

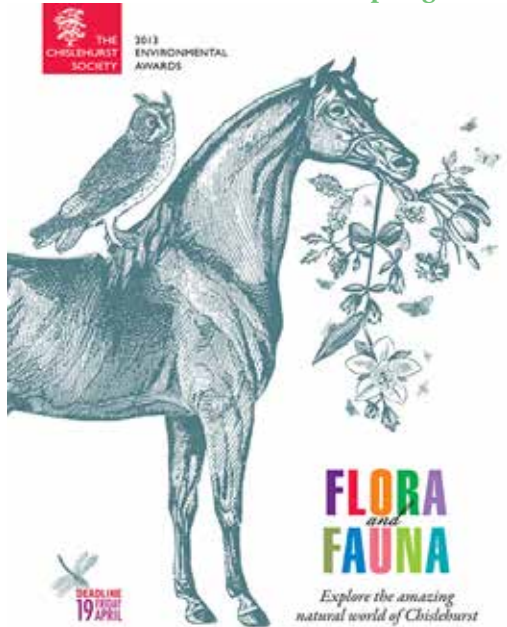
Chislehurst REPORT

A Publication of the Chislehurst Society

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Inside this edition of Chislehurst Report:

- 2013 Environmental Awards
- Update on the High Street
- May Queen 2013
- Camden Place Open Day
- Fly Tipping
- The other bridge
- Litter on the commons
- Age UK - no longer 'pop-in'
- Two new historical walks
- A Chislehurst novel
- Society property
- Society News



The Chislehurst Society Environmental Awards 2013

The Society has launched the 2013 Environmental Awards. The theme this year is Flora and Fauna, and the awards will be hosted by Babington House School on 7 May.

Chislehurst is surrounded by protected woods and commons, all of which have fascinating flora and fauna including many dramatic and interesting trees. We look forward to some interesting, creative, and inspiring entries from our students.

As always we would like to encourage both individual and group entries and also projects from any area of the national curriculum, including Geography, Biology, English, Art, Design and History. We welcome a variety of ideas and images - not everything needs to be illustrated - but all entries should be clearly related to Chislehurst and the theme.

This year's AGM will be held on Thursday 25 April at 7.30pm at Chislehurst Methodist Church. Come along for an update on High Street improvements, and proposed changes to policing in Chislehurst

Chislehurst High Street - an update

It is a year since the Town Team was launched to create a plan to improve the High Street for residents, visitors, and traders. The overall plan was developed and agreed in September last year.

In recent months, after some periods of frustration, the Team has been able to engage much more positively with Bromley Council, both at Councillor and Officer level, and can report some significant progress on a number of fronts:

Traffic management

- Shorter term measures, already agreed in principle, include a yellow box junction outside Sainsbury's car park, and a right hand filter at the Willow Grove junction.
- Depending on changes to traffic flow related to the new filter light, the Council will be undertaking a study of traffic movements in and around the High Street.

Street clutter

- Redundant signs and other unnecessary street 'furniture' will be removed from the High Street by Bromley Council before the end of April 2013.

Street tidiness and environment

- Arrangements have been agreed for more regular street cleaning and maintenance, and a programme of replacing trees on the High Street has started.
- We have agreed in principal that uneven and unsightly pavement and road surfaces will be remedied as far as possible.

Car parking charges

- Because of the particular use of the Library Car Park, we proposed that users of that car park should be able to buy parking units of less than one hour (all other car parks have a minimum of one hour's charge). This has been agreed and already implemented.
- We have made proposals for significant reductions in charges for all-day parking (and the cost of season tickets) particularly in the High Street car park, in an attempt to attract back drivers who are now parking on residential streets. Bromley Council is consulting on this proposal, and we are hopeful of progress by the summer.

The look of the High Street

- We have agreed in principle to adopt a Design Guide for High Street shop fronts and shop signage to be enforced by Bromley for future proposed installations or changes.
- We have had discussions with owners of two unsightly buildings in an attempt to clean them up. We are hopeful of progress on the site on the corner of Willow Grove in the next few months.
- New notice boards will be installed at three locations on the High Street.

The Town Team's proposals for improving the High Street can be downloaded from the Society's website.

90 years of Chislehurst May Queens



On Saturday 4 May 2013, the Chislehurst May Queen Society will be celebrating its 90th anniversary. The Society was formed to maintain the tradition of crowning the Chislehurst May Queen on the first Saturday of May each year. It was founded by Agnes Everist in 1923 and has crowned a May Queen every year since, apart from once during the Second World War.

The Retinue perform traditional maypole dances not only on this day, but also at events held in Chislehurst and the surrounding areas throughout the year.

To celebrate their anniversary, the May Queen Society is inviting all former Chislehurst May Queens and Princes to get in touch if they would like to share their memories of their time in the Society.

