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INDEPENDENCE

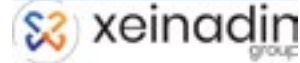
ANNUAL REPORT
SPRING 2023



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FROM THE TILLER

Chairman's Notes



I have been Chairman of the Rickmansworth and District Residents' Association for 10 years now and the last two have seen me slow down with various ailments so I think it is time for me to give up the position and hand over to Ash Pattni who is at present Deputy Chairman and has agreed to take over from me.

It has been an interesting period and I have enjoyed serving the people of Rickmansworth, Batchworth and Mill End and working with the three local Councils and the two MPs who have been in post during my Chairmanship.

I would of course also pay tribute to the people who have served during that time on the Committee and our large army of faithful Road Reps who have delivered Independence.

In 2020 we were hit with the Coronavirus Epidemic which put an end to the chore of the Road Reps in collecting subscriptions on the doorstep. We set up four ways to pay subscriptions but inevitably there was a loss of members as a result of this change.

Perhaps there is something to be said for knocking on members' doors!

Your Committee has recently been urgently addressing this problem and have come up with a number of good ideas but the biggest problem is how to fund the Association for the future unless we can increase our membership back to pre-2020 numbers.

We may reduce Independence to A5 size which would save most of the cost to the RDRA but that is not the final solution and we continue to think of ways to increase our membership and/or cut costs. In the meantime the Association continues to work on behalf of Residents representing their views to local Councillors and campaigning where we feel it necessary.

We are represented on FoMLUC where members of Residents' Associations along the Metropolitan line meet with LU staff on a regular basis to discuss issues, the biggest one of which is the installation of the new signalling system which is still nowhere near completion.

Ash and I represent the RDRA on the Three Rivers Joint Residents' Association which was set up to combat the TRDC local plan and the loss of green belt in our area. TRJRA has had some success to this end and Jon Bishop of the Chorleywood Residents' Association now takes an active part in TRDC meetings regarding the local plan.

The next list of sites to be affected will be issued in October and we all need to keep our eyes open for this list being published.

As I am retiring from the Committee we now urgently need a replacement for me as editor of Independence which was a job I had when I became Chairman and have failed to get rid of! We also need to appoint someone to look after Social Media – do you fancy doing that?

When I became Chairman, we had two issues of Independence each year but we replaced the Autumn one with a bi-monthly E-Newsletter to members. If you do not receive these, please visit the website and subscribe: <https://rickmansworthresidents.org/subscribe>

For the past three years the Committee has been meeting by Zoom but we have now gone back to face-to-face meetings and these meetings are held at the Education Centre at Batchworth lock. If you would like to join the Committee we meet there at 7:30 every other month.

Feel free to leave the RDRA a message: <https://rickmansworthresidents.org/contact-us>

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GDPR (DATA PROTECTION ACT MAY 2018)

Under the above Act we are required to inform our members that their name, address and road representative will be kept on a computer record. This information will be used solely for the benefit of the Association and will not be disclosed to a third party. Any members who object to their details being recorded in this way should contact the Secretary.

AGM

93rd Annual General Meeting 19th June 2023

The 93rd Annual General Meeting of the Rickmansworth & District Residents' Association is due to be held on Monday 19th June at 8 p.m. in the Education Centre at Batchworth Lock.

There is no parking available but nearby parking can be found in Church Street, Moor Lane or Tesco.

All members are invited with any guests to the AGM. Please do let us know at chairman@rickmansworthresidents.org if you are coming and number of guests (Guests are not entitled to vote) so that we can cater for all attendees as refreshments are laid out at the end of the AGM.

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. To consider and, if thought fit, approve the minutes of the 92nd AGM
3. To consider and if thought fit, adopt the Honorary Treasurer's Statement of Accounts
4. To appoint an Honorary Examiner.
5. To receive and, if thought fit, to adopt the Chairman's Annual Report.
6. To elect the President of the Association.
7. To appoint Vice Presidents of the Association.
8. To elect the officers of the Association (Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer).
9. To elect the Association Committee for 2023/24

The Committee for 2022/2023 comprised, in alphabetical order, Leslie Chrol-Frolowicz, Chris Evans, Frank Evans, Richard Lawman, Anne Littlejohn, Ashok Pattni, John Payne, Michael Stimpson, Bob Templeman, Carolyn Venn, Jo Walker and Debbie Wheeler.

Michael Stimpson is standing down and we have one other vacancy at the time of writing.

10. Any other business for which advance notice has been given.

11 – Date of next meeting (Monday 17th June 2024)

At the end of the evening tea/coffee and biscuits will be available.



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ALL MEMBERS WHO ARE ON THE INTERNET.**

Rickmansworth & District Residents Association

91st Annual General Meeting 18th July 2022

Minutes of the 91st Annual General Meeting held on Monday 18th July at 8pm in the Conservative Club, Bury Lane, Rickmansworth. (The Royal British Legion had been closed for the day due to technical problems. No prior notice had been given to the RDRA.) This meeting was originally planned for 20th June 2022 and was postponed due to delay in production of Independence.

In the Chair: Peter Crispin, Vice President of the Association.

