

Ruislip Residents' Association **TOWN CRIER**

Working for the people of Ruislip and Ruislip Manor

August 2026

 www.ruislipresidents.org.uk



**Hillingdon Council is
Badly Run, Watchdog Says**
CIPFA's Verdict on Page 30



**What Could
Go Wrong?!**

Ruislip Lido, see Page 10

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Editorial

Regular readers will notice a change of hand this time. Our Chairman and usual Editor, Graham Bartram, is in Hillingdon Hospital receiving treatment, and the Committee sends him our warmest wishes for a swift recovery. We're all looking forward to having him back in Ruislip, and back at the Editor's desk soon.

In his absence, we've stepped in to put this edition together - Carolyn Towner, our Lido representative and newest Committee member, and Daniel O'Neill, our Chief Road Steward, who usually organises its distribution, rather than its contents. Please forgive any rough edges!

It has been a busy few months to be compiling an edition. Inside you'll find an account of the near-drowning at Ruislip Lido in May. You'll also find our look at CIPFA's independent review of Hillingdon Council, commissioned by government ministers, and its own conclusion that the Council's problems are less about money than about how it is actually run.

We hope to see you at our meeting on 15th September at Winston Churchill Hall - and, all being well, we hope Graham will be there too.

Carolyn & Daniel

Carolyn Towner & Daniel O'Neill
Temporary Editors of Last Resort

Please note that the views expressed in articles in the Town Crier are those of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Ruislip Residents' Association.

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Vivien Alcorn

TRAFFIC & PARKING
Mark Eidem

Could you see your name here in our next issue? We need volunteers to help us to cover aspects of life and living in Ruislip Manor and Ruislip, including:

ASSISTANT PLANNING OFFICER
COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES
DRONE PHOTOGRAPHY
EVENTS & ACTIVITIES DIARY
HEALTH MATTERS
MANOR RETAIL AREA
RUISLIP RETAIL AREA
SOCIAL MEDIA

Please visit 🌐 rralink.uk/help or email
✉ secretaryrra293@gmail.com

Local Events & Activities

Could you help us to maintain this list and add events like these to our website and noticeboard? **Please get in touch!**

SEPTEMBER

11TH Coffee & Crime with Andrew Hunter-Murray at Manor Farm Library, Ruislip.

13TH Heritage Day & Classic Car Show at Eastcote House Gardens.

The Dovecote will also be open.

15TH Deadline to submit Public Questions for the Full Council Meeting on the 24th.

15TH RRA General Meeting at Winston Churchill Hall, Ruislip. Talk on the New Hillingdon Hospital by Jason Seez.

15TH Local History Lecture: "The Founders of Northwood" at St Martins Church Hall, Ruislip.

19TH Hillingdon Cleaner Greener Festival at St Margaret's Church, Uxbridge. Enjoy free admission, eco-stalls, and a film show.

20TH Join the **Harrow Cycle Hub** for a ride and picnic starting from Roxeth Library.

23RD An Evening with Janice Hallett at Ruislip Manor Library.

24TH Full Council Meeting at Civic Centre, Uxbridge. Residents can ask questions to the Leader and Cabinet Members.

25TH Coffee & Crime with Jenny Knightsby at Manor Farm Library.

26TH Pop-up Waste Drop at Deane Park car park, Long Drive, Ruislip.

Free bulky waste drop-off for residents.

27TH Stardust Big Band Concert at Ruislip Manor Methodist Church.

27TH – 4TH OCT St Paul's 90th Anniversary at St Paul's Ruislip Manor, Thurlstone Road. A week of celebratory community events.

OCTOBER

8TH–10TH Musical Maestros at Compass Theatre, Ickenham.

16TH Stars Perform with Masters classical and contemporary music at Compass Theatre.

17TH Voix Célestes: The Heavenly Voices of Duruflé's Requiem in North Harrow.

20TH Local History Lecture: "Picture shows Before Cinema" at St Martin's Church Hall.

21ST–24TH Doctor Dolittle family musical at Winston Churchill Theatre, Ruislip.

24TH Book Sale and open Dovecote at Eastcote House Gardens.

24TH Wonderland puppet show at Compass Theatre. Includes puppet-making.

28TH–30TH Halloween Musical Theatre Workshop at Compass Theatre

LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR EVENTS

We are building a list of ALL local events on our website. If you are a member of a club or association, please get in touch with us - we'd like to feature your events! Visit www.ruislippresidents.org.uk/events or email events@ruislippresidents.org.uk

Chief Road Steward's Message

As the Editorial explains, Graham Bartram, our Chair, is unable to write his usual message this time, so I'm filling in.

It's been an unusually busy year for local democracy. All 53 seats across Hillingdon's 21 wards were up for election in May, including the five seats here in Ruislip Manor and Ruislip. In the run-up, the Hillingdon Alliance of Residents' Associations (HARA), of which we're a member, organised the borough's first-ever digital leadership hustings, "Hillingdon Decides," on 21st April. Four parties took part - the Green Party, Labour, the Liberal Democrats and Reform UK - with only the Conservatives declining their invitation. Graham chaired the event, and I looked after registration and collated residents' questions. Neither of us could have managed it without the support of Residents' Associations from across the borough.

That closer working between associations has continued since the election. HARA's member groups now meet monthly, and you'll notice this issue carries more detail about the Council's finances and governance than usual as a result. Our articles on CIPFA's review of the Council, and on how residents' petitions have

fared this year, both show why: holding the Council to account has become harder work than it used to be, and we've found we do it more effectively together than apart.

Closer to home, a plea in my capacity as Chief Road Steward. This magazine reaches around 11,500 homes twice a year, entirely through volunteers putting copies through doors - but we're still missing coverage for several blocks of flats, including Corinthian Court, Jameston Lodge and the flats above the shops on Victoria Road, plus a few streets of houses too. Most Road Stewards manage their patch in well under an hour, twice a year, with no obligation to continue if it's not for you.

The full list of what we need help with is at rralink.uk/deliver, and you can email me on steward@ruislippresidents.org.uk if you can help with any of it.

