



CDRA Autumn 2018 **NEWSLETTER**

RESIDENTS' MEETING
Thursday 11th October, 7.15pm at Cobham Village Hall
Drinks & nibbles will be followed by the meeting at 8pm.
Guest speaker: Elmbridge Borough Councillor James Browne,
Portfolio Holder for Planning Services
speaking on the Local Plan and Green Belt Review

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As you will know, Sandy (our Secretary) and I will be retiring at next year's AGM.

We hope the Association will continue and will thrive and to this end we have sent out a leaflet to everyone in our area, asking for volunteers to join the Committee and, hopefully, take on more responsibility.

To date we have had some encouraging responses but it is not too late to offer your services.

I will bring you up to date at our meeting in October. In the meantime, if we have not yet got your email address and you would like to be kept informed, please let us know what it is by emailing cdra@live.co.uk **Sue Kilpatrick ■**

TRAVELLERS

Residents have been upset over the Traveller incursions in Cobham and there is anger that Elmbridge Council is not moving these people off your land more quickly. The Council has to work under the law and the Human Rights legislation. I would like to explain what we must do.

When travellers move onto a private site, for example a farmer's field, the land owner can bring in bailiffs and move them off immediately. However when they move onto public land it is completely different.

The Council is required to send officers onto the site to ensure that it is safe for the adults and children and that no one is ill which might preclude us from serving a

notice to quit. The officers prepare the report (we need to be able to prove that we have done this when we go to court) and then the Council serves an eviction order on those occupying the site. They will almost certainly ignore this so we then have to apply to the Magistrates court for a hearing, which we may not get for a few days. When we are given a date we go to court, present our evidence that we have followed the rules and apply for the court order which is then served on the occupants of the site. We may need to bring in bailiffs to ensure they move. Often we have them ready on standby. We can ask the police to help but we have no control over how they deal with the situation.

GUEST SPEAKER AT RESIDENTS' MEETING
You will remember that about 18 months ago Elmbridge Borough Council consulted about a draft Local Plan which would have had a substantial impact on the Green Belt in our area. Having received over 50,000 comments from 3,760 respondents the Council will be consulting on a significantly revised draft Local Plan in the next few months. We have invited Elmbridge Councillor James Browne, the Portfolio Holder for Planning Services, to tell us about progress on this at our meeting on 11th October.

CDRA SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS
If your membership is overdue for renewal we have included a separate reminder slip with this newsletter explaining how to renew.
Your membership number is printed on the envelope

We need a change in the law that allows Councils to act in the same way as private landlords but this is a matter for our MPs.

However Elmbridge Council has applied to the High Court and been granted an injunction to cover 150 of our open spaces, car parks and recreation grounds. We had to produce a lot of evidence in order to achieve this but it now means that we can move incursions quickly and if they refuse to go they can be arrested. **Elmbridge Councillor, Dorothy Mitchell**

The CDRA has, along with other organisations, been very active in contacting the Borough Council, our MP, and the Surrey Police to try and ensure that action was taken to solve the very difficult problems associated with illegal incursions.



The recent encampment of Travellers on the Cobham Recreation Ground

REFLECTIONS

As you will all know by now, I am retiring as Chairman of the CDRA next Spring. This decision has prompted me to reflect on my years on the CDRA Committee.

I retired early from full-time work in 1991, due mainly to my husband's ill-health. I think I had been retired about a fortnight when a neighbour asked if I would be prepared to become the Secretary of the Cobham Residents' Association, as it was then. I was told there was not much to do – writing some minutes once a month and not much else! Coincidentally, the Association was looking for a Membership Secretary as well. My husband, Peter, said he would take on that role and so we joined the Committee together.

Not many people had computers at home. Minutes, agendas and everything else had to be typed on a word processor. Copies were made either by the kind permission of Milk Marketing Board (where I had worked) or by Berkeley Homes at their offices in the Portsmouth Road. I then had to deliver everything by hand to Committee Members or use the post. How times have changed!