Peter Introduced himself:

He had lived in Rickmansworth since 1987, in the house that he and his wife bought shortly before he left the Royal Air Force. He served as a District Councillor for Rickmansworth from 1992 to 1998, resigning when pressure of work made it impossible for him to represent residents in the way that he considered appropriate. He moved away from formal politics and joined the RDRA committee, serving in a number of roles and finishing as the Chairman for a few years. His profession after the RAF was as a project manager, so employed to successfully make changes.

The role of President is non-executive. The constitution starts by emphasising the role of the Association – to protect and advance the general interests of the residents of Rickmansworth and district and to organise and promote united action for that purpose. Taking that further the Association has been involved in, among other activities, reducing the risk of flooding in the town, something that remains a “work in progress”, preventing the use of the field that now houses the Reach Free School for the work camp for M25 widening, supporting the opening of that school and preventing the use of the Uxbridge Road for HS2 traffic. It was noted that the Association covered a much larger area than Rickmansworth itself.

1. Apologies for Absence: Frank Evans, Jean Berry, John Payne, Mary Templeman and Richard Lawman.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the 90th Annual General Meeting held on the 20th September 2021 were approved as a true record, proposed by Antony Abadjian and seconded by Ash Pattni: everyone agreed.

3. Honorary Treasurer’s Statement of Accounts

The accounts were presented by the Treasurer, Leslie Chrol-Frolowicz. The following had been prepared by him but there had not been the opportunity to deliver this verbally at the meeting:

He highlighted a few of the differences in the figures from the accounts for 2020/21. Firstly, subscription income as at the financial year-end (31st March) was down some £380 on the previous year. The RDRA were no longer taking cash payments following the decision not to ask Road Reps to knock on doors to collect these during lockdown.

Income from advertisements, both in Independence and in e-newsletters, amounted to £515, an increase of £180 on the previous year. A few more advertisers would be welcome, particularly in the e-newsletters, as this augments the income in these difficult financial times.

Over the last couple of years the RDRA had been able to offer the facility of making annual payments using PayPal, which provided a steady income for the Association and the Committee were pleased that more members were now using this option to pay their membership subscriptions.

In addition there were members who were now paying membership for three years in advance by sending cheques for £9, which also considerably reduced the burden of administration. The Committee were also grateful to these members for their advance payments.

However, the Committee was concerned that there were still many former members who had not yet adopted one of the various cashless means of paying their membership subscriptions and the RDRA were currently seeking to address this issue. It was noted that the branch of Barclays in Rickmansworth where the Association had its account was to close on 16th September. Consideration was being given to moving the account elsewhere.

A sincere “thank-you” was given to all the Road Reps for their efforts: they were the cornerstone of the Association’s interface with our members. Without them the Association could not function as it did.

Printing costs had reduced by some £165 compared with the previous financial year, as in the past in practice more copies of Independence had been printed than were needed.

Total expenditure for the year under review was very close to the figure for the previous year.

The Association was in the position of having made a small loss year-on-year in 2021/22 of £385, compared with a small surplus the previous year.

This provided the Association with accumulated funds of £8,386 at the start of this financial year at 1st April and with no liabilities. As the minimum balance that the Association needs to function at the end of its financial year on 31st March was in the region of £2000, there was a reasonable margin, the bank current balance as at today's date being £7051.99.

Therefore, he was pleased to report that the Association continues to be a going concern with a viable and sustainable future.

David Rees was given thanks for examining the accounts, and he had indicated that he was willing to continue as Honorary Examiner next year, subject to the approval of the meeting.

The accounts were proposed to be adopted by Ash Pattni, seconded by Anne Littlejohn and accepted by the meeting.

4. To Appoint an Honorary Examiner

It was proposed by Leslie Chrol-Frołowicz that David Rees should be re-elected as the independent Examiner for the Association's accounts for the current financial year - all were in favour.

5. Chairman's Annual Report.

Michael Stimpson presented his report for the past year. He thanked all the Road Reps and the Committee for all their hard work and contributions over the last two years. A special thank-you to Anne Littlejohn as Membership Secretary, Leslie Chrol-Frołowicz as Treasurer and Debbie Wheeler for her continuing work on the e-newsletter and IT-related matters.

Everyone at the meeting was happy to adopt the report.

6. Election of President

Peter Crispin was proposed by Michael Stimpson, seconded by Chris Evans, and everyone at the meeting was in favour.

7. Election of Vice Presidents

Life Vice Presidents appointed at last year's AGM - Tony Berry, Peter Crispin, Brian Morgan and Bob Templeman - were presented with framed certificates to note their appointment.

Michael Stimpson proposed Peter Waters be appointed as a Life President, seconded by Chris Evans - all in the meeting were in favour. Peter was also presented with a framed certificate and a book he had chosen to note over forty years' service to the RDRA.

9. Election of Secretary

It was proposed that Chris Evans be re-elected as secretary - agreed by all.

10 – Election of Treasurer

It was proposed Leslie Chrol-Frołowicz be re-elected as Treasurer – agreed by all.

11. Election of the Association Committee

The following were also appointed to serve on the Committee until the next AGM.

