

BVRA **newsheet**

from the Banstead Village Residents' Association

www.banstedbvra.org.uk

Vol: 31 No. 2 - May 2015

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Executive Committee extends to all members of the Association a warm invitation to the 66th Annual General Meeting to be held at:

**THE CHURCH INSTITUTE, HIGH STREET, BANSTEAD,
on TUESDAY 12th May, at 8.00 pm.**

AGENDA

1. Welcome by Chairman.
2. Minutes of the 67th Annual General Meeting will not be read, but a summary will be distributed to members at the meeting;
3. Presentation by Commander Eddie Roberts of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service;
4. Chairman's report;
5. Presentation of accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015 – printed on the back page of this NewsSheet;
6. Election of Officers, Executive Committee and Auditor for the year 2015/2016.;
7. Welcome to our local Councillors, followed by Open Forum debate of issues that Residents wish to raise;
8. Any other business.

Please bring this invitation with you to the meeting

BANSTEAD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Chairman's Introduction

As we indicated in our last NewsSheet, our AGM falls early this year (availability of the Church Institute was an issue) on Tuesday 12th May; the Agenda is on the front page and the year end Accounts on the back page of this document. I hope it reaches you in good time to allow you to organise your diary so that you can attend.

Our guest speaker will be Commander Eddie Roberts of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service. We felt that it would be a good time to assess the impact of the fire engine being relocated to the old Police Station – and we now have the traffic lights in place to go with it. For myself, I cannot see that we have suffered any problems from the operations of the fire engine but if you have a different experience, come along and ask questions.

As ever the Core Strategy is the most important planning issue. It is, thankfully, now in place as this gives us some protection from undesirable developments. However, we are concerned at the commitment to additional retail space within the boundary of the Village Ward which we believe will be extremely difficult to accommodate – do read Mike Sawyer's article below on this matter. There are some other planning issues, again covered by Mike below.

Another perennial issue is the cost of the Christmas Lights in the trees and Banners on the lamp posts. The total cost of both this year ran to around £4,000 and many of the light strings in the trees now need replacing, after 15 years since they were first installed. The original funding from the Millennium initiative is exhausted and the traders do not seem willing to contribute significant funds; BVRA cannot fund this out of annual income so we need to consider how to approach it this year. We will discuss this at the Town Centre Management meeting in May and decide what to do.

The time has come for me to step down as chairman. I am glad to say that we have an eminently well qualified member of our Executive Committee to take over. Richard Moody has agreed to take on the task and has the unanimous support of the committee. So at our first meeting after the AGM we propose to ratify this change. It has been a most interesting ten years for me and I wish Richard well for the future; you will be seeing many improvements and thank you all, and particularly the members of the committee, for your past support.

Roger Collins

01737 358384

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The existing committee members have all signified their willingness to stand for a further year. Including ex-officio members (Treasurer and Secretary) they are:

Mr R Collins (10 years); Mr J & Mrs S Conacher (5) & (26) years; Mr A Ford (25); Mr D Gradidge (16); Mr J & Mrs M Haynes (1) & (7 years); Mr R Heath (9); Ms S Hull (8); Mr R & Mrs F Moody (3 years); Mr M Sawyer (15 years); Mrs C Vassallo-Bonner (9) And Mr G Ward (14).

We would also like to encourage new members on the committee and would ask anyone interested to contact our Hon Secretary Catalina Vassallo-Bonner (01737 357882) and arrange to join one of our monthly meetings to see how we work.

