



## NEWSLETTER-No 116-SUMMER 2008

### THE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTARY

With the AGM behind us we can concentrate on the important work of the Society and there continue to be issues which will occupy our time. David Smith, the C.E.O. of the Borough of Epsom and Ewell, gave us a wide ranging talk and answered questions (see report later). He told us, among other things, that the Borough has now set aside some money to employ a second planning Enforcement Officer. One of his/her main duties will be to ensure that a finished building conforms to the plans which have been approved by the planning committee watching and judging progress to that end.

We are aware of other enforcement issues in the Borough, and are pleased to see that action has been taken regarding the 'eyesore' front garden in Ashley Road from which the assortment of cars are now being removed due in part through action by your Society.

In my last contribution to the Newsletter I mentioned Madan's Walk and wondered if there are other named footpaths in the Borough. I am indebted to Frank Hiscock a member and long time resident in Epsom for the following information:-

Rifle Butts Alley is in Burgh Heath Road and the entrance is next to the Dame Annis Barn. Its origin lies in fear of the French in the middle of the 19th Century when rifle shooting was encouraged much as bows and arrows had been encouraged centuries earlier. This earth path runs through to the Downs on the edge of the Golf Course. The Butts, which have now become overgrown, consisted of an embankment reinforced with concrete. The British Rifle Association, formed in 1860, used to practice using rifles with a range of 1000 yards, but when the Grandstand Road was built from the Grandstand to Buckles Gap use of the Butts had to be discontinued. Bourne Hall Museum staff have shown Frank maps dated 1866 which indicate the Rifle Butts and the Alley. He also asks me to thank Mr Postle of Epsom College, where they still have their own Rifle Range, and Mr Dodd of Tadworth.

A number of us were invited to the Topping Out Ceremony at the New Grandstand on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May. We climbed by scaffolding steps to the top floor, the highest point of the building, where a small section of the floor had been left incomplete. Soft cement was poured in followed by wine, symbolising fertility and wisdom; oil, for liberty and prosperity; corn, to ripen prosperity into abundance, and salt for purity and hospitality. The human sacrifice and other celebrations of earlier years were not considered necessary! We wish the 11,000 capacity Grandstand many years of successful use.

Ishbel Kenward has drawn my attention to the Environment News published by Sutton Borough in which Alistair Cruickshank has recommended that Sutton should look at successful small towns like Totnes, Ludlow, Dorking and Epsom rather than try to model itself on Croydon and Kingston. He believes that here there is a wide range of small and medium sized shops including most of the national chains but with a range of independent shops as well.

We are intending to change and improve our Website and will give more information in our next Newsletter.

**Harry Corben, Chairman**

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**The Paddock, Langley Vale Road - signage:** This is the new Hotel opposite the Grandstand. It is nearing structural completion, although it will not be open for the Derby this year. This application is for the Hotel signs, including illuminated wall mounted signs, illuminated box signs, floodlights and direction signs. The original application also included illuminated flagpoles. It has to be accepted that a certain number of signs are necessary for such a building, but this is a particularly sensitive site and we were concerned about light spillage over the downs. We also reflected some members' views about the presence of flagpoles although it seems that they were removed in amendments to the application. It came before the May Planning Committee when the amended scheme was recommended for approval with conditions limiting the luminance of the signs and the hours during which they could be illuminated. In a long debate, views were expressed about size and garishness, and the need for more discretion and better design - with special reference to the "Big H" logo of Holiday Inn Express. In the end the item was deferred for further negotiation based on the points raised in the debate. We also will be writing again.

**Chasanhill, Epsom Road, Ewell:** There were appeals against refusals of two very similar applications for the demolition of Chasanhill, a large modern house on the corner of Shaw Close, and the erection of six semi-detached houses with parking. The Inspector said Government Guidance PPS3 seeks to maximise housing development opportunities but requires nevertheless that development should have regard to its surroundings. The Inspector's overall conclusion was that the cramped and dense nature of the proposals would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and on those grounds he dismissed the appeals. This is very encouraging and follows our own views.

