



EMMER GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

serving the local community

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

July 2012

www.egra.co.uk

The AGM was held The Grace Church, Peppard Road on 17th May. We were overwhelmed by the numbers who attended this year, and will be considering the suitability of the venue for future meetings. The True Food Community Co-op, kindly donated a selection of snacks and non-alcoholic refreshments. www.truefood.coop

Details of the new committee are at the end of the newsletter, and minutes of the meeting are on the website. After the formal business Dr Clive Edmonds gave a presentation on the local chalk mines, with a brief insight to the Emmer Green ones and an overview of the 50 – 60 known mines in Reading as a whole. For further information on the caves nearer to home visit http://www.subbrit.org.uk/sb-sites/sites/h/hanover_chalk_mine/index.shtml . Due to the obvious interest in the local caves, we are looking into featuring a more detailed account of these next year.

Thanks to Jack Jackson for writing a report for the Caversham Bridge.

DIAMOND JUBILEE PICNIC IN THE PARK



Such an event has not been held in the park since Her Majesty's Coronation in 1953. The aim was to make it a community generated family occasion. We were at the mercy of the elements, but luckily a reasonable day was sandwiched between some unseasonable weather. A HUGE THANKS to all those who worked so hard to make it the tremendous success it was. The talented EMC Jazz Band provided the music. We had some brilliant performances from our young people – dance, judo and exhilarating gymnasts. And thanks to those who came along on the day with their picnics. Budgens, Waitrose and True Food Co-op generously donated prizes and a whole army of people baked cakes for the scouts to sell. We have gathered together photographs taken on the day, and hope to put together a compilation for dedicated EGRA website pages and souvenir book. Courtenay and Crawshay Drives held a Jubilee Street Party on Sunday 3rd June.

OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY INFORMATION

Tuesday 10th July

Carried through Nettlebed at 8.57am by Mo Merchant and Will Travers.

Wednesday 11th July

Departs from Caversham Court at 8.04am. Breakfast served from the kiosk at 7.30am.

PARKING ARRANGEMENTS

Micro Park and Ride- Clayfield Copse

The recent proposals upgrade the car park with lighting and CCTV to attract and charge commuters have been abandoned. EGRA invited members, many of whom use the facilities at Clayfield, to feed back to us, and Councillor Willis, transport spokesman, and supported all Peppard Ward councillors working together to fight the proposals. A packed meeting was held at the Youth and Community Centre on 2nd July and the strength of feeling conveyed to Reading Borough Council's Transport Officer Ruth Leuilette. Letters were written and petitions signed. The people were listened to, as we have been informed, that although no formal decision will be made until the Cabinet meeting on 16th July, in response to the campaign there will be a U-turn on both this site and its twin proposals at Palmer Park. Councillor Willis thanks all those who supported the campaign to protect Clayfield Copse. EGRA, supports the idea of Park and Ride to help clear congestion in the town, and traffic levels through Emmer Green itself. But it needs to be properly considered, be in the right location, to have a financial incentive and dedicated fast track bus service. We hope the Council continues to work with South Oxfordshire to find a solution.

Shopping Precinct Car Park

The saga continues. Don't celebrate yet. After cautious optimism and much persistence, it now appears the best we can hope for is minimal repairs, with a promise of more work later in the summer. This is not a long-term solution, but it appears the leaseholders of the shops are liable for maintenance, and this causes financial difficulties for some.

Parking - Double Yellow Lines

When double yellow lines were implemented overnight along the entire length of Grove Road, a few areas were deemed excessive and our Councillors have been asking for a few places near the church to revert to single yellow lines to enable limited parking evenings and weekends. These new arrangements have yet to be confirmed.

SCHOOL EXPANSION

Emmer Green Primary School is to take an extra thirty pupils in the next school year. A planning application is in for an additional temporary classroom 12/00902/REG3, but it appears places have already been allocated. There is to be a consultation in the autumn to discuss a more permanent solution. In the meantime, EGRA is very aware of all the transport and parking issues and is lobbying RBC's Education Department for a dedicated bus service to ferry pupils from Caversham Heights and Mapledurham.

OUTINGS

Twenty five EGRA members were lucky enough to visit the Thames Valley Police Museum at Sulhamstead in April. Situated in the White House, a former mansion set in glorious grounds, it's now the training and assessment centre for Thames Valley Police (TVP). We were given a brief history of how over the years a number of town, district and county forces came together in 1968 to form TVP before embarking on a guided tour of some of

the working areas of the complex. First up was the Search Unit. TVP is one of the few forces to employ specialist dive teams whose role is to search for evidence and all too often bodies in some of the harshest environments imaginable not just in rivers and ponds. We were allowed in to their specially equipped truck which had just returned from an assignment in Warwickshire.