Roger Collins

(01737) 358384

BANSTEAD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

PLANNING

Both BVRA and the Banstead and District Federation of RA's recently submitted our comments to Reigate & Banstead (R & B) planners as part of their first consultation on the details that will determine how their policies are interpreted when planning applications are made. There was wide agreement among the R A's on many points, most of which were in support of the council's policies. We have made a number of additional comments, largely about specific issues affecting the Banstead Village ward, and hope to discuss these in more detail with the planners before their public consultation in the Autumn. Should there be any serious matters of disagreement it may be necessary to detail them at that time. The main issues we commented on are:

Green Belt (GB): the need to retain and to strengthen resistance to development; that there is no need to review its boundaries in the northern part of the Borough; and the suggestion that the former allotments at Wellesford Close should be redesignated as GB (currently identified as Urban Open Land – UOL);

Residential Areas of Special Character (RASC's): these are areas where particular styles, quality, density etc should be respected when new developments, extensions and alterations are proposed. No parts of Banstead are so designated at present, although the original "garden village" concept is readily identified in many roads. We have therefore suggested that areas centred on Longcroft/Fiddicroft Roads, Garratts Lane, Holly Lane and de Burgh Park should be considered;

Housing for the Elderly: we have suggested that the council should find some way of encouraging the provision of bungalows so that downsizing from family houses (many in our area with large gardens) should not entail

moving out of Banstead to find an alternative to flatted developments;

The green areas: we have confirmed our view that all the areas of UOL (Lady Neville, the orchard, the allotments sites etc) should be retained as an essential part of the character of the village. In particular we have advocated the need to retain the openness of that large wedge of UOL that runs from the Banstead Downs (GB) to the south along Bolters Lane and through The Horseshoe to Gartons field (behind Garratts Lane), and to recognise the value of this not just as a major green lung but also a wildlife corridor; and finally,

Banstead Village Centre: the Core Strategy (CS) requires the provision of "at least" 2,500 sq m. of additional floor space by 2027. (Just to give an idea of scale that is a bit less than the existing Waitrose store - although it would not necessarily be all in one development). At present it does not specify where it should take place, how this would affect the existing balance of trade, or what would happen to any of the many valued non-retail uses that would be displaced. It also requires the addition of 180 dwellings in or around the village centre, again with no indication of where or how. We intend to debate the implications of these targets (they are not just hopes) with the council as we are concerned about the consequences for our quality of life, the impact on our village high street, and how the additional parking requirement will be met, among other issues.

We hope to get more information to you by the time of the public consultation in the early autumn.

Mike Sawyer

(01737) 355454

POLICE & CRIME INFORMATION

A number of arrests have been made over the last few months including one for fraud and two groups of burglars. Several local roads had suffered high levels of break-ins which are

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believed to have been carried out by these groups so hopefully we will now see a drop in these incidents.

Please be aware, and report, any suspicious activity in your area. It was interesting to hear, at the recent Police Panel Meeting, about the type of intelligence that led to the above arrests. PC Carmen Lambert Singer emphasised just how important information received from the public can be in preventing crime or catching those who are carrying out criminal or anti-social activities.

Vehicle related crime - Recent incidents include a number of cases of damage to vehicles, including tools being stolen from a van in Chipstead Road in the last quarter. In addition there were 3 instances of motorbikes being stolen from outside properties in the area; several of these were stolen without the keys being taken. PLEASE make your motorbikes/scooters and bikes as secure as possible.

Please be vehicle aware. Do not leave items visible to potential thieves and do not place valuables into the boot once you have parked as you may be observed. A handbag was stolen from a car in March when a suspect smashed a rear window to remove the bag which was concealed in the boot.

Please report any suspicious persons or cars in the local area who you may feel should be checked. Please take a minute to look at the persons or the vehicles before reporting them to the Surrey Police number 101 - or 999 if urgent. Leaving any presents in your vehicles also leaves you open to being targeted by car criminals. Help to reduce car crime by keeping things out of sight.

Speeding & Community Speed Watch - Thank you to those of you who responded to this item in the last newssheet. Several people have now been put in direct touch with the Surrey Police Coordinator for the scheme. Volunteers are still actively been sought for Community Speed Watch. If you can spare a few hours, then please contact your local Neighbourhood Policing Team, or me, for more information.