Michael Stimpson, Richard Lawman, Anne Littlejohn, Frank Evans, Ashok Pattni, John Payne, Bob Templeman, Carolyn Venn, Debbie Wheeler, Jo Walker, Ian Mercer and Narinder Sian.

10. Any Other Business

Concern over the loss of banks in Rickmansworth High Street. It was reported that Barclays would have a presence in the library. Andrea Fraser (Batchworth Community and District Councilor) and Gagan Mohindra (MP) were looking into the matter. MS to write to Barclays Bank Manager.

Concern was raised over the obstruction on pavements caused by overgrown vegetation and parked cars.

Councilors Andrea Fraser and Paula Hiscock gave updates on the following issues:

- Rectory Road – high kerbs and a more robust railing to be installed. MS asked that the speed limit be reduced to 30mph.
- HS2 – most of August the A412 was going to be closed from 2300-0600: to be posted on RDRA website.
- “Water a tree” – many new trees have been planted - they are watered once a month. In the current hot weather they needed to be watered more frequently - residents were to be asked to help: a post to be put on the website.
- Flower troughs have been installed in the High Street and hanging baskets are also being put up.
- Saturday market - 24 stalls have signed up for 6 months. Any suggestions for other stalls - contact Andrea Fraser.
- Free water butts - published in July newsletter.
- Consultation for controlled parking zones and reduced speed limits.
- 23rd July St Mary’s Church - Chiltern Folk Association putting on a play about the loss of a ship in the channel with 350 lives lost - proceeds to the RNLI.
- Electrical charging – check website

Planning issues

District Councilor David Raw requested as many individuals as possible to go to the public gallery to discuss planning issues - the more residents that attend, the more powerful the objections.

Carolyn Venn advised that St John’s Primary school was having difficulties with roof being approved for building fund and that Reach Free school taking in an extra 30 children in September, making it a 5-form entry. This may be the case for the next 3 years. There will be a permanent right-hand lane to turn into the school. The new design will widen the road slightly,

The meeting closed at 9.36pm.

Treasurer’s report for Independence 2023

Subscription income has reduced by approx. £600 compared with the previous year, also income from advertising was down by over £100.

Total expenditure for the year was about £650 less than in the previous year, so once again there has been a small net loss with funds at year-end on 31st March standing at £7743.

May I offer a big “thank you” to John Samson for examining our accounts at quite short notice and for his expressed willingness to continue as Examiner for another year if required.

SLCF

RICKMANSWORTH & DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**FINANCIAL STATEMENT - YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2023**

BALANCE SHEET	31 March 2023	31 March 2022 £
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank balances	7,743	7,930
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	7,743	7,930
NET ASSETS		
Representing:-		
ACCUMULATED FUNDS AT 31 MARCH	£7,743	£7,930
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES		
	YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2023	2,022 £
RECEIPTS		
Subscriptions	1696	2,044
"Independence" & e-news advertisements	380	515
Donations	30	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	2,106	2,559
Less:-		
PAYMENTS		
Printing Independence	2050	2,050
Subscriptions		7
Printing, postage & stationery		12
Website expenses	108	228
Room hire - British Legion		25
Room hire - Rickmansworth Waterways Trust	60	
Donations - British Legion Poppy Appeal	25	30
Contribution to TRJRA		360
Miscellaneous expenses	51	232
TOTAL PAYMENTS	(2,294)	(2,944)
NET (PAYMENTS)/RECEIPTS	(188)	(385)
MEMBERS' FUNDS AT 1 APRIL	£7,931	8,316
MEMBERS' FUNDS AT 31 MARCH	£7,743	£7,931

MICHAEL STIMPSON Chairman
LESLIE CHROL-FROLOWICZ Treasurer

Notes on the above

1. The Committee is responsible for keeping proper books and records with respect to the Association's activities.
2. The accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis. .

Report of the Independent Examiner

I confirm the financial statement set out above is prepared from the books and vouchers presented to me and is in accordance therewith

John Samson
Rickmansworth
Dated ,,,... APRIL 2023



Phoenix Morris at Oxford

Photography by Victor Shack

Stills and video

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Phoenix Morris are a mixed Cotswold Morris Side based in Rickmansworth.

Morris is a great way to make friends and keep fit whilst keeping alive a centuries old tradition.

We practice every Wednesday night in Ebury Road Rickmansworth unless dancing out.

We dance at local pubs and events as well as Folk Festivals across the country.

We are a friendly bunch of people who love having a good time and always welcome new members, both dancers and musicians, and no experience is required. Do come along and give it a try – you won't be disappointed.

For further details visit our web site
<https://phoenixmorrisdancers.com/>
or ring our Foreman, Sue Stimpson, on
07831 815357

HS2 across the Chilterns

HS2 approaches the Chilterns on a viaduct over two miles long across the Colne Valley Regional Park near Denham. Construction of the viaduct started in May 2022. Working southwards, it crossed the A412 North Orbital Road in October. The viaduct segments weighing up to 140 tonnes each are made on site in a factory bigger than the Royal Albert Hall. The route leaves the viaduct on a newly formed embankment before entering the Tilehouse Lane cutting on its way to the Chiltern Tunnel. The tunnel portal is just south of the M25 near junction 17.



