

IN THE DARK

Residents in Richmond Road were surprised earlier this autumn when, following the failure of one of the street lamps, City Council workers arrived not to repair the light, but to remove the entire structure.

The cast iron column and its base were uprooted from the pavement, loaded on to the back of a truck and the gap in the pavement filled. This is the latest of Round Hill's ornamented street lamps to disappear. In recent years, the iron cowls of two lights in the Cat's Creep have been crudely replaced by grey plastic caps and in other parts of the district, notably Round Hill Crescent, modern black posts have gradually replaced the older models as the lamps have failed.

Given Round Hill's status as a Conservation Area, it is surprising that there is not more effort to repair the existing lamps. Although they are not original to the area, the iron lamp stands with their cursive brackets have become stylish, even iconic features of the streetscape of Round Hill.

The removal of the lamp in Richmond Road comes at a time when many local authorities in the UK are considering ways of reducing energy bills and limiting the environmental impact of widespread street lighting. *(Continued on page 2)*

2 AGM report Information on the September meeting plus an update on the Pocket Park debate



4 City Car Club A member reports on the experience of making the switch from a private car.



5 Ashdown Road The arrival of new business activity in the area has meant big changes for residents.

6 South Downs National Park One more push to influence the final decision.

7 Books Two books by Round Hill residents are reviewed.

Round Hill Christmas Carol singing

Thursday 18 December 6.30pm ~ see page 3 for details



ROUND HILL IN THE DARK

(continued from front page) In a trial in West Sussex for example, lights will be automatically dimmed between midnight and 5am and if successful, the measures extended to 30,000 lamps.

There are clear benefits to be had but it seems that in Brighton and Hove, the council is already pursuing a more radical option!

David Guest



AGM REPORT 2008

It seemed strange to have this year's AGM in daylight. In recent years, the November timing has guaranteed gloom and wild weather for the event, so this time we moved the date forward to catch the lighter September evenings.

Between thirty and forty local residents and interested parties took part in a lively meeting. Chair Jean Brennan reviewed the events of the year and led a debate on a number of local issues, including suggestions for a Pocket Park (see below) and the recent application by Sainsbury's to extend delivery facilities at the Lewes Road store.

Chris Todd, a member of the Friends of the Earth in Brighton, came straight from a talk on One Planet Living to share his experience of renovating a Brighton house with effective insulating materials.

Pocket Park

Although initial responses were largely positive, the Society's suggestions for a small area of public open space at the junction of Wakefield Road and Princes Crescent met with more concerted opposition at the AGM.

A number of residents in the area overlooking the site felt that some of the current visual amenity would be lost if the area were to become more public and were worried about intrusive noise.

Residents of Sylvan Hall who attended the meeting were firmly against the idea.

Given the strength of local feeling, the Society will not be pursuing the plan and since other sites in the neighbourhood are even less suitable, the possibility of a public space in the area now seems unlikely.

Committee Changes

After years of tireless work on behalf of the committee and the Round Hill area, Vivien Eliades decided to stand down from her post this year. As one of the founding members of the society, Vivien has made a huge contribution to the development of the Society, notably in her roles as Secretary and Newsletter editor.

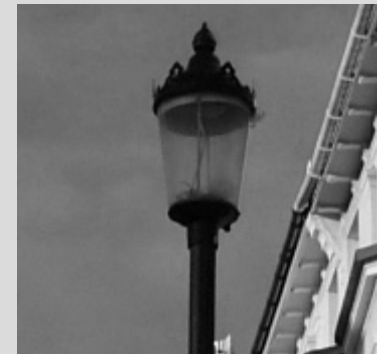
Thanks also to Jo Nean (who did not stand for re-election) for her contribution over the previous year .

In other changes, Kevin Tansley has taken over the role of Treasurer and three new committee members were appointed: Mandy Jones, Djan Omer and Annie Rimington.

Illuminating Round Hill's Streets



The cast iron street lamps with cursive brackets which are still prevalent throughout the conservation area.



A number of lamps have been replaced by more modern columns albeit with a nod towards Victorian styling.

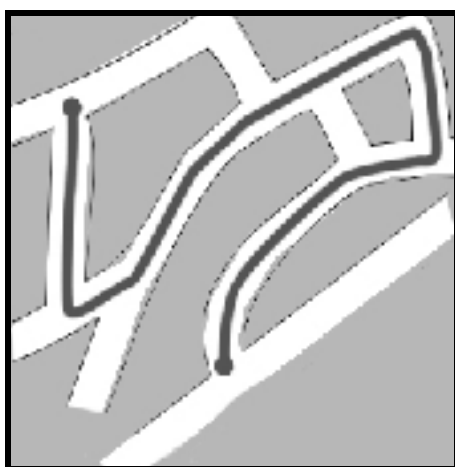


In the Cat Creep, both lamps have now been modified—the original metal cowling removed and replaced with grey plastic coverings.



