

Spring 2005 Newsletter

***ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING***

THE AGM OF THE ASSOCIATION WILL BE HELD AT SHAWLEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL ON TUESDAY 15th MARCH 2005 AT 8.00 PM

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**AGENDA**

1. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting
2. Matters arising from the minutes
3. Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. To consider the adoption of the Association's County Council Election candidate
6. Election of the R A Committee

NB

The Hon. Secretary, Mrs K L Edwards, 18 Ferriers Way, Epsom Downs should receive nominations to the Committee before 8th March

- 7 Any other business

Kathleen Edwards  
Honorary Secretary

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After the formal business of the meeting there will be a short break for refreshment. Then there will be reports from your Councillors followed by an open forum.

**THE TATTENHAMS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

The R A represents residents living in the Tattenhams Ward area of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. It is a non-party political organisation that aims to preserve the amenities of the district and seeks to foster good local government by a close liaison with local authorities and other public bodies.

**Any resident wishing the R A to take up questions concerning local matters or interests should write, email or telephone a Committee Member or the Hon. Secretary.**

**This edition of our newsletter is distributed to all households in Tattenhams Ward prior to our AGM, but normally only to R A members during the rest of the year. If you are not a member and wish to join, please contact the Chairman – see last page for details.**



## **FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Backed by your Ward Councillors, the R A has been involved in a number of major concerns over the last year.

### **The Future of Epsom Hospital**

Despite the best efforts of the R A and many other organisations in Surrey, Epsom Hospital will be downgraded. Sutton Hospital has been announced as the site for the new Critical Care Hospital. In the public consultation, residents in the London boroughs strongly favoured St Helier; Surrey residents split their support over the three alternative locations in Epsom. Sutton received the lowest level of support from both sets of residents, but was the compromise candidate, rated the 'least disliked'. Although it's not too far for most of us in Tattenhams, it's not ideal, and it will be difficult for the rest of Surrey to reach. There are still many issues to be addressed – see further details opposite.

### **The Beacon School**

Nearby residents do not welcome the disruption of extra traffic and parking and other impacts of the proposed private commercial development at The Beacon School. The R A has urged Surrey County Council to review the amount of funding for the urgently needed sixth form unit and improved games facilities. Currently only half the required money is available from public sources.

### **Preston Regeneration Programme**

Completion of the study has been much delayed, but the recommendations should be available for public comment in early March. We have raised many issues and these were reviewed by Tom Crowley, the Borough's Director of Policy & Environment, at the R A's Autumn meeting. An important issue which Mr Crowley is progressing for us with the County Council is the amount of money which will be available locally from the sale of the former de Burgh school playing fields. At present, a Community Centre Project down in Redhill is taking first call on the profits.

One concern is that increased housing will generate more traffic in existing rat-runs – particularly the possibility of extending Chetwode Road across Burgh Heath to Reigate Road. Overleaf we review the issue in more detail and seek your feedback on this - plus the problems of parking at Tattenham Corner.

**As noted on the front page, this edition of our newsletter** is distributed to all households in Tattenhams Ward prior to our AGM, but normally only to R A members during the rest of the year. It would be ideal if we could reach all of the community with all our quarterly newsletters, but this is not possible without adequate road stewards. While it is our vision to achieve total coverage, only an increase in volunteers to deliver the newsletter and collect subscriptions once a year will realise this ambition. This takes on average about 6-8 hours spread over the year. Your assistance could help to introduce a stronger community spirit in Tattenhams.

### **Election Day**

There is now a new polling station, due to the closure of the Methodist Church. In future polling will take place at **St Marks Church Hall, farther along Great Tattenhams**, slightly more central for most voters. Those of you who vote at The Beacon School are unaffected.

Although Mr Blair has yet to set the general election date, there will certainly be a County Council election on **5 May**. If you are new to the area and not yet on the electoral roll, you have until 11 March to get on the register, if you want to vote in May.

