

RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter of Tattenham & Preston Residents



Summer 2020 Newsletter

www.tattenhamra.org.uk

THE GLOVES ARE OFF! – IT'S SURREY versus REIGATE & BANSTEAD

Somewhat unnoticed in the Queen's Speech after Boris Johnson's victory last December – with all the focus on Brexit – was an announcement on English devolution – “ambitions for unleashing regional potential in England”. The government promised continued economic growth and increased productivity, and additional funding (probably a minimum of £30m for 30 years) and powers in step with “institutional reform”. Institutional reform means the abolition of two-tier authorities in the shire counties, such as Surrey. The structure the government would like is single authorities, but possibly with a mayor sitting on top, like London.

County Council

With the coronavirus pandemic, everything was put on the back-burner. But the white paper is now expected this autumn and the County Council has put in a pre-emptive bid for Surrey to be a single unitary authority, with it taking all the powers to itself, abolishing the 11 borough councils in Surrey.

A single county-wide authority has been introduced in Cornwall (half the population of Surrey); the same with Wiltshire and Dorset. Berkshire and Northamptonshire have gone the other way, breaking the county into smaller single-tier authorities, and Lancashire is likely to follow.

Borough Council

Reigate & Banstead and the other boroughs are scrambling to put a counter-bid together. Although some still favour retention of the two-tiers, and that remains a possibility, some see the government insisting no change is not an option. So the boroughs are looking at alternative ways Surrey could be split into a number of unitary councils – either two, three or four, and therefore abolishing the county council.

There are pros and cons of the alternatives – the County Council is seen as too remote, too large and unaccountable, and having many local borough councils as less than efficient.



Local councillors are strongly opposed to a single authority taking all power into a growing central bureaucracy, taking little heed of local views. The costs of change would be massive, and often the savings illusory. Multiple chief executives are removed, but more deputies and specialists are appointed. The county's record on children's services going into special measures and continuing problems with adult care do not show a good record of stewardship.

So, how could the county be split?

The Government has indicated that a population range of 300,000 to 500,000 people would be acceptable, which would support breaking Surrey into three councils. In our area, that could mean an “East Surrey Council”, with Reigate & Banstead joining its neighbours Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley and Tandridge.

With the range of alternatives being put forward the Government would run a consultation. We will work with residents to discuss the alternatives in more detail, and are planning on setting up a general meeting this autumn, using virtual technology through Zoom. We will post details of the alternatives on our website when they are available.

**VIRTUAL GENERAL MEETING
BY ZOOM**

**PAYING YOUR SUBS
(PLEASE!)**

-- SEE NEXT PAGE --



FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Residents

This is my first newsletter, as the new chair of the Residents Association, taking over from Rue Stanley at the beginning of lockdown. My family has lived in the area for over 30 years and I became involved in the R A as I wanted to actively participate in the community. I am sorry I didn't get the opportunity to meet you at our March AGM, obviously a casualty of lockdown.

Hospital

At the AGM, we would have had the opportunity to hear directly from Epsom St Helier about their proposals for a new specialist emergency care hospital built at one of Epsom, St Helier or Sutton. And unlike previous reviews, this stands a chance of progress as Boris Johnson has announced funding of £500 million has already been earmarked for the project. The decision has since been made by the local NHS to go with the Sutton option, which has sparked off a backlash to those committed for the new hospital being in Epsom or St. Helier. It should be remembered that 85% of current cases will continue to be treated at the existing hospitals. There are still many hurdles to go through before the new hospital is built. We hope to have the NHS back to a future meeting.

On-line Residents Meeting

We usually have an autumn meeting, with a visiting speaker on a topical issue, and the chance for questions and answers with your local councillors. There is no sign that large scale gatherings are going to be allowed any time soon, and we think we could hold an on-line "zoom" virtual autumn meeting. We have been successfully holding on-line committee meetings, and we think the technology is robust enough for the numbers of people who are likely to turn up for the meeting. Anyway, let's give it a try!

You will need a laptop computer, tablet or mobile phone to participate, and we will send you an electronic link by email to join the meeting – you will just need to download the zoom app to join us. We can help you do this if you are unsure. **Besides the councillor Q and A session, the main topic will be the reorganisation of the county and borough councils.** We do not have a date fixed yet - we will tie it in with the public consultation, once information is available.

To participate, we will need your email address. We will then advise the date/time and the link to the zoom session. Please email kjchattelle@hotmail.com if you want to join us, and say if you need help with the app.

Subscriptions

We are grateful to our network of road stewards for delivering this newsletter. They would normally be knocking on your door at this time, asking if you would pay the annual £3 membership which we request from residents to support the work of the R A. Given the current restrictions that is not possible. Therefore in most cases, where we have a road steward, we have left an envelope with this newsletter, which we hope you can use. Please just drop it through our road steward's letterbox.

