



Ruislip Residents' Association

# TOWN CRIER

The Voice of Ruislip Residents  
September 2013

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Medieval Day - Manor Farm



Woodland Centre, Ruislip Lido (page 15)

## RUISLIP RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

**PRESIDENT:** Brian Cowley

**VICE-PRESIDENTS:** Joan Davis Peter Lansdown

Officers		Executive Committee Members	
Chairman	Graham Bartram	Vivien Alcorn	Susan Midgley
Vice-Chairman	Mike Hodge	Lindsay Baxter	John Swindells
Treasurer	John Hawley	Jaqueline Bolton	John Williams
Secretary	Pamela Edwards	Ian Cantley	
Chief Road Steward	Jack Greiller	Martin Cartwright	
Deputy Ch. Rd. Stwd.	Roy Parsons	Ivor John	
Responsibility	Committee Member	Responsibility	Committee Member
Community Activities	Jaqueline Bolton	Public Transport	Graham Bartram
Conservation	Lindsay Baxter	RAF Northolt Liaison	Ivor John
Education	Susan Midgley	Ruislip Lido	Peter Lansdown
Environment	Martin Cartwright	Ruislip Retail Area	Graham Bartram
Health	Joan Davis	Social Activities	Vivien Alcorn
Manor Retail Area	Joan Davis	Traffic & Parking	Brian Cowley
Membership	Brian Cowley	Website	John Swindells
Planning	Mike Hodge	Woodlands	Ian Cantley
Police Liaison	Ivor John		
<p><b>Contact us:</b>            Mrs Pamela Edwards, Honorary Secretary            98 Eastcote Road, Ruislip HA4 8DT 01895 674148            secretary@ruislipresidents.org.uk            www.ruislipresidents.org.uk</p> <p>Editor: Peter Lansdown towncrier@ruislipresidents.org.uk</p>			

**RUISLIP RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION - GENERAL MEETING**  
**7.45 pm, Thursday, 24th October, 2013**  
**at Winston Churchill Hall, Pinn Way, Ruislip**  
*(Doors open at 7.30pm)*

Agenda

1. Welcome, apologies and announcements
2. Urgent reports from representatives
3. Guest Speaker - Colin Russell, LBH Waste Services Manager
4. Open Forum - an opportunity for members to question representatives on topical issues - questions sent to the Hon. Sec. *(see page 2)* in advance will be given priority
5. Any other business
6. Close of business session

Followed by informal discussions

Light refreshments available before and after the business session

The meeting will end at 10pm

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Next Meeting: 7.45pm Wednesday, 19th February 2014,  
at Ruislip Social Club, Grosvenor Vale, Ruislip Manor  
(Agenda items to the secretary by Tuesday, 28th January 2014)

**EDITORIAL** *(Peter Lansdown)*

We welcome our new Chairman, Graham Bartram, on board (see page 5). He has a particular interest in public transport and is watching HS2 very closely (see page 10).

It is good to have news of Ruislip High School. It is seven years since the doors opened and the first set of A level examinations have been taken with a great set of results: 79% with A\* - C grades. Over 65% of students are going on to university, to study a range of subjects including Architecture and Medicine. Congratulations to both staff and pupils.

There are several proposals for new or refurbished supermarkets in the surrounding area. I thought you might be interested (see page 21).

*(continued on page 17)*

## COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

### Lunchtime Concerts of Classical Music

**St. Martin's Church Hall, Ruislip**

*(at corner of High Street & Eastcote Road)*

**Admission Free - Wednesdays in 2013/14 at 12.15 pm**

**October 30<sup>th</sup> Ben Schoeman: piano**

**November 27<sup>th</sup> Amethyst Ensemble**

**December No concert**

*2014 programme is not yet available, but concerts will be held on the last Wednesday of each month, except July, August and December.*

*These concerts last about one hour. Retiring collection after each concert to defray expenses. Further information from the Parish Office, 01895 625456, Mondays to Fridays, 0930 to 1200.*

### FRIENDS OF EASTCOTE HOUSE GARDEN

(www.eastcotehousegardens.weebly.com)

- Eastcote House Volunteer Gardeners meet on the 1st Friday, 2nd Saturday and 3rd Thursday of every month, and Conservationists on the 4th Thursday, at 9.30 am (10.00 am on Saturdays)  
Everyone welcome - tools and refreshments provided - no experience necessary. Meet in the car park at Eastcote House Gardens.  
Gardening:      October 4th, 12th, 17th      November 1st, 9th and 21st  
                          December 6th, 14th and 19th    January 3rd, 11th and 16th  
Conservation:    Oct. 24th, Nov. 28th, Jan. 23rd
- Tree Dressing on Saturday, 30th November, at 1.30pm. Make a date to come.

### Ruislip, Northwood & Eastcote Local History Society

#### Lecture Programme 2013/14

Meetings held in St Martin's Church Hall, 8.15pm. Visitors welcome.