As a reminder, it's now possible for anyone to get a postal vote for any election, either as one-off if you're going to be on holiday, or on a continuous basis if that is your preference. Over 10% of the votes cast in Tattenhams are on a postal basis. Again, there is a lead time, although not as early as the deadline to get on the register itself. For further information on both these items call the Town Hall on 01737 - 276000.

John Butcher

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## COUNCIL TAX

Council Tax for the new year has been announced, with an overall level of 3.85%.

Surrey Police came in at 4.9%. County matched inflation at 3.5% - a cynic might note it's amazing what can be achieved when a County Council election is due, after years of inflation busting increases!

Your R A Councillors opposed the 4.75% increase at Borough level – against the votes of all the political parties. This was not an empty gesture, but based on a detailed analysis of the existing budgets – R A Councillors Brian Stead and Nick Harrison serve on the Budget Review Panel and are very knowledgeable about the Council's finances. Specifically we proposed that the 'Community Liaison Unit' be downscaled. It doesn't provide a front line service to the benefit of residents, but 'identifies community issues' which most diligent Councillors should be aware of.

Its work is very similar to the results of our Tattenhams Residents' Appraisal (TARA), but with a much reduced consultation coverage and at an annual cost of a quarter of a million pounds!

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## EPSOM HOSPITAL

In making their decision, to select Sutton, the NHS authorities said that the existing structure of two general hospitals is 'unaffordable'. However, they also acknowledged that the public is sceptical about the costs of the major new Critical Care Hospital and the network of Local Care Centres. The NHS will be preparing more detailed financial budgets before going to ministers for final approval this Autumn. They will also be developing two pilot Local Care Centres, so as to prove that the new structure will work. We will be watching closely.

The development of the Sutton site will take many years, and at the public board meetings which took the decision, the NHS refused to give re-assurances that Accident & Emergency and Maternity Services will be retained in Epsom until the new facilities are ready. We fear that these services will be moved in any event to St Helier on an 'interim basis'. The current problems at East Surrey Hospital - with queues of ambulances outside following closure of A & E in Crawley and consolidation into Redhill – is not encouraging.

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### SNIPPETS:

**The case of the disappearing bus shelter solved.** The one outside the veterinary practice was badly damaged in a traffic accident and demolished for safety reasons. The shelters are provided free by advertising agencies. Unfortunately, the County Council is between contracts, but we are trying to get them to 'accelerate' its replacement by the new agency.

**Nork Park Conservation Volunteers** provide a valuable service backing up the Borough Parks Department, by carrying out tasks to improve and maintain the park and were recently involved in deciding the site of a trim trail to be provided by Surrey County Council, the funding for which was obtained by R A County Councillor Norman Harris. Anyone interested in this rewarding work, please call John Butcher on 01737 - 351572.

**Message in a Bottle** is a scheme for the elderly or those who live alone. It assists the Emergency Services in the event they have to enter your home. Essentially it consists of a small plastic bottle and two sticky labels.

One sticky label is stuck just inside your front door or on a convenient window. The second ideally on the door of your fridge. The bottle with the label visible is placed in the fridge. Inside the bottle, you store a copy of your medicine prescriptions and any medical data you consider necessary.

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If the Emergency Services are called out they will spot the sticker and track down the bottle. That's it. It could save a lot of time and may save lives. Stocks of bottles and stickers are obtainable from the Secretary of the RA.

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## **RESIDENTS' SURVEY & FEEDBACK REQUEST**

### **Chetwode Road Extension**

As part of the Preston Regeneration Plan it is suggested that Chetwode Road is extended over Burgh Heath, so it joins the Reigate Road just by Asda. An alternative to a road could be upgrading the footpath, with street lights.

The advantage of the new road/footpath would be to make the Preston Estate more accessible.

Disadvantages would be the increase in traffic, particularly if the route were to become a new 'rat-run' through the housing estate on to Tadworth or Tattenham Corner – perhaps a particular problem if Chetwode Road is not widened. There would also be a loss of the Heath, and the smaller section near to West Drive would become rather small and separated from the remaining open space.