**Drummond Gardens, Christchurch Mount:** Since the withdrawal of the first application for two blocks of flats and a pair of semi-detached houses, a further application for just the houses has been refused and appealed. We have written to the Inspectorate supporting the refusal and requesting the dismissal of the appeal.

**The Roseberys - formerly White House Hotel, Downs Hill Road:** The houses built on the site of the hotel, at right angles to Downs Hill Road, featured an open landscaped garden along the road frontage behind attractive iron railings. This, combined with the gardens of the adjoining houses provided a continuous garden frontage. We wrote in January to the Planning Department drawing attention to the action of the owners of the end two houses in erecting close boarded fences to enclose their private gardens which entirely destroyed the intended landscaping. Following enforcement action, an application for revised fencing has now been received from one of the owners and we shall be seeking to ensure that the original intention is upheld.

**Alan Baker**

## **CONSERVATION**

Last year, we looked at a total of 109 applications and wrote letters expressing views on 19 of them. The tally so far this year (since the AGM) is 16 applications with 2 letters written. The Society likes to keep its powder dry by commenting only on those which we feel

have a negative effect on their surroundings, which are badly designed, or which involve some form of unsatisfactory modifications. We are obviously particularly concerned about nationally or locally listed buildings, and the effects of infill development.

At the AGM I mentioned two applications in particular, which had come in since the last newsletter, concerning the Chalk Lane Hotel and the RAC Country Club. The hotel's application involved a new 2 storey wing with 14 additional bedrooms to which we objected mainly on the grounds of loss of parking, despite the increased size of the hotel, and the lack of drawings illustrating the relationship of the new wing to the existing listed building and its neighbours. That application was withdrawn, but has very recently been re-submitted with some additional information. Although the drawings are very similar, if not identical, there is a design and access statement and a report on the traffic impact, which includes details of current usage, and which states that 15 additional car parking spaces will be introduced.

The RAC's application related to a proposed irrigation reservoir to be sited about half way up, and close beside, Langley Vale Road. With a capacity of 1 million gallons, the reservoir was intended to provide irrigation for the golf course, hence its location on a higher part of the course. We wrote to object on several grounds, including the complete absence of any sort of landscaping. We were also deeply concerned at the absence of any analysis of the safety issues, especially as the reservoir, as proposed, was actually higher than the road. Thankfully, this application has been withdrawn.

We have written on your behalf a very comprehensive letter regarding the proposals for Lavandou Stables, which is dealt with elsewhere in this issue. It is worth mentioning here that there has also been an application from the same source for a new stable, Jodie's Yard, further up Chalk lane. This application is a little odd, especially as the suggested absence of demand for such facilities is given as a ground for the alternative mixed use development of Lavandou Stables.

**Robert Austen**

## **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE**

The following were elected at the recent Annual General Meeting as Officers and Committee members for the year to March 2009. In addition, the positions of auditor and archivist were elected.

### **Special Responsibilities,**

#### **OFFICERS**

##### **Chairman**

Harry Corben,

##### **Vice-Chairman & Planning**

Alan Baker FRICS.

##### **Hon Secretary**

Malcolm Boyd.

##### **Hon Treasurer**

Tony Smith.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

##### **Minutes Secretary**

Mrs Angela Clifford.

**Membership Secretary**

Mrs Ishbel Kenward.

**Planning Infrastructure**

Norman Dempster.

**Planning & Conservation**

Robert Austen,

**Information Technology**

Piers Nicholson.

**Events**

Mrs Joy Furness

**Publicity**

Nick Lock

**Past Chairman**

Geoffrey Stone

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**Hon Auditor**

Harry Wilkinson OBE

**Archivist**

Philip Clifford

**MEMBERSHIP**

Thank you to those members who have paid their Subs. and especially to those who have generously given donations. A reminder for those who have not yet paid - subscriptions are due by the end of June - £2 per individual, £3 per household. If you have not yet paid and you were out when he/she called, your Road Rep. should have put a note on this Newsletter giving a reminder of his/her address. Please save them an extra trip by taking your Subscription to them. If unsure whether you have paid or not please contact your Road Rep or me.