We hope to see as many of you as possible - and, all being well, Graham himself - at our meeting on 15th September at Winston Churchill Hall. ♦

Daniel O'Neill, Chief Road Steward,
standing in for Graham this issue
steward@ruislippresidents.org.uk

Education News

Susan Midgley

CARDIAC RISK IN THE YOUNG SCREENING HELD AT WARRENDER PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Charity **CRY** held its screening programme on Sunday, June 14th at Warrender School. The reason that this school was chosen as the venue was because **James Markham**, an ex-pupil of the school, tragically lost his life to an undiagnosed cardiac condition in 2001 aged 21 years of age. His parents, **Jeff & Sandra**, requested that this special first memorial screening dedicated to James' memory, could be hosted by their son's primary school. Since his tragic loss, his parents have tirelessly been fundraising for the charity and have already raised over £30,000!

I am delighted to report that all the appointments previously advertised were taken and there were ninety-seven young adults who were screened. This cost the charity £75.00 per person to screen, so to run the event today it cost them £7,500 which was very generous of them. I was told by **Hinemoa, 20 years of age**, about

her experience of the screening process. At first Hinemoa was given an ECG (electrocardiogram), followed by an echocardiogram. She then had a consultation with a doctor who discussed with her the results of the graphs produced which showed her recorded heart rhythm. She felt reassured to be told that everything was normal.

Several former classmates of James including **Andy, David, Will, Dave** and **Vicky**, came to support the day's event for their school friend and also volunteered. They were given a tour of their old primary school by teacher, **Ms Healey**, and were sharing funny stories about their time at Warrender whilst reminiscing.

Prior publication of the screening resulted in many of the Markham's family and friends, as well as families from the wider community, attending this important event. This created a wonderful heart-warming atmosphere which contributed to providing support for the young people present who were waiting to be screened and might have been anxious about their results. It was also an occasion to share

stories and memories but also to celebrate the amazing work that James' family have done and also to share their experience with young people present who might encourage friends to take part in a screening. The reason that this screening event was such a success was the excellent organisation throughout. This was due to the fact that the Headteacher of Warrender, Mrs Helen Brown and Mr Jeff Markham worked closely together to facilitate the day, the logistics being present for the whole day. For their combined effort they deserve the thanks of everyone who attended.

Warrender certainly played an important role in informing the wider community of the work of **CRY**. Compared to other charities which raise awareness of preventing death in young people, this charity does not seem to be so well known. Hopefully more people now will visit their website which explains that, according to verified data, **twelve** young adults die each week from undiagnosed cardiac conditions.

During the next academic year **Warrender School** would like to raise more funds for **CRY** and look forward to hosting another screening day. Ruislip Residents' Association wish them the best of luck.



Some of James' school friends who attended the screening



James as a Warrender pupil



Hinemoa after her screening

LADY BANKES PRIMARY SCHOOL'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On Friday May 15th Lady Bankes Primary School celebrated their amazing 90th anniversary. The school originally opened in 1934 at Victoria Hall, which was since demolished and replaced by Ruislip Manor Library. The school then moved to the present building in 1936 and became Lady Bankes Primary School, named after a local woman Mary Hawtrey who married Sir John Bankes in 1618. He later became Attorney-General to King Charles I. Lady Bankes died in 1661 and is buried at St Martin's Church.

The whole school was assembled on the school field to share this occasion with the many guests who attended. These included the new Mayor of Hillingdon, **Cllr Reeta Chamdal**, parents of current pupils, school governors and, of particular interest, some adults who were at the school in the early forties who were able to share their school memories during the Second World War.

I was lucky enough to meet and chat to **Mrs Doreen Davis** (nee **Citron**) who joined the school in 1940. The school had also produced a special booklet "Celebrating 90 Years of Lady Bankes Primary School" which was available and included the history of the school past and present.

The celebrations began with the whole school and visitors singing "Sweet Caroline" which set the joyful mood of the occasion. Visitors were informed that each year group would be singing a song which represented each of the nine decades of the school. Each group was introduced by Stuart Bottomley, a well-known local DJ. The management of pupils to the performance area was seamless and the school staff deserve a special mention for their professionalism and the pupils for their excellent behaviour which was noted by many in the audience.

The opening performance by the choir represented the 1940s when they sang "The White Cliffs of Dover". This was followed by Year 4's performance recalling the 1950s by singing "If I Can Dream" an Elvis Presley song. A pupil, **Leo**, added to the entertainment dressed in character and brilliantly copying Elvis's moves! Next the 1960s were represented by Year 6 who performed "Dancing In The Streets", a popular song at the time by Martha and The Vandellas. The Reception group then gave us a rendition of "ABC" by The Jackson Five to recall the 1970s. The Nursery pupils, for their young age, then gave a very confident, lively version of the 80s song, "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go" by Wham. To recall the 90s Year 3 performed "Spice Up Your Life" by the Spice Girls. The final three decades were highlighted by Years 2, 1 and 6.

By this time, all the visitors had been joining in with singing and clapping to some of the songs which gave the afternoon celebration a real sense of the joyful mood and pride of commemorating the long and successful period of one of our local Primary schools. The Mayor, **Cllr Reeta Chamdal**, then gave a speech congratulating the school on its fantastic achievements throughout its ninety years, some in which staff had to overcome the difficult dangers of English history.

Father Tommy Merry, vicar of St Paul's Church, Ruislip Manor, gave thanks for the school and prayed for continual blessing on all who are currently part of what he referred to as "a home of great learning."

To end the celebrations on a very positive note, everyone present then joined in singing the School Song, "Lady Bankes, The Place For Me." Headteacher, **Mrs Kate Needs**, her dedicated teachers and all who were involved in organising this wonderful celebration are to be warmly congratulated and thanked for giving the community such an extremely successful Primary school. ♦

Interested in more news about our wonderful local schools? Please visit the Ruislip Residents' Association website for more articles 📍 ruislipresidents.org.uk



Singing a song for each decade



Mrs Doreen Davis



Leo as Elvis

Ruislip Lido: A future child may not be so fortunate

THE LIDO'S NEAR-DROWNING, AND THE COUNCIL'S ANSWER

On 26 May this year, a child was pulled unconscious from the water at Ruislip Lido. During this incident the air ambulance and multiple emergency services attended, and local roads had to be closed for several hours. By extraordinary luck, and the actions of an off-duty paramedic and another member of the public who administered CPR and used a defibrillator, the child survived.

