



Ruislip Residents' Association

TOWN CRIER

The Voice of Ruislip Residents
January 2011



Remembrance Parade—Ruislip High Street



Gen. Meeting —Joan Davis, Chairman, with
Ch. Supt. Julian Worker, Borough Commander

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RUISLIP RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT: Brian Cowley
VICE-PRESIDENT: Peter Lansdown

Officers		Committee	
Chairman:	Joan Davis	Ian Cantley	Tessa Kershaw
Vice-Chairman:	Mike Hodge	Martin Cartwright	Peter Lansdown
Treasurer:	John Hawley	Alan Golding	George Pittaway
Secretary:	Penny Rutherford	Elma Hutton	John Williams
Chief Road Steward:	Brian Cowley	Ivor John	vacancy
Deputy Ch. Rd. Stwd.	Mary George	vacancy	vacancy

Contact us:

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 www.ruislipresidents.org.uk

Editor: Peter Lansdown peter.lansdown@btinternet.com

EDITORIAL *(Peter Lansdown)*

The first Town Crier of 2011 and another 4 pages - 24 in all. This edition is being put together on one of three new laptop computers bought with a grant from Grassroots. The funding will also enable us to redevelop our website - watch this space!

I am grateful to all those who have contributed articles. There should now be regular slots for our MPs, the Police

and school news.

On page 10 there is an update on the proposed HS2 Rail Link. On reading the report in Hillingdon People on the meeting held on Dec. 2nd., the council outlined what it will be doing "to resist any proposal that would harm the borough" and Cllr. Puddifoot stated that "We are not opposed to the concept of high speed rail which is in the national interest. However we have a

RUISLIP RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
GENERAL MEETING & OPEN FORUM
Wednesday 23rd February 2011 at 7.15 pm Ruislip Manor Library
Linden Avenue, Ruislip Manor

Agenda:	7.00pm	Doors Open
	7.15pm	Welcome and Apologies
	7.20pm	Update from Representatives
	7.40pm	Open Forum: Executive Members and Councillors a) Question submitted in advance, including HS2 b) Further questions, as time permits
	8.35pm	A.O.B.
	8.45pm	Close of business
		Light refreshments and informal discussion
	9.15pm	End of Meeting

Questions in advance for the Open Forum to the Hon. Sec.
Mrs. Penny Rutherford, 9 College Drive, Ruislip HA4 8SD
rrasec@d-rutherford.demon.co.uk

EDITORIAL *(cont. from page 2)*

lot of questions..." . On page 6 Nick Hurd supports High Speed Rail, providing that real safeguards for residents are in place. Comments to the editor!

On page 16, the future of the local Girl Guide organisation is in the balance - can you help?

A new feature is the Spotlight Interview. It was thought that it may be of interest for you to know more about some of the committee members and what makes the RRA tick.

TRAFFIC/PARKING *(Peter Lansdown)*

The council has secured funding for improvements to a number of town centres, similar to the work done in Ruislip a few years ago. £400,000 has been earmarked for Ruislip Manor and proposals are being considered by the council, Chamber of Commerce and the RRA. A similar sum has been made available for Northwood Hills.

A consultation on traffic speeds has been completed in Park Avenue and Kings College Road. From 434 letters delivered to local residents,

(continued on page 21)

COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

Ruislip, Northwood & Eastcote Local History Society

Lecture Programme 2011

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

21 February	The London Doughnut Prehistoric/Iron Age Settlement	Jon Cotton Museum of London
21 March	The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin	Sally Brewer Educ. Manager, BF House
11 April	Twenties London	Cathy Ross Museum of London

FRIENDS OF EASTCOTE HOUSE GARDEN

- Eastcote House Volunteer Gardeners meet on the third Thursday of each month, and, from March, the first Friday as well..
Everyone welcome - tools and refreshments provided - no experience necessary.
Meet in the car park at Eastcote House Gardens 9.30am.
Diary dates: Jan 20th Feb 17th Mar 4th/17th
 Apr 1st/21st May 6th/19th Jun 3rd/16th
- For more information please contact: Lesley Crowcroft lesley.crowcroft@tiscali.co.uk

RUISLIP COUNTRY MARKET

Ruislip WI market was formed in 1962 and traded weekly for many years in the Stables. Recently it became the Ruislip Country Market, although still trading in the same way with the same ideals and high standards that have been established for nearly 50 years. Throughout this time only two people have been in charge, one of whom has recently celebrated 40 years of service on the committee – a lifetime of service.

The first WI market started in Lewes, East Sussex in 1919 to help ex-servicemen and the unemployed gain some finance from their allotments. The National Markets department was created with a grant from the UK Carnegie Trust, which was not allowed to support an all female organisation, hence men joined in.

A few years ago the Market moved to Manor Farm Hall in St. Martins Approach car park, and is there every Friday from 10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. except January. Cakes, savouries, eggs, fruit, vegetables, flowers and crafts are on sale.
Please visit to support a local enterprise.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE *(Joan Davis)*

This is our first Town Crier of 2011 and we start another challenging year. Last year brought contention over how to develop the Lido, which is not yet resolved, and this year brings the even more contentious issue of High Speed 2 being routed through our town. If that plan goes ahead we will suffer major disruptions as bridges are rebuilt and new tracks put in place – road congestion, noise, and some of us compulsory purchase of our homes. When and if the line opens, some will face fresh traumas of noise and vibration as trains hurtle past.