**Ishbel Kenward, Membership Secretary (728570)**

**21ST CENTURY COMMUNICATION**

I have email addresses for a small percentage of the Society's members, mostly those who have joined recently. These are not used for any purpose other than EPS communications. An email was sent out recently giving up-to-date information about the Lavandou Stables Planning Application, so that the Committee's view was known, together with contact details for comments concerning the Planning Application.

I realise that a number of members do not have internet access, so this is for those who do. If you did not receive a copy of the email described above then I do not have your email address [or I have entered it incorrectly!]. If you would like to be kept informed, between Newsletters, on the very few occasions that the committee consider it useful, please email this fact to the EPS email address, [info@epsomprotectionsociety.co.uk](mailto:info@epsomprotectionsociety.co.uk). All such communications are sent out as 'blind copies' so no-one else would have access to your email address.

**Ishbel Kenward**

## PRIDE IN EPSOM

I'm sure that all our members want to take a pride in the town. One of the things that detract from the look of Epsom as well as many other towns in this country is litter. Instead of getting irritated, can I suggest that when you are out and about, and it's convenient, that you pick some of it up and put it in a litter bin or take it home. A bit radical I know but if we all kept a small bit of Epsom clear it just might influence other people. It does have a 'feel good' factor too! For those with internet access there is a website called [www.peopleclearinglitter.co.uk](http://www.peopleclearinglitter.co.uk)

**Ishbel Kenward**

## PAUL FIFOOT – AN APPRECIATION

Paul Fifoot was the Society's Newsletter editor for many years and sadly passed away on 22<sup>nd</sup> February this year. Paul was a constitutional lawyer, and had a very active career advising countries emerging from colonialism on new constitutions on behalf of the British Government. He was HM Colonial Service Crown Counsel and Parliamentary Draughtsman for the Tanganyika and Tanzania governments, and also Crown Counsel, British Columbia. Paul held the position of Deputy Legal Advisor, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and was awarded CMG. After retirement, Paul continued as Consultant and Constitutional Advisor to many overseas governments. His many interests included the rights of asylum seekers, the Law of the Sea, the interests of children in developing countries and reviewing books, particularly on the status of Hong Kong.

Our sincere condolences are extended to Paul's widow, Erica.

**Malcolm Boyd**

## DISPLAY PHOTOGRAPH

This picture showing Angela Clifford and Malcolm Boyd was taken by Geoff Stone at our display in the Mall Ashley last year. The photographs of the new buildings provoked much comment, mostly unfavourable remarks about their design and architecture.



## LAVANDOU STABLES AND CHALK LANE

The application by the Halifax Estates for the development of the historic Grade II listed buildings in Chalk Lane for offices and dwellings will be considered by the Planning Committee of the Borough Council, but the date still has to be confirmed. Members of the public can view the proceedings from the gallery of the council chamber. A comprehensive letter of objection has been sent by your committee.

The following extract concerning Chalk Lane is taken from the Society's Newsletter No 5 dated September 1961, and may be of interest to members:

*Following representations by the Society regarding the misuse of this lane which is prohibited to motor traffic, we are glad to report that the Council have strengthened the wording of the prohibition notice at each end of Chalk Lane, and that the Police have now agreed to keep intermittent watch on this road. Successful prosecutions have since followed. Residents and their children who make use of this attractive and unspoiled route to the Downs for either walking or riding on horseback will be heartened to know that effective steps are now being taken to enforce the law. Your Committee will continue to watch the situation.*

Some members may be aware that a new gate has now been erected across Chalk Lane through the good offices of our member Chris Frost as a Surrey County Councillor. It remains to be seen whether the illegal traffic using the lane will be reduced, but I understand that letters have been sent by the police to drivers using the lane as a short cut.

**Malcolm Boyd**

## 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

In 2009 EPSOM PROTECTION SOCIETY will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we are planning an appropriate programme the aims of which are:-

- To celebrate with our members the contribution EPS has made to safeguarding the past and shaping the future of Epsom
- To maintain and raise the profile of EPS in the Borough
- To maintain and raise EPS membership
- To give as many members as possible the opportunity to join in the celebrations

Our plans include:-

Talks in the Myers Studio and local outings

--A buffet supper party.

