

The Planit Issue 3 – May 2010



STOP PRESS – *Bravo* to Melinda Barham and Robin Hellier and the entire Trees team, on their successful prosecutions of Tree Preservation Order offences, totalling fines of £25,000 plus costs!

Congratulations to Steve and Kirsten Bacon on the birth of their baby daughter Isabelle.

Well done to Jerry Godden, who is now a Member of the Royal Town Institute (RTPI).

Welcome to the third edition. The Editor thanks you all for your kind comments. Please email Robin H or Sarah K with any suggestions.



The flyer above is for a free event in Islington on the 15th May. Why not go along? It may be recycling but it certainly won't be rubbish!

Environmental Issues – our focus this month

Sarah Creitzman is hoping to arrange a visit to a recycling centre soon, to learn more about the processing of various streams of different material. Sarah King was interested to learn, in a recent lecture at Anglia Ruskin University, where the different streams of recycling collected in the District actually go for processing.

Did you know, the Council's glass is processed in Yorkshire, its textiles in London, the aluminium cans in Warrington and its paper travels to King's Lynn? Some travels even further afield, as European countries have more expertise in recycling some materials than we do here in the UK. Tetrapaks are currently sent to Sweden for processing and our plastic travels to Holland.

You can learn more about recycling and how to recycle more difficult items such as computers, on the following website: <http://www.recycling-guide.org.uk/facts.html>



Melinda Barham took this local wildlife photo!

Interviews - getting to know...

Sarah Creitzman – Environmental Coordinator since 2009

Sarah has worked at EFDC since 2007. She previously worked at Redbridge and Waltham Forest councils, leading a team of recycling promoters. When asked what attracted her to this District, she replied "the trees!".

Sarah said "Due to global warming, there are lots of big changes being made in the environment sector at the moment and the main part of my job is to ensure that EFDC is keeping up with all the new legislation, and also to report on national indicators. Aside from that, my role is really to try and co-ordinate people from across the Council, so that we're all working together to deal with climate change issues".

You can read more about climate change and read the Council's climate Change Strategy online here:

http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/council_services/environmental_health/green_issues/climate_change.asp

Conservation

The big news this month is that at the meeting on 19th April Cabinet agreed to the secondment of a technical officer to the Conservation Section for one year.

Further news on this front, is that the Trees Team have very kindly allowed Lizzy Haines to borrow Vicky James for two and half days a week as an interim measure to help carry forward work on character appraisals and management plans

Admin

The following is an extract from a recent article which Peter Millward submitted to the National eWell-being Awards 2010 on behalf of the Planning Directorate.

"Planning and Economic Development is possibly one of the most 'paper dependent' departments in the district council, with over half a million maps, plans and documents electronically scanned. However, the road towards total electronic documentation of records has been littered with a number of navigational difficulties. Whilst there is a backlog of files to be scanned onto our system, we are adopting a policy of back-scanning the small amount of manual planning files that remain, as well as taking steps to ensure that information not currently available on our website is quickly provided. As a result steady progress has been made towards providing an easily accessible electronic planning record system. This has improved our ability to deliver effective carbon-friendly Planning Services, providing both significant, environmental and social benefits by making information easily available"

The 2010 National eWell-Being Awards specifically supports and promotes initiatives that demonstrates how ICT can help improve people's lives and reduce our impact on the environment. You can read more at: <http://www.sustainitawards.co.uk/about.html>

Trees & Landscape, and Countrycare

Between January and 31st March 2010 the Trees team have been busy working on finishing the remaking of TPOs on trees which have until now been protected by Essex County Council. The project has been ongoing for the last couple of years but as Essex County Council had decided to revoke all their Orders by the end of March quite a considerable push has been needed to meet their deadline.

To give you some statistics – in the first three months of the year 78 new Orders have been made (we usually make about 15 a year). This has protected 510 individual trees, a further 780 trees in 75 groups and 93 woodlands.

Building Control

As of 6th April 2010 Building Control have implemented the new Part G section of the Building Regulations which covers water efficiency, hot water supply and systems, sanitation and solar water heating, amongst others.

This new environmentally friendly Part G will contribute to water conservation, energy efficiency and sustainability.

Forward Planning

The Forward Planning Team will be starting public consultation on a draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, for the future Core Strategy, in May.

All new planning policy documents need to be subject to "Sustainability Appraisal" (SA) i.e. an assessment of the likely economic, environmental and social effects of the new policies. The Scoping Report is designed to assess the 'scope' and level of detail which the SA should go into.

Contaminated land

Jane Gravelle is Planning's Contaminated Land expert. Jane advises Officers in Development Control and Building Control on contamination issues and reviews land contamination reports submitted by developers to ensure that they comply with current standards. She also advises our Estates department on contamination issues on Council owned land. She has recently carried out a Phase 1 investigation on the old Hallsford Bridge Tip landfill site near Ongar, where she is currently working on remediation proposals for Countrycare, who are hoping to open up the land as a public access nature reserve.

Development Control

We are pleased to announce that **Lindsay Trevillian** has been offered, and has accepted, the permanent Planning Officer post, starting Monday the 3rd of May.

Planning permission has been granted for the War Memorial Hospital in Ongar (previously discussed in Issue 1). Skillet Hill Lorry Park (see right) at the Waltham Abbey junction of the M25 was granted a license to serve alcohol at Magistrates Court, which also resulted in costs being awarded against the Council.

Katie Smith, Dominic Duffin, Lindsay Trevillian and **Jenny Cordell** have started a 10 week course on 'The History of Architecture' on Tuesday nights at City University.



Copyright www.transportcafe.co.uk

Economic Development

Cathy MacBride has set up a page on Facebook for Epping Town Centre, as a marketing tool to attract potential customers to the area. If you are on Facebook, please be Epping Town Centre's friend! Cathy has also been liaising with the IT department regarding the staff 'Green Room' section on the Intranet. She would like to develop this as an area in which staff can write reviews about any of the businesses in the district's town centres – Ongar, Waltham Abbey, Loughton, Buckhurst Hill, Loughton Broadway (aka Debden), and Epping. If you can you think of any businesses you'd like to review, please use the template attached to the email distribution of this edition of the Planit and return it to Cathy.

Enforcement

On a recent site visit for unauthorised work to a TPO tree, **Sharon Hart** was faced with the unusual situation of not being allowed to leave the site.

The situation arose after the officer tried to place a man at the owner of the property under caution for the work that had been carried out. This proved impossible as he kept on making phone calls. Sharon then said that she would leave and send a letter inviting him in for an interview under caution. The man then said she should wait for his relative, which Sharon declined and then got into her car. The man then placed himself in front of the car to stop her from driving off. Sharon asked him to get out of the way but he repeated that he wanted her to speak to his relative. Sharon, although tempted to drive over him (not really!), put the car in reverse but still the man ran after her. As her reverse driving was not up to the standard of The Sweeney she stopped the car and the man remained in front of the bonnet.

There was no alternative but to call the police. They arrived quickly and Sharon was able to leave the site. All in a days work for Enforcement!

Local talent...We're starting this new section looking at celebrating talent in our staff and their families. Do you have any talented kids or partners who you'd like to tell us about? What hidden talents do we have here in Planning?

Did you know?...Many people in the Directorate have recently received a letter of congratulation on their full attendance for last year – let's hope this exclusive club grows over the next year!