IN ROUND HILL THE BELLS ARE RINGING

Carols will again be heard in Round Hill this year—so be in good cheer for Thursday 18th December.



We will meet at the junction of Round Hill Crescent and Lewes Road (opposite Bradley Stores) at 6.30 pm but if you miss the start, please join us along the way!

As with previous years, we will be following a

slightly different route in an effort to include parts of the area that may have missed out in the past. This year, the singers will take in Round Hill Crescent, D'Aubigny Road, Richmond Road and Crescent Road and collections will be in made in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support

Father Christmas, of course, will be putting in an appearance.

The committee would be pleased to hear from anyone willing to help with music for the event but the most important thing is to come along for a good sing, a mince pie and a cup of mulled wine with your neighbours!

READY FOR SUMMER?

The Round Hill Society is planning a street party with a difference for 2008. The event is in its early stages at the moment but to make it a success, we rely on volunteers to help with various activities in the run up and on the day itself.

Please contact David Guest (details on back page) if you would be willing to help.

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS



Leading charity, Brighton and Hove Volunteers, are calling for local young people aged between 16 and 25 to join a new group that champions volunteering.

Drawn from all walks of life and acting as ambassadors, Youth Action Team members encourage their peers to volunteer, and advise organisations on youth led community action. The Youth Action Team organise local events aimed to highlight the many benefits of volunteering, including gaining new skills, contributing to the community and increasing employability. Volunteering within the Youth Action Team include activities such as marketing, design, fundraising and events organisation.

In the words of Zoe, a member of the Youth Action Team, "the meetings are really friendly and fun and it is a great way to volunteer without having to commit all my time and I'm boosting my CV and gaining new skills."

For more information on the event and/or the Youth Action Team, please call Sarah Bourne on 01273 234779 or e-mail: info@bhvolunteers.org.uk.

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CITY CAR CLUB COMES TO ROUND HILL

Back in the summer a couple of council workers marked 'Car Club' in a newly created parking bay in D'Aubigny Rd (near the junction of Roundhill Crescent). As my car was getting older and less reliable (I was considering buying a newer one!) I did the research and waited..... and waited...until at last in September a brand new silver Vauxhall Corsa Easytronic arrived.



While I was waiting, I'd been testing out City Car Club by using another city car based in Riley Rd. It really is a very straight forward process. Having joined the club (they first check your licence with the DVLA and you need to set up a direct debit with the company) and got my credit size membership card and PIN, I book the car online for the time I need. I go and collect the car from its very own parking place. The membership card unlocks it, the keys are inside and I type my PIN into the onboard computer. Then off I go! The cost is £4.95 an hour (with reduced rates for 24 hour and longer bookings). This includes the first 50 miles of travel, after that it is 24p per mile. If I need more fuel, then I just use a card provided to top up at any garage. The detailed bill comes at the end of the month. No insurance costs, no services or repairs; no depreciation and its own parking space. I was convinced!

Now a car has arrived in D'Aubigny Rd, I have now sold my car (so if you are concerned about city car's own dedicated parking space, then at least my old car is no longer taking up space in the street) and I am a converted city car user (even my husband uses it as a backup car). I do use the bus and taxis too – but the city car is great. The only problem is that when I return it,

other residents have parked in the space!

So give it a try, but don't park your car in that bay!

Annie Rimington

City Car Club

Founded in 2000, City Car Club now has over 5,000 members and 300 vehicles. The company was founded in London but now operates in several cities in the UK including Edinburgh, Birmingham and Brighton and Hove.

Website

www.citycarclub.co.uk

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DISQUIET ON THE ASHDOWN FRONT

Although the Ashdown Road planning application reported in the last issue of the Round Hill Reporter (application number BH2008/ 02170) is still under consideration with the City Council's planning department, there have been significant events at the property in the last few weeks.

The normally quiet Ashdown Road has become a centre of commercial activity following the lease of the land to the rear of 2 Ashdown Road to Raj Motors, a car repair and valeting firm. Council officials have been considering whether the establishment of the business on the site represents a change of use for which planning permission may be required and it now seems likely that the management of Raj Motors will need to make a formal application.