--A visit to our twin town of Chantilly including conducted tours of the Chateau, the equestrian museum and a reception in the Chantilly Town Hall.

--A talk in the Epsom Playhouse by a high profile speaker such as Dr Simon Thurley, the Chief Executive of English Heritage, the government's principal advisor on the historic environment in England.

We are also considering a permanent memento in Epsom, such as a fountain in Rosebery Park.

We plan to issue a souvenir programme for the year in January '09 to include some historical information on the Society.

We are planning to associate with one or two other relevant Societies for some of the events and hope to obtain support from major Epsom based companies.

**Norman Dempster**

## THE VALUE OF CONSERVATION AREAS IN EPSOM

Past Chairman Geoffrey Stone welcomed a full house of members and friends to the last in our series of talks. He had to inform the meeting that Professor John Ashurst, our booked speaker, was seriously ill and sent apologies for his absence. Fortunately, Mr Anthony Evans, our Borough Principal Planning Officer (Design and Conservation) kindly agreed in his place to give an illustrated talk about 'The value of Conservation Areas in Epsom'. Anthony picked five of the Conservation areas – West Park Hospital, Church Street, Burgh Heath Road, Downs Road Estate and Epsom Town Centre - not in any particular order.

### WEST PARK HOSPITAL.

In 2003 it was decided to extend the Conservation area in an effort to maintain some of the historic buildings, and also their 'echelon' formation, during development of the site. It is hoped the large ward buildings will house a hotel with accompanying restoration of the grounds. The 'Airing Courts' – where in the past, patients could sit outside out of the wind and rain, will be preserved. Sadly their equivalents were lost on the Horton site development. The buildings have deteriorated since 2003, but asbestos removal has been a problem. It is hoped a Community Development Trust will be set up and paid for by the developers, and which will encourage green initiatives by residents e.g. car sharing.

### EPSOM TOWN CENTRE

Traders report they are losing trade and custom to other larger town centres. This is a problem the borough council hopes to address in the near future via a Conservation Appraisal. (EPS will be part of the consultation process). It is hard for people to maintain the historic fabric of the town if their businesses are struggling. Inappropriate development too costs money and man hours.

### CHURCH STREET

Only 4% of English Heritage listed buildings are Grade II\* and The Cedars in Church Street is one of them. The development is a good example of co-operation between developers and the borough council – largely due to consultation and negotiation prior to submission of the actual planning application. Many other interesting houses too.

### BURGH HEATH ROAD

We saw pictures of some of the fine houses in this area dating from turn of the 19th century. Dame Annis barn – the subject of a withdrawn planning application last year - was rejected for English Heritage listing but may be worthy of local listing.

### DOWNS ROAD ESTATE

This is considered to be a fine example of good 20<sup>th</sup> century development. Derek Lovejoy and Partners were the architects and they kept the avenue of trees planted by Lord Rosebery, maintained a pleasant, open aspect and by using similar materials in slightly different designs, managed a well-juxtaposed and welcoming estate. The houses facing Downs Road all face the road with vehicular access at the rear – giving a pleasing, harmonious street scene.

Anthony answered many wide-ranging questions from the audience. Starting with *on-street parking in Conservation Areas* – cannot do much. *Front gardens being changed into hard standing for car parking* – for the Conservation Areas he hopes the Council will have more control via Article 4(ii) of Conservation Area regulations, but this may involve compensation issues. *Criteria for local listing* – notoriety/fame of inhabitant, local architectural value - has to be agreed by four signatories – Chief Executive, Chair of Planning