Next came a visit to the dog kennels where some training is carried out, but which are more often used to board dogs whilst their handlers are on leave. That days' inmates ranged from a docile German shepherd to a number of the same breed, who were less happy to have their day interrupted by interlopers, and three utterly adorable spaniels deployed on various sniffer duties. The request not to put fingers through the bars didn't seem apt for them and tended to be ignored.

The museum itself contains a number of exhibits illustrating the development of policing techniques and communications over the years, together with exhibits connected with some of the more famous cases in which the constituent forces have been involved. Our guide had first-hand experience of the Hungerford shootings, which merited its own display, from his days as a forensics officer.

Everyone found the visit most enjoyable, helped to a large extent by the enthusiastic and humorous approach of the museum curator. Our thanks go out to him, and to Barry Prior who arranged the visit for us. *Jack Jackson*

POLICE MATTERS

<http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/yournh-tvp-pol-area-N130> This is the direct link to the Caversham North neighbourhood section of the Thames Valley Police website. It gives details of our local officers and dates for forthcoming **Upper Caversham Neighbourhood Action Group** meetings at Highdown School. Please support those meetings, the next of which is on Tuesday 17th July, 7.00pm.

Warm summer weather means open windows and a change in behaviour patterns. Anti-social behaviour, albeit from noisy neighbours, or late-night revelling should not be tolerated. Please report incidents: Noise Pollution: Environmental Health Section on FREEPHONE **0800 626540**. For the non-emergency police, call **101**

Please be security minded in your home - residents are reminded to keep valuables safe, and keys out of easy reach.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Blossom Trees

Following on from the successful tree planting in Courtenay Drive, thanks to collaboration of residents and RBC, the programme has been extended to Crawshay Drive, Burnham Rise and Brooklyn Drive. Courtenay Drive plans to raise more money, and the adjacent streets will organise their own projects. EGRA continues to support this and offers congratulations to all those involved.

Verges

Grass cutting is now five times a year. Not necessarily at the times it's needed most. But on the bright side, for a brief period, we now have our own mini wildflower meadows, havens for wildlife. If you feel any overgrown junction near you is causing sightline problems, let us know.

Maintenance

Richard Hammond currently heads our graffiti clean up team and he asks for you to report to him on 0118 9475372 or email egra.members@gmail.com . Thankfully things have improved, but if you would like to help out please get in touch. We also look after seats, signs, a notice board and a dragon. If you want to help with maintenance get in touch.

Clayfield Copse

The new waymarks project is nearing an end. Four of the six plaques created by the Berkshire and Mid-Thames Woodcarvers were on display at their stand at our Jubilee event. We hope in the autumn to be handing them over to Friends of Clayfield Copse for installation. The Friends continue to meet for active conservation work on the first Sunday of each month. They also arrange guided walks through the woods. Contact Anne Latto on 0118 9484454 or email anne_latto@yahoo.co.uk

Caversham 100 Years On

The panels that were created for the history of Caversham event in 2011 have been reproduced and bound in A3 format. Copies are on sale for £10 at WordPlay, Caversham. Please call the shop on 0118 9482800, or email info@wordplay.co.uk

SNIPPETS

Book Prizes

We shortly hope to be in a position to present the fifth of our annual book prizes to pupils who have shown an interest in the community, both in and outside the school. We hope to continue to reward youngsters in our community and are discussing how best to administer this in the future.

Tradesmen's List

Jane Handley has been working very hard to overhaul the 2012 Tradesmen's List. Thank you for your contributions. Copies will be circulated with this summer newsletter. If you receive the electronic version, please print it out or save it on your computer. The list is only available to members, so is not on the EGRA website.

Age Concern

Tai Chi - regular Wednesday morning classes continue at St Barnabas Church Hall.

Zumba Gold - eight free sessions of a low impact dance exercise programme which has been designed for the needs of the over 50s. Friday 29th June - Friday 17th August, 1.30pm - 2.15 pm, at the Milestone Centre, Caversham Park

Caversham Good Neighbours. This voluntary organisation based in Caversham helps residents of Caversham and Emmer Green by offering transport to local surgeries, the hospital etc., and home visits. They would like to recruit more volunteers and also promote the service they offer. Please phone the office on 0118 9483466 Monday to Friday 9.30am -11.30am or Secretary Pat Rawlings on 0118 9477778.

COMMITTEE

Committee - Chairman Margaret Ormonde, **Vice Chairman** Barry Prior, **Minute Secretary** Jane Handley, **Treasurer** Bill Harper, **Membership Secretary** Richard Hammond, **General Members** – Vera Bodman, Vanessa Cozens, Jennifer Leach, Julie Robbins, Andrea Robinson, Jasmine Waters.

Committee Support - Newsletter Distribution Diana Hartrup, **North Reading Youth Project** Tara Taylor, **Website Management** Clive Ormonde

Thanks go our teams of volunteers who help deliver the newsletters and keep an eye on the notice board, clean graffiti and water trees.

Margaret Ormonde, Chairman. Tel: 0118 9470922 email: egramargaret@googlemail.com

