

## OUR HOSPITAL - BACK IN PLAY (AGAIN)

Either Epsom or St Helier (or both) could be downgraded unless investment of £300 million plus is secured. The NHS Trust managing the sites has set out six scenarios for public consultation, only one of which involves acute services continuing at both sites.

The scenarios are:

- Both hospitals continue as they are and receive enough funding to bring them up to a “functional level”.
- Options 2 and 3: A new specialist acute facility at *either* Epsom *or* St Helier.
- A new specialist acute facility based at Sutton Hospital.
- A variation of the above - a new specialist acute facility based at a combined site of Sutton Hospital and the Royal Marsden Hospital.
- No capital investment, so acute services withdrawn and no specialist cancer care in a combined site with Royal Marsden.

The acute facility would involve accident and emergency, maternity and paediatrics, high dependency and coronary care units, and fully meet NHS standards.

The Trust claims that for 85% of patients there would be no change and services would continue at the same site as currently. An A&E service would continue, with both “walk-in and urgent treatment centres” on both sites, under all scenarios. (We suggest that the Trust is clear on when an A&E unit is an A&E unit and when it is an urgent treatment centre – what is the difference?)

Trust Chief Executive Daniel Elkeles has said he needs public support to gain funding from the NHS, and that current buildings need a huge investment. He said “If we do not get the investment, we can’t, in perpetuity, continue providing good care in buildings which are not fit for purpose.”

Local MP’s have responded very differently. Our MP, Chris Grayling, has expressed “profound concerns” about launching yet another discussion on the hospitals’ future without any clear indication from NHS England that funds would be available for a new hospital. He supports the separation of Epsom and St Helier, and sees Epsom working as part of a network of Surrey Hospitals. Crispin Blunt, MP for the majority of Reigate & Banstead, takes a different view. He supports the case for co-location in Sutton with the Marsden, stating “the Surrey option is off the table and should stay off the table” for the time being. Who is right? Which option do you favour?



**DE BURGH SITE PLANS APPROVED - see page 6 for details**

*Artist's Impression: View of the southern end of the development – the pocket park and play space*



## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

**Kathy Edwards** We were very sorry to hear of the passing of Kathy Edwards. Kathy and John our former chairman both served on the Residents' Association committee for many years. Our deepest sympathies are with John and his family at this sad time.

**County Council Election** We are pleased to report that in the election in May. We were successful again, with Nick Harrison elected with a substantial majority. The result for the Nork & Tattenhams division was:

Residents' Association	2,470	<i>Compared to the last county council elections in 2013, the share of the vote for the Residents' Association increased by 5%.</i>
Conservatives	971	
Liberal Democrats	186	
Labour	166	
Green	78	
(Turnout 32%)		

The political make up the County Council has not changed significantly, with the Conservatives reclaiming the 3 seats they lost to UKIP back in 2013. The overall numbers are: Conservatives 61 seats; Residents' Association 9 seats; Liberal Democrats 9 seats; Green and Labour one seat each.

**Trees in Verges** We successfully applied for a special projects grant from Reigate and Banstead Council to replace some of the trees that we have lost in recent years from our verges. We have funds to plant about 20 trees, which will need to be nurtured in their first couple of years with regular watering and additional watering during hot dry spells.

If you miss the tree that used to grace your verge and can take on the watering responsibilities, then please get in touch with Councillor Jill Bray via email – see below. In the event that more than 20 people volunteer to look after a tree in their verge we will, in the interests of fairness, have a draw to decide where the trees are placed.

We have had residents offer to pay for trees to be planted in their verges and whilst making a financial contribution won't guarantee that one of the trees is placed in your verge, it would increase the overall number of trees planted, so please let me know if you would like to make a contribution.

**Community Speed Watch** One of the **BIG issues** mentioned by many of you during our recent canvassing in the lead up to the Council elections was speeding on our local roads. We have used Community Speed Watch as a useful deterrent. The scheme provides training. We need at least 20 people to make 4 or 5 teams to regularly patrol the roads in our ward. A Rota will ensure volunteers do not operate Speed Watch in their own road, but other volunteers, on another day will be. If you would like to find out more please email Councillor Jill Bray: [cllr.bray@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.bray@reigate-banstead.gov.uk).