Although it is good to see some businesses thriving against the backdrop of national recession, for some local residents, the intrusion in a quiet residential area has been unwelcome. Neighbours of the property report considerable activity focused on the site with trucks bringing vehicles to and from the short road which is notoriously tight and difficult to navigate. There have also been additional cars parked on Ashdown Road, adding to the congestion in the area.



The interaction of commercial and residential users of areas such as Round Hill is fraught with difficulties and the complaints of residents in Ashdown Road are reminiscent of the problems reported by neighbours of Floline in Princes Road on the other side of the hill. Here too, the manoeuvres of larger vehicles in the road junctions have been a consistent cause for concern.

Residents in Ashdown Road have been describing their experiences to Council officials who will now await an application from the business operators.

David Guest

NIGHT DELIVERIES



Sainsbury's at the Vogue Gyrotory on Lewes Road recently applied for changes to its licence to allow additional deliveries. The changes are sought in connection with the "Sainsbury's to you" internet shopping services which it operates from the store.

The changes would involve extending the available window for deliveries into the night and are of particular concern for residents in D'Aubigny Road and Round Hill Crescent whose residences are near to the delivery bays.

A number of objections have been lodged, questioning some of the evidence submitted with the application and the underlying principle behind operating a warehouse-style distribution from a site intended as a retail store.

The noise survey evidenced by the application has been a particular focus of concern since it was performed in D'Aubigny road at some remove from the delivery site. Some residents were angry that this should form a basis for the application when the level of disturbance in the street is somewhat less than that experienced in the gardens adjoining the delivery bays.

The application is under consideration.

David Guest

Rent-a-Crowd

A suggestion put forward at the AGM was that residents willing to support mass actions, such as photo-shoots or demonstrations, should add their names to a contact list. A list was started at the AGM—please contact us if you would like us to add your name.



SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK: THE FINAL PUSH

The South Downs Campaign, with which the Round Hill Society is affiliated, is asking for your help in "one last push" to urge the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Hilary Benn MP) to confirm the status of the South Downs National Park without further delay.

The leaders of the Campaign believe that this is the right moment to ensure that the politicians making the decision are aware of the strength of public feeling behind the proposals and are concerned at possible compromises that could limit the scope of the area granted National Park status.

A new postcard campaign has been launched with the help of affiliated bodies across the country, but particularly in the South-East with a quarter of a million postcards due to be printed and distributed.

This final mass action is intended to remind the Government of the popularity of the National Park and the importance that it cover at least the area originally proposed by the Countryside Agency (now Natural England).

The aim of the postcard is to press for a speedy decision on the National Park which should include the Chalk Hills, the Western Weald, Ditchling and Lewes.

The Round Hill Society will be distributing copies of the postcard in the neighbourhood—please complete and return them to add your voice to the campaign and if you would like to save on postage, just take it by hand to your nearest committee member (addresses on the back page).

David Guest



South Downs National Park



A student's view of Round Hill

Many of Round Hill's residents have lived in the area for years but others spend only a short time in the neighbourhood, perhaps while studying at one of the city's colleges or universities.

If you are a student living in the area, we would like to hear your stories: what are your experiences of living in this part of Brighton, are there facilities or events that you would like to see and how do you interact with your neighbours?

Please contact us with your thoughts (contact details on the back page).

Artists' Open House Christmas Show

The Sundial House 51 Upper Lewes Road

will be open for your locally made gifts
6th, 7th, 13th, 14th, December, 11am to 6pm.



CITY IN BLOOM 2008



Congratulations to Jan and Rusty Curry of Richmond Road who won this year's award for the city's **Best Wildlife Garden** in the Brighton and Hove City in Bloom Competition.

Other categories included Best Basement Garden, Best Hanging Basket and Best Kept Allotment and winners were invited to a prize-giving event at the Metropole hotel in September.

This edition of the Round Hill Reporter was printed by

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ESTATE AGENTS



TWO NEW BOOKS BY ROUND HILL RESIDENTS

A Mule in Brighton by Rob Silverstone pub. Vanguard press, 2007, £7.99, 199 pp.

This might just be the book to buy, read without damaging the spine, and copy your favourite recipes and tips before sending it to a non-Brighton friend so that they can envy you living in such an exciting and fascinating place.



