



ORRA NEWSLETTER

Spring 2022

Hello Everyone

It's official, Spring is here. Although we may have to wait a little longer for the weather to catch up, there are many beautiful flower displays on show. My particular favourites are the cyclamen and the small white flowers on the bank in Ratton Drive between nos. 12 to 16.

Over the winter period the grass verges have been damaged in many spots throughout Old Ratton. Commercial vehicles have been parked too close causing erosion to the edges. It would be so helpful if everyone could check the lawns outside their own homes and return them to their natural beauty.

ROADS

The second phase of roadworks will commence later in the year. Three members of the team have been busy walking the site, preparing a schedule of potential works and compiling a specification for the contractor. Consideration will also be given to some additional traffic calming measures and reviewing road signage.

Arrangements will be made to empty all gullies throughout the estate.

There has been an issue with trade vehicles and vans parking on the roads after 6pm and at weekends. Every effort is made to advise those concerned that the vehicles must be parked on a driveway or off site. This also applies to camper vans. Please can I ask all residents to pay particular attention to this problem as it does cause unnecessary aggravation for committee members and neighbouring properties.

TENANTS

To save embarrassment and confrontation, please would all homeowners who let their properties ensure that their tenants are made aware of ORRA's Constitution and Covenants before moving in.

FACEBOOK AND WEBSITE

It is pleasing to see a number of residents regularly post items on the Facebook page, it's there for everyone to use. It is particularly useful for passing on information. Our Webmaster Phil Tong regularly posts items of interest relating to the area and EBC bulletins.

Those who have been following Neal Potter's history of Ratton may have been surprised to see that a previous owner of the Ratton Estate had made his money through being a slave owner in Antigua. We are up to the point in the story where the Duke of Devonshire is just about to change the local area forever.

CATCH-PIT

Some residents may not be aware that within the ORRA estate at the top of Linkway, is a catch-pit to collect water and debris as it flows down the public footpath off the Downs. ORRA is presently in dispute with EBC as to the responsibility for clearing the pit, as it often gets blocked. ORRA is in possession of historical documents in which EBC agree that it is their responsibility to clear the pit. However, the present EBC administration refuse to accept these documents even though they themselves generated them. ORRA is seeking legal advice on how to resolve this impasse.

LEANING LAMPOST

ORRA has also been disappointed with the service it has received from East Surrey County Council (ESCC) regarding the replacement lamp-post on Ratton Drive. Initially ORRA agreed with ESCC for them to change the leaning lamppost but without ORRA knowing we were passed on to an ESCC approved contractor trading under the name East Surrey Highways. It was necessary to pay in advance for our chosen replacement. Due to siting problems ORRA had to accept a modern lamppost instead of our chosen replacement. The Committee think this replacement would be cheaper but so far we have been unable to agree this with the contractor. ESCC do not seem interested in helping to find a solution stating that ORRA's contract was with the third party. Discussions about misrepresentation are ongoing!



STREET PARTY

After such a long period of lockdown and self-isolation you may be pleased to hear that a Street Party will be arranged later in the year.

Everyone will be invited and it is hoped that some additional attractions will be incorporated.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's AGM will be held on Thursday 19th May at 7pm in St Mary's Church Hall, Willingdon.

GENERAL HOUSE KEEPING

Bonfires - Bonfires can be a problem for residents with breathing issues; they are unpleasant, smelly and definitely anti social. It is far better to use the brown bins or transport the rubbish to the Council refuse area.

Ground Feeding - Ground feeding encourages vermin into gardens, sheds and houses. Let's eradicate it, the wildlife are more than capable of finding their own more nutritious food.

MOVING ON

This will be my last newsletter as I shall be retiring as Chair at the AGM in May and stepping down from the committee. It is time for a new team to take over the reins, which means new volunteers, so if you fancy doing your bit to preserve this unique and wonderful area we like to call home, step up now.

All the best

Rose

Rose Kiley
ORRA Chair 2019-2022

FINANCES

April 1st saw the start of ORRA's new financial year and maintenance charge requests for 2022/23 have been delivered. A 10% increase to the charge was agreed at last year's AGM, given that there had been no increase since 2019. Thank you to those that have already forwarded their payments. There are still a few outstanding payments for last year and we would appreciate any arrears being brought up to date.

Last year's accounts have been forwarded to ORRA's accountant and when certified a copy will be available.

Janet Olliff has now taken over from Angela Potter as ORRA Treasurer.

TREES

Our 2022 estate tree survey has recently been carried out by our independent, expert arborist, with minimum work required and scheduled throughout the coming year. The tree work programme is proving to be extremely successful in maintaining the health and well being of all our mature trees, with minimal damage sustained during the recent high winds.

A tree planting programme is absolutely essential to ensure new trees are brought on as old trees reach the end of their life and with this in mind two Walnut trees have been planted in WTW to replace two small dead ones. ORRA will be looking to plant several more trees around the estate this year, including one in honour and celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. This will likely be sited on the ORRA land next to the 18th century pillars in Upper Ratton Drive.

The committee welcome any suggestions for planting new trees in vacant spots in the lawned areas that run along our roads. The trees are an important part of making Old Ratton such a beautiful area, which is why all tree work, be it front or rear gardens, has to be approved prior to work commencing.

Footnote

Have you taken the short walk down to Hampden Park at this time of year? There are nesting Swans, Herons and White Egrets and the Egyptian Geese will no doubt be paying a visit.

Hampden Park was once the Decoy Pond for wild fowl to grace the table of Mr Freeman-Freeman Thomas (later to become Lord Willingdon). He named the park after his grandfather Viscount Hampden and sold the park to EBC with an agreement that they would build a new road from Eastbourne to Willingdon (Kings Drive). The park was opened in 1902 by Lord Rosebery.