21 October	AGM & Development of a Town: Windsor as a Garrison 1066 - 19C	Brigitte Mitchell Windsor Local History Group
18 November	A New Story of Hornsey	John Hinshelwood Hornsey Historical Society
16 December	Members Evening	
20 January	A History of Harefield through its maps	Keith Piercy Harefield Historical Society

## **CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE** (*Graham Bartram*)

As this is my first Chairman's Message I thought I would take the opportunity to introduce myself. I have lived in Ruislip for over 26 years, five times longer than I have lived anywhere else in the world. I was born in Scotland and grew up in Northern Ireland, Ghana, Nigeria and Derbyshire. I trained as a software design engineer and moved to Ruislip from Oxford when I got a job at the BBC. I worked there for seven years on a wide variety of programmes and projects, including Ceefax. I was then in multimedia for several more years, working on a number of government and NGO websites. Finally I decided to make a major career change and made my hobby, flags, my job. So today I am the Chief Vexillologist of the Flag Institute, the national flag organization, and the Secretary-General for Congresses of the *Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques*, the world's flag organization.

I don't drive (I took one look at the traffic in London and decided to give up trying to pass my test), so I use public transport. For that reason, I have agreed to take on the Public Transport role on the Executive Committee, following on from Tessa Kershaw's sterling work. If you have any suggestions or complaints about public transport in Ruislip that you think the Residents' Association can help with, please contact me.

One large part of the public transport brief is HS2, and I have been involved in that from the beginning. We recently sent in our response to the Draft Environment Statement (DES) Consultation and the Secretary of State's Route Change Consultation, and copied it to our two MPs. They used it as a briefing document when they went to meet Alison Munro, CEO of HS2 Ltd. She revealed that the Final Environment Statement would have ten times the detail of the draft, which means we will have a huge task checking it when it comes out. HS2 Ltd have also restarted the Community Forums, which they suspended during the DES, so it will be interesting to see what they have to say for themselves having received so much feedback. The political landscape for HS2 is also changing, with more politicians and organizations coming out and saying publicly that HS2 is a waste of money.

I hope to meet as many of you as possible at our next meeting (see page 3), when Colin Russell, Hillingdon's Waste Services Manager will be giving a presentation around recycling, but in the meantime, if you see me on the High Street, feel free to stop me for a chat!

Graham Bartram -Chairman - 01895 673310

## FROM OUR MP FOR MANOR WARD - JOHN RANDALL

In February 2003 I wrote in a column for the *Uxbridge Gazette* - "The saddest thing for me is that I can no longer trust what a British Government tells me." This was in the middle of the debate about what we should do in Iraq. The success of previous military interventions I believe encouraged a hawkish attitude, both here and in the US. There was no doubting the nature of Saddam's regime. However I found it impossible to vote to sanction military intervention by Britain at that stage and resigned from the Opposition front bench. I had many reasons for opposing action then, principally because we had not had the report from the UN inspectors and we did not have support from countries in the region. Subsequently we also saw that there had been virtually no post-war strategy and sadly Iraq is still in a very volatile state, even if Saddam has long gone.

So I was faced with a real dilemma as the House of Commons voted on Syria. I found myself able to vote for the motion that was put to us, as it contained the need for UN inspectors to report and for the Security Council to debate that report. It also made it explicit that any action would be targeted purely to destroy the chemical weapon capability. There was no dodgy dossier to trust. Crucially it also required a second vote before any military action took place.

I believe that many of my colleagues and indeed many of our constituents are scarred by the Iraq experience and that they feel that we should withdraw from any international action. I can understand that but I do not agree. Of course military action is ultimately an admission of failure, but does that mean it should be completely ruled out? As we all know the motion was defeated and although personally I regret that, I think we can at least take comfort that we do live in a vibrant democracy where such a vote can take place. I am at least reassured that Britain is now concentrating on humanitarian aid to try to relieve the human disaster that is taking place in front of our eyes.

It is always very difficult to write on a topical event when the copy date for submitting an article is some time before publication, as events can change very fast. At the time of writing the world is anxiously waiting to see the latest developments in Syria. Although sadly I do not think the situation will be any less tense when this is published, I cannot say what may or may not have happened. I pray that, not just the Syrian regime, but dictators around the world will not take comfort from the understandable reluctance to use force to uphold international law. Unfortunately history tends to Edmund Burke's view that "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

## FROM OUR MP FOR WEST AND EAST RUISLIP WARDS - NICK HURD

Many West Ruislip residents are concerned about the impact of HS2 on the local area. If it happens! Some of you will have noticed that the number of sceptical voices in Parliament and the media has grown. This does not surprise me given that the costs are enormous and do not appear to have stabilised. There will be more rigorous debate ahead which I welcome, given the importance of this decision. The increased noise does not yet alter the fundamental fact that all three main political parties support HS2. So my priority is to argue for the measures that will minimise the impact on the area. That includes an extension of the Ruislip tunnel to by-pass Ickenham and a relocation of HOAC. Critically for West Ruislip, I have argued strongly to HS2 that they have to rethink their strategy of moving spoil. The traffic implications of their first proposal were completely unacceptable as many of you pointed out. They appear to have taken that on board and I will meet them in the autumn for an update.



Residents can always get an update through my website, [www.nickhurd.com](http://www.nickhurd.com).