Committee, Mark Berry and a Councillor not on the Planning Committee. Another questioner was assured the Clerk of Works took weekly photographs of *The Cedars* as work progressed so a proper record is available of past and present alterations. Surrey County Council was also criticised for an apparent lack of appreciation of the care which should be taken with, for example, *road markings in Conservation Areas – it uses thick yellow lines not primrose coloured as is permitted, and in Downside, white hatchings had yellow ones painted over them – uugh!* Anthony agreed but said it is harder now to talk to SCC Highways Officers who used to be based at the Town Hall but are now in Leatherhead. *How are inappropriate changes to listed buildings dealt with?* - normally by negotiation but there is sometimes a lack of understanding of Planning Law regarding Conservation Areas amongst foreign business people and this ties up time and money. No-one wants to destroy a livelihood so officers try to explain and negotiate compliance. *Lavandou stables* – no application so far but the council will probably need to employ an outside business consultant for advice. *Hollywood Lodge* – decimated by the fire and now dangerous. Privately owned and owner unresponsive to approaches. *Upper High Street site* – bought by Tesco. Anthony meeting them in March. *Why is Epsom declining?* – not known hence Conservation Appraisal. Need a Town Centre manager to organise events and liaise with local businesses. SCC receptive to new ideas for traffic management. *Station development?* - Network Rail has put the site out to offer. *Horton Chapel?* Huge consultation with local residents now 12+ parties interested – ongoing.

Robert Austen then thanked Anthony whole-heartedly both for stepping in at the last moment and producing such a relevant and well-illustrated talk. He considered the Borough fortunate in having such a knowledgeable person working for it. EPS was pleased to see that modern design is not always in conflict with conservation. The audience showed its appreciation in the usual manner and Geoffrey presented Anthony with bottles of wine as a token of thanks.

**Angela Clifford**

## **TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA**

As part of a review of conservation areas in the borough, the council has arranged a public exhibition of the Character Appraisal and Management Proposals for the town centre area. We have written in response to the proposals, supporting particularly the appointment of a town centre manager with authority and powers to improve the attractiveness of the town, and to attempt to encourage more small individual retail outlets. We also supported greater emphasis on the heritage of the town and agreed that the conservation area should be extended part way along the Upper High Street. Some of the objectives in the management plan are aspirational, and it is quite difficult to see how many can be achieved especially in a difficult economic environment. However we share many of the objectives to create a more attractive and welcoming town centre and we can only hope that they come to fruition.

**Malcolm Boyd**

## **TALK BY DAVID SMITH AFTER THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Mr David Smith, Chief Executive of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council was introduced by Harry Corben and invited to give his personal view of ‘The Future of Epsom’.

He has been working here for 22 years both as Town Clerk and as Chief Executive. To start with, Mr Smith kindly offered the Town Hall as a venue for an event during our 50<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary Year in 2009. He also made it plain that, in spite of any ideas to the contrary, he is certain there is no corruption in the planning process in this Borough.

Casting our minds back 20 years, he asked who would have foreseen the proliferation of offices, telecom masts, and internet shopping? Probably no-one. The expansion of internet shopping has had an impact on local retail trade; the hospital cluster development has changed Epsom as well, but the station has hardly changed since June 1986 though planning permission for redevelopment was given in 1987! What of the future? Housing pressures are largely market driven and not by central government policies, so why not 12-15 storey blocks of flats, concentrated in central areas? Or else may have to build on parts of the Green Belt? If Government policies are ignored – for example about limited car parking at new developments, this may have appeal and costs implications. Difficult decisions may lie ahead but he encouraged the Society to keep questioning these sensitive issues.

Local Employment opportunities are important and sustainability will enter the equation. In retail terms Epsom has done well over the past 5 years, but faces competition from centres such as Kingston, Sutton and Croydon. The latter all have national multiples, so Epsom must have appeal for its distinctive character. The high percentage of open spaces contributes enormously to the character of the Borough and this is why there is a team carrying out a character assessment of the Borough. What of Community facilities? Should the Market remain? Currently, consideration is being given to extending the Town Centre Conservation Area from The Spread Eagle to part way along the Upper High Street. Another issue likely to need addressing is anti-social behaviour – not just drunkenness, but bad parking, non-compliance with planning conditions. We were delighted to learn there is now a Compliance Officer who will be able to help avoid the latter becoming more common. Nonsuch Park – a draft lease from SCC is now being examined. Downs - the new Grandstand will be a real asset. Upper High Street/Depot Road - the fire station may relocate and be redeveloped with the Phoenix Court flats. Good news that the footpath from the High Street to the Town Hall Car Park is to be widened and lighting improved soon. Network Rail is now in partnership with a developer so maybe the Station development will finally start. There *is* a positive future ahead for our town.