There is a temptation to play ostrich and hope the plan will fade away, or to clamour for it to be in someone else's back yard, or to convince ourselves that it is an expensive folly we can do without. It is hard to be objective and to judge the proposal fairly, but if it can be justified as a national need, then we should be careful how we respond.

There will be lengthy consultation. Be ready to play an active part. Within our Association there will be debate before we form a view. Whatever that view, we will press that those who are disadvantaged must have generous redress. Those who have to move must be enabled to profit a little in new homes, to help them re-build their lives, and the adverse impact must be minimised, as

far as possible, at every stage of the project.

Despite these serious thoughts, this is the start of a new year, with spring almost in the air. I wish you all a good year and hope it will be a successful year for our Association too.

Getting involved in Ruislip affairs

Our Association attempts to monitor all that goes on in our town, which is a huge task. There is plenty of scope for new volunteers to join our team and enjoy working with other local people. Right now we would like to hear from members who might be willing to help with the following roles, as leaders or assistants:

- Road Stewards
- Area Stewards
- Webmaster
- IT Manager
- Leisure and Sports Adviser
- Executive Members
- Technical Advisers

If you wish to volunteer, or to know more about any of these roles, please contact our Secretary (page 2). You will be welcome to attend meetings as an observer or to meet an Executive Member to discuss details before making any commitment.

For more details visit our web site:
www.ruislipresidents.org.uk

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

In a recent national survey 70 % of respondents said they thought people should have more influence over the decisions that affect their community. I agree. In fact that feeling is a large part of what drives my politics. Take planning for example; an emotive subject for many residents of West Ruislip. As an MP I have been appalled how little the local voice seems to count. So I am delighted that we won the argument on gardens which now are better protected under planning guidance, and I am excited by the recently published Localism Bill (see page 9), which offers all kinds of new rights and opportunities for citizens and communities - including much more community led planning. I was thrilled to hear that the Government has accepted a large number of proposals put forward by communities in response to the cross party Sustainable Communities Act which I took through Parliament. There seems to be a genuine cross party agreement that we will get better decisions and services if we involve local people more, and real change is in the air.

The proposals for a new High Speed Rail route divide opinion locally. The consultation will be a stiff test of how this relationship between central and local should work. I personally support the idea of High Speed Rail for business competitiveness and environmental reasons. But as taxpayers, we must all feel comfortable that there is a robust business case. However compelling the national interest we must make sure that those who suffer loss are treated with respect and fairness. This will guide my approach as the MP of a number of residents directly affected and many more who are concerned. As ever I always welcome direct comment from my constituents to hurdn@parliament.uk on this and any other issue.

FROM OUR MP FOR MANOR WARD - JOHN RANDALL

Given the great opportunity to write something of interest for the residents of Ruislip I should be ruthless in promoting myself as a fair-minded, jovial sort of person. However, I must confess that on occasions I can be grumpier than any Victor Meldrew. So many things bring out this unattractive trait in me that I would need an entire edition of the Town Crier to get them off my chest. Basically, I don't always see eye to eye with all things modern. Obviously there are lots of good things but some things seem designed to annoy. Can you remember a few years ago when we were all being told that new technology would give us all more leisure time?

Well, that never happened because technology gave us mobile phones and emails, so we became accessible at all times of day and night. Switching my phone off makes me feel guilty in case there is a real emergency and I am drawn to read

FROM OUR MP FOR MANOR WARD *(cont.)*

emails whenever I am near a computer. The problem with the paperless system is that I live in perpetual fear of losing an important message into the ether because I've forgotten to save it, so I end up with more paper than ever. On balance, I suppose the internet is a good thing, but don't get me started on Twitter or Facebook. I am forever being told that I am an old fogey by younger and more "down with the kids" friends and colleagues because I won't sign up to these phenomena. Perhaps I am? I seem to dislike most current television programmes especially reality ones. I would rather take exercise by walking than going to a gym and I like reading real books rather than a version on a screen.

However not all is gloom and doom. When Parliament is in recess and I work from home, escaping the vagaries of the Metropolitan line or the rush hour traffic, I start to mellow and appreciate things more. Our local area, where I enjoy meeting people who have time to stop and chat, makes me appreciate being part of this community. When I take a walk and birdwatch locally, I rediscover the pleasure to be had and it makes me determined to try to preserve our quality of life here, that unique mixture of country and town that makes the suburbs so special. Perhaps my children are right when they say that I just enjoy pretending to be grumpy!

RUISLIP LIDO - DECEMBER UPDATE *(Peter Lansdown)*

Water Level Feasibility Study Technical discussions on the proposed Mitigation Scheme have now taken place and a Flood Risk Assessment is being finalised. It is hoped that the full report will be published soon.

Toilets/Changing Room Facilities Building works for the new toilets and changing rooms have been completed and the facilities are in use.

Proposed Overflow Car Park The planning application for the proposed overflow car park attracted a number of local resident consultation responses and also requests for clarification of various points. The Council is seeking to address the issues raised to ensure that information is submitted as part of a further 14 day re-consultation so that the public have an opportunity to comment accordingly. The timings of the re-consultation will be published in the near future.

Proposed Loading Restrictions Following requests from residents, a statutory consultation was undertaken on proposed loading restrictions, which are intended to improve access and road safety. Two objections have been received in response to the consultation and officers are working with the residents in order to hopefully resolve their concerns.