### **Specific comments from Nick Hurd on the Draft Environmental Statement Consultation (DES):**

**Traffic:** The projections for movements of HGVs have caused widespread consternation across the area. The clear local view is that the plans have been drawn up with insufficient knowledge of existing traffic conditions on the key roads. The simplest thing that I can say is that the current plans have been misjudged and are unsustainable. My strong recommendation is that project planners go back to the drawing board in terms of a strategy for moving and disposing of spoil from the works.

**HOAC:** The premise that HOAC can survive on its current site after the works is wrong. Leaving aside the loss of sailing as an option, the hiatus will mean that parents, schools and other agencies will seek alternatives. This is a view strongly held by the management of the centre and one that I support. The loss of this much loved community asset will be deeply felt. Therefore, my strong recommendation is that consideration is given to a relocation of the existing centre to another local site.

**Noise:** HS2 are aware that, for residents living close to the proposed line, the noise of trains is a major issue. There is scepticism around the emphasis placed on average noise. This does not answer the natural question of residents which is "How bad will it be at peak noise?" Again, I strongly urge HS2 to go further in engaging with directly affected residents in Ickenham and Harefield.

(continued on page 14)

## HISTORY: THE CRIMINAL CAREER OF THE SON OF A VICAR OF RUISLIP

*(Eileen Bowl)*

The Reverend Christopher Packe was the Vicar of Ruislip from 1834-78. It is extraordinary that he should have had a son, Francis Packe, who became an international criminal. Six months before his father's death in June 1878, Francis had been found guilty at the Old Bailey of feloniously forging and uttering a bond of the Chicago and North-Western Railway for \$1000 with intent to defraud, and was sentenced to ten years penal servitude. Two previous offences for which he had been convicted, presumably in his absence in 1867 and 1868, were taken into account. The present offence had occurred in July 1876 and he was charged in the name of Frederick Randolph, one of many aliases that he adopted over the course of his life.

Francis was born on 19th July, 1840, and baptised at St Martin's church the following May. By 1851 Francis was at the Marsh Royal Free Grammar School at Marlborough. He did not proceed to university, but entered the Bombay Native Infantry as a Lieutenant in April 1859, when he was still 18.

In 1861 he failed to re-join his regiment at the proper time and, while he was staying at The Hen and Chickens Hotel in Birmingham in November 1862, he presented cheques drawn on Grindlay & Co. of Parliament Street, at the hotel

and in payment for a suit of clothes. When inquiry was made by telegraph, the reply came that it was 'a dead swindle', so Packe, who had elevated his status from Lieutenant to Captain while in Birmingham, was arrested at the railway station as he was about to step on to a train for Bristol. He was convicted at the end of December 1862 and sentenced to 18 months hard labour. It was noted that he was wanted for similar offences in Manchester, Sheffield and Liverpool. That brought his military career to an end.

Presumably Francis Packe was released sometime in 1864. The offences that were taken into account by the judge at the 1878 trial may have been committed under assumed names. The lengthy ten year sentence was imposed because the judge said that the prisoner had already served a sentence of seven years. There seem to be hints that he may have spent time in America and is referred to by one newspaper as an American lawyer. The 1881 census shows him as an inmate of Her Majesty's Convict Prison, Princetown, Dartmoor.

After serving eight years he was released on 9th October, 1885 on licence and reported to the Police Office at Great Scotland Yard the same day,

## HISTORY: THE CRIMINAL CAREER OF THE SON OF A VICAR OF RUISLIP (continued)

stating his intention of proceeding to New York. The police were supposed to have been keeping him under surveillance, but he duped them into believing that he was in the United States until returning on 22nd November and that he was again *en route* to and from America between 27th November and 18th December 1885. He had actually been engaged in nefarious activities in Switzerland and France during the first period and, as was eventually found out, carrying out a successful raid upon the Court Jewellers in Vienna in early December.

His criminal career continued and in 1887 'Francis Packe de Ruislip (Angleterre)' was found in possession of goods that had been stolen in Basle, whilst living in Paris under the name of Georges Duncan. Extradition orders between Switzerland and France followed and the Home Office became involved. Appeals in various courts in Paris ended with him being set free in May 1888 on the grounds that he could not be tried in a French court for a theft committed in Switzerland.

He was arrested in Hamburg in 1903, having tried to negotiate a railway bond, part of the contents of a mail bag, valued at £3,000. The authorities were mystified as to the true identity of the 'elderly' and presumably respectable-looking gentleman, whom they had arrested. He had first given his name as Harold Brown and later

as Francis Beaumont. When he died before trial, it seemed that all attempts to trace him were doomed to failure.

The Vienna police came to the rescue and recognised him as 'the notorious Francis Packe, son of Christopher Packe, a former Vicar of St Paul's, Windsor.' (*sic*), who had got clean away with £20,000 of jewellery when he and others had plundered the Court Jewellers on The Graben, Vienna on 6th December 1885. The plundering of the Court Jewellers had caused the greatest upset and excitement in Vienna in 1885 and had been reported widely at the time, including in *The Times* on 8th December.

By the time of his death Francis Packe's exploits seem to have acquired a romantic tinge. The English reporter writing from Vienna on 5th June 1903 for the *Shields Gazette* writes almost admiringly about Packe's criminal career. 'His alibis were legion and his robberies also legion. London knew him as Bartlett of New York, New York as Duncan of London, Paris as Beaumont of Vienna and Buda Pesth as Marens of Paris.' He finishes 'Packe deserves a place in the romance of crime as one of the most daring burglars and forgers of the last century.'