Viaduct crossing the North Orbital Road



Viaduct crossing the North Orbital Road

Two giant tunnel boring machines (TBMs) are currently creating the twin tunnels which will be nine metres in diameter. They are digging around 15 metres a day and work around the clock. The tunnels are lined as they go. The lining segments weighing eight tonnes each are also made on site. Excavated spoil is pumped out of the tunnel as slurry and treated on site before being used for local landscaping. The construction compound is linked to the M25 by temporary slip roads.

The tunnels will have four ventilation shafts and one intervention shaft. These are at Chalfont St Peter, Chalfont St Giles, Amersham, Little Missenden and South Heath. Construction of these is now complete and internal systems are being installed. The TBMs reached Chalfont St Peter in May and Chalfont St Giles in September last year and Amersham this February. They are due to reach the North Tunnel Portal near Great Missenden by the end of the year when they will be removed and scrapped.



The Chalfont St Giles vent shaft at the top of Bottom House Farm Lane



The Little Missenden vent shaft alongside the A413

The north portal construction compound is connected to the A413 by a temporary haul road from the Link Road roundabout at Great Missenden. Another haul road has been constructed alongside route taking construction traffic off local roads.

Over eight miles of temporary roads have been constructed across the Chilterns. All will be removed once construction is complete. The A413 is the road running from Denham past the Chalfonts, Amersham, Great Missenden and on to Wendover.

The route then continues in a cutting towards Wendover passing under a series of road and footpath overbridges. The 450 metre long Wendover Dean viaduct will be constructed off Bowood Lane. An underbridge will then take Rocky Lane under the route.



***The Chiltern Tunnel north portal north of Frith Hill,
South Heath***



Wendover Dean viaduct looking west towards the A413

The Small Dean Viaduct will take the route over the A413, the Chiltern Railway and Small Dean Lane. A fully-enclosed 600-metre-long conveyor system has been built to transfer the stored spoil from earlier earthworks across the A413 for use further north. It is expected to save some 400 HGV movements a day over a three-and-a-half-year period. The devastation here is particularly shocking.



Small Dean viaduct crossing the A413 south of Wendover



***The Wendover green tunnel looking north from
Ellesborough road diversion***

Passing Wendover, the route will enter the 'cut and cover' Wendover green tunnel. This tunnel which will be $\frac{3}{4}$ mile long will be built by excavating a cutting in the ground, forming a tunnel box from precast concrete segments, and then covering it over with landscaping. A swathe of land has been cleared and six houses have been demolished in Ellesborough Road to facilitate construction. Ellesborough Road itself will be temporarily diverted behind the remaining houses before being realigned over the tunnel. Wendover Cricket Ground has also been lost.

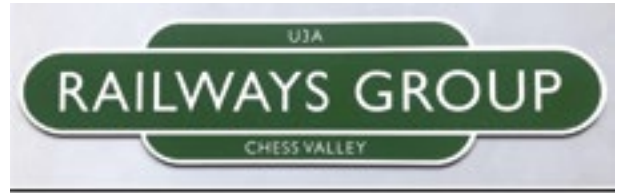
The route then leaves the Chilterns crossing under Nash Lee Road on its way to Stoke Mandeville passing to the east of Aylesbury and on up to Birmingham.

Services are due to start running in 2029 at the earliest and perhaps five years later than first planned. The cost has more than trebled since it was first announced in 2010. The truth is it is impossible to say just what the final cost will be.

Keith Hoffmeister

You can find out more by visiting the Chiltern Society HS2 Photo Diary at [HS2 Photo Diary](https://chilternsociety.org.uk/hs2-photo-diary) visiting the Chiltern Society HS2 Photo Diary: <https://chilternsociety.org.uk/hs2-photo-diary>. Here you will also find links to a virtual fly-through along the route from Denham to Calvert, north of Aylesbury as well as the regular online updates.

Chess Valley U3A Railways Group



The Chess Valley U3A Railways Group meets monthly and is for anyone with any interest in Railways, be it Steam Engines, Railway History, Architecture, Current stock, Railways in the UK and Overseas as well as Model Railways. Our venue is Christ Church Hall, Waterside, Chesham, HP5 1PY and parking is free in the Moor Road car park next to the swimming pool at HP5 1SE in the Chess Valley Recreation Area. Please contact the Conveners via email at railways@cvu3a.uk if you wish to join the Group, you will be very welcome

We have an interesting mix of speakers and visits each year with our latest visit in February 2023 being to the Postal Museum between Farringdon and Kings Cross with a ride on the famous Mail Rail train (pictured) which was very enjoyable. After refreshments in the café we lined up for the Mail Rail ride which is a fifteen minute ride through the rail tunnels which were built to transport mail between Mount Pleasant Sorting Office near Kings Cross and Paddington. The carriages are small and covered by a Perspex roof and the trip was very interesting with stops where the history and story of the Mail Rail were described by large video and sound presentations. After the ride the Mail Rail exhibition was next, which again was very informative, then a visit to the Postal Museum which explained the history of the Post since its inception. This included a new exhibition of King Charles III stamps and 50p coins. A very interesting visit.