FOODBANK

Cobham Foodbank is very busy and is likely to become even more so with the introduction of Universal Credit in Elmbridge later in the year. Find out what is needed and how you can donate food or money by visiting www.cobhamarea.foodbank.org.uk Doantion boxes are in local churches, Sainsburys (High Street), Waitrose and Starbucks ■

Over the years I have been Secretary, Chairman and Planning Officer – sometimes all three at the same time! I started off knowing precious little about Planning. I don't pretend to be an expert now, but I know lots more than I did including, I hope, when to object and when to shut up! I learnt also that the Council is not the enemy – I am sure there are many times when Applications have been passed when the Council would like to have refused them – and the reverse! Planning law is what it says on the tin and one cannot make decisions because it suits!

Some four years after I joined the Committee, an Application to build a Motorway Service Station on the M25 at Downside reared its ugly head. It was at that time the Association became Cobham & Downside Residents' Association.

Ultimately, then Secretary of State, John Prescott, approved the Application, despite many years of objection, over one hundred thousand pounds spent on that objection and a Planning Inquiry, involving the employment of QCs on all sides, which lasted over six weeks. I won't bore you with all of the details but it was a wonderful example of how local residents, businesses, the Borough Council and the then MP all worked together to fight this Application.

Over the years one has to accept change and Cobham has certainly changed. Not all change is bad, and as I have said many times in the past, no change at all would mean we could still be living in mud huts! Some changes have been good and some not so good. We as a Residents' Association have tried to be fair. People need homes to live in and at prices they can afford. What matters is the quality of what is being built, where, how many and whether the infrastructure is capable of coping with the expansion.

I could go on for a long time, delving into

the past work of the CDRA, but I won't. My hope is that the Association will continue in being, will thrive and continue to do its best to represent the interests of local residents.

Sue Kilpatrick ■

THE CEDAR CENTRE, COBHAM

The Cedar Centre in Cedar Road houses more than just the library upstairs – have you ever wondered what goes on downstairs?

As you enter the building you will be familiar with the Welcome desk where you should be greeted warmly as you enter the building.

On the left hand side of the building is the Oasis Children's Centre – a charity providing essential support to children and families in need across Elmbridge.

On your left is a seating area providing a comfy place to meet friends and enjoy a drink from our coffee machine. Tea, coffee and hot chocolate are all freshly made and are reasonably priced.

Past the welcome desk, on your right, you will find the Sure Start Children's Centre Information and Advice desk and next to that is the Children's Centre manager's office. The Sure Start Children's Centre is centrally funded and has a different focus from the Oasis Children's Centre. It works closely in the community with local community groups providing activities and advice designed specifically for families with children under 5 years. The Sure Start Children's Centre organises many varied activities locally especially designed for parents with pre-school age children.

Beyond that is a small meeting room available for local not-for-profit organisations to use at no charge.

This building is more than just the library. It is a community hub providing information, activities and support to all local residents whatever their age.

The Cedar Centre is managed by a small committee of Directors who all have an interest in the local community. They meet

regularly to (amongst other things) look at ways of attracting visitors to the building and making sure that we provide all the facilities and activities that local residents want. **Angela Ewing, Chair of the Cedar Centre Directors ■**

COBHAM COMMUNITY GARDEN UPDATE

Our team of loyal volunteers (more always welcome!) spruced up the Garden for the 'Britain in Bloom' judging in the teeth of the heatwave, we were assessed on 11th July. Results will be announced on 14th September, a painfully long time to wait, so please send us good wishes! By the time you read this we'll know the outcome.

We continue to keep the Garden trim ready to open for visitors on 8th September for Heritage Day. We have a stall on the Leg O'Mutton Field selling Garden goodies and our display in the Flower Show marquee, and there is a chance to sponsor the planting of a new fruit tree for our Orchard extension!

We are buzzing about biodiversity and our organic produce:

New additions to the Garden this Spring/Summer include a bug hotel built by children from Cobham Free School; Gertie the Gatekeeper butterfly made by Stoke D'Abernon WI, displayed at Wisley celebrating the centenary of the WI in Surrey; and our new shed built back in that bitterly cold weather (if you can remember) as a service project by the American Eagle Scouts. Our new fruit trees are also establishing, and some early plantings have a small amount of fruit appearing! Thanks again to CDRA for your generous donation to help put things right after the 2017 travellers' invasion. We've dedicated a tree to you in the orchard, come and find it!

