

July 2024

Issue 3



Welcome to our latest newsletter. If you are reading a printed copy and wish to follow the underlined web links you can download the PDF from our website download page.

RVR Social Events

Summer Garden Party at Harcourt House

On 30th June, our Chair, Margaret Brearley, hosted a wonderful garden party at her home, to which over 100 members and friends came. As well as providing an opportunity for guests to socialise, the party was intended to raise funds for the Bromley Food Bank, with a very successful outcome, viz:

Over £1,100 was raised: The bric-a-brac and bring and buy stalls (including Linda Müller's home-made marmalade and most generous donations from members and their friends) were most successful, raising in total about £300. The generous raffle prizes, some of which had been kindly arranged by Dawn Eastbury, also resulted in the good sum of £258. The balance was made up of very generous donations from attendees at the party. When the raffle was drawn, 2 prizes were donated to Bromley Food Bank.

Musical entertainment was provided by the Chicago Classics trad jazz trio. They played for longer than originally agreed and added greatly to the relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

The cakes and sandwiches, prepared on the day by Linda Müller and her team, (see photo overleaf) were a triumph of catering skill and presentation.



RVR Social Events ...

Summer Garden Party at Harcourt House



Setup duty on Saturday 29th



Food preparation team at work



Our host addressing the guests



The raffle draw

Scheduled Social Events

13th July 2.30 pm - Historical Walk around RVR area.

12th August 11:00 am - Visit to Bromley & Sheppards Colleges.

22nd August 2.30 pm – Visit to The Keeping Gallery, Shortlands.

If you are interested in attending any of these events, please contact our Social Secretary, Linda Müller, at linda.muller2021@gmail.com. Numbers are limited so please do so quickly.

Probable Social Events (To be advised)

Mid September - Cream Tea

RVR Social Events...

Summer Garden Party - Donation to Bromley Food Bank

At our bi-monthly members' meeting on 4th July, Ray Nowak, of the Bromley Foodbank Project, gave us a fantastic talk about food poverty in Bromley and the work of the foodbank to help alleviate it. Shockingly, nearly 8000 people were helped last year, and that doesn't take into account what other organisations do. As well as helping with food, the foodbank also tries to help with the wider issues.

You can learn more about the work of the foodbank and how you might help, if willing, on their website: <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/>



The picture shows our Chair, Margaret Brearley (right), and Social Events Secretary, Linda Müller (left), presenting to Ray Nowak the donation of £1,000, for the foodbank, raised during the garden party at Harcourt House.

Join RVR ! - A message from a recently joined member, Julie

"Who is looking after your community interests? Who is there to help fight your corner to make this a better place to live?"

The Ravensbourne Valley Residents' Society is a valuable source of support for our community – join us and be part of it. Be it from keeping an eye on significant planning applications or traffic issues that may impact on our community, to litter picking, to combating antisocial behaviour that mars our beautiful streets and parks.

There are also opportunities to get to know your neighbours - at social events, like the ones shown above, and regular bi-monthly meetings where you can learn about the good work that is being done and where we can make a real difference.

My introduction to the society came via a controversial planning application. The planning officer at the time provided invaluable advice and support to our case. We have also found out lots of information about the area we live in with organised walks in BPP, and other areas of the Ravensbourne Valley. It offers great value for money with just a contribution that is little more than the cost of a coffee in our local café and eateries. Come and try the society out and become a part of a positive and helpful group."

By the way, time is scheduled at the end of the bi-monthly meetings for socialising. The meetings are held at Shortlands Golf Club and the bar stays open until late.

RVR Social Events...

Beckenham Place Park (BPP) walk with James Allen, Ranger, on 17th May 2024

An account by Liz Smart & Linda Müller

A group of 24 RVR members met at the Ravensbourne Ave entrance and walked towards the start of the east side developments, stopping firstly at a very muddy clearing near the Ravensbourne. James has a plan to plant a wetland area with reed-beds and yellow flag iris to encourage wildlife but the hydrology needs to settle first.



Onwards to the large lake that will retain water and be added to during wetter months through overflow pipes from the river. This area is now well advanced with newly planted trees, bases for park benches and more landscaping to come. The new trees that we could see were Field Maple and Birch but rarer Black Poplars will also be included. The asphalt path leading down to the lake will lead to a pond dipping board, built for field studies and educational use. Initially the lake will probably be fenced to allow wildlife to get established.

Looking over the river towards the old playground, the bridge has been removed ready for a new replacement and the old playground has given way to a new wood-framed play area, perhaps open for the summer. The previous children's nursery will undergo modernisation and become a cafe.