Mail Rail train at the Postal Museum

The Railways Group Programme for the next few months is as follows:-

2023

- **March 17th – A Life on the Tube – Ian Arthurton**
 - **April 21st – DVD – James Cadle**
 - **May 19th – 125 Group – Gary Heelas**
 - **June 16th - P2 Prince of Wales – Chris Ardy**
 - **July 23rd – Fawley Hill Railway visit – Graham Yellowley**
- Mail Rail train at the Postal Museum**



Beeches Light Railway

We have visits planned to Fawley Hill (Sir William McAlpine's private railway), Nene Valley Railway at Peterborough and a Broadway to Cheltenham train ride in conjunction with the Chess Valley U3A Striders Group who will walk from Winchcombe to Broadway while we get to ride on the train.

Recent speakers of note have been Christian Wolmar, the famous railway journalist www.christianwolmar.co.uk, who gave a great speech on Crossrail, and Nigel Lowey who was a fantastic speaker and who gave a superb talk on St Pancras Station. In fact Nigel was so good he was invited back to speak to the Chess Valley U3A General Meeting.

We have visited the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway and the Beeches Light Railway (Adrian Shooter's mile-long railway in his garden before his premature death late last year) as well as Pendon Model Railway museum.

Ebury Way News - March 2023

campaigning@spokesgroup.org.uk

The Ebury Way was established on the route of Lord Ebury's railway which ran from Watford to Rickmansworth. The route is now a part of the Sustrans network (NCR 6/61) linking Slough to St. Albans and beyond. The Ebury Way is well used by walkers, runners & cyclists



Most of the maintenance on Sustrans routes is done by volunteers, but the larger projects are often planned, managed and funded by local government.

Sustrans often does not own the land, but has agreements with the land owner which is often a local authority. A lot of good work has been done, in March this year a large section of the Ebury Way has been cleared of vegetation and a new surface covering provided, I believe the work has been organised and funded by Three Rivers District Council.

Also in March many SPOKES and Sustrans volunteers cleared a large amount of vegetation ingress on the route near to the Vicarage Road junction.

Around 20 years ago, in a project called "Access for All" funded through HCC, the access to the Ebury Way from Church Street, Rickmansworth was improved by providing a hard surface and reducing the inclines on the route near the canal basin.



This part of the Ebury Way has become difficult to use, due to tree roots breaking up the surface and redevelopment on the adjacent site. The tree roots have raised the surface making it hazardous for people on wheels. The new tall building behind the high fence which was erected on part of the existing route, has made it hard to see or avoid obstructions on the surface.

The current condition of the route has made it less attractive deterring many people from using the route.

Whilst there are alternative routes around this area. None are safe or satisfactory at present.

How can this problem be remedied ?

It is believed that the freehold of land is held by the "Canal & River Trust". I have been advised the "Canal & River Trust" are unlikely to put money into resolving this.

The darkness and safety issues were made worse by the recent development.

Proposals were made in 2021 to TRDC on how to overcome the issue. One of the options was to divert the route onto TRDC land. Another option was to cut back the trees, remove the roots and build up the surface of the route. TRDC's current position is that the route is not on their land and probably not their issue.

The HCC - Countryside & Rights of Way (CROW) service is about to begin engagement with stakeholders including SPOKES as they prepare a plan for improving the Ebury Way.

SPOKES and other stakeholders will continue to encourage local officialdom to make this route safe and easy to use.

Produced by Roger Bangs for SPOKES - Cycling UK local Representative

Why is there an egg shortage?



In a mad moment I decided to acquire some hens, four of them, from a farm in Chalfont St Giles when they were about 6/12 months old. They are all different and I did not think of egg production at all to be honest, they were more like pets and as they were a bit beat up and quite dirty as they were free range, I had to spoil them of course with all the best sorts of foods that chickens like!

This happened at the end of the summer last year just before DEFRA decided that they should all be shut in for their own good, keeping them away from potential contact with wild birds!

In the beginning, prior to shutdown, they had the run of the garden and boy did they make a meal of it quite literally! They are great composters in that they eat almost anything. This cuts down on your waste food production by a hefty margin. There is not a slug or snail in sight!

Bird Flu is very serious for the egg and chicken meat producing companies, according to the DEFRA site there are thousands of sites, all over the country but mostly in East Anglia, where the culling of birds in their thousands has taken place.

I was very lucky to have got my hens when I did, they have given a great sense of enjoyment and are very amusing to watch. I love the sounds they make. When you first get them they have to be shut in their coop for at least 3 days so that it imprints on them that the coop is then their bed and home, they then will automatically 'go to bed' at dusk on their own. You just have to make sure everything is secure before it gets dark as that is when Mr Fox is about.



My egg production is now four eggs a day, two brown and two blue: yes, there are some varieties of chickens that lay blue eggs. They are very attractive but much smaller than duck eggs of course!