Fraud - There are gangs operating across the country targeting older and vulnerable people stealing thousands of pounds of cash direct from their own accounts by pretending to be the police or a member of a banking company. The police and/or your bank:

- will NEVER request your PIN number over the phone.
- will NEVER send a taxi to collect you or your credit card to check it is secure.

Do not be a victim of this type of crime - ALWAYS refuse to give your details over the phone. Do not call back the person who called. If you can, call the police on a separate phone such as a mobile or a neighbour's phone. If this has already happened to you please call the police or call ACTION FRAUD or search their website.

Terrorism

Whilst it feels very unlikely to happen in Banstead area, being aware of terrorism is an important aspect of our daily life. Rather than worrying about whether or not you are wasting police time if you see something please do report it and let them worry about it.

Next Police Panel Meeting - These are held quarterly, with the most recent having just taken place in March. Please do support the police and these meetings – it is a great opportunity to meet the local police face-to-face and be able to give them your concerns and feedback about crime in the area. Upcoming dates are usually displayed on posters in shop windows throughout Banstead High Street beforehand as well as on other notice boards locally.

To report a crime or incident or to contact your Safer Neighbourhood Team call 101. Only call 999 in a genuine emergency requiring urgent police attendance.

If you use social media, you may be interested to know that Surrey Police is on Twitter, Facebook and other social media channels. You can find out more at <http://www.surrey.police.uk/contact-us/social-media>.

Sally Hull

(01737) 370050

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NHS/LONGCROFT

Epsom/St Helier update

We understand from an email received from MP Chris Grayling's office at the end of March that Daniel Elkeles, the new chief Executive of Epsom St Helier University Hospital, has announced that A&E, Children's Services and Maternity are safe at the two hospitals for the next five years. He also announced that the Trust will be seeking Foundation Trust status which will provide greater autonomy in its affairs. Despite this assurance there are those who believe that financial constraints may still make it necessary to axe some hospital services after the General Election.

The GP members of the Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group, which looks after the health of people living in Banstead, voted to remove Epsom Hospital from the now defunct Better Services Better Value campaign running in South West London two years ago.

However, a leading GP from Sutton CCG has declined to support Daniel Elkeles' hopes to keep A&E, maternity and children's units open at both hospitals for the next five years.

It would seem that another new chapter of the long running hospital saga is still to be written.

The Longcroft Clinic plans to continue its talks with a session on Moles and Warts. The date is not as yet available but will be advertised as on previous occasions.

Catalina Vassallo-Bonner

01737 357882

INFRASTRUCTURE

Road Survey

I have been surveying the public roads in Banstead since 2006 in an amateur way. It helps to have an old car that rattles a bit. There are 84 roads to examine. If your own road is in a poor state and you think it should rank in the top (bottom?) 10, let me know.

Here are what I consider to be the worst:

Avenue Road: for a busy road, this has been on the list for years. It is a mass of bumps, dips and pot holes. Please, Surrey CC, could we have it resurfaced?

Wellesford Close: whilst the main part is showing its age now, the first 60yds is truly awful being a mass of pot holes.

Fairlawn Grove: more patches, and regrettably more pot holes, especially in the first 100yds.

Croydon Lane South: I thought it had been patched, but a short stretch is a mass of rubble.

Glenfield Rd & Sandersfield Rd: I have coupled these together as they both show similar signs. They are breaking up rapidly and pot holes are multiplying. It is lucky we didn't have a severe winter.

Yewlands Close: a few years ago 3 stretches of rubble were resurfaced and remain in good condition. In the meantime, the rest of this circular close is now in a very poor state disintegrating into rubble.

Thornfield Rd: several serious pot holes.

Woodmansterne Lane: as far as we know, Surrey C C is still arguing with the contractor who made a mess of last year's resurfacing. Holly Lane had a similar problem but is now OK. All we want is for Woodmansterne Lane to be brought up to a similar standard.

In the last year, the following have been resurfaced. Holly Lane (again), De Burgh Park, North Acre (or 98% of it), and Oakley Gardens.