Crossing over the railway bridge we could see trucks and diggers setting out the mountain bike course and we discussed the problem areas of Japanese knotweed, and the use of glyphosate; not a good solution but useful and lawful to use for control purposes. Himalayan Balsam and Sycamore trees are still bothersome to James who is Woodland Manager as well as Park Ranger.

We walked past the Mound. It was originally planned as a much larger hillock but much of the material dredged to make the reinstalled swimming and boating lake was contaminated and could not be used. Possible plans include planting Flowering Cherries on the Mound but in the meantime children and dogs love the area!

From the Mound we took the Foxgrove path which leads to a very wet, boggy depression, destined to become wet woodland known as 'carr'. Originally a continuation of the lake, the infiltration of the strong and large roots of the Ash trees now growing here are thought to be responsible for the basin's perviousness. As these trees are also prone to ash die-back, they will be removed in time and Alder or Willow planted. Alongside is an original bund (wall) which is uneven. It looks like a path but isn't – the real path is signposted on the other side of the boggy area.

We made our way up to Crab Hill (named after crab apple trees that we think once grew here), which housed an Italian prisoner of war camp during the war, a cricket pitch afterwards and is now a flowering meadow with cut grass paths.

On our way to the Mansion we rued the demise of the zig zag tree and passed a rare and impressive Wild Service Tree (aka Chequers tree). Will the Mansion be renovated soon? Sadly, as it was at the time built cheaply with bricks and a stone facade, James thinks the cost of renovating the building would be almost preventatively high.

Finally, BPP has just been awarded the prestigious Green Flag Award for another year and has been nominated for The Heritage Green Flag award as well. Well done and thank you James.

Bromley Updates

Churchill Theatre and Library



Bromley Library and Churchill theatre complex is up for sale with estate agents Knight Frank !

The council continues to assert that their plan is to ensure that a thriving, state of the art theatre remains anchored at the very heart of Bromley Town Centre deep into the 21st Century.

A council spokesman said: “Whilst discussions remain ongoing with the theatre’s current operators Trafalgar Group, the council is also going out to market to invite additional expressions of interest, to secure the future of the theatre, in line with its statutory duty to obtain best value for Council Tax payers’ money, prior to reaching a final decision.”

Relocation of Bromley Central Library

Following the public announcement in October 2023, the proposals to relocate the Bromley Central Library to a more prominent location on the High Street have progressed and the appointed design team are seeking views from the public in order to help them design the new library.

The project team wish to understand how people currently use the library, or why they don’t use it. Your response to this survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FXZZ985>) will be used to progress the next stages of the design for the relocation of the Library to the former Topshop unit on the High Street.

Croydon Road Recreation Ground Bandstand



Built by McCallum & Hope Ltd of Glasgow, the elegant Edwardian bandstand, believed to have been installed in 1905, is a rare example of cast iron work, notable for the quality of its design, with the execution believed to be the only remaining example in Britain. It holds an historical association with one of Beckenham’s most famous residents, David Bowie, who played at the bandstand at Growth Summer Festival in 1969.

The festival was organised by the musician himself along with the Beckenham Arts Laboratory, and has led to the bandstand being known locally by some as the ‘Bowie Bandstand’.

The successful completion of the renewal work for the bandstand has been a long-term vision of many, including the Friends of Croydon Road Recreation Ground, the Heritage of London Trust and Bowie’s Beckenham Oddity and other Bowie fans who supported with fundraising concerts.

Bromley Updates

Biggin Hill Airport

Support of Bromley FC Women and Girls Strategy Extended

London Biggin Hill Airport has announced that it is extending its support of Bromley Football Club Community Trust's Women and Girls' Provision by committing to a further year as lead partner.

Having initially partnered in 2023, the collaboration will continue to build on the previous twelve months' work which saw phenomenal growth in the women and girls' game, including a doubling of weekly female sessions and a 200% increase in females playing recreational football at Bromley FC's home, Hayes Lane.

The Airport has also confirmed that it is now the principal sponsor of Bromley Rugby Club's new Girls' Section. Rugby is one of the fastest growing female sports in the UK and is seeing a surge in interest from professional to grassroots level.

As principal sponsor, the airport will be supporting Bromley Rugby Club's vision for all female players to have equal opportunities to their male counterparts as they progress through age-grade rugby and beyond.

Details of the above and other airport initiatives can be found at <https://bigginhillairport.com/news/>



Trustees Needed

Recruiting Now!