Rob Silverstone has produced a book of three linked but distinct parts. First a selection of whimsical stories about living in and around Brighton. The Volks railway, the Chattri, the Duke of Yorks, cooking at the Royal Pavilion, cycling on the Downs, Sussex University campus, the Zap Club, favourite coffee shops, behind the scenes at Brighton station and tales from deepest Hove. These stories and more make this my favourite

section. It repays the effort of sinking below the surface and getting immersed in his narrative.

The middle section is 50 or so photographs of the area: the seafront, the Downs, the events and Festival, the characters and oddities that make Brighton special.

By the time you've done these parts you'll know the author has been involved with food - as chef, delicatessen owner and teacher - and the third section takes this much further with a selection of recipes emphasising fresh and local produce, including (a necessity in Brighton) a significant selection of vegetarian dishes. To help keep it local he includes a source list for the best of local produce, from ciders and wines, through cheeses and smoked foods, to ham, poultry, pickles and honey; and offers his choice of good places to shop and eat in the town.

On second thoughts you might want two copies - one to keep and one to make a friend in a less exciting town envious.

Rob Stephenson

RSPB Guide to Birdwatching - a step-by-step approach by Mike Unwin, pub A&C Black, 2008, £12.99, 176 pp.

This is a book for the would-be birdwatcher, and it engaged my attention from the very beginning, with references to the Anglo-Saxon name for the wheatear* and the northward extension of the range of the Dartford Warbler as evidence of climate change. But how can a book encourage that incipient interest in birdwatching? This one does it with bite-sized portions of fascinating detail on all aspects of birds and watching them, from information of wing and feather types, to bird anatomy and senses and from clues to aid birdsong recall and recognition to the best times of day and seasons for birdwatching. It also makes great use of full colour photographs and drawings of score of birds, with snippets of information about them, which means you are learning as you read, and you can check your progress by trying the regular quick picture quizzes.



I already enjoy walking in the country, now I can see how a little birding could make more of each outing. And the book draws me in further by giving advice on careful observation, and how simple sketches can help with later identification, choosing a field guide and selecting suitable binoculars.

I was particularly taken with the idea of using websites and digital guides to not only look at pictures of birds but also listen to their songs. That will surely help with those annoying little chaps that stay outlined against a bright sky, just far enough away to be no more than a dark spot - but singing all the time.

This is a lovely book that is sure to result in a field-guide and pair of 'bins' by the kitchen window, and could easily lead to visiting local bird reserves, or identifying and regularly walking your own birdwatching patch, keenly looking for avian signs of changing seasons.

Rob Stephenson

* hwit aers, translates as white arse.

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	Mandy Jones	81 Princes Crescent	
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	Paul Thompson	29 Richmond Road	883004

Deadline for next Issue:
SATURDAY 14TH FEBRUARY

OVER THE HILL...

It seems the Victoria now has a buyer, despite the continued presence of estate agents' boards. Several parties had shown an interest after the property had failed to meet its reserve price in an auction earlier this year, some of whom were interested in running the pub as a going concern. However the eventual buyers are believed to be developers looking to convert the building into accommodation.



Not only residents are confused by the changes to waste collection in the area—so are the Council! New signs appeared along the lamp posts in Princes Crescent, helpfully informing residents: "Your new collection day is Tuesday". Actually, it's Monday, but let's not get caught up in the details.

Carelet's appeal to the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds of non-determination by the Council Planning office was rejected by the Inspector in October. Several reasons for refusal were given and full details can be found on the Round Hill website. Residents in Princes Road and the wider area are now expecting a fifth application from the developers.

The Reporter is published by the Round Hill Society to keep residents in the area in touch with local news, events and each other. Every effort is made to present a fair and balanced view, while aiming to accept any material from Round Hill residents. The opinions expressed in The Reporter are not necessarily those of the Round Hill Society.

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Bishop Window Cleaning T: 07939 161904

BUILDERS

Chris Nesbitt Plastering, bricklaying. T: 07867 864619
Earthwise Construction green design, construction & renovation (Contact Ben East). T: 0845 680 0015
A Team Builders Ltd Plastering, damp proofing (Contact Giles Walker). T: 385478, M: 07725028393

DECORATORS

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Rob Stephenson 51 Upper Lewes Road, T: 673511
Peter Skinner T: 558790/889964

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Richard Simpson simpsoncarpentry.com,
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Bruce Jonas Tree Surgeon T: 693247
All Out Tree Surgery and garden clearance, call Giles
T: 01273 243026, M: 07989 537828

CYCLE REPAIRS

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Auto-bodycare Service Centre 25 Ditchling Rise,
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Please send your recommendations (or warnings!) including your own details for verification, to the editor.

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