HISTORY: A SAD TALE OF POVERTY AT RUISLIP COMMON IN 1845

(Eileen Bowl)

At the time of the 1841 census William Murrell and his son, William, both described as agricultural labourers, were the sole occupants of a 'hut or shed' at Ruislip Common, just at the northern edge of the Lido Car Park. Young William married and went to live at Iver, but was imprisoned at Aylesbury for stealing potatoes in January 1844. It was a time of agricultural depression.

By August, William was out of gaol, but also out of work, 'except an occasional job or two'. In October or November, as a result of the serious illness of his wife, he sought assistance and the family was ordered to be removed from the Eton Union to the Uxbridge Union when Martha should have recovered. Early in December she was somewhat better and to avoid the order of removal, William borrowed a horse and cart and took the family and their few belongings to Ruislip Common, where his father still lived. William and Martha found a lodging in the old workhouse (now a private house in Ducks Hill just above the Garden Centre), which had been divided into tenements that were let to poor people by the owner, Ralph Deane of Eastcote House.

The couple's only food was some potatoes which William had been given in Iver in return for 'doing up' a garden and a few more that his father had provided

as seed, supplemented by twopenny-worth of sprats and occasionally a half loaf of bread. Eventually Martha persuaded her husband to apply for help and he was given an order of admission to the Union Workhouse at Hillingdon. Reluctant to go there he walked back to Ruislip and found that work was available in the woods, cutting pea sticks and carrying them to the road to be carted. He began next day but in his weakened condition through lack of proper nourishment, he found that the most he could earn in a day was ninepence and was forced to give up.

In January 1845 he was very ill and Martha left home to walk to the Relieving Officer's house at Hillingdon to ask for medical relief. She was given an order for Mr Rayner, the medical man with responsibility for Ruislip paupers, to attend her husband and having taken it to the doctor's house in Uxbridge, she returned to Ruislip Common, where she arrived about mid-day, having walked some ten miles without food and bringing nothing but a promise of a visit from the doctor. Mr Rayner duly arrived and gave her an order to the effect that she should receive food and other necessaries. Still hungry and very weary Martha set off again to the Relieving Officer's house so that he could exchange Mr Rayner's order for an order for Mr Collins, who had a gro-

HISTORY: A SAD TALE OF POVERTY AT RUISLIP COMMON IN 1845

(cont.)

cery on Breakspear Road at the house now called Brill's Cottage, a short distance from the old workhouse. The order was to supply goods to the value of 3 shillings (15p).

Three days later she attended the Union Workhouse seeking more help. Mr Pearce, one of the Guardians who was from Ruislip, promised to set William to work 'in grubbing' on the Monday morning. In the meantime Martha was given a meal at the workhouse and Mr Stratton, the Relieving Officer arranged to meet her at Ruislip church on the Saturday morning. He gave her three loaves and one shilling and eightpence halfpenny.

William Murrell who had hurt his foot on a stump, became very ill over the weekend. A neighbour saw him on the Sunday, lying on his face on a chaff bed, with a stiff neck and his jaw locked, although sensible. Another neighbour, Mrs Allday went to Uxbridge herself on the Tuesday, to fetch Mr Rayner, but William Murrell died before he arrived.

At the inquiry into the death held at The Six Bells by Thomas Wakley, Mrs Allday stated that her own husband 'had no employment but breaking stones at the Uxbridge Workhouse, at which he never could earn more than one shilling and fourpence or one shilling and sixpence a day, and to perform that work he had to walk ten miles a day.' The surgeon, Mr Rayner, believed that death was due to lockjaw caused by the injury to the foot, rather than by want of food. The jury brought in a verdict of 'Died from lockjaw'. The foreman added 'that the jury could not separate without expressing their great dissatisfaction and disgust at the continuance of a system which compelled the poor, in the hour of sickness and destitution to travel so many miles as it was proved that the wife of the deceased man was compelled to walk before she could obtain the relief that was necessary for their wants'.

LOCALISM BILL *(Ivor John)*

This Bill, currently going through Parliament, is intended to change many aspects of how Local Authorities and communities can influence changes within their area. Several of the existing constraints will be removed with regard to planning and other matters, but communities will be more influential in deciding some issues in their area. To find out more go to:

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/localism.html>

HIGH SPEED RAIL LINK - HS2 *(Tessa Kershaw)*

This is the current expected timetable for HS2:

Consultation Period (probably 5 months duration)	Start February 2011
Final Decision about choice of Route	December 2011
Introduction of Hybrid Bill in Parliament	2013
Construction Start	2015

On 20 December, 2010, Philip Hammond, the Transport Secretary, announced that the Government has now decided which preferred route for HS2 will be put out for public consultation in February 2011. This is the route that will run through Ruislip, affecting many properties via proximity/noise nuisance, and indeed the area as a whole, due to the huge congestion and disruption that will occur during the building work.

All the route maps and further information are on the Department of Transport website

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/rail/pi/highspeedrail/hs2Ltd/> or that of HS2 Ltd, the company set up by the Government to look into the feasibility of this rail link <http://www.hs2.org.uk/>

Their contact details are:

Tel: 020 7944 4908

Email: HS2enquiries@hs2.gsi.gov.uk

The effect of HS2 on Ruislip:

Although this 'preferred' train route will run via West Ruislip, it will be a non-stop service from central London to Birmingham and as such passengers will not be able to access the trains at Ruislip. The current proposal is to have 14 trains an hour travelling in each direction on the line. The train speed would be 155 Miles per hour when approaching West Ruislip from London, after which it is expected to start to accelerate to 186mph (which is more than double the current speed of trains on Chiltern Line), to finally reach 248mph after Amersham.