You can contact the May Queen Society via their website: www.cmqs.org.uk.

Chislehurst Golf Club – Open Day

On Saturday 4 May from 2pm – 6pm Chislehurst Golf Club is holding an Open Day at Camden Place. The historic house has played an important part in the history of Chislehurst primarily as the home of the exiled Emperor Napoleon III, the Empress Eugenie and the Prince Imperial. The golf club, established in 1894, comprises the clubhouse and 18 holes in the heart of Chislehurst.

The Open Day will enable local residents to view the house, its artefacts and surrounds, with tours and refreshments provided and special membership offers.

Fly Tipping

A truck full of building rubble was recently dumped on St Paul's Cray Common, just by the entrance to Scadbury (pictured below). This highlights once again the need for vigilance to prevent this abuse of our open spaces. The Trustees of the Commons have now installed large wooden bollards to make this particular spot less prone to this problem.

But as the gardening season approaches, Bromley Council is getting ready for more and regular dumping of garden waste by householders or their garden contractors. The Council has written to us about this, and we reproduce part their letter here.

Bromley Council is asking residents to please be mindful of their responsibility to make sure that their garden waste is disposed of properly. The little known Waste Regulations of 2005 make householders across the country legally responsible for ensuring their household rubbish, including garden waste, is only ever passed on to an authorised person for disposal.

Residents can sometimes be approached by a 'man in a van,' often only contactable by mobile phone, who offers to dispose of waste at a reasonable price. There is a reason he is cheap: it invariably gets fly-tipped locally by the person in question, not infrequently just around the corner.

The Council does and will prosecute those caught dumping rubbish but householders should be aware that they themselves are also legally responsible and could face prosecution too, if they have not checked that the person they are dealing with is an 'authorised waste carrier.' By raising awareness of this issue now, the Council hopes to reduce fly-tipping, which is extremely unsightly, costly to clear up, and potentially dangerous to passers-by.

You can easily check to see if someone has a waste carrier's licence online and details about bona fide waste disposal options are all available at www.bromley.gov.uk/wastenews. Street problems like flytipping can also be reported online at www.bromley.gov.uk/report



The other Chislehurst Road bridge

Since March 2011 residents in Oakhurst Close had been asking Network Rail to remove graffiti from the railway bridge over Chislehurst Road at the junction with Station Approach. In the summer of 2012 the Society was approached to add its support and the Society, in turn, approached Councillor Colin Smith at Bromley Council.

After much hard work and a great deal of perseverance on the part of Council staff Network Rail finally agreed to clean the site and the work was completed in February.



Litter on the commons

We are advised by Gwen Lardner, who leads the anti-litter group, that Coopers College is continuing to work hard to reduce the littering that takes place in and around college, using both carrot and stick. They have a number of strategies working simultaneously in an attempt to engage students positively, to educate them on the importance of protecting our environment, and where necessary to severely punish those who continue to litter. They are working closely with the London Borough of Bromley, and have arranged for the enforcement company, X-FOR, to patrol outside college for two weeks in April. X-FOR can issue penalty notices to any student over the age of 16, and it is expected that this will act as a major deterrent outside the school gates. X-FOR are also coming into college prior to this, to deliver a series of assemblies outlining their work and their enforcement powers.

On the positive side, Coopers' work across the curriculum continues, with a renewed focus on our environment. 60 students from year 8 will be spending a day creating a collage influenced by Kirt Schwitters (a German artist, 1887–1948, famous for collages and installation art) using litter collected from the community. The collage will have a base setting of a map of the college grounds and community at large, and will be illustrating how our immediate environment is spoiled by dropped litter.

Coopers has been working with the Borough and a number of new litter bins have been placed on the routes from Royal Parade to college, and they are soon to take delivery of an increased number of new recycling stations for use in college.

Katie Wood, Assistant Principal at Coopers, advises us: *'We hope that we will continue to make positive progress with the issue of litter. Although it is not a problem that will ever be solved entirely, at Coopers littering is something that simply will not be tolerated.'*

The future of the Active Age Centre – no longer ‘pop-in’

We have been advised by Age UK, an independent organisation which owns the Chislehurst Active Age Centre, that from 1 April it is to be used to provide Day Opportunities service for older people who are either physically frail or have dementia, and that the cafe is to close. The Centre plays an important part in many people’s lives, and some are deeply upset at the change and have asked for our support.

We have spoken to Age UK’s local director. She advises us that the income generated from the cafe is not sufficient to meet the costs of running the premises, and Age UK’s trustees have concluded that they cannot continue to subsidise the cafe indefinitely. However, others have pointed out that the income from the flats above was intended to cover the costs of the Centre, and have queried whether planning consent is required. The Society is attempting to clarify the position, and we will comment when we are in a position to do so. In the meantime, we believe that alternative accommodation is being sought for some of the clubs that are being made homeless by this decision.