David Gradidge

(01737) 353981

Winkworth Road traffic

Road safety problems in Winkworth Road have been put under the spotlight again recently. This has been a concern locally for over 30 years. Previously a pedestrian refuge was placed in the road near Wilmot Way, the zebra crossing was installed at the Sutton Road roundabout, and Access Only signs were placed at the entrances to the access roads.

Residents in this road have become increasingly concerned that these measures are not now effective. There are two main issues. Cars are reported to be using the access roads, and in some cases to be travelling at speed, to bypass queueing traffic in Winkworth Road. Also, crossing Winkworth Road has

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become more hazardous and this includes the use of the zebra crossing.

A group has been set up, in conjunction with local residents and the local Neighbourhood Watch, to see how safety in this area can be improved. We are currently working with an experienced highway engineer to look at costed proposals to address both these issues. The intention is then to work with Surrey County Council to see which proposals may be implemented. We are always very conscious that finance is a big driver for such issues, but we are hopeful that some measures can be implemented.

Richard Moody (01737) 360917

BANSTEAD HIGH STREET

We were given in the 2014-15 year a grant of £2,000 out of Cllr Ken Gulati's allocation, for improvements to the High Street. We have recently completed the work funded by this grant. The two dead trees opposite Waitrose (one stump has been at a drunken 45 degree angle for over a year!) have been removed and 'stump-ground', as has another old base of a long dead tree. Two new trees have been planted; these are biggish silver birch saplings, *betula utilis*, and that stretch of the High Street will look much better now.

We have also removed around a dozen old half-height signposts along the High Street, which no longer carried notices of any kind and were therefore redundant. Now they have gone you will not notice that they were ever there but it has tidied things up a little!

Finally we are refurbishing the benches along the High Street. These should all be back in place within a week or two. It is possible that one or two may be beyond repair and if so, we will try to find the funds to replace them over the next year.

All this work would, once upon a time, have been carried out by the councils but their budgets no longer run to this and we believe that Surrey CC has a policy of not pruning trees nor removing dead ones unless they constitute a potential hazard. We will have to consider whether we can justify using our own funds, as

and when available, to carry out further such work.

Roger Collins

01737 358384

HEDGES AND GARDEN MAINTENANCE

Spring has sprung and the plants, hedges and trees in the garden are beginning to bloom and spread. This brings us to a seasonal request for courtesy to your neighbours and the general public and we ask that you please keep your garden in your garden and not to let it creep or overhang where it should not!

Please do not let your hedges, trees or plants impinge on the public footpaths or highway – not only is it inconvenient, and sometimes downright dangerous, you may also be breaking the law. Thank you.

Sally Hull

(01737) 370050

LADY NEVILLE PLAYGROUND

For all those many users of our popular play park in the village which was refurbished within the last 5 years it cannot have escaped your notice that the surface there is already in a very sorry state. Wet and muddy throughout the winter months and baked to an uneven and dangerous state during the summer.

The committee have raised this issue with the Parks Department over the winter, being keenly aware that all available monies seem to be lavished south of the borough at the moment.

We have been promised that the council is aware of the issue surrounding safety surfaces in the playground since the surface laid has just not proved durable enough to deal with the heavy use that the playground receives.

We have been told that options to replace the surface with a softer rubber compound are being explored and costed but since the Parks Manager with whom we were corresponding is now no longer in the employ of the Council we fear that we shall have to start lobbying all over again. Hopefully we shall have some more positive news to report in our next newsletter, if not at the AGM.

Marion Hayns

(01737) 350288

BANSTEAD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

477 BUS

There have been changes to the route of the 477 bus between Banstead and Guildford as from March 30th. It no longer travels to the Drift Bridge down Bolters Lane from Banstead High Street but up Garratts Lane to the A217 and on to Burgh Heath. From Burgh Heath it turns right onto the A240, stopping at Asda. From there it continues via the Rose Bushes and picks up its original route to Guildford at the Drift Bridge. The return journey from the Drift Bridge goes directly up the 240 to Asda, left onto the A217 and back down Garratts Lane to Banstead High Street.