Most of the track through Ruislip would run alongside the north side of the existing Chiltern line, until it nears Breakspear Road South when it will split away to become a fully separate line heading in a more northerly direction, crossing Harvil Road near to the Dogs Trust. For the trains to run at very high speeds the track needs to be straighter and more level than the current Chiltern Line route. Various viaducts, embankments, bridges, stations and road junctions will therefore need to be re-configured or built to enable this, which will cause huge disruption to the roads and railways in the general Ruislip/Ickenham area during the many years of the construction period.

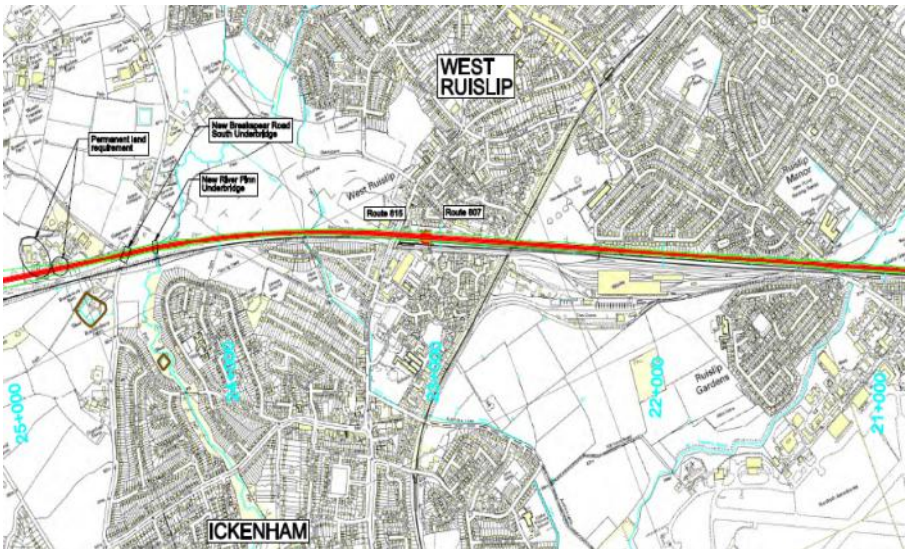
HIGH SPEED RAIL LINK - HS2 (cont.)

For those living close to the proposed route there is the risk that noise and vibration will affect their homes, plus the possibility of visual intrusion, if the new track is built higher than the existing track, or where tall gantries will be installed for electric power lines.

If the route goes ahead, some land/buildings close to, or on the line of the new track, may need to be compulsorily purchased by the Government. Others will remain, but with a new train line right next door. There is an Exceptional Hardship Scheme (see Department of Transport details above) for those who need to sell their homes, and the understanding is that there will be further schemes (such as compensation for blight to property) available

in the future. No more information about these extra schemes is yet available.

Hillingdon Council held a meeting on 2 December 2010 for residents living close to the proposed route, explaining more about it and emphasising that they will fight against it as hard as they fought against the Third Runway. More public meetings will follow once detailed information has been received from HS2 Ltd relating to: the width of the land required for the new rail line (perhaps as much as 75 metres), noise levels, properties that will physically be affected, mitigation proposals to reduce noise and views, compensation/blight schemes. Council contact details are 01895 250111 or <http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/>



RAF NORTHOLT, THE SIR KEITH PARK BUILDING *(Sqd Ldr Richard Willis)*

On the north side of the airfield at RAF Northolt stands an insignificant looking single storey building surrounded by brand new state of the art facilities for units such as the Queen's Colour Squadron and the Central Band of the RAF and a series of brand new blocks of sleeping accommodation for single airmen and women. It is the Sector Operations Building which controlled Z-Sector of 11 Group during WWII.

However, the Sir Keith Park Building, as it is now named, stands as an important survivor of WWII and of plans to demolish it as part of the more recent station MoDEL redevelopment programme. Sir Keith Park (right), who as a Wing Commander was Station Commander of RAF Northolt during the initial stages of the development of the Sector Operations Building and later as the Senior Air Staff Officer at HQ Fighter Command, regularly returned to the building to deliver VIP presentations on the pre-WWII Dowding System. During the Battle of Britain Sir Keith – a New Zealander - commanded No 11 Group at RAF Uxbridge and later took command of the RAF in Malta, before moving to the Far East prior to his retirement in 1946. It was therefore highly appropriate that the building was formally opened on 15th September by Air Vice Marshal Graham Lintott, the Chief of the Royal New Zealand Air Force, and has since had its listing as Grade II signed off by the Secretary of State.



In playing its part alongside HQ Fighter Command at Bentley Priory and HQ No 11 Gp at Uxbridge, the Sir Keith Park Building can, in many respects, be considered the prototype of all RAF Sector Operations blocks. This is because not only did it play a key role in the evolutionary development and prototyping of the processes central to the successful implementation of the WWII Integrated Air Defence System, but significant elements of its internal design were rolled out across Fighter Command. This latter, and unplanned, development stemmed from a lack of sufficient funds to adopt an optimum design developed by Hornchurch, who had been charged with shadowing Northolt's activities for this purpose. Hence it was the more austere, but nonetheless functional, layout associated with the Sir Keith Park Building that was adopted by Fighter Command stations in time for the Battle of Britain.