**Ruth and Keith Ravalde** Our secretary (Ruth) and treasurer/ membership secretary (Keith) retired from the committee in the Spring. At the AGM we thanked them for 20 years of dedicated service to the RA and we continue to appreciate their work as area Road Stewards.

**New Members** We are delighted to welcome new appointed committee members: Mandy Carle and Martin Beard. Martin has joined us as Vice Chairman and Mandy as Events Manager. We are always looking for new volunteers for the committee or newsletter delivery. We are also looking for someone with Social Media and website management experience. Please get in touch to find out more.

In October we will be holding a Residents Association Autumn Meeting. More information will be in our events section on the website and in the next newsletter. See our website for more local events in Tattenhams.

*Rue Stanley*      [ruestanley17@gmail.com](mailto:ruestanley17@gmail.com)

# **COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATE**

## **Thanks**

I would like to thank my colleague in the Residents' Association who helped in the election, canvassing and acting as tellers. It was a team effort. Thank you to residents for answering the door when we came knocking, for responding so positively, and giving me your vote. I will try to represent you vigorously, and work hard to live up to the trust that you have put in me and the Residents' Association.

## **Canvassing Issues**

Residents raised a wide range of issues on the door step, with roads and pavements predominating. You frequently mentioned the condition of the traffic lights junction of Reigate Road with Great Tattenhams and Tattenham Way, and I'm pleased this has already been resurfaced. The other spot highlighted was the five-way roundabout on Epsom Downs at the top of Fir Tree Road, which is particularly poor. This is in fact in Epsom & Ewell, and I have raised it with the relevant county councillor, and some patching has been completed.

I am pleased that the pedestrian crossing at Tattenham Corner is complete, as is the resurfacing works in Preston Lane. This latter scheme was many weeks over schedule, caused by a major leak in the sewage system. This overrun, and the delays caused by the gas main replacement, has impacted the resurfacing of Chapel Way. The contractor has now moved on to work elsewhere in the country and it is not clear when the work will be re-scheduled. You may have also noticed the extensive drainage works in the A217 Mad Mile, following which the entire section will be resurfaced.

Although work is underway on these projects, there are severe cut backs to local highways budgets. A number of you have asked me for minor patching, tree trimming, drainage dig-outs, signs and white lines, and other works usually carried out by the local "community gang". With the election complete, the ruling group has reduced the budget for Reigate & Banstead from £610,000 to £77,000. Consequently, very little local work will be commissioned, over and above that needed to meet minimum legal requirements.

The other issue of concern to many was planning and development. The Residents' Association continues to look at planning applications, to maintain the character of the area, and ensure intensive and detrimental development is minimised. We promote the local environment and oppose un-neighbourly cramped schemes, with inadequate parking and loss of trees. We find that developers frequently try to squeeze in as many new properties as they can on a site. Even if they are turned down at the Council's Planning Committee, they can always appeal to the Bristol-based Planning Inspectorate. We are pleased that in a number of important recent applications, the Planning Inspectorate has come down in favour of the Council and objectors.

## **The Budget Gap**

At the County Council's post-election AGM. I took the opportunity to remind Cllr David Hodge who was re-elected Leader, that despite the election, the reality is that the Council faces the same challenges in budget and services. Nothing has changed – the Council still needs to save over £90 million this year. I pointed out that the most recent report from the Public Accountancy Body, CIPFA, claimed that Surrey's spend is substantially more than that of similar county councils.

Back in February we had the on-off issue of a 15% increase in council tax, and Cllr Hodge told us he had a "gentlemen's agreement" with the government to solve our funding issue, and that is why he backed down and stuck to a 5% increase in Council Tax. This was taken to mean that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would offer Surrey a place on a "Business Rates pilot programme" which would give Surrey more funding. But post election, the pilot programme has been abandoned, and who knows what the government's approach will be to adult social services spending – the primary cause of Surrey's budget plight. It seems unlikely the gentlemen's agreement will be honoured.

At the AGM, I also urged Cllr Hodge to take personal charge of improvements to Surrey County Council's children's services, which were as found severely wanting by OFSTED.

*Nick Harrison*

## **STREET LIGHTS – THE BIG TURN-OFF**

Starting last February, the street lights in our area started to be turned off at midnight. They were already being dimmed at 10:00pm. Lights in our main A and B roads were left on, but they were all turned off in our residential roads, be they through roads, feeder roads, cul de sacs or footpaths.

