

THE RADYR AND MORGANSTOWN ASSOCIATION

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

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NEWSLETTER TO MEMBERS – November 2013

Welcome to our regular Newsletter. We actually have some important news: we are (if you are reading this on the day it is sent out) about to launch an R&M Facebook Page called '**Radyr & Morganstown Hub**'. Brief details are given below but, if you use Facebook, please 'Like' the page when it goes live. In quasi-technical terms, we actually want it to 'go viral'. It goes live on 18th November, the date of our next General Meeting.

Facebook. Kicking and screaming, we join the 21st Century. Everyone seems to be on Facebook and Twitter, including a number of local organisations (like the Golf and Tennis Clubs, the Parish of Radyr, the RPMG, etc) and we have somehow avoided doing anything ourselves. The prospect has been looked at a number of times by both the Association and the R&M Webteam but perhaps we had convinced ourselves that people actually take time to look at the events diary on the website or study the posters in Station Road. Notably, we seem to see the same people at many of the events we and others run – events that are not fully booked. We clearly needed to do more to attract new audiences to events and people into organisations; people who tell you after the event 'I wish I had known it was on'; people who, quite frankly, find a lot of our communication boring.

For any of you who do not know, a lot of younger people, and also the not so young, want information fed to them in one place and do not go searching round websites any more. The first port of call after checking emails these days is often Facebook where you can get information from virtually all the groups and organisations you belong to. Just about every medium or large business or group now has a page, as do a lot of smaller ones. On our page we plan to include information on forthcoming events; details and photos of events which have taken place; and local news items. With a Facebook page anyone in the community who has an account can put information onto it. Organisations can use it to publicise their events, as part of recruitment drives for new members or purely to show the community what they do. Businesses will be able to post and talk about their plans or offers. Individuals can share information or try to find others with similar interests. So what actually appears is really up to you.

So, get on line with your PC, laptop, Ipad or smartphone, set up a Facebook page if you haven't got one (we can help with that if you wish), and start receiving the information you really want to have.

Cardiff Local Development Plan. The process rolls on. The full details of the plan (or at least all that they are going to tell us at this point) are now out for full consultation and you can make your input any time up to 26th November. The aspects that concern us have not changed – lack of existing infrastructure and the fear that, if new building takes place in NW Cardiff before that infrastructure is put in place, chaos will reign. We feel comforted that both our AM, Mark Drakeford and our MP, Kevin Brennan, fully support this position. This is not the place for further detail. If you want full details, look on the R&M Website where you will find a link at the top of the Home Page to all the information you need, including a copy of the R&MCC's draft submissions.

Christmas Lighting Ceremony. The event, on Friday, 6th December, is all getting rather close now. Most aspects are in place: the Christmas Trees in both Morganstown (the Granny Park) and Lychgate Gardens will be lit at 18:00 (with school choirs present); the tree in Windsor Park will be lit at 18:40 (combined school choirs) and the lights will be turned on in Station Road at 18:50. You should be getting a flyer thought your door in the near future. Make sure you come along to this ever-popular event (please pray we have a fine evening) and yes, before you ask, this will be one of the first events to be featured on the new Facebook page.

Website. We had a great evening with a number of R&M Organisations on 4th November. We were able to brief them all on the latest state of play with the R&M Website, update them on our Facebook plans, and provide advice on how best to promote events given the various different options available locally. In fact, one thing we subsequently decided to do is to produce a small booklet on publicity matters. We will get that out as soon as possible. If you would like to see the short general briefing notes prepared for organisations after the session, do get in touch and we will send you a copy. And, although this was not the purpose of the meeting, we were happy to take note of any issues concerning the use or operation of the Website. Let us know of any issues or suggestions and we will be happy to pass them onto the Webteam.