RAF Biggin Hill Museum & Chapel

are looking for new trustees to join the existing cohort. Of particular interest would be people with a background or skills in marketing, HR, law, fundraising or heritage management; or any other relevant skills. You do not need to be a historian to be a successful trustee, you just need to support the mission of the Trust. If you're interested in learning more about this exciting opportunity, please email **director@bhmm.org.uk**

Street Friends Activities

Street Friends have met three times since the last newsletter.

On 14th May, the team started on a new area suggested by Nigel Foster– the railway fence (very high!) at the Shortlands end of Ravensbourne Avenue - and retrieved a large area of pavement by removing overgrowth that could easily go in your eyes when walking.

We discussed several jobs in mind over coffee at Ravensbourne station.

- Basal pruning in Grasmere Road and Ravensbourne Avenue
- Highland Road (Beckenham Lane end) cutting back overgrowth and litter picking (Linda Müller collected 2 bags after our session today). It is a well-used school run
- Carrying on with Ravensbourne Avenue (Shortlands end, railway fence) overgrowth on pavement. Today we got as far as Shortlands Golf Club exit (opposite side of road)
- Triangle, Ravensbourne Avenue, overgrowth on pavement
- Warren Avenue Playing Fields entrance to the Goan field trim back the foliage for about 20 feet to stop it encroaching any more on the path



The team next met on 18th June with the intention of clearing the entrance to the Goan Fields.



A number of expressions of gratitude from walkers and cyclists have since been received by members of the Street Friends team.

Street Friends Activities

As part of the Big Bromley Brush Up Campaign, Maria Kampioti and Devaan Feese from LBB/Veolia Street Friends joined RVR Street Friends before our session on 18th June. It was a great opportunity to chat with our group and meet passersby at Ravensbourne station to promote litter picking. They had a table with litter pickers and purple sacks to hand out.



On 2nd July, a slightly larger team met to carry on the work in Ravensbourne Avenue, initially behind the bus stop at the triangle where a large quantity of foliage was cleared to make the pavement passable, and then continuing along towards Shortlands Station.



The next Street Friends meeting will be on Sunday 11th August. Please join us with your children. Meet at Ravensbourne Station at 10:00am.

Planning

The Chalet

At long last we are seeing some meaningful action at this property although this has not yet resulted in any tidying of the appalling eyesore and environmental hazard. A few months ago, an Enforcement Notice (see below) was issued requiring the owner to tidy up the property giving them until early June to do so. No tidy up was done by the deadline which means that a criminal offence has now been committed.



The council could now prosecute the owner and secondly, they might also undertake the work themselves recharging the owner for all the costs incurred. Ultimately, the council could force the sale of the property to cover the costs.

The Chalet Kirkstone Way, BR1 4JH 'the Land' as shown edged red on the attached plan

3. What you are required to do on the land

The Council requires the following steps to be taken so as to remedy the condition of the Land:

- (a) Cut back and remove all overgrown vegetation in the front and rear gardens of the Land, and
- (b) Make good the gardens ensuring that the vegetation is cut back and is clear along the pathways, and the pathways are exposed and cleaned, and
- (c) Remove the vegetation from the elevations of the property at the above Land, and
- (d) Make repairs to the external fabric of the property and of the detached garage:
 - (i) Remove the dilapidating boundary fence from the Land and,
 - (ii) Secure the Land by installing a boundary fence and;
 - (iii) Install external windows and doors at the property in the above Land and;
 - (iv) Make good the outside walls, render and paint the walls and;
- (e) Remove from the Land all resulting cuttings of the vegetation and all debris.

Planning

100 Ravensbourne Avenue

Readers will recall that a 'hip to gable' extension was built at 100 Ravensbourne Avenue in 2022. Ordinarily, such a development would likely be acceptable but this property is situated in the Shortlands Village Conservation Area meaning that additional criteria are used to assess developments. When a retrospective permission was sought, it was refused and the subsequent appeal was dismissed. The two pictures below show before and after.



Subsequently, a revised application was submitted for a 'half hip' which is shown in the artist's impression below. This too has now been refused. In our opinion it is likely that an appeal will be raised but the inspector will be significantly constrained by the decision of their colleague inspector in the earlier appeal. In our opinion, the proposed changes to a half hip do not address the original inspector's concerns sufficiently and as such the second appeal is likely to fail. There is a very high chance that the only acceptable solution to the council will be to reinstate the full hip roof. There is a precedent for only allowing roof extensions that retain a full hip at 18 Ravensbourne Avenue.

