

Note from the Chairman

Since the last newsletter Peter Walker has resigned as Chairman of the Association. As Vice Chair I was appointed by the committee in his stead. We would like to thank Peter, and his wife Barbara, for their work on behalf of the residents. Peter was Chairman for 7 years and he spent a considerable amount of time representing our Associations views during the planning stages of a number of major projects in our area, for example the BT Building, Riverhead Infants School and Blighs Meadow. The Committee has met 5 times during the year. The issues brought to our attention include, street lighting, inconsiderate parking, hedge cutting, speeding, condition of the road surface. Please continue to bring any concerns to our attention so that we continue to seek action from the relevant authority. We have also attended the Town Forum, a consultation body chaired by Sevenoaks District Council, and obtained information, and had an opportunity to express our views, at them about local issues, for example the running of the leisure centre.

We have written to the council about two planning applications in our area, the Orange phone mast at the top of Brittain Lane and an application to build a boundary wall and fence.

As a Committee we would welcome some new talent to join us in particular to represent the roads in the Middlings, Braeside/ Stapleford Court and the lower part of Brittain Lane. The members of the Committee are currently entirely male and we would like to redress this balance.

I look forward to meeting you at the AGM.

Philip Runacres

Great Britain's Wood

The Forestry Commission is responsible for the protection and expansion of Britain's forests and woodlands.

The Forestry Commission has adopted Great Britain's Wood under its Woodland Welcome Scheme. This means that the woodland is open for the public to walk through.

HOW TO GET THERE

To access the wood, there is a point of entry from the footpath opposite Redlands Road, and access from the footpath near New Beacon School in Brittain Lane. See the map on our website for details. There is a lot to see there: fantastic scenery, wildlife, as well as beautiful wild flowers.

The Woodland Trust are also involved, and have sponsored information boards throughout the woodland. For more information about the Woodland Trust, visit their website at www.woodland-trust.org.uk. The Forestry Commission can be found at www.forestry.gov.uk

For more information on the Redlands Residents Association, please:

Postal Address: John Brasnett, Secretary 8, Croft Way, Sevenoaks TN13 2JX .

Email: info@redlandsresidents.org.uk

Website: www.redlandsresidents.org.uk

Redlands Residents Association

Working for the benefit of the local community.



REMEMBER OUR
LIMIT 30 MPH

Notices

NOTICE OF THE AGM

The Annual General Meeting will be on the 20th May 2004, at the United Reformed Church Hall at 7:30pm. There will be drinks and nibbles provided. Anyone willing to join the committee should send their details to the secretary at the address shown before the AGM.

NEW WEBSITE

The Redlands Residents Association has developed a new website that includes information for both residents and visitors. It has pages for the residents to post their messages and submit images. If you do so wish, please email us at info@redlandsresidents.org.uk. If you would like to receive updates from the association via email, please contact us. To view the website, the address is www.redlandsresidents.org.uk. We hope this information is of interest to you.

PARKING

There will be new parking restrictions in Brittain's Lane following a public consultation process. Remember not to park on the pavement it blocks the footpaths and could get you a fine!

Gardening

The Answer Lies in the Soil

By Andrew Cowen

That old saying is still as true today as it was when it was first coined. In an area as diverse soil-wise as the Redlands area, it is crucial to know what your soil type is.

There are two main things to think about, the acidity/alkalinity (pH), and consistency, i.e. the amount of sand or clay it contains. Sandy soils fall apart in your hands while clay forms a solid ball when you roll it around in your fingers.

Of course both types of soil have their advantages. In addition the remedy for each is just the same. That remedy is compost and plenty of it. Compost helps to bind sandy soil particles together thereby retaining moisture and nutrients whereas in clay soil it helps keep clay particles apart allowing it to drain better. Composting is also environmentally friendly.

In terms of soil pH in this area most soils are mildly acidic hence Rhododendrons thrive everywhere. Another suggestion is the Pieris, which are quite common but still lovely shrubs and good for light shade and late winter flowers.

If you have the room, a strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) is for you. The leaves are evergreen and the tree itself is wide and spreading to about 8 metres. The bark has a lovely red brown. The flowers are basically white and the fruits red and strawberry like. Although you might eat the berries, you'd only eat one, they are unpleasant but not poisonous.

I also suggest you plant a Hamamelis, Witch Hazel. This will grow in mild acid soils and give good autumn leaf colour.

Gardening

Having concentrated on shrubs and trees let me finish by suggesting one group of ground cover perennials which will grow beneath them and in acid soils. These are Trilliums which have a beautiful three petalled white flower.

Andrew will be our guest speaker at the forthcoming AGM and will talk on Wildlife Gardening. Andrew runs his own Garden Design, Construction and maintenance business and works in and around our area. He also lectures in Garden Design & Wildlife at The Studio, Bromley.

Our thanks to Andrew for his contribution. You may contact him on 01732 369461 or send an email to andrew@cowenlandscapes.co.uk

Bonfires: please be considerate and light bonfires after dusk when residents have mostly left their gardens. Or take your trimmings to the tip.

Hedge Trimming: Please keep all hedges adjacent to the footpath trimmed back to your boundary. This helps pedestrians walk freely along our roads.