One of the adults there that day - a friend of the child's mother - wrote to the Council afterwards, and has given us permission to draw on her letter. She described why she'd come: "attracted by the appearance and presentation of the site as a family beach destination," with "a sandy beach, children's play facilities, a splash area, a large boat play structure." She noted the name itself: "the term 'lido' is widely understood to refer to an outdoor swimming facility." On arrival, she found no lifeguards, no enforcement, no controlled access - an environment,

she wrote, "functionally indistinguishable from a recreational beach and swimming area." She asked the Council to urgently review its signage, whether physical barriers were needed, whether lifeguard patrols should return, and whether its own branding was misleading families about what the site actually offered.

Her conclusion was blunt: "The child involved ... survived only because suitably skilled individuals happened to be present by chance. A future child may not be so fortunate." Her letter in full, and further detail on what's happened since, is on our website - see the link at the end of this article.



Is enough being done to keep everyone safe?

RAISING IT WITH THE COUNCIL

Our committee member Carolyn Towner put the matter to the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services, Cllr Wayne Bridges, as a Public Question at July's full Council meeting. She pointed out something specific: along the 250-metre route most visitors walk from the bus stop and main car park to the beach, the information boards cover ducks, geese, planets, asteroids, dogs and barbecues - but nothing about water danger. The only water warning signage is on the beach itself, where it can be lost among the gazebos and tents on exactly the busy days an incident is most likely.

Carolyn also asked whether the Council would now consider physical measures - fencing, or restricted access to the water - rather than relying on signage alone.

Cllr Bridges chose to answer in writing rather than in person. His answer confirmed there are no plans for barriers: fencing might simply displace risk elsewhere along the shoreline, he said, and could hamper emergency access. Officers are "reviewing whether any further improvements to signage... would be appropriate."

What his answer didn't do was engage with the specific point Carolyn raised - the empty 250 metres of approach path.



On a busy day, thousands of people visit the Lido - with hundreds going into the water

Instead, more than half of his response was devoted to something else entirely: attacking a MyLondon article about the Lido, accusing the paper of inventing the "secret beach" label and of "clickbait journalism, poor fact-checking and misleading reporting."

The Council's newly-published Ruislip Lido Operational Plan for 2026 - finally released after months of promises - confirms where the priorities actually lie. It runs to several pages on car park tiers, traffic marshals and litter crews. It does not mention a lifeguard, a water safety officer, or a single additional sign.

The risk assessment covering the water itself - the one the Council points to as covering "drowning risk" - was last modified on 22 July 2021, and shows no sign of being touched since. Of the nineteen risk assessments the Council



Can Hillingdon Council really deny they are responsible for visitors expecting a 'beach'?

holds for the Lido, covering hazards from delivery vehicles, to algae, to the splash pad, it is the only one rated above "Low Risk" at all - and its own paperwork proposes nothing further: just "none."

A COUNCIL WITH A SHORT MEMORY

However, Cllr Bridges's defence doesn't survive contact with the Council's own history. In 2014, the Hillingdon Council website described work underway on a "beach side catering facility," and reported that "an extension to the existing beach area is being created ... to include new sand." Four years earlier, in 2010, the then-Leader, Cllr Ray Puddifoot, promised that residents would enjoy this new catering facility as part of a wider improvement plan that included "enhancing the beach to reinstate the swimming area that so many older residents used as children".

That controversial plan was strongly opposed by both residents and local conservation groups. It was eventually shelved - but not because the Council decided it was misleading. It simply faded from view when it became inconvenient, without ever being formally withdrawn.

So when the Council's Cabinet Member tells residents that the only organisation ever to promote Ruislip Lido as a beach is a London news website, that isn't quite right. Hillingdon Council did it first, in its own press releases, for the best part of a decade.

The friends and family of the injured child didn't need to read any of that history to know something was wrong. They worked it out from the boat-shaped play structure, the sandy beach, and a word - "lido" - that means exactly what it says.

See the Risk Assessments, a timeline and more details online: rralink.uk/k6ajb ♦



Sandy shore, pirate ship, palm trees?
Not a beach, according to Hillingdon

General Meeting

19:45, Tuesday, 15th September 2026

Winston Churchill Hall, Pinn Way, Ruislip HA4 7QL

Doors will open at 19:30, with the meeting starting at 19:45. We will have a talk on the New Hillingdon Hospital from Jason Seez, the hospital's Chief Infrastructure and Redevelopment Officer. This will be followed by an open forum for questions from our members.

The meeting is open to all residents of Ruislip and Ruislip Manor, and we'd love to see as many of you there as possible.



Please send any items for the Open Forum to the Secretary by 8th September. ♦

Hillingdon The Musical

If you enjoy sharp political comedy, look up **Hillingdon The Musical** on YouTube. It is a creative online project turning council news into satirical songs about local politicians.

Their collection of tracks covers many controversies. Songs mock the new Ruislip Lido gates and propose a fantasy monorail to solve Ruislip's endless traffic woes. They also tackle basic services with a comedic take on flimsy council bin bags, alongside affectionate nods to Cllr

Tuckwell's memorable election campaign for an Uxbridge fish and chip shop.

Not all tracks are for laughs. A heart-wrenching ballad explores the closure of the beloved Rural Activities Garden Centre, and others detail Council finances, plans and debates. The musical project offers an entertaining way to follow our local politics, with new songs most weeks.