This policy was approved by the County Council's Conservative Councillors after a very limited and poorly publicised consultation which ran for only 4 weeks last August, with only 842 residents responding in the entire county. Residents were asked if they were in favour of switching off street lights for part of the night where deemed safe to do so in order to save energy bills and reduce CO2 emissions. They were given the options of 'many', 'some' or 'none' – with less than half agreeing to switching off 'many' lights. The consultation process was inadequate – poorly publicised, the time frame too short, and the emphasis on saving energy and emissions *where deemed safe* (from what? crime? falling on unlit pavements in a poor state of repair?) The responses were insufficient to support the council's case. The saving, while important, is modest in the scale of the overall council budget - £210,000 each year – or about 25p for each adult in Surrey.

The Council has said that it consulted the police so as to exclude "high crime" areas from the switch-off programme. The Police Commissioner dismissed the issue, saying switching off street lights has little effect on crime, and anyway he lived in a small village without street lights and that there has never been a problem.

Residents have approached the Residents' Association noting recent burglaries and trips on the pavement at night. In Epsom, an increase in car crime has been reported. Following up on these concerns through a formal question to the Council, we were told "*no roads in Reigate & Banstead were identified by Surrey Police to be excluded on the grounds of concerns over crime.*"

Despite protests and challenges, the Council Leadership are unwilling to revoke the policy, saying that the savings are included in the budget, and that it has been approved. A petition with over 1,000 signatures was dismissed, saying "over 75% of people consulted were in favour of switching off some lights". It acknowledged the low level of responses, but said "*it is reflective of the anecdotal feedback in the media, including social media, both prior to and since implementation.*"

## **COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRES**

Last year the Council brought in charges at our local tips, such as the one in Epsom, for non-household waste - rubble and DIY waste etc – although the first bag is free. The government minister was unhappy with this and the possibility of increased fly-tipping and he was reported as considering outlawing charges. This seems to have been lost in the general election.

We reported at the time that we anticipated further service cuts, and this has proven to be the case. The Council is now seeking the views of residents on the following:

- Ending the free daily allowance of non-household waste
- Closing sites on two weekdays so all sites are open for five days a week
- Restrictions to ensure Surrey sites are only used by Surrey residents (already in place in Epsom)
- Permanent closure of four smaller sites in Bagshot, Cranleigh, Warlingham and Dorking
- Restricting users of vans, trailers and pick-ups to the larger sites.

An online survey can be reached through the Surrey website – **closing date 7 August** – with the responses taken into account by the Council's cabinet in making a decision this autumn.

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/recyclingcentres](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/recyclingcentres) or go to [www.surreysays.co.uk](http://www.surreysays.co.uk).

**Or:** email to [wasteconsultation@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:wasteconsultation@surreycc.gov.uk)

**Or for a paper copy:** call 03456 009 009

**Or** text 07860 053 465

The website gives a list of frequently asked questions. It says that the proposal is to close sites when there are fewer visitors and would try to avoid closing nearby sites on the same day, so residents have an alternative. We take that to mean sites would be open on both Saturdays and Sundays.

## WILLIAM HODSON, the JAM FACTORY and the new RAILWAY

In our last newsletter, we told the story of William Hodson and North Tadworth Farm, and his very own Jam Factory. The farmhouse was at the end of Chetwode Road, where Broad Walk stands today, and the factory was sited on Long Walk. Much of the Preston Estate and the de Burgh site were the fields for his fruit and veg.

For William, business was blooming. By 1892 he was wealthy enough to put his two older boys through Epsom College. Fred, his oldest, left the College and joined the jam-making business. While John studied medicine at Guy's Hospital and went into general practice in Nottingham.

1893 must have been a good year for potatoes, judging by the adverts that William placed in The Standard.

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In the same year, an Act of Parliament was passed to control access to the commons and heath-lands of Banstead. When William was appointed as one of the Conservators, he found himself rubbing shoulders with local dignitaries, such as Francis Baring, who built the country mansion in Banstead Wood, and Lord Chief Justice Sir Charles Russell of Tadworth Court.