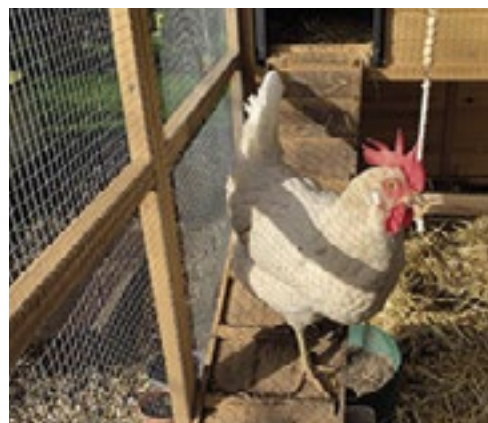
I have given them names, as you do, Speckle is the black and white one and a blue egg layer, Scruffy is mostly grey with some red/brown on her neck and I named her scruffy because she was when I got her, missing feathers and generally looking a bit beat up. Scruffy is also a blue egg layer.

Saucy is the brown one, got it! Brown sauce! Well she has been producing one egg a day since 13th December last year. Always the first in line for treats! Then

there is Snowy who is white of course and both of them lay brown eggs.

It is very sad what has happened to chickens, it is worldwide and it will take some time before we are free of bird flu. In the meantime my family are reaping the benefits of fresh eggs.

Compiled by Anne Littlejohn March 2023





My favourite place in Rickmansworth

Everyone has a spot, maybe more than one, that special local place you find whilst out walking. A spot that you hope no-one will spoil...

I've had mine for a while - I call it the Rickmansworth Rainforest because moss covers most of the ground and trees. It's very small and I would imagine people walking quickly would not even notice the space. But I love it and dawdle there, breathing in the mossy air...

*Where is your favourite spot in Rickmansworth?
Send in your photos and short stories about it to
news@rickmansworthresidents.org*

by Debbie Wheeler





Rickmansworth Waterways Trust

A new boat, volunteering opportunities

Many of you know of the work of Rickmansworth Waterways Trust based at Batchworth Lock and I have written previous articles for Independence. We are still very much thriving as a charity but we do face some significant changes in the coming year.

Firstly, Mark Saxon, our General Manager has decided to retire this August after 10 years in the role. I am pleased to announce that following our recruitment campaign and interviews we have appointed a new General Manager who will take over from Mark when he leaves the Trust in August later this year. We conducted interviews in April and after taking up references I can now confirm that Warwick Gainsborough has accepted our offer and been appointed.

Warwick is a resident of Croxley Green and is currently the Visitor Experience Manager at the Postal Museum in central London. I know Warwick is delighted to be joining us and I hope you will join with me in welcoming him to the Rickmansworth Waterways Trust.

Secondly, our Trustee responsible for finance is also going to retire from post later this year after many years holding the position. This is a voluntary position on the Trustee board and the role involves: -

- Preparation of Small Company/Charity Accounts from book keeping software
- Processing small entity payroll
- Preparation of Gift Aid Returns
- Budgeting
- Other financial matters/general business advice

The role would suit someone who is either a qualified accountant or qualified by experience, with a background in Small Accounting Practice or as an accountant/controller for a small business. Please again contact the enquiries@rwt.org.uk email address if you wish to find out more about the role.

Finally, we have purchased a 4 year old purpose built trip boat which will enter service alongside our current boat, Pride of Batchworth, running both short trips and longer charters. We decided to do this after evaluating several options for commissioning a

new build electric boat but came to the conclusion that the technology at the moment is too immature to be reliable enough to fit our operational needs. Reliability and battery life were not meeting our needs based on the experience of other charities that had gone down this route. Therefore when a suitable second hand boat came up for sale from a business in London that was selling its boats we decided this would fit our needs for the next few years. Look out for this new boat at Batchworth very soon! We have renamed the boat "Spirit of Batchworth".



The next Rickmansworth Festival is being planned for 20th and 21st May so please put this date in your diary now and if you want to join our team of volunteers who help make all that we achieve possible then please come down and see us at Batchworth or email enquiries@rwt.org.uk.

**David Montague
Chairman, Rickmansworth Waterways Trust.**

This years Rickmansworth Folk Festival organised by the Rickmansworth Town Team, Phoenix Morris and Ricky Folk.



**Rickmansworth
Folk Festival
Saturday 15th July**

There will be a stage set up in the Bury for performances between 12 noon and 6pm and local Morris Sides will perform in the High Street from 10am – 4pm throughout the day.

Last year saw large crowds gather in the Bury to watch and listen to the various acts and this year's acts are Warp and Weft, Liz Lawley, Chris Lawley, Mandy Hardingham, Jill Waterson and Ady Shaw, Dave Artus, Calum Granger, Julian Mount, Carrivick Sisters and Jim Moray.

The Morris Dancing will be led by our local Morris Side, Phoenix Morris with Merrydowners of Harrow, Whitethorn of Harrow, Wicket Brood from Bricket Wood and Baldock Midnight Morris.

All the above, of course, is what is planned but subject to change or alteration on the day – at the time of writing we are over three months away!

This will be the 9th Folk Festival to be held in Rickmansworth and it gets a bigger attendance every year.

Put the date in your diary and come down and bring a picnic to enjoy the acts performing in the Bury.



Photographs by Michael Stimpson

It has been fantastic to see many Rickmansworth residents, their friends and families at the various events BCC has been involved with throughout this past year. To name a few, The #loveyourhighstreet Rickmansworth market, the Christmas light switch on and Christmas fair, and both the Bury music and canal festivals.