### **Tattenham Corner Car Park**

There is increasing pressure on the free Council Car Park at Tattenham Corner. Many spaces are taken by rail commuters and therefore not available to shoppers. The Station Car Park cannot cope with the increasing number of rail passengers, caused for example by the loss of car parking at Tadworth Station and because Legal & General at Kingswood do not allow staff to park at work every day.

Some people tell us that the Council Car Park should be used on a 'first-come; first serviced' basis; that the needs of commuters should be considered; and in fact rail use should be encouraged. They also tell us that if the Car Park were not available, then nearby streets would suffer all day parking.

Others think that shoppers should take priority, and this could be restricted by say, a 'five hour limit' at the Council Car Park (allowing, for example, shopping trips to Croydon, but restricting the daily commuter). Local shops suffer if easy parking is not available.

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### **LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK AND WHY**

#### **CHETWODE ROAD EXTENSION:**

#### **TATTENHAM CORNER CAR PARK:**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**OR: PHONE** Nick Harrison 01737 – 215405 **OR EMAIL** [cllr.harrison@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.harrison@reigate-banstead.gov.uk)

## **BUSES4U**

At a recent meeting of the East Surrey Transport Committee we heard about a new initiative called **BUSES4U**, which is being introduced locally from 28<sup>th</sup> February. Already operating in other areas of the County, **BUSES4U** will serve us north of the M25 in Burgh Heath, Tadworth, Tattenhams and Kingswood etc. Times of operation will be Monday to Saturday, from 18:30 in the evening up to 23:00.

**BUSES4U** is a completely flexible type of local bus service with no fixed timetable. The route is determined by the requests made by would be passengers. The service is open to anyone who lives in our area, with no age limits or any mobility or physical restrictions as the bus is fully equipped with disabled access. Journeys can be requested to anywhere in the area or to Epsom, Banstead or Redhill by contacting the BUSES4U Travel Centre on 01730 - 815518, or by text on 07714 - 854082, or by email to [buses4u@tandridge.gov.uk](mailto:buses4u@tandridge.gov.uk)

The Travel Centre is open between 08:00 and 17:00 Monday to Saturday (other than 12:00 to 13:00 Saturday afternoon). Bookings must be made by 17:00 on the day you wish to travel. As much notice as possible is advisable, as bookings are on a “first come, first served” basis and can be made up to a week in advance. If you know when you wish to come back, your return journey can be booked at the same time. Single journeys up to 4 miles cost £1 and £2 return. Over 4 miles a single is £2 with returns at £4. Children under 5 travel free, whilst under-16s are half price. Concessionary bus passes are accepted.

**BUSES4U** is not intended to replace existing bus services nor to compete with community transport services. Leaflets providing more detailed information may be obtained from local libraries or the Council Helpshop or by contacting East Surrey Rural Transport Partnership, Tandridge District Council, Station Road East, Oxted, Surrey RH8 0BT, tel 01883 - 732877 or email [rtp@tandridge.gov.uk](mailto:rtp@tandridge.gov.uk)

## **FOOTPATH REPAIRS**

We have asked why footpaths are repaired using tarmac, rather than re-laying paving slabs. We are told that tarmac is much cheaper, and its flexibility is helpful to cope with tree roots, which is often the cause of broken and uneven slabs and tripping hazards with traditional flags. Also new slabs are now only available in metric and not imperial sizes, which requires larger areas to be re-laid and replaced, adding further to cost.

## **BUILDING WORKS**

Grass verges and roads seem to be frequently used as the place for builders to store bricks, sand etc, and for the mixing of concrete. This is dangerous particularly at night for passing traffic, and the verges are often permanently destroyed. Sometimes use of these areas is inevitable, but it should be licensed, and the builder held liable to repair any damage. If you feel unable to tackle the builders directly, call Surrey Highways on 01737 – 737400 for action. In our experience, you will need to be persistent!