Want to know more about Chislehurst’s past?

The first meetings of a new Society group for members, the Chislehurst Local History Group, have been very fruitful. A fuller report will be included in the next edition of The Cockpit; recent developments, available via our website, include:

- *a Heritage Trail for the High Street, a leaflet pointing out a number of features in and around the High Street.*
- *a tour around Chislehurst. Taking the best part of a day, if walked, the tour covers 36 locations in Chislehurst, and includes images from the past and today.*
- *an increase in the size of our collection of old images of Chislehurst places and people to more than one thousand images (including the one shown here).*



We are very grateful to Peter Ribbons, a collector of postcards and other memorabilia of Chislehurst, for making his postcard collection available to us. We have named the archive The Chislehurst Society’s Ribbons Collection.

Thrilling Chislehurst!

The Society has been contacted by a member, Mike Uden, who tells us that he has a book published at the end of March. Titled *The Sacrifice*, it’s a detective novel which starts off in The Glades, Bromley, and features Shortlands, Beckenham, Kent House, Biggin Hill, Bickley and Chislehurst. It is published by Robert Hale Ltd.

At last – a property for the Chislehurst Society



Several years ago, the Society began to look for suitable premises for its permanent home when we became aware that we had been left a significant bequest from a former member, Charles Dunn, for that purpose. After long frustrating searches, we became aware in October 2012 that the old chapel, in Queen's Passage, off the High Street, was available.

The building is not in good condition, but once repaired (or possibly rebuilt), it should suit our needs perfectly, with

office space for the Society, other space that can be let for regular income, and a community space that can be used by the Society and by other groups who need a place for meetings.

The building is generally known as Webb's Works; it was a showroom for the adjacent Webb's furniture factory. It has seen a variety of uses over its 150 year life, including a printing works and most recently a plumber's showroom. But its origin was as the fore-runner of the Annunciation Church. It was built as a chapel in 1858, and served in that role until 1870 when the Church opened, and is therefore of some historical significance.

The best view of this old chapel is from the south bank of Prickend Pond. If you are standing on the right spot, the tower of the church aligns beautifully behind the strong gable of the chapel and this alignment gives the appearance of one church.

The building is accessed from the High Street, via Queens Passage, which runs between Go Travel and Cafe Nero. There is a small car park, but plenty of additional parking nearby.

We completed the purchase in February and moved in to the building in late March. We will have a formal opening and renaming of the building when the repairs are completed, probably early in 2014. We look forward to welcoming our members to the building when it is ready.



Society News

Road Stewards' news

Two Road Stewards have resigned since the last edition of the Report, and we welcome two new Stewards.

A warm welcome to Anne Dacey (Walden Avenue) and Huw Pritchard (Davema Close & Brenchley Close) and we look forward to working with you. Thank you to Robert Goldsmith (Walkden Road), and Clive Franklin (Davema Close & Brenchley Close) for your work for the Society, and best wishes for the future.

We omitted to announce that Jane Richardson became road steward for Crown Lane last August, on the retirement of Anne Scobie. Apologies, and thank you to both!

Executive committee news

We are sorry to report that **Terry Baskett**, a member of the executive committee, and chairman of the planning sub-committee, has resigned. We are grateful to Terry for all his work for the Society for the last six years, and wish him well for the future. **Professor Barry Redding**, a member of the planning sub-committee, has been co-opted onto the executive committee, and will assume the role of chairman of the sub-committee.

Anne Johnson-Rookes, former minutes secretary for the Executive Committee, has also stepped down, following a reorganisation. Many thanks to Anne for her support to the committee and chairman over the last four years.

Members' meeting

Our first members' meeting of 2013 was on 7 March, and three more are planned, for 2 May, 4 July and 5 September. The May meeting, led by Eddie and Pat Williams of Willow Wildlife Trust, will be held at the Methodist Church, 2.30pm.

Road Stewards' meeting

The next meeting is planned for 25 May, Details of where the meeting will be held, and the topics for discussion, will be circulated nearer the time.

Events for your diaries

A full listing of events organised by the Society, or notified to us, is on our website, under the 'What's On' tab. Some events in Spring and early Summer include:

- 7 April and 26 May – Clean-up mornings, Red Cross car park, 10.30am
- 25 April – Society AGM, Methodist Church, 7.30pm.
- 4 May – May Queen event on the common
- 7 May – Society Environmental Awards at Babington House School, 6pm
- 25 May – Road Steward meeting, location to be confirmed, 10.30am
- 8 June – Rotary Summer Fair on the common

You can contact the Chislehurst Society

by phone: 020 8467 0900 or email: membership@chislehurst-society.org.uk

or by post: PO Box 82, Chislehurst, Kent. BR7 5TT