

The Old Ratton Residents' Association  
www.orra.online

Chairman  
Mr Mark Thornton  
2 The Close  
Ratton  
Eastbourne  
BN20 9BW  
chairman@orra.online



Treasurer  
Mrs Lisa Olliff  
23 Walnut Tree Walk  
Ratton  
Eastbourne  
BN20 9BP  
treasurer@orra.online

## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2019

### Dear Old Ratton Residents

It is still just Spring as I start to write this although Summertime is officially close by. What a fantastic time of year, with the joyful explosion of colourful flowers, beautifully recorded by one resident on our Facebook page – many thanks for that. You can almost find yourself not caring whether we're 'in or out'!

### Residents' Charter

As promised in the last newsletter, I am enclosing the new ORRA Residents' Charter document with this one. Please take a few moments to read it and truly consider the spirit of its intention before saving it for future reference. It will also be available on the ORRA website. Your Committee has worked hard to make this Charter approachable and relevant to modern life in Old Ratton. Hopefully this will help to avoid any confusion around what contribution is expected from us all, showing consideration for others and keeping this beautiful private estate unspoiled and unique. This new Charter will be tabled for adoption at the AGM on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

### Afternoon Tea Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2019

I am very pleased to announce the date for the ORRA Afternoon Tea this summer. As previously mentioned, this event will be very similar in style to our gathering last year, closing a section of Manor Way for most of the day. We have again been offered free use of tables, chairs and other equipment, but we will be asking residents to contribute finger food to make the event more or less self-funding. We would also like to add a book and plant exchange this year, so please bear this in mind over the next few months and put aside books and plants in readiness. Much planning and co-ordination will be required but experience from last year's success will no doubt help tremendously. Please save the date in your diary and watch this space!

### Call for volunteers

It feels like I have mentioned this often but given the critical importance of engagement across our estate, I make no apology for that. Without willing volunteers to join the ORRA Committee the orderly management of our environment will grind to a halt, remote professional administrators will take over and charges will go through the roof. We are keen that no parts of the estate feel ignored and note that we are particularly under-represented in 'Lower' Ratton Drive, Manor Way, Linkway, Upper Ratton Drive and from May, The Grove. Please consider stepping up to offer some of your time, however much or little you can manage. There will also be times when your particular skills and experience could make all the difference, especially offered pro bono, whether legal, financial, construction, drainage, etc.

The Old Ratton Residents' Association  
www.orra.online

### **Trees / Leaves**

In recent times, we have been purposefully attempting to carry out a rigorous programme of tree maintenance, to help extend the lives of the many elderly trees on the estate. Naturally, many would have been planted together, have aged together and now are reaching the end of their lives together. As a result, we are facing a period where some large trees sadly will need to be felled. ORRA policy will continue to be to re-plant for the benefit of future generations wherever possible. It feels like more, but only three ORRA-owned trees have been felled over the last two years (one allegedly responsible for subsidence). Our dilemma is magnified by the need to act diligently by seeking professional advice to avoid the very real potential of negligence claims and then of course, becoming duty bound to follow that advice. Turning to leaf fall, in hindsight the second leaf sweep earlier this year was comparatively insignificant and consequently not good value for money. Your Committee is exploring other possible options for street cleaning more generally.

### **Drainage**

We are learning more about the layout of the surface water drainage system and moving closer to a comprehensive picture of the foul waste linkages between properties and main sewers, thanks to significant efforts by one of your Committee members in particular. The former will serve to inform discussions about the need for any possible remedial work and the latter will hopefully result in Southern Water facing undeniable evidence supporting our belief that much of the Old Ratton foul sewer system is their responsibility.

### **Traffic**

We continue to move the speed sign every 2 months to different locations around the estate, chosen strategically for both potential speed and also volume considerations. I am aware that there will be a degree of impatience for action but having agreed the importance of gathering factual information to support detailed discussions on possible actions, we must see this phase through. Data recorded in Ratton Drive and Walnut Tree Walk so far, albeit in a downhill direction only, shows broadly that the former suffers greater volume and the latter greater speed. Whether the volumes and speeds occurring are within an acceptable range or not will be the subject of much discussion and opinion. It follows that potential solutions would need to reflect the nature of the particular issue in different locations, noting the likelihood of wider impacts across the estate and the risk of unintended consequences too. I would expect this project to involve material consultation across the ORRA membership.

### **Varmints**

Unfortunately the issue of unwelcome wild animals seems to be getting worse, including at least one case of rats entering property through damaged sewer pipes. We must all help to limit this risk by addressing any maintenance needs promptly, keep gardens and outbuildings clean and tidy and most importantly removing anything that might encourage the colonisation of rats in the first place. Ground feeding continues to attract rats, seagulls and foxes, all of which are fundamentally unwelcome in a tranquil residential environment. Please stop this now!!

### **Cheerio**

I hope you have enjoyed my last newsletter before I stand down at the AGM on 16<sup>th</sup> May. Apart from the odd achievement, my greatest pleasure whilst Chairman has been making friends and acquaintances on a scale that would normally have taken me a lifetime! Thanks for your support and very best wishes for the future.

Kind regards,  
Mark Thornton  
Chairman, ORRA