## HIGH SPEED RAIL UPDATE *(Graham Bartram)*

After the hiatus caused by the consultation on the Draft Environmental Statement (DES), the world of HS2 seems to have sprung back into life.

Our response to the DES was sent to HS2 and, via our two MPs, direct to Alison Munro, CEO of HS2 Ltd. John Randall MP supplied a response that he had received from Ms Munro, in which she emphasised that the DES was precisely that - a draft to show progress to date. She stated that the full Environmental Statement would be about ten times the length! Sadly she did not answer any of our specific questions.



Several prominent politicians and organizations have recently come out against HS2, including some of those who started the whole process, Lord Mandelson and Alistair Darling amongst them. On 9th September, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, Margaret Hodge MP, said that “The Department for Transport has yet to present a convincing strategic case” to justify the £50bn investment. Other MPs on the committee warned that the HS2 plans are based on “fragile numbers, out-of-date data and assumptions which do not reflect real life”.

Following evidence from, for example, the Institute of Directors, that business people do not find time on trains ‘wasted’ because they can work while travelling, Secretary of State, Patrick McLoughlin, has apparently had a change of heart and says that HS2 is not about speed any more - it is about capacity. This raises other problems as the Department for Transport (DfT), only last year, gave a franchise (later withdrawn at the cost of many millions) to First Group to run the West Coast Mainline on the basis of them more than doubling passenger numbers by 2026, using the existing line. This means that when Phase 1 of HS2 is operational to Birmingham, the West Coast Mainline could already have doubled the number of passengers it carries - a fact accepted by DfT. Where is the capacity problem?

Of course all of this is assuming that in 2026 twice as many people will want to travel from London to Manchester or vice versa, but what about new technology? Even today we have video calling from our mobiles, and teleconferencing in business - what will we have in 2026? Live holographic projections, robotic avatars, who knows?

The government and HS2 Ltd. have started a fight back, commissioning a report from KPMG that predicts that HS2 will generate a £15bn a year boost in the economy. Within hours of being published the report was being torn apart by others, including

## **HIGH SPEED RAIL UPDATE** *(cont.)*

the government's own advisor on modelling, Professor Dan Graham of Imperial College, who said that the figure "seems to be on the optimistic side".

Robert Peston, BBC Business Editor, being particularly scathing, said that one of the KPMG's report's qualifications made his jaw fall to the floor! The report states: "The methodology employed makes the implicit assumption that transport connectivity is the only supply-side constraint to business location. In practice, there could be other constraints that could inhibit the potential location effects, such as the availability of skilled labour and land in a given location."

Mr Peston explains in his BBC News article: "As I have mentioned, many of the gains to the regions that KPMG calculates are based on the reasonable notion that companies will be established in places where transport links are better. It has taken no account of whether those regions actually contain available land to site new or bigger companies or have people with relevant skills to employ."

Baroness Valentine of London First, a business membership organization which supports HS2, commented on the KPMG report: "HS2 will boost capacity on our railways and tie the great cities of Britain closer together. KPMG's analysis shows clearly that faster and better rail connections will benefit the whole of the UK, not just London and the south. The Government should stick to its course and bear down on the project's costs to ensure taxpayers get good value for money."

### **Community Forum**

HS2 Ltd. have recently announced that they are restarting the Community Forums that they suspended for the DES. RRA will be attending these, as we have all the previous ones. Maybe HS2 Ltd. will have some answers to the questions we keep asking.

### **Property Compensation Consultation**

Following the High Court's decision that the previous Property Compensation Consultation was flawed, HS2 Ltd. are re-running the consultation. There will be a "public information event" in Ruislip, at the Barn Hotel, on 14 October 2013 and the consultation documents are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-property-compensation-consultation-2013>

So the saga continues, and RRA will continue to fight to get the best deal for the people of Ruislip, although more and more people seem to agree that the better course of action would be to drop the whole idea.



**Martinmas Fayre - Spirit of Christmas**

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 10.30am-2.30pm  
St Martin's Church Hall, Eastcote Road, Ruislip

Craft, gift and speciality stalls, Santa's grotto, face painting, silent auction, home baking and preserves, café, games of skill and chance for all ages. Get into the festive spirit and get ahead with your Christmas shopping.

Free entry

[www.stmartins-ruislip.org](http://www.stmartins-ruislip.org)

**Ruislip Chamber of Commerce**



Ruislip Family Day - Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November

Santa will be in his grotto in  
John Sanders from noon onwards.

The children's annual Treasure Hunt will be  
taking place with lots of prizes to be won.

There will also be kiddies' rides in the  
High Street and lots more.

## **EASTCOTE HOUSE GARDENS** *(Lesley Crowcroft)*

The Friends of Eastcote House Gardens are thrilled to be able to announce that Heritage Lottery funding has been granted to restore the Grade II Listed Buildings and gardens. A new building to house the tea rooms, toilets and a park manager's office will be erected. Thanks go to all who have supported this cause over the last 5 years.