Our new watering system has ensured that we've grown lovely produce, despite the heat – we have all sorts of greens, courgettes, tomatoes, aubergines, cucumbers, beans, carrots, new potatoes, onions and beetroot of many colours.



Cobham Community Garden in full swing, find it on the Leg o' Mutton Field

We'll be making some changes for the 2019 growing season, so come and talk to us to see what's happening and perhaps sponsor one of our new fruit trees. We aim to develop an Orchard that Cobham will be proud of!

Do come and visit, join us in some gardening, or simply buy some fresh local, organic produce most Thursdays or Saturdays, between 10 and 12 midday. Contact us on: hello@cobhamcommunitygarden.org.uk or call us on 01932 863610. **Gill Money** ■

WRITING ABOUT WHAT YOU KNOW (AND DON'T KNOW)

CDRA committee member Mike Dawes writes more about his experiences in devising and writing a first novel: A Manner of Walking.

If you have ever thought of writing a novel or short story, the advice you may be given is: write about what you know. I think the advice is sound: writing about what you know gives you confidence.

When I wrote *A Manner of Walking*, I used the city of Bristol as the basis for my location; I knew the streets and other locations there from my own experience. Cambridge colleges also featured in the story. Again, I was on familiar ground from my undergraduate years, even though they were some time ago!

But I also had to write about what I didn't know. My story was set in July 1925, for example, at the time of the miners' dispute. I also had to carry out some research into various WW1 battles, the memory of which haunted one of my principal characters. I used many sources of information: books about social history of the time, the archives of Bristol Central Library and of the Imperial War Museum in London and many texts at Cambridge University Library, of which I am fortunate to be a member. In fact, I think that researching my book took two to three times longer than did actually writing it!

The other thing I was very concerned about getting right was use of English. In the spoken language, 'modern' expressions in 1920s England were somewhat different from those of today. I

set about devouring novels written at that time, even children's comics and magazines!

I had tremendous fun putting all this together in my first novel. If you are interested to see how it turned out, *A Manner of Walking* is available at The Cobham Bookshop. **Mike Dawes**

COBHAM IN BLOOM

Early in the 2000s, Elmbridge Borough Council approached the CDRA, asking if it would be prepared to enter the Britain in Bloom Competition. After some debate we agreed to do so, called ourselves Cobham in Bloom, got together a team of 'willing' workers and with funds and much other help from the Council, we entered the South & South-East section of the Competition. We weeded pavements, cleared up side roads, planted flowers in troughs and baskets on a designated route, and wherever we could, managed to 'beautify' Cobham & Downside.

My memory is that we entered the competition on four or five occasions. We never achieved a Gold but we did receive several Silvers and a Silver Gilt.

It became increasingly difficult to have enough volunteers to enable us to continue but, with some financial help from local organisations, including the CDRA, the CCHT and the Council, I do manage to arrange for the troughs in our local streets and at the Community Centre to be planted up twice a year. **Sue Kilpatrick**

HOW TO JOIN THE CDRA

If you're reading this and not already a member then we hope you will decide to join us. Send your name, address and a cheque, made out to CDRA for the £5 annual subscription, to CDRA Membership, 32 Freelands Road, Cobham KT11 2ND. You can also pay by online or telephone banking, our details are; account number 12422371, sort code 60 06 03; account name: CDRA. Please use your name and street name as reference so we know who you are. If you join in this way you will also need to email us your name and address. In both cases, let us know if you would like to be sent a receipt. Alert us if you don't want your details held on our computer files.

CDRA Committee Members

Chairman and Planning:	Sue Kilpatrick	01932 888851
Hon Treasurer:	Wendy Whitaker	01932 868205
Hon Secretary:	Sandy Brook	01932 868672
Membership Secretary:	Renny Kyle	01932 862513
Environment and Amenities:	Ian Clifford	
Newsletter:	Rosemary Bailey	
Transport:	Mike Dawes	

Anne Bryant, Jill Newman, Des Magill, Gerald Stanford

www.cdra.co.uk

cdra@live.co.uk

With thanks to Curchods Estate Agents for covering cost of postage