The lesson here is that it is essential to get professional advice before undertaking any development – even decking over 30 centimetres high in your back garden requires a planning application and permission. As ever, we are ready to give guidance to members.



Artist's impression of the amended proposal, just refused permission.

Planning

61 The Avenue

This is a long saga! Following redevelopment of the two blocks of flats (that look like large houses) a few years ago, a planning condition required the responsible party to replace any dead shrubs. Many died in 2021 (and many more subsequently) and should have been replanted in the winter of 21/22. The winters of 22/23 and 23/24 have passed and there is still no replanting. We have asked a formal question of the Council to seek an explanation of what is happening here. The pictures below show how badly the once verdant site has been reduced.



Romany Ridge and 15 Hillbrow Road

The proposed massive block of flats at the site, twice refused permission, appears, as a proposition, to be dead.

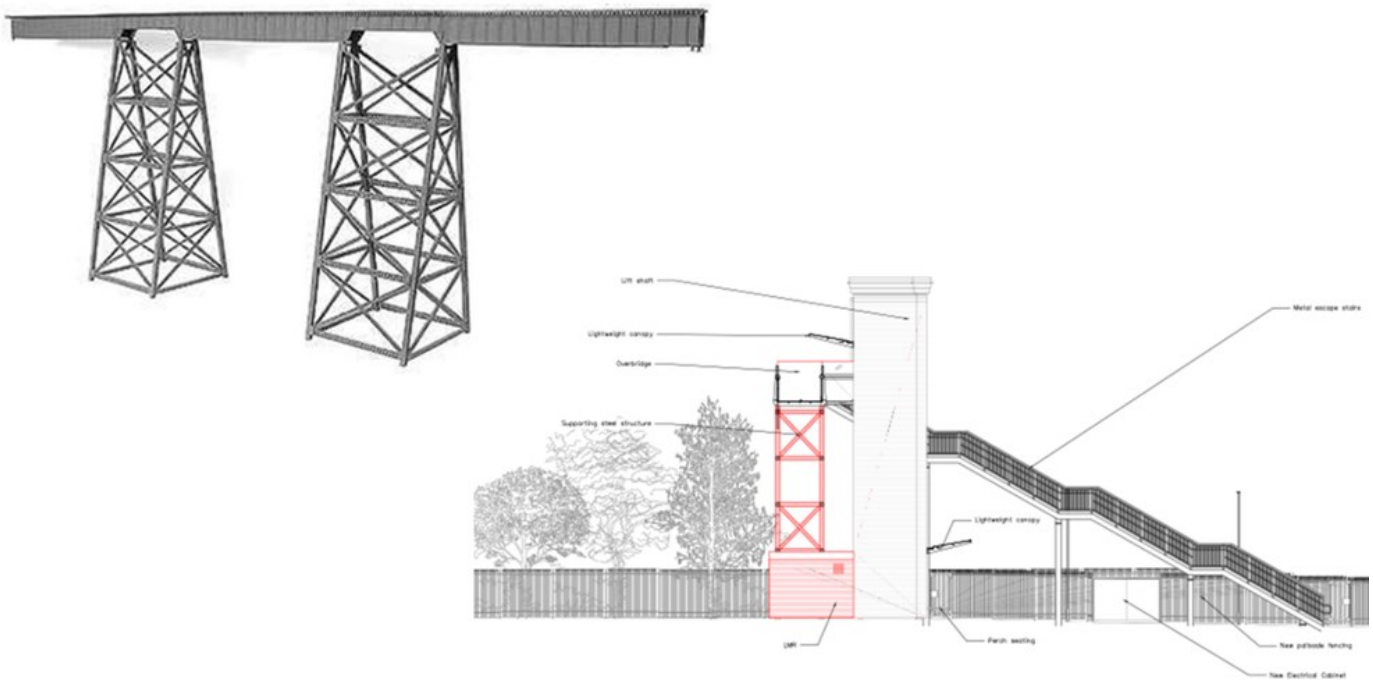


Planning

Shortlands Railway Station

Just when you thought it was all over, and there was only the building work to be done... **this is back with a design change.**

The relatively neat self-supporting bridge over the platforms between lift towers is, it transpires, unbuildable (!). As such, the bridge needs to be supported by large open metal trestles with a girder like appearance. This is visually very unattractive and Cllr Adam Grant has 'called in' the application so it can be publicly discussed at a meeting.