William was a religious man. In 1895 he built a Mission Hall on land in the High Street called Town Field or Pound Field, which he bought with other local businessmen. The Mission Hall was later registered as the Baptist Free Church and the current building is known as Christchurch.

Meanwhile, when Frederick Colman of mustard fame bought the Nork Estate, William got a new landlord. Fortunately, they shared a passion for farming and so, while William got on with his business, Colman built up a prime herd of red-pollled cattle on the grasslands of Nork.

At the same time, moves were afoot to construct a new railway. A spur line was proposed from Drift Bridge to Walton-on-the Hill, passing through Tattenham Corner and Tadworth Village.

Frederick Colman was not happy. The line would run right across his new estate. He reacted by selling off a narrow strip of land to Epsom Grandstand Association, on which they constructed a 'straight mile' racecourse. It started at the lower end of Merland Rise (celebrated today by Straight Mile Place) and finished in front of the Grandstand. The new racecourse cut right across the proposed line of the railway. When the rail sponsors proposed to tunnel under the 'straight mile', Frederick countered with a barrage of objections; e.g. demanding that an additional siding be built at Tattenham Corner for the sole use of the jam factory. The Drift Bridge spur line proposal was dropped.

In 1900, Frederick Colman died and control of Nork Park passed to his widow, Lady Helen Colman. Her older son, Gordon (pictured standing), set about turning the estate into a game park which would prove disastrous for William's fruit trees. William's quarrel with the Colman's would lead to his downfall.

When Gordon Colman turned 21, he joined the board of the family's mustard business and was put in charge of sales and advertising. With Gordon's passion for hunting he hired a gamekeeper for Nork, skilled in the propagation of wildlife and protecting it against poachers.



Very soon, William's farm and orchards were overrun by rabbits which destroyed his crops and damaged his fruit trees. As if that wasn't enough, he also lost an important customer, when the wholesale business of Ransome Wallace of Copt Hill (who had invested in the jam making business) was declared insolvent. William's good fortune was fast running out.

Needing to control the pests, William consulted the terms of his farm lease and found it stated that, as tenant, he could kill the rabbits, if his landlord failed to do so on his behalf. He raised this with the Colman's who did nothing, so William decided to take matters into his own hands. Over the next few days he killed no less than 500 rabbits. When Gordon Colman discovered the slaughter, he issued a demand for compensation and William Hodson had to pay £25 for the dead rabbits, £277 for pheasants, and a further £400 in legal bills.

## WILLIAM HODSON .... continued

William was a ruined man. Unable to pay his workers, he had to close the Jam Factory and dismiss the workforce. Unable to pay the rent, William and his family were forcibly thrown off the land they had farmed and improved for the last thirty years. One can only imagine the effect this had on poor William. He was forced to sell his share in the Mission Hall.

To make ends meet, William took a job as an Estate Agent's clerk in Tadworth. His sons emigrated and William ended his days living alone in Ashcroft, Tadworth. He died in 1912, aged 62. I have been unable to locate his burial place. Elizabeth Hodson survived her husband until 1922, living in a cottage in Epsom Lane. She died aged 70 and was buried in Kingswood Cemetery.

*chris.watkins@ntlworld.com*

## DE BURGH DEVELOPMENT APPROVED

Final approval has been granted to the new development on the site of the playing fields of the former de Burgh school. This detailed application put forward by developer London Square for 229 dwellings (170 houses and 59 flats) replaces an earlier outline approval for 186 dwellings. 25% will be affordable (34 shared ownership and 23 affordable rent) – less than usual because of the high mix of social housing already in Preston.

Despite the additional properties, the new scheme is a much improved design. The properties are better than those put forward in the outline approval, with additional parking over and above that required for the additional housing, and more open public spaces and play areas. Much of the parking will be in secure parking courts, and there will be car barns in place of unused garages.

For such a major development there were relatively few objectors. There was concern on the added strain on schooling and GP services, but no objections came forward from these authorities. Local schools do have capacity. The Residents' Association expressed concern about traffic rat-running through the side roads, and the Highway Authority have proposed short sections of one-way streets in Long Walk and Broad Walk to help – this will be subject to public consultation. However, they claimed their room for manoeuvre was limited because of the outline approval in place. They say they were obliged to look only at the limited additional traffic from the extra 43 properties. We remain very concerned about additional pressure on the Merland Rise/ Great Tattenhams junction.

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