Batchworth
Community Council
Eastbury - Moor Park - Rickmansworth

These events have been so enjoyable for our residents that we have been happy to sponsor these and other events for the year to come. Please see the forthcoming events list below. Some may be slightly different this year due to the cost of living but not lacking in the same quality. Event organisers have all been looking at more cost-effective ways to run their events. We thank the organisers, volunteers and our officers that make these events possible as well as great fun.

Rickmansworth High Street has been a hot topic with shoppers and our retailers. We know from past conversations with the retailers that many of them would like to see the High Street re-open along with 2 Hours free parking.

Currently there is another trial pedestrianisation period coordinated by Hertfordshire County Council, but unfortunately TRDC have not supported these two hours free parking the retailers had hoped for.

If you have an opinion and would like it to be heard, please visit: <https://surveys.hertfordshire.gov.uk/s/Rickmansworth/>



If you have any problems or would like to let us know your thoughts, please do not hesitate to contact us at BCC office@batchworth-ecc.gov.uk

There is also a big opportunity to have your say on the Rickmansworth and Batchworth of the future, and what they may look like by visiting our Neighbourhood Plan exhibitions at St Mary's School, Stockers Farm Road on 14th June from 7pm and on Saturday 17th June at 4 pm. This is part of a two-year ongoing project where Batchworth residents can have their say on the proposals before being hopefully adopted by the District Council. If you are unable to make any of these events, please do respond online. We will be communicating with you all soon on how to do so.

There are many other projects we have initiated and continue to work on, including a Greening the High Street Project, working with the Colne Valley Trust to help protect our green areas, as well as developing a circular walking path around Batchworth and green area improvements.

I finish this update on a point of celebration; It was a great honour to be asked as Chair of BCC to be a part of the renaming ceremony of Rickmansworth Waterways Trust canal boat Spirit of Batchworth. What could be a better name for

a boat! Its new name encapsulates the Batchworth community spirit and celebrates our enjoyment of our natural surroundings. Hope to see you all soon as we sail together into a new adventure in 2023.

Cllr Andrea Fraser
Chair, Batchworth Community Council

Events sponsored or organised by BCC:

RWT canal festival May 20th and 21st

BCC's ALL NEW OUTDOOR CINEMA:-

On July 22nd at Merchant Taylor's school

And July 23rd at St Mary's School Rickmansworth

2pm Children's showing and 12a showing 7pm. See our website for tickets

July music festival in the Bury Saturday 15th July

Continued market on the last Sunday of every month

10.30-2.30pm look out for extended opening hours in the Summer months and visit stalls such as Cinnamon Square, Two Left Paws, Begin Again, Cookie Crumble, Funky Elephant and much, much more!





Don't let the music stop

Long Covid doesn't just affect humans. Countless arts organisations and music venues appear to be suffering from its effects too – in the form of reduced audiences and revenues.

Three Rivers Music Society, which holds lunchtime and evening concerts in Rickmansworth Baptist Church, would like to claim that it is bucking this global trend. But we too have been struggling to balance our books despite staging some unforgettable concerts.

Here are some of the stand-out performers we have attracted over the past three Covid-disrupted years:

Iain Farrington, a brilliant pianist and arranger who performed the "Chariots of Fire" comedy sketch with Rowan Atkinson at the 2012 London Olympics. He and John Reid, a professor at the Royal Academy of Music, treated us to an evening of dance-inspired piano music immediately before the first lockdown.

David Halls, director of music at Salisbury Cathedral, and a member of a piano trio that raised our spirits in early 2022. Earlier he had entertained the queue waiting for Covid vaccinations at his cathedral by playing organ music by Bach and Handel – and even a little Rodgers and Hammerstein.

Verona Maier, another accomplished organist, who is vice-rector of the National University of Music in Bucharest. Her piano recital last November was astonishing. She played Bach's Partita No. 1, a revolutionary composition that the immortal Johann Sebastian said he wrote to refresh music lovers' spirits. Almost 300 years later it still achieves that aim.

The highly regarded John Donegan Jazz Sextet, which has performed for us seven times, also helped to blast away the Covid blues. John is a local pianist and composer with a national reputation, and several members of his sextet are stars in their own right.

But ever since the music society was revived in 2017 by Dr Steven Halls, former chief executive of Three Rivers District Council, and our chairman Ash Patil, the concerts that have left audiences most awestruck are the recitals by teenage students at the Purcell School in Bushey, a world-class centre of musical excellence. "How can someone so young play so well?" is the perennial question.

Happily, the Purcell performances have been witnessed by children even younger than themselves because we always invite a local primary school to send a class to these concerts (in fact, free entry to concerts is offered to all under 25-year-olds).

We believe this early introduction to classical music will encourage children to become the musicians or concertgoers of the future. But, of course, it does not help us to pay performers' fees in the short term. That is why we must trust that, as Covid fears abate, residents of Three Rivers will turn up in greater numbers to support our concerts.

The music society, a charity established in 1975, should not be allowed to disappear. As one local concertgoer said on a social media site in February: "The people of Rickmansworth are lucky to have such a seriously good music society."