Matters raised by questions included the future of The Adult Education Institute: owned by SCC, not suitable for Youth Service, and now on the market. On race horse training: a distinctive part of the Borough, four new young trainers have set up locally, the South East England Development Agency is keen to retain training in Epsom and local trainers are more positive. No design details available yet for station site, but this would be a legitimate place for modern design in the Borough.

There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the Chief Executive for his thought provoking but encouraging view of the future of Epsom.

**Angela Clifford**

## **EVENTS, OUTINGS and TALKS**

***ANNUAL BUFFET SUPPER PARTY.*** Friday 24th October 2008 7.45 to 10.15pm

As usual this event will be held in the large hall of St Joseph's Church Epsom (situated behind The Haywain in the Dorking Road). Please note that the doors will not open until 7.30pm. One of our members, Barbara Culpin who has provided the food for the last 2 years, has decided to hang up her apron this year. A big 'thank you' to Barbara and her team for the hard work of catering for us. The Food Studio Caterers have agreed to do the catering this year. Their menu looks very appetising.

By popular request Headley Kay, who entertained us in 2006, has agreed to return this year with his special mixture of songs, stories and music. He is an excellent guitarist who lives in Leatherhead and does a lot of voluntary work entertaining patients in hospitals. Tickets are £17 each. You are welcome to bring friends and guests as the numbers are not limited. Please complete the application form printed at the back of this newsletter and send it with a cheque made payable to Epsom Protection Society, and a stamped addressed envelope for return of your tickets, to Joy Furness 37 Woodcote Hurst, Epsom KT18 7DS.

***MAPLEDURHAM & HENLEY OUTING*** on 24th July 2008

This outing which had to be postponed from last year because of flooding is fully booked.

***VISIT TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT*** on 3rd March 2008. This was fully booked. It was very successful and everyone enjoyed the tour of both Houses of Parliament and the lunch which was hosted by our MP, Chris Grayling.

***CHRISTMAS OUTING.*** It is hoped to organise an outing near to Christmas. Details will be in the next newsletter.

***TALK*** 28th February 2008. Unfortunately Professor Ashurst was in hospital and unable to give his talk but hopes to do so later in the year. The subject was so popular that it was sold out. Luckily Anthony Evans, Design and Conservation Officer in the Borough Council was able to step in at the last moment and gave an excellent illustrated talk on Conservation Areas in the Borough. A detailed report of this appears elsewhere in the newsletter.

***WALKABOUT with IAN WEST*** on SUNDAY 6th July 2008. Ian West will take us on a guided tour of Nonsuch Mansion to see rooms not normally open to the public including the kitchens and servants quarters. The tour will begin at 2.30pm and everyone is welcome. The entry to the house is via the Cheam Gate entrance to Nonsuch Park which, if you are coming from Epsom/Ewell, is located on the left hand side of the road just before Cheam Village. Drive in and continue a short way along the road (ignoring the first car park) and turn right along side the garden wall of the house. Use the car park at the end near the house. Entry is through the green wooden gate in the wall of the house which will be open with a flag over it. If anyone is coming by bus, there is a stop just beyond the gate, and you need to allow 15 to 20 minutes to walk from the gate to the house. Please bring money with you as there is a charge of £2 each for entry to the mansion.

**Joy Furness (01372 722186)**

## **THE DOWNS**

I am on a steep learning curve at present as I try to follow in John Murray's footsteps and report on Downs matters for you all. Although I live in Langley Vale, my approach and interests may well differ from his, so please bear with me.

As EPS representative, I am invited to attend the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators' meetings but am not allowed to speak - just listen and observe. I understand that once a year I *will* be allowed to raise matters at the Consultative Committee meeting. Technically these are public meetings and the agenda and minutes are available on the council website. The new Managing Director of the racecourse Mr Nick Blofeld, was confirmed as a

Conservator at the meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> April. Our Society was much involved in drawing up the 1986 Downs Act and continues to support the present trainers, indeed we would like to see the number of racehorse training stables increase. For this reason we welcomed rebuilding of the Grandstand and the building of an hotel on the old paddock site. If racing ever disappears from Epsom, our Borough will be the poorer so increased income for the Racecourse is important. The Rubbing House has permission from the Conservators to apply for planning permission to install a new parking area between their fence and the approach road, on condition that it will retain the green appearance. Parking bays will be marked so cars park nose to the fence and not alongside it. It is hoped this will lessen the parking on the edges of the Downs themselves.