A team of very enthusiastic volunteers from a 20 year old airwoman to an 87 year old

RAF NORTHOLT, THE SIR KEITH PARK BUILDING *(cont.)*

ex-Lancaster pilot have been peeling back the layers of the building over the last 18 months to establish the original layout and purpose of the rooms, and the internal decor. Gradually the building has yielded its secrets, including 5 original markers from the plotting table, which had fallen between the floorboards, as well as the precise size and shape of the table itself. The team is working on restoring the plotting room to its working appearance and it is intended to create a small but perfectly formed Station museum in the other end of the building to tell the story of RAF Northolt's history as the last surviving Fighter Command Battle of Britain Station still in active service.

The Ministry of Defence is content to secure the fabric of the building and provide heating and light, but all the restoration work is being undertaken by volunteers, who also fund-raise to purchase the materials needed. Occasional visitors are invited to make a donation to the cause and the generosity of the Polish Air Force Association has ensured that the funds flow to keep the project on track.

As the building is on an active MOD establishment access is by appointment only through the Media and Communications Officer on 020 8833 8909.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE *(Tessa Kershaw)*

Some of you may know very little about our Executive Committee, so it has been decided to interview members – one for each Town Crier. The members undertake all their duties voluntarily, for no payment, during their own free time. It is hoped that these mini-interviews will help to enlighten RRA members about what is done on their behalf to try to ensure that Ruislip continues to be a pleasant place in which to live.

New committee members and helpers are always needed, and welcomed, to share and expand both our workload and range of expertise. So if this article inspires you to consider offering to help, please contact the Secretary (*see page 2*)

(Interview on page 19)

HEALTH MATTERS *(Joan Davis)*

Foundation Trust application: The Trust hopes to become a Foundation Trust on 1st April, 2011, which would bring it many freedoms. The final assessment towards that goal started in early December and the Trust hopes that it can meet all Monitor's requirements.

Dr Foster Report on the Hillingdon Hospital Trust: On each of the five areas of assessment published in December, Hillingdon and Mount Vernon hospitals were rated "as expected" for a medium sized Trust, but the Trust was very close to "better than expected" for its overall mortality rate.

Upgrade of the children's waiting room in Hillingdon Hospital: Hasbro, the international toy company, has sent in a team of volunteers to brighten up the walls and fit out the room with a most generous selection of toys, games, DVDs and books. Patients and their families report that they love it!

Improved care for broken bones: For an older person, a bad fall often fractures the neck of the femur bone in the leg. Their best chance of recovery is a swift operation to repair the damage. So it is good news that, since November, Hillingdon Hospital has been able to offer 24 hour access to an operating theatre and a dedicated emergency surgical team to care for these patients. This is a big improvement on the previous service.

Patient Safety: The Medical Director of Hillingdon Hospital Trust, Dr Susan LaBrooy, recently presented a report showing that patient safety is at the top of her agenda. She touched on measures to combat cardiac arrest, ways to reduce infections, and guidelines to improve standards of nursing care, including safe use of high risk medicines, and protection of patients from falls and pressure sores. All news that we like to hear!

A satellite Radiotherapy Unit for Mount Vernon Cancer Centre? NHS Hertfordshire is continuing to explore whether a satellite unit would be viable. The outcome of this next stage of the MVCC Development Review is not expected until Spring 2011 at the earliest, but if the project proceeds there will have to be formal public consultation on where to build the satellite unit. The Lister Hospital in Stevenage is believed to be the most favoured option.

CyberKnife at Mount Vernon: Many members will know that clinicians across the NHS can refer suitable patients to Mount Vernon for cyberknife treatment. The

HEALTH MATTERS *(cont.)*

equipment, costing over £2m, the gift of a generous donor, brings new hope to some patients who previously could not be treated with radiotherapy. PCT funding for cyberknife treatment for some central nervous system conditions has already been agreed, which is a big step forward. Negotiations are now underway for funding of this treatment for a wide range of other conditions.

Harefield Hospital's new Operating Theatres: After three years of planning and rebuilding, Harefield Hospital's five operating theatres are all on the ground floor, two of them brand new rebuilds and three of them fully refurbished. An Open Day was held to let Harefield staff and invited guests see the changes. Highlights included the spacious new theatres, with equipment suspended from the ceiling, touch screen controlled. In the area where patients wait to undergo surgery there is an interactive wall panel - a soothing lake with a fisherman waiting for a "bite", cyclists in the distance, a balloon drifting across the sky, dragonflies and butterflies hovering, where birds sing, cows moo, ducks swim and fish jump out of the water – all remotely controllable by the patient at the touch of a hand-held device!

Another feature, displayed outside the theatres, is the beautiful urn created by Grayson Perry. A visit to the hospital inspired him to decorate it with surgeons in theatre garb, surgical instruments, couches and similar clinical items. He most generously donated the urn to be auctioned for the hospital and the new owners have lent it for display in the hospital, where it excites much admiration.