Etcetera Buses who run the 477 have said that people with bus passes who use the bus before 9.30 may show their bus passes and pay a flat fee of £1.00 for their journey. Very handy for early appointments at either Epsom Hospital or the Old Cottage Hospital.

Catalina Vassallo-Bonner

(01737) 357882

EMAIL COMMUNICATION AND YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS

As we now live in an age of instant communication, BVRA has been examining how we can enhance communication with our members by using email. There are a number of considerations to take into account, just some of these being:

- What do we want to communicate? Currently we are looking at the potential of this method of communication as a more instant and direct method of contact with members when urgent issues arise, for example significant planning issues such as the cemetery planning application of late last year. In future, it may also be appropriate to communicate the newssheet in this way to most of our members.
- How do we:

- gather the email addresses as comprehensively as possible?
- store them correctly and compliantly with data protection regulations?
- ensure the data is kept up-to-date?
- if applicable, cater for those members who do not have an email address?
- Would this change the newssheet and road steward distribution network, which is hugely valued, and how?
- How would this affect subscriptions and collection of funds?

As a result of our discussions, we are likely to have an option for people to provide their email addresses to us at the AGM if they so wish. If you are not able to attend the AGM and would like us to receive your email address please contact me for more details.

Please note that it will be some time before we can administer the newssheets by email. We would like to reassure members that there is no intention to withdraw the current printed newssheets at any time in the foreseeable future.

Sally Hull

(01737) 370050

NOTES ON THE ACCOUNTS

The need to go to press somewhat earlier than usual means that the accounts on the back page are in draft form. They are as at April 5th. They have not been audited and are subject to revision.

Membership totals are not finalised but hopefully will be close to 1980 households, a modest increase on last year. We have a new printer and costs look to be a bit lower. The situation with village lights has been covered elsewhere.

The results at the moment show a small deficit, as against a small surplus last year.

David Gradidge

(01737) 353981

BANSTEAD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

DRAFT ACCOUNTS AS AT 31ST MARCH 2015

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH 2015

	<u>2014/2015</u>	<u>2013/2014</u>
	£	£
INCOME		
Subscriptions & Donations	<u>4010</u>	<u>3809</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Production of News Sheets	1820	1989
Subscriptions	66	64
Printing postage & stationery	114	134
Hire of rooms	344	284
Web Site	71	71
Sundry expenses	41	89
Banstead Village Lights	1850	1161
Less Waitrose Token Scheme	- 249	- 487
Donation to May Fayre	40	100
Donation to Royal British Legion	100	50
Donation to Banstead Churches Food Bank	150	
Excess of Income over Expenditure	<u>- 337</u>	<u>354</u>
	<u>4010</u>	<u>3809</u>
WAITROSE TREE FUND		
Cost of Trees		572
Installation		264
Less Receipt from Waitrose		<u>- 836</u>
		<u>0</u>

SURREY CC WORKS FUND

Balance as at 1 st April 2014	2121
Replanting High St trees	- 1662
Removal of posts in High St	- 450
Balance transferred to Sundry expenses	<u>-9</u>
	<u>2121</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2015

	<u>31/03/2015</u>	<u>31/03/2014</u>
	£	£
NET ASSETS		
Treasurer's account – Lloyds TSB	7856	10666
Cash in Hand	11	19
Debtors net of Creditors	<u>281</u>	<u>-80</u>
	<u>8147</u>	<u>10605</u>
REPRESENTED BY		
General Fund as at 1 st April 2014	8484	8130
Less deficit for the period	-337	354
	8147	8484
Surrey CC Works Fund	<u>0</u>	<u>2121</u>
	<u>8147</u>	<u>10605</u>

J D G Gradidge
16 The Maples
Banstead
Hon Treasurer