Listen on YouTube and at:

hillingtonthemusical.co.uk ♦

Ickenham to Harrow Connect 2050

AFFINITY WATER: PLANNING TODAY FOR THE WATER CHALLENGES OF TOMORROW

The way we use water is changing; and so is the world around us. Our region is growing rapidly, with thousands of new homes and businesses increasing demand for an essential resource that many of us take for granted. At the same time, climate change is bringing hotter, drier summers alongside more frequent periods of intense rainfall, putting greater pressure on both water resources and the network that delivers them.

By 2050, demand for water is expected to be significantly higher than it is today. Meeting that challenge will require more than simply producing more water. It means investing in smarter infrastructure, reducing leakage, protecting the environment, and helping everyone use water more efficiently.

That's why at Affinity Water, we've developed Connect 2050; our long-term plan to build a more resilient water network for the future. This major infrastructure programme will deliver

phased improvements between now and 2050, helping to secure reliable water supplies for a growing population.

Through sustained investment, innovation and careful planning, Connect 2050 will strengthen our network, improve resilience to climate change, reduce pressure on the environment, and ensure customers continue to receive a reliable supply of high-quality drinking water for generations to come.

It's about making the right decisions today, so future generations can rely on water tomorrow.

STRENGTHENING WATER SUPPLIES FOR THE FUTURE: ICKENHAM TO HARROW PIPELINE

One of our first projects is Ickenham to Harrow and as part of Connect 2050, we're investing in a new booster pumping station and laying 10 kilometres of new mains pipeline. This will enable a transfer of up to 35 million litres of water per day between strategic connection points at our Ickenham Pumping Station and Lascelles

Avenue Harrow. These two intermediate connections along the route will provide local resilience to our network.

Working with our contractor, Barhale, we're installing a new 600mm diameter pipeline with connections at Eastcote Village and Rayners Lane. This will help us move water more efficiently around the network, providing greater flexibility during periods of high demand or if part of the network is affected by an incident. The project will strengthen the local network, providing an additional source of supply, reducing the risk of disruption and improving resilience for thousands of customers across Hillingdon and Harrow. Over the past decade, two bursts have occurred on this critical section of the network. Installing temporary overland pipes enabled us to respond to the incidents and maintain supplies, which is

not an acceptable long-term solution. This investment will provide a more reliable and resilient water network for the future.

Following engagement with London Boroughs Hillingdon and Harrow including their relevant highways teams, Environment Agency and Landowners, the outline design is nearing completion. Our contractor Barhale will shortly begin engaging with residents, businesses, and community groups along the proposed route to share more information about the project and upcoming works.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Get in touch with the project team

✉ SCST@barhale.co.uk

Keep up to date with progress at:

🌐 affinitywater.co.uk/connect2050 💎



Affinity Water: Ickenham to Harrow Connect 2050

Tudor Lunch Club The Last Lunch



Readers may be aware that the Charity (RNOFA) which runs the Tudor Club in Field End Road has been struggling financially over the past couple of years.

As with many local charities, we have never really recovered from the impact of Covid, with our membership and lunch services much reduced. In addition, again as with all lunch clubs in Hillingdon, the loss of our annual Hillingdon Council grant of £80,000, plus increases in staffing, power and food costs, mean that for the past few years the charity has been operating at a significant loss.

The Trustees have spent considerable effort to mitigate these losses including increases in Meal and Membership charges. We have applied for many other grants, for example HS2, the Fassnidge Memorial Trust and the National Lottery. Some of these have been successful, we received £75,000 from HS2 in 2022/23 plus a number of other smaller donations, and we are currently awaiting a response from a second HS2 application. In the meantime, however, we have needed to draw down from our Reserves.

Without a "guaranteed" annual Grant income, and with only sufficient funds remaining to pay essential final bills, the Trustees have had to make the decision to close the Club at the end of September 2026. Having the Mayor of Hillingdon as President, the 2022 Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, and, at one time, two councillors as trustees, have not helped the Tudor Club at a time of most need.

We know that many members will be disappointed to hear this news. The Trustees are devastated that, after such a long time, more than 70 years, this welcoming and much-needed lunch club will close. The staff and members present at an open meeting on July 1 were formally made aware and we will keep them informed of the situation as we go forward.

From RNOFA Trustees, July 2026 ♦



Ministers Slam Our Council's 'Weaknesses'

Last August, at a public Audit Committee meeting, Hillingdon's interim finance chief was asked about the council's computer system. Andy Goodwin didn't reach for jargon: it "has been a bit of a car crash." A year on, the government has said much the same thing about the whole council - just more formally.

On 15 July, the government issued Hillingdon Council with a formal "Best Value Notice" - not the kind you'd find on a supermarket shelf, but a serious step, taken when ministers lose confidence in how a council is run.

The letter is blunt about the fault. It cites the seven statutory recommendations from external auditors Ernst & Young (July 2025, which we reported on at the time), a "no assurance" internal audit opinion for 2024/25 - meaning the council's own auditors couldn't confirm its basic controls were working, an independent CIPFA review (May 2026) finding "a lack of challenge, clarity of strategic direction and organisational grip," and separate concerns about organisational culture.

Only one of the four reasons touches money - reliance on emergency bailouts. The other three are entirely about how the council is run. On whether Hillingdon's funding is fair, the letter says nothing; that argument isn't what this Notice is about. The council's own statement called it a reflection of "funding pressures" - the government's letter says no such thing.

The Notice doesn't take over the council's running, but ministers warn that failing to improve could mean formal intervention. It stays in place for at least a year, with quarterly progress reports required.

Cllr Kaushik Banerjee, who resigned the Conservative whip in May, put it more plainly than any government letter could, calling it "managerial avoidance presented as financial prudence."

The government is now watching Hillingdon Council closely. As residents, we should be watching just as closely - and asking, loudly, what happens next.

Read more at rralink.uk/tnkt8 ♦

Councillors' Comments

Ruislip Ward – Philip Corthorne, John Riley, Peter Smallwood OBE
Ruislip Manor Ward – Douglas Mills, Susan O'Brien



Philip
Corthorne



John
Riley



Peter
Smallwood OBE



Douglas
Mills



Susan
O'Brien

Since our last update, residents across Ruislip and Ruislip Manor have once again returned all five Conservative Councillors to Hillingdon Council. We are sincerely grateful for the trust placed in us and look forward to serving our area for another four years. Our postbags are already actively receiving enquiries, which shows that residents know how to contact us directly with requests for assistance on everyday council matters.