Merger of Hillingdon Community Health services with Central & North West London NHS Foundation Trust: The Governors of this FT heard recently that both their Board and the NHS Hillingdon Board have approved the Business Case for this merger to go ahead – but that, despite lack of objection from their own Board, the Business Case is NOT available to members of the public! The Community Voice, of which Ruislip Residents Association is a prominent member, has complained forcefully to NHS Hillingdon that the public has not been properly consulted on this important and controversial issue – no immediate change of services are involved, so public consultation is not obligatory, but tiny Hillingdon Community Health is being absorbed by giant CNWL, so the merger needs to be monitored carefully.

The Government is consulting on some of the proposals ... until 8 March 2011
Joan Davis Tel: 01895 636095

GIRL GUIDING IN RUISLIP HITS CRISIS POINT *(Lin Gregory)*

Girl Guiding in Ruislip is desperately trying to recruit new leaders (Guiders) for their Rainbow, Brownie and Guide units:

Rainbows – 5-7 year olds, meetings are normally 1 hour a week

Brownies – 7-10 years old, meetings are 1 ½ hours a week

Guides – 10-15 years old, weekly meeting are 2 hours

If you have some time to spare to help out it would be great to hear from you. Helping at Rainbows, Brownies and Guides is really rewarding. All the units have a varied programme which includes cooking, crafts, games, singing, exploring the outdoors, learning new skills and working in groups. The Guiders also get together socially and recently a group of leaders went to the New Forest for a training weekend, with a bit of retail therapy thrown in! In the last year all the Brownie units have been invited to attend residential events and the Guides have had the opportunity of camping. Ruislip District took a group of Guides to Switzerland a few years ago and is planning a trip to another Girl Guide World Centre in India this year.

Helpers are particularly needed for the 2nd Ruislip (St Martin's) Rainbow and Brownie units. These are both popular units that have been running for many years and have the maximum number of girls attending with long waiting lists. Unfortunately the current leaders have to leave at the end of this term and without replacement leaders these units may have to close.

Leaders are also required for the units that meet at The Guide Hut in Bury Street. If there is no one to take over then there is no alternative but to close them. This will result in over 60 girls not being able to attend the weekly meetings and other Guiding events that they currently enjoy so much.

Girl Guiding is celebrating its centenary this year and all the girls have been participating in events, either in their units or attending District/Division activities. It would be a terrible shame to close these units in this historic year.

Please, please think about sparing some time for this fantastic organisation. Not only will you have great fun at the weekly meetings, you will meet some wonderful people and make new friends. Full support and training will be given.

If at all interested, please call or email :

tel: 01895 905511

email: lingregory@blueyonder.co.uk

POLICE - EASTCOTE AND EAST RUISLIP SNT *(Rob Belson)*

When the nights are long and the mercury plummets it is the little things that make all the difference: getting a seat on the train, the train actually turning up, no queue at the coffee shop. It makes all the difference between surviving the day and actually enjoying it.

Little things making all the difference is something that Eastcote and East Ruislip Safer Neighbourhood Team also recognise and is a message we try to promote during our regular street briefings, crime prevention visits and at any other opportunity that presents itself. See below for little things that can make all the difference to home security.

The team have been out doing the little things throughout the year. Personnel changes saw PC Darren Vicary 245XH join the team during the summer. Darren has been pivotal in providing road safety advice to local school children, engaging the minority who are intent on acting anti-socially in the community and in conducting high visibility patrols to combat burglary and motor vehicle crime. One individual, who the team suspected was responsible for numerous graffiti incidents, was arrested for criminal damage offences. Following his successful conviction instances of this type of crime have reduced significantly in the area. Other arrests this year include numerous burglars, various people for possession of drugs and several for cultivation of cannabis.

The team currently has three community support officers (PCSOs), Ben Jacques, Andrew Phillips and Gary Randall. Together they perform high visibility patrols and provide reassurance to victims of crime, They have also been involved in various youth activities, such as attending Scout meetings and holding assemblies at schools on the ward. The PCSOs do much more than their reassurance and crime prevention role. They have been involved in issuing numerous tickets, warnings for possession of cannabis, seizure of mopeds used anti-socially, the arrest of people for possession of class A drugs in Field End Road and three people for burglary in Devonshire Road.

Little things taken together make a big difference. Some of these can make a big difference to your home security, e.g. cutting back hedges to provide sight lines, securing gates and sheds securely and using a light or radio on a timer when the home is unoccupied. Checking that doors and windows are locked should be part of your morning and evening rituals. The SNT can provide further home and personal security tips — contact the team on 020 7161 9235 to arrange a visit.

SCHOOLS - COTEFORD INFANTS - RUISLIP/EASTCOTE *(Julia Thomas)*

Coteford Infant School children are curious. They are interested in lots of things and last term they had a chance to find out what it was like to be in Ruislip or Eastcote in the past. Staff planned exciting visits, invited in local residents with special interests and everyone did lots of reading and research. They all learnt something about our local area that is so rich with historical sites.

Everyone visited Eastcote Walled Gardens and had tours led by Leslie Crowcroft and her team that included a visit to the huge old dovecote. Some children already knew the gardens well because they had helped with planting earlier in the year. We sang as we danced round the Mulberry Bush and tried to measure the huge old trunk of the Wellingtonia tree. We imagined ladies from the time of Henry VIII enjoying the flowers and 2 classes held Elizabethan banquets in their classrooms.

The children in Years 1 and 2 also went to find out about Manor Farm. They saw the Old Barn, the library, the Manor House and the place where the Norman castle might have been. The children were fascinated by tales of 1066 and looked at the pages of the Doomsday Book that mentioned Ruislip. Back in school they made castles, designed coats of arms and wrote stories about the Normans.