If you don't have the cash, and many of us have got out of the cash habit, then a cheque is fine. Alternatively, if we don't have a nearby road steward, or if you prefer, you can make an electronic transfer from your bank:

**To make an electronic transfer please send £3 to:
sort code: 30-93-08 account number: 00218075
Please put your post code and house number in the reference field.**

Planning

We are concerned that the government have introduced changes to the planning system, to give more freedoms to developers to avoid the views of residents and local councillors. And there are more changes in the pipeline. We will give an update in our next newsletter.

Kathryn Chattelle

A VERY DIFFERENT KIND OF YEAR

So far 2020 has been a year like no other. At the start of the year I don't think any of us would have predicted that we would spend months in lockdown and that our lives would take such a dramatic turn. We hope that you are healthy, staying safe and coping with this unusual year.

Help is Still Available

Over the last five months, Merland Rise and St Marks have been coordinating a team of willing volunteers to help those in the community who have been self – isolating. We have been helping families and individuals by collecting shopping, prescriptions, befriending and giving other practical help on a regular basis.

AT THE BEGINNING OF JULY, WE GIFTED
'THE BIG CREAM TEA GIVEAWAY'
TO THOSE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WE HAD
BEEN SUPPORTING DURING LOCKDOWN



Even though lockdown has officially ended, help is still available for those who may need a little support. If you need someone to collect a prescription, shopping or maybe would appreciate a friendly phone call then our volunteers are still available to help you. You can request help by emailing help@merlandrisechurch.org.uk or phoning Des at St Marks 01737 353011.

Church Opening

Ordinarily, our church regularly runs a wide range of activities open to everyone in the community; from the soft play café, table tennis club, children's clubs to opportunities to meet with others to pray or learn more about the Bible. We are hoping that it will not be too much longer before we are able to open and restart all these activities. In the meantime our Sunday services are streamed on Youtube and you are welcome to join us every Sunday 10:30am at www.merlandrisechurch.org.uk/live

The logo for "essentials" is displayed against a background of a starry night sky with the Milky Way. The word "essentials" is in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, with the letter "a" in orange. Below it, the tagline "the heart of the Christian faith" is written in a smaller, white, lowercase font.

Are You Curious to know more?

- Essentials is a five week online course that is ideal for anyone who wants to find out more about Christianity.
- Each week we will watch a short film followed by a chance to talk and ask any questions you have.
- Starts **Wednesday 9th Sept 7:30pm.**

Contact Richard for more details: richard.powell@merlandrisechurch.org.uk Phone: 07513 279883

18 YEARS AT EPSOM DOWNS– MEMORIES AND MILESTONES

Sally Leach joined Epsom Downs Primary School and Children's Centre in January 2003 and retired at the end of the summer term. She shares a few of her memories of 18 years at the centre of our community

It's been a privilege to be the Head of Epsom Downs Primary School and Children's Centre for the past 18 years and I am especially proud of the achievements of the children who have made the school such a special place.

Our core belief is that children should learn first-hand as much as possible and have memorable experiences to enhance their learning. Here are just a few of those memorable moments



EPSOM DOWNS FARM . Few schools have a farm where children can learn about and care for animals. We have chickens (some hatched in classrooms!), rabbits, guinea pigs, goats and pigs.

Children collect eggs to use in their cookery lessons, they also harvest fruit and vegetables from our allotments. Our nature world provides outdoor learning opportunities with a pond and wildlife area.



CHRIS TARRANT OPENS CHILDREN'S CENTRE

In 2005 we opened our day nursery and the first Children's Centre at a Surrey school. We have always been committed to support families throughout their journey with us.

Chris Tarrant opened the centre, spoke eloquently about our provision, planted a tree and released some balloons. The event was made special by the enthusiasm of Chris, and the children and their families who attended had a wonderful day.



STEEL BAND AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Our steel band is very popular and they enjoy performing within the community. A particular highlight was the year the children performed for Chis Grayling MP at the House of Commons.

The children and adults arrived in a minibus with the steel drums in a horse trailer and had to go through security. The children played beautifully and left with enduring memories of the event. One member of the band has just qualified as a teacher while training at Epsom Downs.



JIVE IN THE DRIVE The school has always been actively involved with the local community and Merland Rise Church have been a great supporter of the school. Our parent fundraising group organise annual events that include a summer fair, firework display and, for a few years, 'Jive in the Drive'.

We welcomed both local bands, and some more widely known musicians, including Chico from the X factor.