We have to hope that others will realise the truth of that statement in the coming year.

Concert information at trms.uk



John Donegan: a local musician with a national reputation



Verona Maier: her piano recital was astonishing

Obituary

Mohanlal “Morris” Gohel, who died on 25th February, was the very respected and popular owner of Blacks, the newsagent in High Street Rickmansworth which he had owned since late 1982 – so just over 40 years. Born in India, Morris and his parents moved to Uganda when he was 10 years of age. Morris married and had his two sons whilst living in Uganda before moving to the United Kingdom in 1972 just ahead of Idi Amin’s expulsion of the entire Ugandan Asian community that year. The family first settled in Leicester with him involved in the clothing trade, as well as becoming a driving instructor, before they moved for short periods to Borehamwood (where he had a grocers shop) and then Southall. Finally, in 1982, Morris was told of Blacks in Rickmansworth being for sale and he bought it and moved the family to our town where he remained.



Because of the high regard in which he was held, his views were taken very seriously when the District and County Councils were working together on the Rickmansworth Regeneration scheme which was carried out in the mid-1990s and resulted in the road and pavement layout that we have today. Morris was well known for his good humour, helpfulness and dedication to his customers and until the very end he opened the shop at 5.00 am so that his earliest customers of the day could be served. We have lost a character and a sense of business continuity that is hard to replicate. His funeral on 7th March saw the chapel at Breakspear Crematorium filled to standing room only as the community honoured his life.



*Rickmansworth High Street - Coronation Ready
(Photographs courtesy Ashok Pattni)*

Drains and Sewers

Can They Catch Us Out



We all know that Rickmansworth lies in the bottom of a valley but we forget at our peril the possible impact of that simple statement. The Association was busy some 15 years ago with a campaign to prevent further flooding but now, with the promise of more development around the town, it is time to remind our members of the risks that the town faces.

Leaving aside the flood of 1928 which left houses in the centre of the town, such as those in Norfolk Road, flooded to a depth of about 3ft, we have seen several close run things since 1990. Today, contrary to the government's map of the areas at risk of flooding which shows the Aquadrome area as most at risk, the biggest risk to property in Rickmansworth is almost certainly from heavy rain overpowering the town's drains and sewers in both the town centre and along the Harefield Road.

There was a major presentation at the Association's AGM in 2007 that highlighted the difference between the problems in the Harefield Road and those in the town centre.

First the Harefield Road. The Thames Water pumping station in Stockers Farm Road deals with foul sewage from a huge area that stretches as far as Hitchin and, as is common across much of our country, the foul sewage from property is mixed, despite many rules to stop it, with surface water run-off from houses and commercial property. As a result the volume of sewage that the pumping station has to handle increases dramatically whenever it rains. The pumps in the pumping station were replaced with much larger ones in 2009 and the new pumps have, most importantly, macerators which grind up such items as paper nappies which should never be flushed down the toilet. Should the volume of sewage increase so much that the pumps are once again overwhelmed there is a fallback. Herts Highways installed a pump in the road drain in Harefield Road close to the corner of Heron Close and that pumps any overflow of sewage out on to the field between Stockers Farm Road and the canal. If the residents of Harefield Road are to be free of overflowing sewage then it is crucial that both Thames Water's big pumping station pumps and Hertfordshire Highways' emergency surface water pumps are kept well maintained and ready for the worst that the weather can throw at us. Fourteen years on from all the flood alleviation work it is vital that maintenance is not skimped.

In and around the town centre it is equally vital pumps and drains are kept clear or, for example, Rectory Road will flood under the railway bridge if the pump there stops working and High Street will flood at the bottom of Station Road if the surface water drains and sewers are clogged by silt and debris which stops the water flowing away to the Town Ditch. The surface water sewers were built over 100 years ago, with some of those from High Street to the Town Ditch being the original open drainage ditches shown on the 1876 town map culverted when Ebury Road was built. This century has seen flooding in Church Street and High Street by the Coach and Horses and between Station Road and Marks & Spencer and we don't want repeats.

Back in 2007 your Association contributed to a major campaign to prevent more development around the town, not for Nimby reasons but to avoid an ever-increasing risk of flooding in the town unless major infrastructure works are carried out. As an example of the scale of such work we can go back to the mid-1990s when, to stop flooding of the cottages at the start of Uxbridge Road, a massive 3 ft diameter sewer was built across the playground at Ebury Roundabout and then behind the houses along Uxbridge Road to the sewage works at Maple Cross.

So the safety of everyone living and working in the town centre and along the lower Harefield Road is dependent on Hertfordshire Highways, the Environment Agency and Thames Water keeping all drains and sewers clear and the various pumps working. And, for the future, all those involved in planning decisions being fully aware of the risk of flooding and ensuring that developments do not make that risk any greater. If you hear of a development that could impact the town centre or the lower Harefield Road make sure that adequate drainage is going to be included.

Peter Crispin

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because it's our area too.



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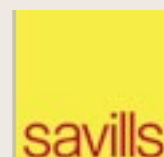
The combination of our global network of buyers and our in-depth local knowledge of Rickmansworth means that we're well placed to find the perfect match for your property.



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