There is still a long way to go before all works are finished. Regular updates of progress and garden closures will be available on our web site:

[www.eastcotehousegardens.weebly.com](http://www.eastcotehousegardens.weebly.com)

Matching funding for the project is needed and the 'Friends' are required by the Heritage Lottery Fund to raise £25,000 cash and supply £125,000 in volunteer hours during the lifetime of the project [5 years]. We have raised £12,500, so half way to the total. Our fund raising events will continue. The EHG 2014 calendar is now on sale, a bargain at £5.00. Available from [lesley.crowcroft@gmail.com](mailto:lesley.crowcroft@gmail.com)

Another grant of £20,000 has been received from the Mayor of London's Big Green Fund for improvements to the River Pinn and Long Meadow. This is part of the Colne Catchment Action Network.

## **HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT AND ELIZABETH TOWER** *(Vivien Alcorn)*

More of our members have had the opportunity to visit either Parliament or the Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben) during July and August. For a short report from Joan Davis, who took part in the visit on August 9th and got home in one piece to tell the tale, see page 22.

More of these trips have been requested through John Randall MP's office - the only way to do it - we hope we will be offered dates for 2014.

If you are interested in either of these visits, please contact me by email, [valcorn@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:valcorn@blueyonder.co.uk), and I will add your name to the waiting list.

Please note: Two places per household - members of RRA ONLY.

## **POLICE POINTS** *(Steve Kershaw.)*

June saw the anniversary of my first year in post as the Borough Commander for Hillingdon and also the implementation of the new Local Policing Model (LPM), which promotes local police dealing with local crimes. I am so grateful for the support the people of Hillingdon have shown in working with me on these changes. Together we have managed to reduce crime and educate our residents and visitors around important crime prevention issues. I wish to acknowledge the fantastic support which I have also received from the Borough Council and its members. We have driven forward a number of joint initiatives which I hope will continue to provide the best possible policing service for Hillingdon.

Your police have tracked down and arrested some very serious criminals, with our officers undertaking enquiries which have meant working with authorities in many other countries and with many different law enforcement agencies.

Key to our success has been our willingness to chase the criminal. Your officers have helped catch offenders who have hurt our community and fled elsewhere. We have not given up at our borders. We have taken the fear of crime back to them and arrested them in their "safe" houses.

We will be holding our second 'Aladdin's cave' exercise in the near future. During this event we display the vast amounts of property which we seize from criminals and the aim is to restore it to the rightful owners. Our first event, earlier this year, saw almost 1,200 residents attend the Civic Centre to view this property. Hillingdon Neighbourhood Watch and many other community groups were in attendance and there was a great feeling of unity against criminals.

I look forward to building on our successes. If my officers are doing their job right, please take the time to say 'well done'. If things are not how you would expect, then please let me know.

## **SPECIFIC COMMENTS FROM NICK HURD** *(cont. from page 7)*

**Ruislip Residents' Association** is concerned that important information is absent in the DES. The group argues that much of the information presented is the worst case scenario with no suggestions for mitigation. A few omissions:

- Ruislip Conservation Area is shown about 1/3 its actual area
- 2.1.9 omits Ruislip, Ruislip Manor, Eastcote and Ickenham Underground stations
- 2.1.11 omits the major local routes of Swakeleys Road and Breakspear Road South
- The DES does not make any mention of the Phase 2 work planned in the area.

## **COUNCILLORS' COMMENTS** *(John Riley)*

**Eastcote and East Ruislip Ward** – Catherine Dann, David Payne, Bruce Baker  
**Manor Ward** – Douglas Mills, Michael Markham, Susan O'Brien  
**West Ruislip Ward** – Philip Corthorne, Brian Crowe, John Riley

**New Woodland Centre Opens at the Lido** - The Mayor of Hillingdon together with the Leader of the Council and other dignitaries attended the opening in August of the new Woodland Centre at Ruislip Lido; it really is an impressive building and will provide a valuable resource for all who use it. This building is part of the overhaul and improvement of facilities at this great attraction in the Borough. Together with the new Car Park and other projects the Lido is getting the upgrade it deserves as one of the “jewels” in Hillingdon’s crown. The significant crowds attracted to this venue at weekends and sunny weekdays show its ever increasing popularity. Such popularity brings with it responsibility and while we want all our visitors to have a great time it is no more than sensible that visitors park responsibly, with due consideration for residents and in particular for road users on Ducks Hill, Bury Street and Breakspear Road.



**Highgrove Pool Reopens** - Since the last Town Crier the remodelled and upgraded Highgrove Pool and exercise centre has reopened. There was an official Civic opening ceremony. The pool and other facilities are a very popular leisure attraction where many local people learnt to swim. Again this impressive amenity is a demonstration of the commitment of this Administration to improving the health and enjoyment of residents. We in Hillingdon have continued to rebuild and improve where others have had to close and reduce. The Administrations’ secure financial management ensures that residents get the best we can afford, using creative and innovative methods to achieve our aims.

**Resurfacing of Local Roads** - The theme of improvement continues with the programme for resurfacing our roads. The speed and efficiency of the workforce is to be commended and many residents have reported very positively to us on the completion of their roads. A new list is being proposed to the Leadership of the Council and we hope to include as many roads in our Wards as we can.