ROYAL VISIT The Duke of Gloucester visited the school in 2007 for a tour of the site and was impressed by the diversity and support we are able to offer.

The children provided enthusiastic entertainment and a presentation was made to Rev Roger Welch, celebrating 25 years as governor at the school.

We still have the 'Duke of Gloucester' tea service bought for the occasion!



RAINBOW UNIT 10TH ANNIVERSARY One my first projects at Epsom Downs was the development of our outstanding open plan early years facility called the Rainbow Unit.

On the 10th anniversary of the opening every child in the school dressed in a colour of the rainbow and we held a balloon launch.



AWARDS We have achieved many awards during the last 18 years. Chris Grayling presented an Award on 2 occasions for the work in our nurture room.

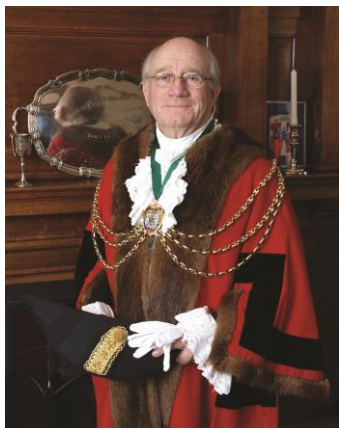
We also achieved the whole school nurture award for the work to promote healthy lifestyles including positive mental health. Other awards include the NACE award recognising challenge for more able pupils, the International Schools and Eco Awards.



I am sad to leave the school but have wonderful memories of my time here and know that it is in safe hands with Anya Salisbury who will lead and develop the school even further.

Sally Leach

BRIAN STEAD



We regret to report of Brian's death. He was a Residents Association councillor for Nork, first elected in 1995, and stepped down only last year. He was an effective councillor and successfully led the R A group at Reigate & Banstead.

Brian was well respected in the council chambers, contributing much in chairing the Council's overview and scrutiny committee for ten years, holding the ruling administration to account. He was mayor in 2011-12. He was also an unwavering advocate of the needs of his residents and as a councillor he spoke with clarity and passion. He spoke up on behalf of residents on planning matters.

Locally he was a governor at Warren Mead Junior School and served on the Nork Community Association committee, and was a founding organiser of the Music in Nork Park. He was the driving force behind the fitness trail in Nork Park and the youth facilities and skateboard park in Tattenhams Recreation ground.

SHAWLEY SCHOOL'S VIRTUAL SPORTS WEEK



Some might think that out primary schools were closed from late March through to the summer holidays. Not true. They remained open throughout – to some degree – with the children of key workers and vulnerable children able to go to school full time. Even over the Easter holidays, half-term and bank holidays.

They were joined part way through the summer term by children in reception, Year 1 and Year 6, each working in “bubbles”. The other year groups were provided with on-line resources and hard copy materials. Teachers kept in touch with all their children and families.

Children did miss their friends, and at Shawley Community Primary School there was the opportunity for a brief end of term meet-up with classmates and class teachers for the coming school year. Year 6 could also say their goodbye’s as they go on to secondary school.

Determined not to miss out on Sports Day due to COVID-19 the school hosted a virtual sports week. Children at home and at school joined together to compete in ‘The Rainbow Games’ – seven challenges (one for each colour of the rainbow) were set over four days. Each one consisted of a video explaining the challenge and how it could be completed (at home and at school). Each challenge had a scoring process. Points were collected daily by each of the sports and team captains.



The final totals were announced to the whole school community with Team Hawking becoming the overall winners. The week was hugely enjoyed by all who took part and it brought the whole school community together in spirit during this time when it has been impossible to actually all gather together.

No Laughing Matter

Residents have been asking, “What are these little silver canisters?” They have been turning up in their tens of thousands in lockdown in our streets, parks and open spaces. Epsom Downs, Tattenham Corner and Nork Park especially. R A councillor Peter Harp has been collecting them up daily by the bucket load.

They contain nitrous oxide or “NOS”. Also known as laughing gas, it has a number of practical uses, including an acute painkiller in hospitals, and to help energy efficiency in cars. One of our members picked up the wrapper for a box of 24 canisters imported from Germany for use in whipping cream.

It’s used recreationally, often transferring the gas from the canister into a balloon and inhaled, with the empty container discarded. NOS is a greenhouse gas, and the canisters can be dangerous to wild life, besides being unsightly.

Taking the gas is not illegal, but supplying it to others for recreational use is. The risk of using the gas is immediate and long term, and can lead to nerve damage, paralysis and asphyxiation. Official statistics report 25 deaths over a six-year period. There are suggestions to strengthen the law as it is currently difficult to apply – do support the parliamentary petition by clicking on www.petition.parliament.uk Chris Grayling has been written to.

