are hoping as many of you as possible will come to support our major Daffodil, Bluebell bulb and Wildlife hedge planting day on Saturday November 12th starting at 10:00. Please add this date to your diary and come armed with a large spade and a fork if you have one. New members will be very welcome to join us.

Please contact brian.bvra@gmail.com or phone 01737 215 869

See also Facebook page: Winkworth Woodland Community Project

Brian Ransom (Co-ordinator Winkworth Woodland Community Project)

BANSTEAD WILDLIFE FIELD

This wildlife area of about 2 acres on Basing Road was created in 1997. As with all such areas, it needs maintenance to keep it in good order. There is a pond, a sensory garden for wheel chair users and a tree planting to include every native species. A circular path goes round the site with a detour to the pond. Lately it has looked a bit sad. The paths were getting narrow and covered in grass, the sensory garden was being invaded with bramble and other undesirables, the pond whilst still healthy was being choked with bull rushes and the 2 benches were unusable.

With the help of the R & B Countryside Officer and the Downlands Project (DCMP), I have been able to organise a work party to retrieve the situation. Some 80% of the paths have been widened, the sensory garden is being uncovered but will need further work and some replanting, the benches are usable (bar a wasp nest!) and invasive Silver Birch has been cut out. Much still to do, perhaps in the Spring. Mowing will take place in late September. It already looks much better thanks to a lot of hard work.

David Gradidge

ROAD STEWARDS

Firstly a very gentle reminder that the annual sub is now £3.

There are a few vacancies for road stewards. The Orchard (off The Horseshoe) with 15 members, and in Basing Road and the immediate surrounds. Here we have 25 members.

Please let me know if you are interested. You don't have to live in the road but it helps.

David Gradidge 353981
or 16 The Maples SM7 3QZ
or dgradidge@waitrose.com

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

BVRA Committee:

Vice-Chairs: Mike Sawyer (355454) and Sally Hull (370050)

Treasurer:and Road Steward liasion : David Gradidge (353981)

Secretary: Mrs C. Vassallo-Bonner (357882)

Group email: Banstead-BVRA@Outlook.com

Local Councillors:

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council Ward Councillors:

Dr Lynne Hack, 19 Longcroft Avenue, SM7 3AE (01737) 354905

Mr Eddy Humphreys, 20 The Oval, SM7 2RA 07841 160711

Mr Sam Walsh, Melrose, 11A Longcroft Avenue, SM7 3AE 07973 955882

Surrey County Councillor:

Mr Ken Gulati, Quetta, 25 Colcokes Avenue, SM7 2EJ (01737) 352627

FUTURE EVENTS..

SUGGESTIONS FOR FILLING THOSE DARK WINTER EVENINGS

As the evenings close in, summer becomes a distant memory and there is absolutely nothing worth watching on the TV, why not explore the friendly and vibrant groups on offer here in our own community? Banstead Recorded Music Society (BRMS) meet fortnightly on a Thursday at the Library in the Horseshoe (please enter via the back door) from 7.45 until 10pm. You will be assured of a very warm welcome. Programmes on offer from 3rd Nov until 16th Feb include titles such as Music for a Winter's Evening, A French Sojourn, Classics for Christmas, A Twentieth Century Parade and the intriguingly named Waxing Lyrical. Tea and coffee is served in the interval. Further details can be obtained from Roger Collins rafcollins71@gmail.com

Live classical music can be heard at the Community Hall in Park Road as part of BAFS Winter Concert season. On Sat 19th Nov at 7.30 there is an opportunity to hear violin sonatas by Beethoven, Brahms and Elgar played by a young postgraduate student from the Royal College of Music, with piano accompaniment. On Sat 4th Feb first prize winner of the Vladimir Horowitz International Piano Competition, Alexei Grynyuk will be playing sonatas by Beethoven, Liszt and Scarlatti. Further details can be found on the website www.bansteadarts.co.uk. Tickets (£12) are available from the library.

If you prefer not to venture out on a dark evening Banstead U3A have 3 interesting afternoon talks on offer. On Thu 24th Nov Mr R Maini of Banstead Opticians will talk on dry/watering eyes at St Mark's Hall, Great Tattenhams at 2.30, and on Wed 18th Jan Roger Stamp will be talking on Durdans - The story of a House at Banstead Community Hall Park Road at 2.30. On Feb 23rd it is back to St Mark's for a talk on The Lavender Fields of Banstead by Lorna Maye. Contact Erika Porter at erikaporter@hotmail.co.uk for information on any of the above talks.

Marion Hayns

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

RBL Banstead are in need of poppy appeal collectors to assist with this year's poppy appeal between 29 October and 12 November 2016. We have stands at both Waitrose and Asda and we have 1 1/2 hr time slots. If you would like to assist with this please contact Sue Parsons on 01737 211082. You do not have to be a member to collect and there is no upper age limit. Our oldest collector is Mr Ken Olson OBE MC TD who is aged 93!! We collected a magnificent £36,500 last year and would dearly love to exceed it this year and with your help we can.

Allan Parsons Poppy Appeal Organiser

CLEAN FOR THE QUEEN

Many will recall the camaraderie and great sense of achievement those of us experienced when we met together in mid March to litter pick and wash down the street signs in this lovely neighbourhood of ours. We are all set to repeat the exercise in the autumn, picking up on those areas that we did not have time to visit first time around and also intend to revisit some of the hot spots. Please join with us again on **Saturday November 26th** when we shall be setting off from the car park at the Community Hall in Park Road from 9.30 am as before. Litter pickers, bags and gloves will be provided.

Marion Hayns

CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA

The Banstead Business Guild (BBG) have organised a Christmas Community Event on Thursday 1st December between 5:00 & 8:00 pm. There will be plenty for the whole family including a flying visit from Father Christmas on his sleigh. Many of the shops will have special 'on the night only' offers and will have in store activities so there will be plenty to do and see.

Special guests taking part include Surrey Show Choir, Local School Choir, Jenny Green Jazz Singer, Theo the Magician, Michael Buble Live Tribute, Caribbean Band, Crafty Faces Face Painting, Street Entertainers plus many more wonderful talented acts. The Mayor of Reigate and Banstead will also be attending. For up to date details visit and like our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/BansteadChristmasCommunityEvent

The BBG is growing steadily and we are welcoming applications from all businesses on and around the High Street and from residents that may have companies located elsewhere but are keen to see the village economy prosper and the High Street continue to improve. If you are interested in finding out more visit our website: www.bansteadbusinessguild.co.uk

Marion Hayns