Our special visitors were great. Several members of the local history society came in to show photographs, share memorabilia and talk about what it was like in the olden days. The youngsters found it hard to understand what children did without television and were amazed to see Ruislip with no yellow lines and very few cars. Wendy Hobday, Lady of Ruislip, Lord of the Manor, visited us, as did the Mayor of Hillingdon. We had assemblies and sessions in classrooms and tours.

Did you know that:

Fore Street was once called Frog Lane because of Gutts pond which used to be where Pretty Corner is now

Ruislip has been spelt in over one hundred different ways over time

Hampton Court was built using trees from Ruislip Woods

Winston Churchill stayed at Highgrove House during his honeymoon.

Teachers know that children learn best when they are motivated and excited. We know that this topic was very exciting and the children really enjoyed their learning.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE EXECUTIVE - INTERVIEW *(Tessa Kershaw)*

Name? Joan Davis.

How long have you lived in Ruislip? Over forty years – I moved here in 1964

Committee Responsibilities: Chairman (since June 2010) plus Health Services Representative for many years.

How long have you been a Committee Member? At least 15 years.

Why did you choose to join the Committee? Because I believe that residents have a more powerful voice by working together than any can have by working alone, and I felt that I would like to add my own contribution.

Describe the regular activities you undertake in connection with your committee responsibilities:

(a) Chairman – I chair meetings, represent RRA at events run by other organisations, write letters, exchange emails, and am first RRA point of contact for many people. I can be asked to speak at a moment's notice on any local topic, so I need to be involved in every aspect of RRA's work, particularly contentious issues such as proposals for Ruislip Lido or HS2. RRA tries to support all its members, but when views differ we aim to keep a neutral stance, admitting the range of opinion, and advising all factions how to promote their own views.

(b) Health Service Representative – my input in this role comes from me being Chairman of The Community Voice, an umbrella organisation concerned exclusively with good local health services, which monitors plans and services at all levels of the NHS in NW London and SW Herts. It also holds monthly meetings, at which visitors are welcome, to hear NHS speakers and to debate issues.

What people/organisations does this involve you liaising with?:

Everyone! Hillingdon Council, MPs, Councillors, residents, and local organisations of every kind, for example Friends of Warrender Park, Ruislip Manor Chamber of Commerce, Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services, and Hillingdon Alliance of Residents Associations.

How many meetings, on average, do you attend per month in connection with your duties? Impossible to say - some weeks have only a couple of meetings, others have three or more meetings most days. I am lucky to have the free time available to attend so many.

What are the best and worst aspects of being a Committee Member?

Best – involvement in local issues.

Worst – too few hours in the day!

PLANNING MATTERS *(John Williams)*

Firstly an update on some items reported in our last issue.

The Council is currently reviewing the response to their consultation on the **Local Development Core Strategy Document** and we expect the next stage to be the publication of the **Site Allocation Document**.

The latest news on the **HS2** proposals is covered elsewhere in this issue.

The application for security gates on the new housing site at **Mill Works, Bury Street** was refused by the Council and the developer has since lodged an Appeal. Similarly the refusal of the application at **53 Pinn Way** is now the subject of an Appeal. In both cases a letter has been sent to the Planning Inspectorate supporting the Council's decision.

Since our last issue there has been another proposal for a large development of flats. Developers, London Square, recently held an exhibition of their proposals for redeveloping **Lyon Court, Pembroke Road**. They propose to replace the existing building and the adjacent pair of semi-detached houses with 71 flats in two four storey blocks. We have informed both the developer and the Council of our concerns about the high density of the development and the loss of the extensive green garden area.

We have also expressed concern about two proposals in Eastcote which it was felt would have implications for the wider area. At **RAF Lime Grove** developer Taylor Wimpey was seeking to raise the already high density above that originally agreed. This application was refused. On the vacant site at **216 Field End Road** (opposite Eastcote Station), the same architects as those at **Lyon Court** are proposing a four storey building containing a Sainsbury supermarket and eleven flats. Whilst the site is clearly suitable for redevelopment, the proposed building would be completely out of character with the adjacent buildings. Also due to an inadequate parking provision and its proximity to an important junction we are concerned about the impact on traffic flow in Field End Road.

Finally, as part of the Coalition Government's "Big Society" programme draft proposals for the Localism Bill have recently been published. These include reforms to the planning system which we will monitor with some interest. A summary of the proposals has been published by the National Organisation of Residents Associations (NORA), to which we are affiliated. Further details can be seen on the websites of NORA (www.nora-uk.co.uk) or the Dept of Communities & Local Government (www.planningportal.gov.uk).

PLANNING MATTERS *(Mike Hodge)*

Recent changes heralded in the High Street include the closure of Pizza Hut to be replaced it is understood by Ladbrokes bookmakers (no extra planning permission required apparently despite being in Conversation Area).

Kentucky Fried Chicken have extended with seating accommodation into 56 High Street (next door).

62 Fairacres: A proposal to construct a single storey rear extension, first floor side extension, enlargement of front & rear dormer windows & conversion of garage to habitable space was refused by council planners on 24 November. The RRA supported local residents in registering their concerns over what was considered over-dominant development.

The Ferns, Withy Lane: The proposal to replace an existing industrial building with a block of 5 flats with associated parking having been previously refused by the local authority went to appeal on 22 November and will be decided on the basis of an exchange of written statements coupled with a site visit by the planning inspector. We as before registered our objections to the proposed redevelopment.