The new Conservative administration, led by Councillor Steve Tuckwell, has now been in office for just over two months. There will be new priorities, initiatives and ways of working, and each of us is pleased to be playing a part. However, our most important role remains representing local residents and ensuring that your voices are heard.

Locally, The Orchard continues to be one of our greatest concerns. Lidl has returned with revised early proposals following the refusal of its previous application. Having met with Lidl and examined what has been presented, we believe the changes amount to little more than tinkering around the edges. The fundamental concerns about traffic, road safety, access, heritage and the impact on nearby residents remain. It was the wrong proposal in the wrong place before, and nothing we have seen changes that view. We will continue working with residents and local organisations to oppose it.

The proposed 24-hour gaming venue at 73 High Street has also returned, this time through an appeal against the Council's refusal. We encourage residents to submit their views to the Planning Inspectorate.

In reality, this would be a machine-led venue operating around the clock. We remain strongly opposed because it is the wrong use for this location and would do nothing to support the character, vitality or long-term future of Ruislip High Street. Other proposals, including the development of the St Martin's car park, and the old "Barn Hotel" site, will be considered carefully on their individual merits, always with the interests of residents at heart.

We will also be keeping an eye on the HMO situation whereby some landlords have ignored concerns and proceeded to appeal the council's decision. We trust the robustness of the council's refusals will reflect the decisions from the outcome of the appeal process which is carried out independently from the council.

We continue to work closely with traders on a range of issues. Our independent businesses are the backbone of both Ruislip and Ruislip Manor High Streets, and we want to encourage the right mixture of shops and services that local people genuinely want to use. At time of writing, we were only a few days away from the Ruislip Manor Fun Day. We would like to congratulate the Ruislip Manor Chamber of Commerce for putting on another excellent event and for the tremendous work they do to champion Ruislip Manor and its businesses throughout the year.

The new motorcycle parking arrangements have also taken effect. A number of penalty notices have now been issued to motorcycles using spaces where they are no longer permitted to park. There is still work to do, and this will not solve the problem overnight, but we hope it represents the beginning of a lasting improvement for traders, shoppers and everyone using Ruislip High Street.

We also recognise the challenges many residents have faced following the recent changes to bus services at Ruislip Station. We are working with Transport for London, which is responsible for these changes, on a longer-term plan to reconfigure the station so buses can return safely. TfL has also informed us that it is reviewing bus timetables and where services terminate, whilst maintaining the overall level of service. We will continue to press for improvements and keep residents informed as discussions progress.

Alongside these larger campaigns, it remains a real pleasure to visit local schools, societies, sports teams, churches and voluntary organisations. The range of people giving their time to make Ruislip and Ruislip Manor such special places never fails to impress us.

We look forward to continuing to serve residents and represent your concerns. ♦

Ruislip Baptist Church Loving Ruislip



Ruislip Baptist Church is a church that wants to love the community of Ruislip and Ruislip Manor. We have been a part of this community for over 80 years and we want to continue to be a beacon of love, joy and hope to all those around us. We believe the message of Jesus is good news for everybody, and we want everyone to be able to experience that for themselves! Whether you are young or old, you come to church or not, even if you have a different faith background entirely, we hope that our church might be able to help you experience some of this good news for yourself.

We are a diverse church made up of all ages and backgrounds and this shapes how we serve our community. We have events where people of all ages can come and find connection and community. Action Tots is

our popular toddler group for those with young families whilst Café Connect provides a fun and loving community for those who are in their senior years and free on a Monday morning. We also have a heart for the young people in our community and we want them to grow, flourish and thrive and there are loads of opportunities for them to do just that at RBC. We have youth groups for those who are 11+ throughout the week, our annual Summer Holiday Club for kids under 11, and on Sundays, our 10.30am service includes groups and activities for children and young people of all ages.

We would love to invite anyone from our local community to come and join us at any of our events and activities. And even if you never step through our doors, please know that we are here for you.

We regularly run Alpha courses which give you the opportunity to explore the meaning of life and faith in a fun, pressure-free environment. If you would like to join an Alpha course, please visit our website or contact the Church Office:

office@ruislipbaptist.church

www.ruislipbaptist.church ♦

London Plan Fact check of the home building debate

Hillingdon Council warns that the Mayor's Draft London Plan will "force" 24,030 new homes onto the borough over 10 years, with 61% on Green Belt land - the highest share of any London borough. The figures sound high. But the Council's own explanation of how this system works doesn't match the alarm it is raising.

WHO ACTUALLY DECIDES?

The London Plan sets each borough an overall housing figure. Where Green Belt release is needed it points to broad zones - in Hillingdon, within walking distance of six stations: Hillingdon, Ickenham, Ruislip Gardens, Northolt, South Ruislip and Uxbridge. What the London Plan does not do is draw actual boundaries or name specific fields. That decision belongs to the council, through its own Local Plan. This was confirmed by Gavin Polkinghorn, one of the Council's planning officers, at the Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee on 29 July. When asked by Cllr Jonathan Bianco about the council's power to control specific sites, the officer was clear: the London Plan sets the targets, but "that's up for us" when it comes to exactly where the homes go.

IS HILLINGDON UNIQUELY BURDENED?

Cllr Steve Tuckwell, Leader of the Council, says there is "no evidence to justify placing such a disproportionate burden on Hillingdon." The data suggests otherwise. Hillingdon's total reflects that it's London's second-largest borough, with more land, more Green Belt, and more well-connected stations. Measured fairly (as homes required per hectare of Green Belt) Hillingdon (3.03), Barnet (2.94) and Harrow (2.90) are all asked to build at the same rate. Some inner boroughs are asked to build even more, with no Green Belt at all. Southwark (27,799), Wandsworth (26,609) and Newham (26,260) all have targets equal to or higher than Hillingdon.

