

THE RADYR AND MORGANSTOWN ASSOCIATION

(A Civic Society affiliated to the Civic Trust for Wales)

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NEWSLETTER TO MEMBERS – September 2013

Welcome to our regular Newsletter. If you look back on past Newsletters (they are all available on the Radyr website – see www.radyr.org.uk/16388) you will find we don't talk about planning issues much. We are happy to leave those, correctly, to the R&M Community Council. However, unashamedly, we are going to bang on a bit more about the Cardiff LDP, as we did in July. No doubt you will be assailed by other articles and material from the Community Council, in Radyr Chain, through your door, etc. And rightly so; this matter affects us all and we want to make sure – with the Community Council – that everybody who is interested knows what is in the Plan, the implications for our Community, and feels consulted and listened to. Fortunately, in recent years the Community Council has become an official 'consultative body' – i.e. Cardiff Council **must** consult the R&MCC and take account of its views. When the whole LDP process comes to a head – which is really at the time when it is examined by an independent inspector (currently timed for around March 2015) – the inspector will want to see evidence that the right people have been consulted, and their views taken into account. So watch out for all briefing sessions (see below), wade through the detail (you will be able to find it all via the Radyr website) if you have the time, and make sure you have your say.

Cardiff Local Development Plan. The actual Development Plan, or at least major chunks of it, has just been published. At the time of writing we and the R&MCC are going through the detail and trying to understand what it all means. There are some hopeful signs – a route has been published for a new railway line which would run through the proposed development area to the south of Radyr. Providing that could be in place before much of the building takes place, that might prevent the huge traffic problems we predict. Also, there is talk of phasing the development – building on Brownfield sites first – which makes a huge amount of sense but will not please the developers. However, much of the essential timing detail is still to be published so it remains difficult to make any real sense of the impact of the LDP on the R&M Community. The rest of the details should emerge over the next month and **the R&MCC is planning a public meeting, to be held in the Comprehensive School on 7th October, to give everyone an opportunity to be fully briefed. We recommend you attend. The Plans will also be on display at a Community Council Exhibition from 10:00 to 14:00 in Radyr Library on Saturday, 21st September in Radyr Library.**

As a footnote to this item, we should say – hot off the press – that the LDP was mentioned at our recent General Meeting on 16th September which was attended by Kevin Brennan, our local MP. Both he and Mark Drakeford, our AM, have been vocal in condemning the Council-based LDP Process which omits any real aspect of Regional planning. It was made clear that the present LDP process is deeply flawed and might have dire consequences for NW Cardiff, but opposing it entirely would not be wise. It is better to seek to modify the proposals to take away the worse excesses. We are reminded of a line from one of Hilaire Belloc's Cautionary Tales for Children: *'And always keep a-hold of Nurse, For fear of finding something worse'*.

Christmas Lighting Ceremony. We have now started our detailed planning for this very popular event which will be held in and around Station Road (plus the three main tree sites) on Friday, 6th December. As mentioned in the last Newsletter, we would like to build up the number of stalls, particularly from local organisations – it is an opportunity to promote yourselves, make a bit of money and have some fun. Interested? Please get in touch now!

Hanging Baskets. What can we say but we hope you like the restored hanging baskets in Station Road. It cost us over £200 to get things back into working order and fill the baskets. It was a bit late in the season to be doing it so they have not blossomed as much as they would have done if we had started earlier – which we will next year. And we will also take the baskets down over the winter (when we put up the Christmas trees actually) so everything will continue to look tidy. Quite frankly, it is easier to do it all ourselves than try to battle with Cardiff Council.

Website. Have you looked at the new format of the website – see www.radyr.org.uk ? It has given the Webteam the opportunity to highlight a few more areas of importance to our Community and also introduced a search facility which covers the whole site, in case you need to find some obscure information. The vast majority of local organisations are featured on the site, as are all local businesses as far we know. It is a constant battle to ensure all the details are up to date so, if you do spot something that is wrong or missing, do let the webteam know. The email address is web-team@radyr.org.uk.

We believe that the website is a crucial resource for our size of Community – giving information about everything that is going on, giving access to key information (like the LDP), providing links to businesses, and even giving the opportunity (via the Soapbox) to have a public debate. That last facility is quite well used, we are pleased to note, but we feel many organisations may not be using it to best effect – not updating their details, not putting details of meetings on the events calendar, and certainly not providing little snippets of news to go in the section on the front page. **To help promote all the facilities, and also to emphasise the other ways the Association can assist local organisations, we are setting up a special meeting in the Old Church Rooms at 19:30 on 4th November.** This will be a hands-on opportunity to see and talk about everything the website has to offer, including our plans to involve ‘Social Media’. We will be contacting all organisations shortly with further details, and to encourage them to attend, but anyone will be welcome to come along.

Festival 2014. The charity has been chosen for the next two years - 2013/14 LATCH and 2014/15 NSPCC. We are working with members of LATCH to provide a celebrity for the Christmas Tree lighting and for the 2014 Festival. **A meeting of the Festival committee is taking place on Wednesday 25th September** when the theme will be determined and a number of the events will be developed. Allan Cook has been working hard on getting a music and drama items pencilled in to the programme. We are working with the three local schools to develop their ideas and involvement in community activity.

PACT and Neighbourhood Watch. At the last PACT meeting the police reported that a number of motor vehicles were monitored at speeds in excess of 30 miles per hour on Heol Isaf. Each number was taken and letters will be sent to the owner warning them of the speed limit. Other matters included parking and the local development plan issues.

Morganstown Motte. The weather on Sunday 15th September couldn't have been more unkind for the Open Day at the Motte. The weathermen were predicting a major storm with high winds and the event had to be brought to a premature end. Our apologies to those who turned up to find the Motte closed.

It wasn't all doom and gloom however. The Woodland Rangers were on hand to show the two dozen or so people who turned up early what they had achieved so far. We can never remember seeing the Motte and Bailey looking so attractive. The grass on the Bailey had been cut and should have been raked to create a hay meadow. Ranger Richard Cormock told us of the large number of wild flowers that had already re-generated in the area, including cowslips. We saw how quickly the undergrowth was regenerating on the Motte now that the tree cover had been felled and more vigorous species will have to be kept in check to allow the wild flowers to spread. With the spread of plant species helpful to birds and insects it will become another wildlife haven. He also told of future plans for the woodland in the area.

A Friends Group for Morganstown Motte is in the course of being set up. Its aims are;

1. To help the Woodland Rangers maintain this attractive site; there are only two of them to cover the whole of Cardiff.
2. To secure funding to protect and investigate further this important historical site.

On Monday, 18th November at the Old Church Rooms at 7.30pm the Chair of the Friends of Forest Farm will be speaking to the Community Association to tell us about this very successful group and what they do. Why not come along then? In the meantime, if you are interested in becoming involved with Morganstown Motte in any capacity, please contact Allan Cook on 2084 3176. Hopefully we will have another open day at the Motte in the spring, when the weather is more clement and the cowslips are in flower.

Next Meetings. As mentioned above, our next meeting will be on **Monday 18th November** at 7:30pm in the Old Church Rooms when Martin Chamberlain will talk about Forest Farm. The following meeting will be on **3rd February**, when Gwyn Rees will talk about researching family history. We are now signing up speakers for 2014/15. Our local professional cello-player Simon Davison has already agreed. Watch this space.

If you would like to comment on any aspect of this Newsletter or require further information, then either email the Secretary, Nick Hawkins (rma@radyr.org.uk), or ring the Chairman, Cyril Williams, on 029 2084 2250.