Above: a loose impression of the trestles is provided above to help understanding of the technical drawing. The actual trestles are shown in red

Beckenham Place Park (BPP)

Scheduled Music Events, 2024

This year's music festivals are confirmed as:

Summer Time Live - Friday August 16th

<https://beckenhamplacepark.com/events/summer-time-live>

Hospitality in the Woods - Saturday 17th August

<https://beckenhamplacepark.com/events/summer-time-live-tz9zm>

The Ravensbourne River



Volunteer work to improve the environment of the river corridor, woodlands and new pond habitats, has continued through 2024 organised by Thames21 in collaboration with London Borough of Lewisham (LBL). "Wade and Conservation" sessions, in and alongside the river, have been well supported by various groups, including a RVR team, and the river is looking considerably improved.

Thames21 and LBL will be hosting BPP East Open Day - Picnic in the Park on Saturday 21st September 11:00am - 4:00pm. Preliminary details of the event are on the BPP website [here](#), and you can sign up for updates by contacting Beckenham Place Park Community Engagement Officer, Catriona Ross, by email at BPPRiver@thames21.org.uk.

Regular Events

Events and activities taking place in the Mansion can be viewed [here](#).

Events and activities taking place in the park can be viewed [here](#).

Free music in the Homestead courtyard on weekends between May and September, with DJs on Saturdays and live bands on Sundays. Starts from 3pm, see the full programme opposite or on BPP website [here](#).

Are you musical? Sign up for Jam in the Park sessions - everyone welcome (in support of Twang Music Foundation) For more info, email brazilent@yahoo.co.uk

MUSIC IN THE COURTYARD

DJ's on *Saturdays*

Bands on *Sundays*

3pm onwards

*Jam in The Park sessions everyone welcome (in support of Twang Music Foundation) More info - brazilent@yahoo.co.uk

May 12	Plastic Free Band
19	Jam In The Park*
26	The Mayans
June 2	Mark Buckingham Jazz Quartet
9	Aisling Iris
16	Jam In The Park
23	Nadine Leigh
30	Soul Of The North
July 7	Aisling Iris
14	Derek Reid & friends
28	Plastic Free Band
August 4	The Nunhead Folk Circle
11	The Mayans
18	Jam In The Park
25	MoseMusicCollective
September 1	Soul Of The North
8	MoseMusicCollective
15	Jam In The Park
22	The Nunhead Folk Circle
29	Mahogany Soulz

The HOMESTEAD Cafe

Roads and Transport

Park Road / Foxgrove Road / Southend Road junction improvements

Work on the new roundabout and pedestrian crossings continues as scheduled.

The expected completion date is late August or early September.

Farnaby Road Community Road Watch

A Community Road Watch is scheduled to take place around Farnaby Road / Bromley Avenue in late July. This is an indication that concerns raised by the local community regarding speeding are indeed viewed positively by the police. If you would like to participate, contact our Roads and Traffic Officer (roadsandtransport.rvr@outlook.com)

Crime Update

Vehicles continue to be stolen from outside the homes of the owners; there were 4 instances in the Ward in the last 2 weeks of June alone. Residents are encouraged to take additional security measures if possible, e.g. Faraday pouches, "Krooklock" type devices.

There have also been incidents of sheds being broken into and bikes stolen.

Please report any suspicious activity by phoning 999 if it is occurring at that moment, or phoning 101 or by reporting via the Police UK website if it relates to an event which has already taken place.

Practical advice when it comes to dealing with suspicious messages and calls:

- If you have any doubts about a message, contact the organisation directly using the contact details on their official website.
- **Do not use the number or web address in the message. Your bank, or any other official source, will not ask you to provide sensitive information by email.**
- Received an email that doesn't feel right? Report it by forwarding it to "report@phishing.gov.uk" - where they will be checked.
- Report suspicious text messages or scam call numbers, free of charge to 7726. Your provider can find out where the text came from and block or ban the sender.
- To report a scam text, forward it to 7726 and send the sender's number when prompted.
- To report a scam call, text 7726 with the word 'Call' followed by the caller's number.
- If you've lost money or provided financial information as a result of a phishing scam, notify your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud at actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040.

Thanks to our Councillors

The RVR committee extends thanks to our Councillors who have attended our meetings and events in the last year and have provided us with valuable information and help on local issues;

Felicity Bainbridge; Graeme Casey; Will Connolly; Adam Jude Grant; Julie Ireland; Chloe-Jane Ross; Michael Tickner; Sam Webber

Thanks also to Downham Cllr Oana Olaru and to Cllr Alexa Michael. (Chair, Development Control Committee) who has been very helpful to our Planning Officer on planning issues.