Festival 2014. Progress has also been made on next year's Festival. We were a bit shocked (see next item) to be one of the Cardiff-wide organisations to be mentioned by Cardiff Council as not being deserving of any grant next

year. We do take pride in aiming to deliver a lot for the R&M Community on a tiny budget. Most work is done on an entirely voluntary basis; no-one claims any personal expenses; we keep professional input to a minimum; and we think the 26 year-old Festival is a huge success and an asset to the R&M Community – and Cardiff in general. People we have spoken to over the years are amazed at what we achieve. So we were sad, and a little disheartened, to learn that our small grant is to be axed next year due to the financial constraints – particularly as, this year, Cardiff Council decided for the first time to charge us £130 for ‘administration costs’ in permitting us to use Parc Radur for a concert; this was billed as ‘a heavily discounted rate’. On the day of the Concert – the last Sunday of the Festival – we found they had not even cut the grass in advance, as had been agreed. All we got from the ‘administration fee’ was a whole list of restrictions on how we could use the Parc.

But we keep smiling. David Cargill battles on with his umpteenth Festival and it will be a tremendous two weeks. In case you have not put it in your diary yet, the Festival will run from the 3rd to the 18th of May ending with a public concert in Parc Radur. All the favourite events will be there, and a few new ones – watch this space. The Theme will be ‘This Sporting Life’, which gives us a whole raft of opportunities for mischief. **The next meeting of the Festival committee is taking place on Wednesday 27th November.**

Council Cuts. Let’s deal with this issue now. Walking along Heol Isaf on Monday evening it was rather obvious that many residents had not received the news that Cardiff Council had decided to move to ‘winter orders’ and only collect green bins every four weeks as opposed to every other week. If you look at the top of the Noticeboard on the R&M Website you will find the gory details. Quite correctly, this sudden, unannounced news was the subject of some harsh comment on the Soapbox (see www.radyr.org.uk/22863). We did look into the background and found that the change was meant to be fully publicised – but no-one we know had been warned. As mentioned on the Soapbox, to change the schedule without notice after the last green collection just when all the leaves are just falling off the trees, smacks of a sort of perverse humour. On top of that, our friendly street cleaner who, with his predecessor, has kept the centre of Radyr reasonably shipshape for many years has been reassigned to a central core team. That is code for saying we have lost him. We remember the WI many years ago collecting bags of rubbish as an occasional initiative to keep things under control. Whilst it is true that we should not be making a mess of our own environment, if things are not kept tidy, they tend to get worse. Neglect leads to lack of care. It is very sad.

On top of those cuts, we have also heard that the funding for the Radyr & District Good Neighbours Scheme is on the list of cuts for the next financial year. This scheme, which was one of the Association’s recent chosen Festival charities, provides tremendous support for elder members of our and neighbouring communities. Not only is there the weekly ‘Meet for Lunch’ events, but support – totally voluntary – is given to people who have difficulty shopping, meeting friends and even going to the hospital. At a recent meeting attended by Mark Drakeford, who is not only our AM but is also Minister for Health and Social Services in the Welsh Government, it was pointed out that this support for hospital visits saves the Welsh Government a huge amount of money in ambulance fees. Of course, that is not the Council’s budget.

If you want to make some comment about any of this, then do contact our local County Councillor, Rod McKerlich, or perhaps attend a PACT meeting where he gives a report and such matters can be discussed.

Film Nights. On a lighter note, we are considering introducing film nights as a regular feature in the Old Church Rooms. We have all the right equipment and it looks as if it is quite affordable for local communities to get access to modern films just on release. Please get in touch if you think you would welcome this and attend. We would like to feel there is positive support before embarking on our first venture.

Claire Morgan. We have been approached by Claire, who is a year 11 student at Radyr Comprehensive and who will be going to Malawi for four weeks in July 2014 with Outlook Expeditions. A lot of Community activity is involved and we have agreed to give her a grant of £100 toward her costs of £3600. We will place a News article about the trip on the Website in the very near future, but you can contact her direct on Claire.morgan@radyr.net if you would like more information or would like to donate yourself.

Cyd Cymru: Collective Energy Switching. Another quick flyer for a new collective energy switching scheme that is being run by the Energy Saving Trust and the local government. Details can be found on the Website Noticeboard.

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.

Finally, as this is our last Newsletter before Christmas, the R&M Executive would like to take this opportunity of wishing everyone a very happy forthcoming Festive Season and a successful New Year.