*(continued on page 17)*

## **FRIENDS OF PINN MEADOWS (FOPM)** *(Rob Cousins)*

It's déjà vu on Pinn Meadows. For the third consecutive year, Eastcote Hockey Club has withdrawn its planning application for a fenced and floodlit Astro turf pitch and car park on Pinn Meadows, just before it was due to be heard by the North Planning Committee. Yet again the planning officer had recommended refusal. Yet again thousands of residents had signed a petition objecting to the development. And yet again Eastcote Hockey Club has promised to re-submit in due course.

The great news for residents is that a successful planning application is further away than ever and, as well as the planning officer's recommended refusal, there were objections from the Council's Flood Officer, Tree Officer, Sustainability Officer, Highways Officer and the Policy and Enforcement Planning team. Objections to the planning application were also received from the Environment Agency, Natural England, The Woodlands Trust, Sport England, The Ramblers Association, The Open Spaces Society, Eastcote Conservation Panel, Ruislip Conservation Panel, Ruislip Residents Association, Nick Hurd MP and numerous other residents' groups. The Hockey Club's grant offers have also been rescinded and following LBH's confirmation that their £150,000 grant is no longer on offer, the GLA have also confirmed that they have withdrawn their £120,000 grant offer. So is that the end of the matter?

Unfortunately not! The Hockey Club has been on Pinn Meadows recently to conduct a bat and river survey, no doubt to support their next planning application submission later in the year. Obviously, the £200,000 cash in their bank account, which has accumulated since the current Astro turf pitch was built in 1997 and has been supplemented by annual Council grants and a 91% Council rent subsidy, needs spending, but Pinn Meadows is not, and never will be, the right location for another Astro turf pitch.

In order to permanently protect the area, Friends of Pinn Meadows submitted a petition to the Council signed by over 5,000 residents, and supported by Eastcote Residents Association, Ruislip Residents Association and local Councillors, requesting that the Council designate Pinn Meadows as a Village Green. However, the petition was refused, as the Council felt that there was already sufficient protection from its own policies and ownership of the land. Let's hope so!

In other news, the Pinn Meadows Chrysalis project was completed this summer and includes new footpaths, benches, bins, bird and bat boxes and parking bollards. The completion was marked with the unveiling of a fantastic new information board

## FRIENDS OF PINN MEADOWS *(cont.)*

highlighting the history of the meadows and its wildlife species. FoPM also held a Big Picnic this summer as part of the nationwide “Big Lunch” event to get communities together. As well as the food and games, Ruislip Fire Crew brought their fire engine down for the children (& adults) to play on. FoPM also recently played host for the Council to the “London in Bloom” and “Britain in Bloom” judges who visited the meadows and were impressed with the amount of community involvement. To reinforce this, the Council’s Green Spaces team organised scythe training workshops on the meadows and FoPM members are now looking forward to being able to demonstrate their expertise in this ancient art at their future working parties.

Find out more at: [www.fopm.org.uk](http://www.fopm.org.uk).

## COUNCILLORS’ COMMENTS *(cont. from page 15)*

**HS2** - No report like this would be complete without a reference to HS2. Your Councillors continue to support the tremendous efforts of the **No** campaign which is highly effective. Any number of senior officials and politicians are coming round to the “No” arguments that many of us spoke on at the outset of this ill-considered project. The costs are becoming so outrageous as to be beyond any possible contemplation. We will always put residents first.

## EDITORIAL *(cont. from page 3)*

There will be another visit to RAF Northolt on Wednesday, 6th November, which, as before, is already heavily oversubscribed, and I am working through the names in order of date application. If there is anyone who would like to join the waiting list for a further visit scheduled for Wednesday, 19th March, 2014, maximum of two people per household membership of the RRA, let us know by email:

[towncrier@ruislipresidents.org.uk](mailto:towncrier@ruislipresidents.org.uk).

Further visits to the Houses of Parliament/Elizabeth Tower took place in August (see page 22, with photo on page 23). If you are interested in visiting our Seat of Government, details can be found on page 13.

## HEALTH MATTERS *(Joan Davis)*

### North West London Issues

North West London's "Shaping a Healthier Future" programme has considerable impact on The Hillingdon Hospitals Foundation Trust.

- a) **Capital funding:** This will be phased in over time:
  - **Backlog maintenance:** An external survey will guide what is funded.
  - **Infrastructure improvement:** This is to prepare Hillingdon Hospital for the proposed development of its clinical services.
- b) **Improved clinical services:** There are three main strands:
  - **Maternity services:** The aim is to provide for 6,000 births per year, with greatly improved facilities.
  - **New theatre and beds:** There are plans for an additional theatre and Intensive Treatment beds – as well as 46 beds on the new Acute Medical Unit.
  - **Diagnostics:** The case for more MRI/CT scanners will be explored.
- c) **Ealing Council's application for judicial review of the whole programme:** Judicial review was refused on 8th August, but Ealing Council expects to have an oral hearing in early September. The outcome will influence Hillingdon Hospital's plans for its emergency and maternity services.

### Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group

**Financial inheritance from Hillingdon Primary Care Trust:** Last year's accounts show a recurrent deficit of £11.3m per year, but also a 2012-13 surplus, as required! This was only achieved with in-year support of £21.8m, as a result of which Hillingdon CCG inherited a £15m debt. *Through Community Voice, RRA is protesting loudly that repaying this debt is grossly unfair!*

**Reinvestment of funds withheld due to above target re-admissions to hospital:** The aim is to use these funds to prevent avoidable admissions. A Rapid Response team in Hillingdon Hospital is now identifying patients likely to avoid admittance by more care at home, possibly with care in a 'virtual ward'.

**New Urgent Care Centre at Hillingdon Hospital:** This will be open 24/7 and have diagnostic facilities. It will be run by Greenbrook Healthcare. Only ambulances will have direct access to Hillingdon A&E – all other patients will be triaged in the UCC. Patients referred there after 'phoning 111 will have priority treatment. Some patients will be referred to their GPs, some treated in the UCC – only those needing A&E's specialist care will be transferred there.

### Central & North West London Foundation Trust

**Expansion of CNWL:** In Hillingdon this Trust provides mental health and community services. Its 7,000 staff provide healthcare to a third of London's population and

## HEALTH MATTERS *(cont.)*

across wide areas of Kent, Surrey, Hampshire and, from earlier this year, Milton Keynes too. It has a total income of £420m.

### **Royal Brompton and Harefield Foundation Trust**

**Redevelopment:** Both hospitals are to be developed on their current sites. At Harefield Hospital in 2012-13 Acorn Ward capacity was increased by 18 beds and the Cherry Tree Day-Case Unit was created with 16 beds. A fourth laboratory for replacement cardiac catheters was opened.

**Safe and Sustainable Review:** This Review proposed that Royal Brompton Hospital lose children's heart surgery, but that has been overtaken by a new review covering congenital heart disease services for both adults and children.

**Transplant services:** There were more than 20 transplants in 2012-13; more than double the number in the previous year.

### **The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**

#### **Successful bid to secure funding for dementia friendly environments:**

£845,120 has been awarded by the Dept. of Health for Beaconsfield East Ward and the garden shared with The Stroke Unit. This is one of 116 national pilot schemes. The Alzheimer's Society notes that the stress of hospital admission can exacerbate dementia symptoms such as distress, challenging behaviour, and confusion – it is hoped that a better environment will combat that stress.

**Pressures on A&E:** The London Ambulance Service reported that during the height of this summer's heat wave calls exceeded 6,000 per day. Hillingdon A&E attendances exceeded 300, compared to a daily average of 220 and on some days in July ambulance arrivals increased by 50%.

**Integrated care pilot for elderly patients and adult diabetic patients:** In collaboration with Central & North West London FT, the Trust led a successful bid to provide an assisted discharge pilot to provide intensive therapy support in the home for up to five days, aiming to cut hospital stays by up to four days. A further successful bid provides specialist diabetic training to staff in selected nursing homes, with the aim of reducing the number of diabetic patients needing hospital admission; a clinical nurse specialist leads this programme, supervised and supported by a consultant from Hillingdon Hospital.

**The Friends and Family Test:** In June the Trust was in the top half in London for inpatient feedback and in the top quarter for A&E. Some patients added comments leading to a review of menu choices, more meal choices for long term patients, and remedial action to combat lights' nuisance and noise at night.

## EDUCATION MATTERS *(Susan Midgley)*

**Ruislip High School:** I am pleased to be able to report that paintings by students from the school are now hanging in the corridors of the Princess Christian Unit at Mount Vernon Hospital, together with those from Bishop Ramsey. A photo shoot was arranged at the hospital; in attendance were Mr. Simon Lordan, Head of Art & Design, Kerry Ferris, Art teacher and student representatives, Aimee Brooks, Jason Bangi, Millie Patel and Drishna Sainju who had work on display.

**The Young Ruislip Artists' Exhibition 2013:** On Friday, July 12th, at The Art Gallery in Ruislip Manor, there was a private viewing for parents, students and local press of GCSE and A Level artwork by the students from Ruislip High School. Following the private viewing, the paintings were on display for a week; some of the paintings were for sale. Proud parents purchased work on the evening. The pictures were generously framed by the partners of The Art Gallery, Stephen Bird and Helen Dancer, who also set up the impressive display. Two paintings which particularly caught my eye were "Woman With Chains" by Jasmine Virdee and "Pained in Acrylic" by Vanessa Keen. Both students explained very articulately the themes they were asked to explore as stimuli and how they eventually came to produce these final pieces of A Level coursework. Some of the students whose work was on display will be taking places on Foundation courses at Art colleges.

**Warrender Primary School:** In July the Year 5 students from the school were unanimously elected to receive the Hinman Shield by the Eastcote Conservation Panel for the contribution they made to the success of the bid made by the Friends of Eastcote House Gardens to the Heritage Lottery Fund. Each year the shield is awarded to children who have done some conservation work in the community. The presentation was made in the Gardens by the Mayor of Hillingdon and was received on behalf of the school by Head Boy, Ben Roberts, and Head Girl, Sophia Valabhji.

**Retirement of Mr. Barry Harmer:** Mr. Harmer was originally appointed as Deputy Head of Whiteheath Junior School in 1986. He became Headteacher in 1990. Under his leadership, the school has gone from strength to strength and was reported in the *Evening Standard* in January 2005 to be among the 37 best schools in the capital and among the best Primary Schools in Britain. Ofsted gave the school "Outstanding" after its inspection and the school won the Primary category after virtually every pupil met or exceeded the government's targets. The school is now designated a Beacon School. When asked what he would miss most, Mr. Harmer said it would be contact with the children. In his retirement Mr. Harmer plans to travel with his wife to Australia and Russia and to walk Hadrian's Wall.