Useful Links

Fix My Street: A useful website where you can report problems specific to a street in your neighbourhood: <https://fix.bromley.gov.uk/>

Report It: A website where you can report problems with a range of services or issues in the borough: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/report>

Bromley Neighbourhood Watch: The main public facing is the website where all the meeting minutes are published along with lots of other tips, guides and suggested 'links'. Some 150 people a month access the site - so why not join them? <https://bnwa.co.uk/>

Bromley Trading Standards - Alert: To read the latest and receive Alert! direct, visit: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/trading-standards/trading-standards-alerts>

Bromley Borough Foodbank: <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/>

Bromley Environment Network (BEN): The BEN website has a downloadable PDF of the latest newsletter and a link to the newsletter archive on the landing page: <https://bromleyenvironmentnetwork.org.uk/>

RVR Subscriptions

Members have a choice of paying their annual subscription of £5 by cash or, preferably, by Standing Order.

If you wish to continue paying by cash, your subscription for the current membership year (January to December) will be collected in the summer when your annual roundup newsletter is delivered. If you are able to pay by Standing Order, please set one up to make the payment on 1st December to cover the following membership year (and the rest of the current year as a bonus).

Here is the information you need to set up a Standing Order to pay your annual subscription:

Account Name: Ravensbourne Valley Residents

Account Number: 54423282

Sort Code: 09 01 53

Reference: Membership number* followed by surname

Amount: £5

When: 1st December annually for year following

* Your road rep will provide you with your membership number.

If you are already a member he/she can tell you now.

If you are a new member he/she will tell you when your number is allocated.

Meeting Dates

Forthcoming members' meetings are as follows:-

Thursday 5th September, 2024;

Thursday 7th November, 2024;

Thursday 2nd January, 2025.

The meetings will be held at 7:30pm at Shortlands Golf Club, unless otherwise stated on the agenda, circulated in advance of each meeting.

Society Officers and Road Representatives

There have been a number of changes recently. Please note the contact details below. The most up-to-date list can always be viewed on our website [here](#).

Elected Officers

Chair	Margaret Brearley	chair.rvr@outlook.com
Vice Chair	Beatrice Osborn	vicechairman.rvr@outlook.com
Secretary	Jacqueline St Quinton	secretary.rvr@outlook.com
Treasurer	Sharon Richardson	treasurer.rvr@outlook.com
Membership Secretary	Alastair Holmes	membership.secretary.rvr@outlook.com

Appointed Officers

Planning Officer	Clive Lees	planning.rvr@outlook.com
Newsletter Editor	Euan McMaster	editor.rvr@outlook.com
Roads and Traffic	Andrew Lancaster	roadsandtransport.rvr@outlook.com
Street Friends	Monica Wiltshire	trees.rvr@outlook.com
BPP Rep	Liz Logan	bpp.rvr@outlook.com
Social Events Secretary	Linda Müller	linda.muller2021@gmail.com
Deputy Treasurer	Emma Fagg	emmafagg@talktalk.net
Hon. Legal Advisor	Richard Thomas	contact - chair.rvr@outlook.com
Auditor	Jayne Nickalls	contact - treasurer.rvr@outlook.com
LBBRF Delegate	Vacant	contact - chair.rvr@outlook.com

Road Representatives

Bracken Hill Lane and Close / Highland Road	Linda Müller
Bromley Ave	Philip Wolfson
Grasmere Road	Rosamond Eele
Calmont & Ashgrove Roads / Belgravia Gardens	Rita Smith
Coniston Road / Ullswater Close	Jane Doherty
Downs Hill / Crab Hill	Emma Fagg
Elstree Hill / Erin Close / Hillbrow Road	Nicki Martin
Farnaby Road (1–81)	Jaki Moody
Farnaby Road (82–194)	Dawn Eastbury
Madeira Avenue (Evens)	Judy Adcock
Madeira Avenue (Odds)	Anne Lancaster
Oaklands Road / Spencer Road / Hawkshead Close /	
Lullington Garth	Stephen Edwards
Ravensbourne Ave. (Evens)	Monica Wiltshire
Ravensbourne Ave. (Odds)	David MacKenzie
Ravensmead Road	Peter Saunders
Warren Avenue	Clive Lees

If you wish to contact your representative please email the RVR Secretary or write to:

RVR Secretary
35 Downs Hill
Beckenham
BR3 5ET