

ARCO (Association of Retired Council Officers) Newsletter

Summer 2024

www.arco-kingston.org.uk email secretary@arco-kingston.org.uk



Our Forthcoming Events

Thursday, 25 April 2024	Celebratory Meal, The Berrylands, 12 noon onwards
Wednesday, 15 May 2024	Informal gathering, North Star at 12 noon
Thursday 11 July 2024	Get Together, Guildhall
Monday, 9 September 2024	Informal gathering, Kings Tun at 12 noon
November (tbc)	Coffee Morning, Guildhall
December (tbc)	Christmas Lunch

Dear Friends,

At our Annual General Meeting on 6 March your Committee were re-elected for another year. We were pleased to welcome the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Richard Thorpe, and enjoyed an excellent lunch prepared by June, Shona and Jenny. The serious business included kicking off a discussion about the future of our Association – there's more about this on another page.

Our future events are set out above with more details overleaf. I hope to see you at one or more of these.

Finally, I would like to remind that we are marking the 100th birthday of our member and regular attender, Margaret Silverside. We have invited Margaret and her daughter, Vanessa, to join us for a celebratory meal at The Berrylands on **Thursday 25 April**. Please see overleaf if you would like to join us.

Best Wishes

Chris

Chris Coke, Chairman

ARCO Secretary: Martin Longhurst, Mayfield, Hoe Lane, Abinger Hammer, DORKING, RH5 6RS

secretary@arco-kingston.org.uk

More about our forthcoming events

Celebratory Meal at The Berrylands on Thursday 25 April 2024

Arrive between 12.00 pm and 12.30 pm

This event will mark Margaret Silverside's 100th Birthday which will be on 16 April. Tables have been reserved for members to join us for a meal from the menu. There is no need to book and you will choose and pay for your meal on the day. Please note that not everyone will be able to eat at the same time, but this approach gives you flexibility and avoids a lot of admin for us!

You can find the menu at www.theberrylands.co.uk . There is a wide selection of starters, pub classics, burgers and desserts.

The Berrylands is at 107 Chiltern Drive, Surbiton, KT5 8LS. There is very limited parking on site but there is street parking in the vicinity. Bus K2 stops adjacent to the pub, which is also 150 yards from Berrylands Station. It is much quicker to travel by train from New Malden.

Informal Gathering at The North Star on Wednesday, 15 May 2024

Arrive between 12.00 pm and 1.30 pm

Once again, tables have been reserved for members to join up for a meal from the menu. There is no need to book and you will choose and pay for your meal on the day. Please note that not everyone will be able to eat at the same time,

You can find the menu at www.emberinns.co.uk/nationalsearch/london/the-north-star-chessington#/ . This currently shows the winter menu, but it is an extensive one, with starters, pub classics, pasta, steaks, burgers and desserts.

The pub is at 271 Hook Rd, Chessington. KT9 1EQ, half a mile south of the Ace of Spades. There is a car park on site. Buses 71, K4 and 465 stop outside, while the K2 stops nearby, round the corner in Rosemary Gardens.

Summer Get Together at The Guildhall on Thursday, 11 July 2024

Doors open 12.00 pm

Please see the Booking Form enclosed.

Informal Gathering at The Kings Tun on Monday, 9 September 2024

Arrive between 12.00 pm and 1.30 pm

Another of our popular gatherings at the Kings Tun, 153-157 Clarence Street, Kingston, KT1 1QT, between Eden Street and the Railway Station. We meet in the upstairs bar – there is a lift. Wetherspoons have an extensive menu of hot and cold food and free refills of hot drinks! Just come along – no booking required.

The Future of the Association

As we've mentioned before, your Committee are concerned about this issue in view of the declining membership and reducing attendances. Matters were brought into focus by the response to our offer of a free coach trip in the last Newsletter.

Here are the results of the free coach trip survey. There were 17 responses, plus 4 others said they would like to go, but were not available on those dates.

Destination – A clear decision:		Not so much on the date:			
	Points			Points	Max No
Canterbury	71	Wednesday	26/06/2024	56	13
Chichester	51	Thursday	27/06/2024	51	12
Eltham	41	Friday	28/06/2024	43	13
Worthing	38	Tuesday	25/06/2024	42	11
Arundel	36	Monday	24/06/2024	39	13

Because of differing availability, the maximum number on a particular date fell to 13. Even if a number of guests came along, the Committee felt that it could not justify the expense (probably £600 - £700) for such a small number. Fortunately, at the AGM a member mentioned Richmond and Kingston Accessible Transport (RAKAT). ARCO appears to be eligible to apply to use their minibuses and this is being investigated. However, we are sorry to say there will not be an outing in June although we hoping to arrange one in the autumn and to give details in the next Newsletter.

Turning to the wider question, here are few statistics:

	2003	2014	2024
Total Membership	236	223	132
New Members	9	8	2
Deaths	7	4	5
AGM Attendance	40	35	20

Out of the current total membership, there are around 100 members living close enough to Kingston to potentially participate in events. Taking into account various factors, the reality is that we can only expect a maximum of around 25 people to come along to any event and the attendance figures throughout 2022 and 2023 bear this out. The average attendance was 17 in 2022 and 15 in 2023. The most popular events are the Guildhall ones.

Maybe your committee is having trouble thinking "outside the box" or maybe we're just too set in our ways, but we are having trouble coming up with ideas for activities for you. We thought that a free coach trip would be welcomed but there has been a very low response which suggests that is not what you want.

As ARCO is YOUR association could you please help us out and tell us what YOU want? If no-one can come up with anything and numbers keep dwindling there may be little point in continuing and that, in our view, would be a great shame.

So come on members, let us know what you want. All suggestions welcome.

Your Committee

Invitation to Summer Get Together

Thursday, 11 July 2024

12.00 Noon to 2.00 p.m.

Queen Anne Suite, Guildhall, Kingston upon Thames

The intended offer is a finger buffet, including sandwiches, cakes, coffee and tea

Bring Your Own Bottle

Glasses will be provided for your own wine or other drinks.

RSVP by post, phone or email to Jenny Longhurst, Mayfield, Hoe Lane,

Dorking, Surrey RH5 6RS **by 24 June 2024**

Telephone: 01306 730321

Email: jenny.longhurst@btinternet.com

Payment may be made by cheque with this form OR by Bank Transfer to

Sort Code 09-01-55 Account 60178603

Name "Association of Retired Council Officers (Kingston)"

and send an email with the details requested below to confirm.

Retain top half as a reminder and send off bottom half

I would like One/Two (please circle) places at the Get Together on 11 July 2024

and enclose a cheque for £ (payable to ARCO)

for the cost of £3.00 per head.

Name(s) required on Badge(s) (Capital Letters)

1. _____ 2. _____

Telephone No. _____

Email: _____

Please note any dietary requirements, e.g. vegetarian:

Click [here](#) to download this form.