THE CONTRADICTION

Cllr Tuckwell said the Mayor is "trying to dictate Hillingdon's future from City Hall" - a claim published on 30 July, the day after the council's own planning officer told a public committee the opposite. The numbers are correct; claiming that Sir Sadiq Khan dictates their location is not.

Consultations on both Plans are open, see rralink.uk/b3tvu for dates and details. ♦

Danny Beales MP

MP for Uxbridge & South Ruislip



TWO YEARS AS YOUR MP FOR UXBRIDGE AND SOUTH RUISLIP

It's been just over two years since I was elected as your MP. I've spent that time listening to constituents, raising local issues in Parliament, and pushing for change across Hillingdon. Here's a snapshot of what we've achieved together.

LISTENING TO RESIDENTS

With thanks to St Gregory the Great Church for hosting us, my team and I welcomed over 40 residents to my South Ruislip coffee afternoon - an opportunity to bring together members of the community and hear directly from constituents about what matters to them.



Tea, biscuits, and a side of Victoria Road

One of the biggest concerns raised was road safety on Victoria Road, particularly traffic lights and parked cars making the area dangerous for pedestrians and drivers. I've raised this with the council, who are now looking into it, and I'll keep pressing for a firm update.

If you couldn't make the coffee afternoon but have an issue you'd like raised, get in touch. We're here to help.

TACKLING ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Following persistent problems at the Old Dairy site - including car meets and noise - I worked with Arla Place residents, landowners and police to secure speed bumps, with roundabout changes and extra security hours now under consideration. If antisocial behaviour is affecting you, contact my team or sign up to Met Engage metengage.co.uk

PROTECTING MOUNT VERNON RADIOTHERAPY

I share residents' concerns about plans to move radiotherapy from Mount Vernon to Watford. I pressed the hospital trust to properly assess the impact on patients,

especially those with cancer, and to model a new radiotherapy service alongside the planned chemotherapy unit at Hillingdon Hospital. They've agreed to do so, and I'll keep fighting any changes that disadvantage local residents.

SOUTH RUISLIP STATION

After long-running complaints about lorries striking the railway bridge and pigeon mess beneath it, I met Network Rail on site. New warning signage is now up, and pigeon mitigation works are being programmed for this summer.

HEATHROW EXPANSION

I remain unconvinced expansion plans meet the Government's own tests on noise, air pollution, climate targets and regional growth - and I can't support them unless they do.

Have your say in the Government's consultation, open until 1 September 2026: gov.uk (search "Heathrow expansion national policy statement").

CRACKING DOWN ON FARE EVASION

I've raised residents' frustration at unchecked fare evasion with TfL, and visited Uxbridge station to see enforcement first-hand. TfL has agreed to step up local enforcement, is designing new gates, and is trialling facial recognition - and I'll keep pushing for tougher action across the borough.

A WIN FOR PROSTATE CANCER PATIENTS

Around 1 in 8 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer. Working with Prostate Cancer UK, I pushed the Department of Health to reverse its decision on Abiraterone - and I'm delighted it will now be available on the NHS, expected to save thousands of lives a year



Campaigning pays off for men's health

A NEW START FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

To tackle rising youth unemployment, I campaigned with Uxbridge College, the Job Centre and central government for a new youth hub. The result: Future Start, launching this September at Uxbridge College, offering tailored support to help young people reach their potential.

Thank you to everyone I've worked with over the past two years - including the Ruislip Residents' Association, always passionate about improving our area.

dannybeales.com

☎ 01895 913563

✉ danny.beales.mp@parliament.uk

Putting Residents First?

In his foreword to Hillingdon Council's 2025/26 Performance Report, Leader Cllr Steve Tuckwell wrote in June that performance management "allows our residents to hold us to account."

Yet since May's election, Hillingdon Council has rewritten its Constitution to reduce public scrutiny.

First, they gutted financial oversight. Budget monitoring was stripped from Select Committees and concentrated into one smaller committee with a single opposition councillor. Rules were also changed so debt write-offs no longer need a full Cabinet vote. When 143 residents submitted a valid petition asking to restore proper scrutiny, the Council rejected it, insisting the decision had been "taken democratically."

In July, the Council pulled up the drawbridge by rewriting the Residents' Petition Scheme. The borough-wide thresholds jumped from 100 to 500 signatures, local thresholds from 20 to 50, and the democratic right to an automatic public Cabinet Member hearing was scrapped. These changes will make it harder for residents to secure a public hearing.

Learning from May, the Hillingdon Alliance of Residents' Associations (HARA) submitted a valid borough-wide petition before the July vote, backed by a Freedom of Information request. The FOI response later revealed the Council had zero recorded cost or time assessments to justify these changes.

The response? At the July full Council meeting, Deputy Leader Cllr Richard Mills dismissed our valid submission as a "small petition." He then declared the Council would not be held back by "those who continue to shout online without having the courage to put themselves forward and face the electorate."

The petition was then rejected. The Council's new excuse? The Leader had "considered" our petition before pushing the vote through anyway.

If Cllr Steve Tuckwell's own words mean anything, residents should be able to hold this Council to account. Dodging public hearings, weakening scrutiny of debt write-offs, and insulting community groups as online cowards suggests otherwise. We have more details and video at:

📍 rralink.uk/jst2g 💎

Uncovering Ruislip's Hidden History

Recent reviews of reports by Historic England and independent experts across Lidl's refused 2025 application and three active schemes currently under consideration have revealed fascinating details about our heritage.

THE BARN HOTEL REDEVELOPMENT

Sitting on the medieval hamlet of Field End, experts actually support this site's latest redesign. They call the removal of the modern hotel extensions and the restoration of its 16th-century barns a "considerable improvement". Due to their archaeological interest, developers will be required to host public open days, viewing platforms, and school visits to share this history with the community.