*(continued on page 22)*

## **PLANNING MATTERS** *(Mike Hodge/John Williams)*

**POST OFFICE 48 HIGH STREET:** A formal planning application to regularise existing signs and advertising material was refused by the local authority, but it has now gone to appeal. At the time of this report a decision from the Planning Inspectorate was still awaited and we will continue to monitor the situation.

**97-99 HIGH STREET:** Morrisons are to open a local retail outlet on this site and have been actively recruiting with a view to opening in the near future.

**8 WINDMILL HILL:** Despite local objections and written support from Ruislip Residents Association, unauthorised works have continued on this site. Various planning applications have been refused by the local authority. Yet another has now been registered, which must be determined by local planners before any enforcement measures can be taken.

**QUILTERS 178-182 HIGH STREET:** This flagship store has withdrawn a planning application to redevelop the site, which would have entailed conversion to residential dwellings. It is possible a smaller scale application may be submitted in due course.

**ESSO FILLING STATION EASTCOTE HIGH ROAD:** Given its local position, concerns have been raised concerning a proposal to redevelop the site for residential housing. It is only recently that the garage in Midcroft closed, setting a precedent which it is hoped will be contained.

**PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT:** With changes to the rules, it is important to gather feedback on the new regime. There will be a meeting hosted by the organisation of local residents' associations later this month, when an update of how in practice things are panning out will be discussed. We shall keep residents informed.

**SUPERMARKET DEVELOPMENT:** There are a number of proposals in the area surrounding Ruislip, most notably the development of land off the A40 at Hillingdon Circus. Currently there are two major projects, from Tesco and Morrisons, each for a large food store with a hotel, at least six storeys high, over a 100 residential units and general reconfiguration of the area which would see demolition of The Swallow public house and new parking arrangements.

It is understood, that Sainsburys:

in South Ruislip are to enhance floor space and update their store,  
in Eastcote are planning to open a "local" store opposite the station  
and in Northwood are developing plans for a large store in Station Approach.

## **CLIMBING BIG BEN** *(Joan Davis)*

If you get a chance to climb Big Ben – grab it! Not for the fainthearted – there are 334 steps to climb so it is a challenge, but highly rewarding. Two groups accomplished this feat on 9th and 16th August in visits organised by the RRA with group leaders on the day being Tessa Kershaw and Steve Baxter respectively. The visit is free, which is surprising in view of the amount of organisation involved. Two guides accompany the party every step of the way, one ahead and one at the rear, for the whole of the visit, spanning nearly two hours.

Big Ben is actually the largest of the four bells in the Belfry. Since the Queen's Jubilee in 2012 the tower is called the Elizabeth Tower, but most of us will always choose to refer to the whole tower and clock (and bells!) just as "Big Ben".

The climb is up a spiral staircase, solid concrete steps and a rail right to the top, but there are mini-landings every dozen or so steps, and three major stops en route to sit down and catch one's breath. Our guide was well briefed and informative. There were historical references and plenty of time for questions. Timing was perfect, with Big Ben and its companion bells marking the quarters of the hour as we progressed to the top. We saw the machinery of the clock and the bells themselves, arriving at the belfry for the chime of twelve noon. Ear plugs provided!

The view from the top is superb – an excellent view of the Shard, tallest building in Europe, and of other London landmarks. We touched Big Ben itself, watched as the big hammer struck the hour on the bell, saw the crack which nearly led to it suffering the same fate as its forerunner, Big Ben 1, which was broken up and melted down.

There were many stories, such as the current big bell being pulled from its foundry in Whitechapel by 16 white horses through cheering crowds, much like the jubilee! I won't tell you more, for fear of spoiling your own visit.

## **EDUCATION MATTERS** *(cont. from page 20)*

The school's motto reads: A child should attend with pleasure, satisfaction and profit, leave with regret and remember with pride. Much of this certainly sums up Mr. Harmer's achievement at the school. He will be greatly missed by staff, students and parents. Miss Michelle Kenny (previously Deputy Head) has been appointed as Headteacher from September.

## REMINDER

**DON'T FORGET !**

**The RRA GENERAL MEETING is on  
THURSDAY, 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER  
COME ALONG and JOIN US for a GLASS  
OF WINE (and LIGHT REFRESHMENTS)**

**TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LISTEN TO  
GUEST SPEAKERS AND ASK YOUR BURNING  
QUESTIONS!**

**WE REALLY WOULD LIKE TO MEET YOU  
WE WELCOME YOUR INPUT!**

**(see Page 3 for details)**

Members visit the Elizabeth Tower (see page 22)

(Photo: Mark Barker)





**Identification please!  
Grown from a stump of red cabbage**

**Ruislip High School  
Paintings hanging at  
Mt. Vernon Hospital  
(page 20)**



**Warrender School  
The Hinman Shield  
(page 20)**

**A visitor to our July Executive  
Committee meeting  
(approx. full size)**