Consideration is being given to using the rear part of the refurbished Prince's Stand for educational purposes. Eventually it is hoped there may be interpretation boards and a Nature Trail leaflet. The Surrey Wildlife Trust Officer, who has drawn up the habitat management plan for the Downs, is keen for a Historic Landscape element to be included too. The overall aim is to inform and interest the visiting public about the Downs and thus explain why, amongst other things, dogs need to be controlled, model aircraft should only be flown on a specific area and after 12 noon when the racehorses have finished using the training gallops, and why hack riders are confined to certain areas. One possibility is to raise a team of volunteers, a sort of 'Friends of Epsom & Walton Downs', who could help with conservation and generally support the Lower Mole Countryside Management team. Simon Dow, a local trainer, requested that the leaflets available to new users be handed out on a couple of mornings per week to try and reduce misuse by new visitors. The trainers pay an annual fee to use the training gallops which are maintained to the standard required. It is for this reason that certain areas are kept aside for the racing industry while hacks have their own tracks to use.

Unimproved chalk downland habitat - as found on Juniper Hill and Walton Downs - is increasingly uncommon and is important for several threatened species. I was interested to learn that a survey of terrestrial invertebrates (chiefly beetles, bugs, flies, bees, wasps, ants, butterflies and moths) had recorded 118 species of which 7 are rare or notable and 13 local. Indeed we do have something to cherish here on our doorstep. Much of this has happened because of the racing history of the Borough and without the racehorses using the downs for training, its Green Belt status and the racecourse itself who knows what developments might have happened.

Arrangements for the Derby are well established but always reviewed. Music nights after evening racing are popular and a request is being considered for a 2 day music event – a so-called 'poshfest' which would finish at 11pm. No fireworks would be permitted though. It is possible a film about 'Racing behind the scenes' will be made here, but negotiations are only at an early stage. All these events help to encourage appreciation of the Downs and the Racecourse. Although there will not be racing on August Bank Holiday week-end (22-25<sup>th</sup>) there will be a fair on site as usual. Trainers Open Day will be 20<sup>th</sup> July and, for a one-off minimal fee, many of the training yards are open to the public. Horseman's Sunday, another long established tradition, will be on the last Sunday of September.

**Angela Clifford**

## HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

The Heritage Open Days weekend in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell will be on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>/Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

The provisional programme is as follows:-

**Saturday all day:** Old Moat Barn, Horton Lane; Beaumont Care Home, Church Street, Epsom;  
St Mary's Church, Cuddington; Ewell Court.

**Saturday morning and afternoon:** St Martin's Church, Church Street, Epsom.

**Saturday morning:** St Mary's Church, Ewell plus the old church tower; Spring House, Spring Street, Ewell; Rectory Barn, Church Street, Ewell; Fitznells, Chessington Road, Ewell.

**Sunday all day:** Lavandou Stables and Indoor Riding School, Chalk Lane, Epsom.

**Sunday morning:** The Warren near Langley Vale; the Watch House, Church Street, Ewell; St Michael's Church, Church Street, Ewell.

**Sunday afternoon:** Epsom College Chapel; Woodcote Grove (Atkins), entry from Chalk Lane.

**Isobel Cross, On behalf of the Epsom and Ewell Heritage Open Days Committee  
(Tel: 01372 722074)**

### APPLICATION FORM FOR BUFFET SUPPER PARTY, FRIDAY 24TH OCTOBER 2008 at 7.45 pm in ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH HALL EPSOM

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....  
.....

PHONE NUMBER.....

I would like.....tickets for this event (£17 each) and enclose a cheque made payable to Epsom Protection Society for £.....and a stamped addressed envelope. Please return to Joy Furness 37 Woodcote Hurst Epsom KT18 7DS (Tel 01372 722186)

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Epsom Protection Society  
Tel Nos: (membership 01372 7285700  
(other 01372 723325)  
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