LIDL'S PLANS AT THE ORCHARD

Historic England formally objected to previous plans to demolish this pub for a supermarket. Highlighting its role as a gathering place for the Polish 303 Squadron during the Battle of Britain, they warned its loss would destroy a culturally significant asset and erase our understanding of Ruislip's Metro-land development.

2 ARLINGTON DRIVE

Plans for a new home here triggered immediate warnings because the plot sits within the curtilage of the Tudor-era Little Manor House. To ensure buried history isn't lost, a strict two-stage archaeological dig is required before any construction begins.

COUNCIL'S PLANS FOR 6 NEW HOMES ON ST MARTIN'S APPROACH CAR PARK

A 2019 test dig uncovered a historic channel containing 15th-century artifacts. Heritage experts evaluating proposed housing here also noted a 1937 survey showing a potential castle bailey moat running right through the unexcavated southern section. As a result, extensive trenching is required, meaning the car park would need to be closed for a major archaeological excavation before any construction work could begin.

We obtained the Historic England and GLAAS reports via Freedom of Information requests (see page 31) and have those documents along with a longer version of this article on our website: see 📍 rralink.uk/4chvd 💎

David Simmonds CBE MP

MP for Ruislip, Northwood & Pinner



It was a privilege to run in support of the Michael Sobell Hospice at this year's London Marathon. Thanks to the generosity of residents, friends, family and colleagues, I raised over £1700 for the charity. I hope this will make a useful contribution to their important work, which is hugely valued by residents.

On local matters, homes in proximity to the River Pinn are not immune to flooding or the severe damage it causes. Flood Re, established by the Conservatives, is a joint initiative between government and insurers which aims to make the flood part of household insurance policies more affordable. I welcome that the current Government want to keep the scheme operating, but I have reservations about the reforms announced. I am concerned that these changes will be punitive toward properties above council tax bands A and B, and I had the opportunity to raise these in Parliament with the Minister who, unfortunately, did little to reassure me.

At time of writing, a new Prime Minister is expected imminently and so the future of Flood Re remains to be seen, but I will follow developments closely.

On local health matters, NHS England has published its consultation report on proposals to move the cancer centre at Mount Vernon Hospital to Watford General. In addition to the closure of the urgent care centre last year, the removal of key services from the site have left residents with viable concerns about its future, as well as the accessibility of healthcare locally.

I took the opportunity to raise this in Parliament with then Prime Minister Keir Starmer. I hoped it would encourage action and commitment from the top of government. However, it took close to two months to receive a rather evasive and non-committal reply from the Health Minister, Karin Smyth. It was disappointing, but not entirely surprising, given the lack of interest from the Department ahead of the urgent care centre closure, despite overwhelming local support to keep it open.

Looking to the rebuild of Hillingdon Hospital, the NHS is currently reviewing which services will need to be temporarily decanted to nearby hospitals. This has prompted a review of services at the Mount Vernon site and after meeting with the team leading on that, it is clear that the wide range of services provided there need a proper plan for their future once the main hospital has been rebuilt.

Like many residents in Ruislip and beyond, I do not want to see Mount Vernon decline. I therefore wish to assure readers that I will work hard to ensure that the future of Mount Vernon is safeguarded.

Turning to planning issues, I understand that Lidl is revising its proposals for a supermarket and carpark at The Orchard site on Ickenham Road. The previous application was refused by Hillingdon

Council's Planning Committee, citing factors such as traffic, road safety and the need to preserve local heritage. While Lidl has claimed the new plans address the fundamental concerns on which the initial refusal was based, it is critical that they receive full scrutiny once the formal application is submitted, which is expected to be later this year. The concerns of residents and the local area must be taken into account, and I will review details once they become widely available.

I continue to serve and support residents through my office and regular surgeries, including at Vito's in Ruislip. If you would like to get in touch, or follow updates, please use the contact details below:

☎ 020 3545 2462

✉ david.simmonds.mp@parliament.uk

🌐 davidsimmonds.org.uk ♦

Tips For Saving Energy

Looking to lower your energy bills without freezing this winter? Fellow Ruislip resident Bill Upchurch has built a practical website to help us do just that. Based on his own tests, his site breaks down ways to improve your home. Instead of turning on the central heating, he suggests warming yourself with a cheap halogen heater. He also offers

useful tips, like cutting wall heat loss with radiator foil, or tackling damp solid walls with thermal liners. Beyond these ideas, Bill provides updates on renewable energy and local recycling.

For honest advice on saving money and climate tech, visit Bill's website today.

🌐 www.ccinfo.org.uk ♦

Treasurer's Corner

Nick Potter

It's time to renew your subscription to Ruislip Residents' Association, if you haven't already done so. The money is essential for the RRA to continue to represent the interests of Ruislip and Ruislip Manor residents, to produce the *Town Crier* and fund our other work.

Subscriptions remain at £5, but please continue with your generous donations which are a very necessary part of our funding.

You can pay your subscription online at:

🌐 www.ruislipresidents.org.uk and click on the yellow "Pay Your Subs" button in the menu bar. Alternatively, you can fill in the form below and post/deliver in a sealed envelope to RRA, Box No. 231, Mail Boxes Etc., Rye House, 161 High St, Ruislip HA4 8JY or drop it in to Mail Boxes Etc., (near Ruislip Station) or Chimsons Chemist, 29 Victoria Road (near to Ruislip Manor Station). ♦

Please detach and return this form if you wish to pay your RRA subscription by cash or cheque:

Post to: RRA, Box No. 231, Mail Boxes Etc., 161 High Street, Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 8JY or hand deliver to Mail Boxes Etc. or Chimsons Chemist (Ruislip Manor) in an envelope.

Please find enclosed £5.00 for the 2026 subscription and a donation of £ giving a total of £ which is paid by cash*/cheque* (* please circle method chosen)

Cheques should be made payable to 'Ruislip Residents' Association'. Please do not send coins by post, and avoid using staples or sellotape. The cashing of your cheque is proof of its receipt.

Name(s):

Address:

..... Post Code:

Please supply your email address if you are interested in helping to deliver the *Town Crier*.