TRAFFIC & PARKING *(continued from page 3)*

255 replies were received of which 48% are in favour of Option 1 and 69% are in support of some form of traffic calming. After discussion with Ward Councillors, the council propose to introduce measures which include four traffic speed tables (similar to those in Green Lane, Northwood), two in Park Avenue and two in Kings College Road. A detailed plan is available and should be on the council website.

Work is scheduled to start on the Pegasus crossing at the top of Ducks Hill around the end of January. This crossing will help both horses and pedestrians to cross a busy main road

with poor visibility.

The pedestrian crossing in Eastcote Road, at the junction of St. Martins Approach, has not been safe for some time, with vehicles continuing across with pedestrians in the middle of the road. In an effort to improve safety, the Zebrite system will be installed soon. This should make the crossing more conspicuous. If you are not familiar with this, the flashing yellow lights are replaced by a bright halo effect, as can be seen at the crossing further along Eastcote Road adjacent to Hume Way.

RUISLIP WOODS - WHAT IF? *(Ian Cantley)*

Ruislip woods are 'ancient semi-natural woodland'. A wood is described as ancient if it has been woodland for over 500 years; in the case of most of Ruislip Woods the earliest available records refer to there being woodland on this site and it is likely that the area has been wooded since the last ice age ended 12,000 years ago and woodland subsequently developed naturally. This original woodland is referred to as the 'Wildwood'. Ruislip Woods are also described as semi-natural because although they developed naturally they have been intensively managed for at least 900 years. At Ruislip this management was mainly 'coppice with standards'; coppicing the 'underwood' – hornbeam, and periodically felling the standards –oaks for timber. This management method is documented for Ruislip Woods from medieval times.

Visitors on walks often ask where the oldest and largest trees are and are disappointed to find there are no such veterans. The largest tree in the woods is the Beech tree in Park Wood near the path from the running club; this tree is unusual as there are very few beech trees in Park Wood. The reason for the lack of old veteran trees is the intense management since medieval times; all the large trees went a long time ago and the trees that have grown up to replace them have not grown so high. The size of timbers used in buildings in England reduced in the 14th/15th centuries with the largest timbers only being found in castles and cathedrals. (Rackham). Timber from Ruislip Woods was used at the Tower of London, Westminster Palace and Windsor Castle (LTMP) and in Ruislip Woods "the felling of relatively young oaks was common practice" (Bowl)

So to the 'what if? What would Ruislip Woods be like if man hadn't interfered and managed them so intensively and the wildwood had been left? A clue can be found in certain field guides to trees where the height given for a mature sessile oak is 40m high with 9m girth. This means a tree 133ft high and 9'6" in diameter at chest height. The normal height of an oak in Ruislip Woods is about 50ft and very few are more than 2ft in diameter. However it is possible to see what such unmanaged woodland would look like. Straddling the Polish/Belarus border is an area of European oak forest called the Bialowieza Forest that has survived largely untouched. It covers an area of approx. 39 sq miles (Ruislip Woods, approx. 1.1 sq mile) and is home to bison, wolves, elk, beaver and some enormous trees. The forest can only be visited by permit, but gives a fascinating glimpse of what the wildwood may have looked like. In the first photograph the scale of the trees is not obvious because they are so tall growing to their full 130ft height, but in the second photograph showing the fallen trunk it can be seen that its diameter is over 8ft. On entering the

RUISLIP WOODS - WHAT IF? (cont.)

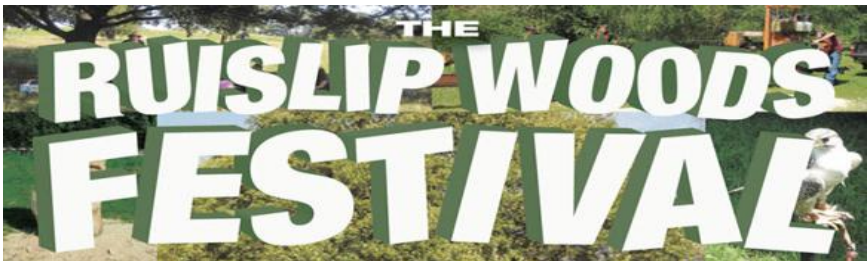
wood the feeling is of entering a cathedral with the trunks disappearing like columns upwards to the canopy. Identifying the tree species from the bark is easier than from the leaves, as they are so far above your head, but the species present are familiar oak, beech, ash and hornbeam. Also fascinating are the dead trees, both standing and fallen, supporting a rich collection of fungi and epiphytes. The Bialowieza forest is closely protected, being a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve, which befits its status as the last remnant of the primeval forest that once covered most of Europe.



For more information about Ruislip Woods or to join the Friends go to www.ruislipwoodstrust.org.uk or email secretary@ruislipwoodstrust.org.uk.

References

The History of the Countryside – Oliver Rackham
Ruislip Woods Long Term Management Plan 1982
The Goodliest Place in Middlesex – Eileen Bowlt



The date of this year's Ruislip Woods Festival will be **Sunday 15th May 2011**.
Make a note in your diary now.

RUISLIP—Autumn or Winter?

November—Coppicing



December snow



January—the sun's back.

John Randall, MP (see page 6)



Coteford Infant School at
Manor Farm (see page 18)