Email address:

Planning/Heritage Update

HOUSING GROWTH IN RUISLIP

Following approval for development at 2 Midcroft (the old petrol station) and 82–84 High Street (the former Lloyds Bank), a further 25 flats have been approved since early 2026 above or behind High Street shops. In July, 5 flats were approved at 54 High Street (former Barclays). Additionally, plans for 6 flats behind Tesco Express were approved, with conditions mandating the restoration of the 1930s Woolworths facade and new lighting in the dark alleyway by Superdrug.

applicant has now lodged an appeal. The RRA is deeply concerned about the Council's ability to defend this. In our objection, we provided accurate data proving Ruislip is not a 24-hour economy. Surprisingly, the planning officer's report ignored our evidence, relying instead on obsolete data - such as citing the closing time of Tokyo Fizz, which shut down in 2022. The Council ignored our later request to correct these errors, leaving their refusal vulnerable to being overturned by the Planning Inspectorate.

LIDL'S ORCHARD PLANS

In June, Lidl ran an informal pre-application consultation for a new food store at the former Orchard pub site. This stage is now complete. Lidl has emphasised to the RRA that they are analysing all the feedback before finalising their designs. No formal planning application has been submitted yet. When Lidl does apply later in 2026, Hillingdon Council will run a statutory public consultation, and residents will be able to formally submit their comments.

JULY PLANNING SNAPSHOT

Across our Conservation Areas, July saw 5 new planning applications and 4 new enforcement issues. The Council approved 5 applications, and 2 appeals were dismissed. We are currently closely tracking 10 ongoing applications alongside 3 active appeals. We have full details online.

MORE DETAILS

See page 21 for details about Hillingdon's Local Plan, and page 31 for good news on our planning transparency campaign. For more details on these developments, including a longer version of this article, please visit 🌐 rralik/nk.umf2px ♦

HIGH STREET BINGO HALL APPEAL

A proposal for a 24/7 "Bingo Hall" Adult Gaming Centre at the former Santander bank was refused by the Council, but the

Governance in name only?

CIPFA - the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy - published its independent review of Hillingdon Council on 30 July. Commissioned by ministers as a condition of the Council's bailout, its focus turns out to be less about money than about how the Council is actually run - and its verdict is damning.

Officers had already drawn up the hard choices facing the Council: fortnightly bin collections, reviewing the library network and its three theatres, a bigger council tax rise. CIPFA's verdict on what happened next: "there appears to be no political will to take these decisions and, perhaps more importantly, if not the measures on the list then no credible alternative."

Even scrutiny doesn't escape criticism. The Council's own scrutiny committees, CIPFA finds, "appear to act more on the basis of party-political lines" rather than asking whether decisions are any good.

That same absence of political will runs through the Council's finances too. For fifteen years, Hillingdon's Council Tax has fallen further behind its neighbours - not because the option wasn't there, but because nobody chose to take it. That gap

is now worth more than £26 million a year - a shortfall CIPFA says cannot be closed by savings alone.

CIPFA's brief asked whether the Council's strategic direction was real, or existed "in name only." Its own findings answer that question without quite saying so out loud: "the strategic direction of the authority is not clear or understood."

Hillingdon still has no corporate strategy and no Asset Management Strategy. CIPFA warns that without change, "the council will have to continue to rely on EFS" - permission to borrow.

That's the pattern: not one failure, but structures that exist on paper and stop working the moment they are actually needed.

We wrote to the Chief Executive, the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Finance to ask them to respond to these findings. By the time we went to print a week later, none had.

Full findings, including details of CIPFA's risk ratings and links to the report itself at:

rralink.uk/mjyaa ♦

Transparency victory: Opening up the files

The RRA has raised concerns about the fact that statutory heritage and archaeological consultation responses (from Historic England, Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service and London & Middlesex Archaeological Society) have not been published on Hillingdon's planning portal.

After the RRA formally contacted Planning and raised a public question at the Council meeting, Cllr Nick Denys, the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Property, confirmed that improvements were being made to make the statutory consultee responses more accessible in the next few weeks. We also understand that the new planning system enabling individuals to view statutory consultee responses and officer reports would be in place by Easter 2027.

Beyond heritage, getting our hands on these hidden reports through Freedom of Information requests has proven why transparency is so vital for local safety. For Lidl's refused 2025 plan at The Orchard, a hidden LBH Highways report revealed massive internal objections, warning that the proposed 72 parking spaces doubled

the London Plan limit and delivery vehicles could cause gridlock at the White Bear roundabout.

Similarly, for the undecided St Martin's Approach Car Park housing proposal, internal data showed Highways officers completely ignored the Council's own venue booking data regarding local parking demand. The proposal also moves the car park entrance closer to the Eastcote Road pelican crossing, yet the report contained no safety analysis regarding visibility displays or pedestrian conflict.

When challenged, planning officers initially claimed hiding these documents was standard practice, but the RRA proved other London boroughs publish them openly. Thanks to the RRA's persistent campaigning and the recent Council commitment to launch a new planning portal by Easter 2027, Ruislip's (and indeed, the whole Borough's) future will no longer be decided in the dark.

We share regular planning updates in our free association newsletter - register at

rralink.uk/newsletter ♦

RUISLIP RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING

19:45, Tuesday, 15th September 2026

Winston Churchill Hall,

Pinn Way, Ruislip HA4 7QL

Doors open at 19:30

The Guest Speaker will be Jason Seez, Hillingdon Hospital's Chief Infrastructure and Redevelopment Officer, followed by an Open Forum, with questions to a panel of RRA representatives.

All Ruislip Manor and Ruislip residents are welcome.
We hope to see you there. The meeting will end at 22:00.

Open Forum items to the Secretary by Tuesday, 8th September 2026.

Subscribe to our email newsletter

Stay in touch between the printed issues of the *Town Crier*. Recently we have covered Lidl's plans for the Orchard, the revised Barn Hotel plans, the St Martin's carpark, the Council's changes to petitions, public consultations and other topical subjects. Please consider subscribing:

🌐 www.ruislipresidents.org.uk/newsletter

