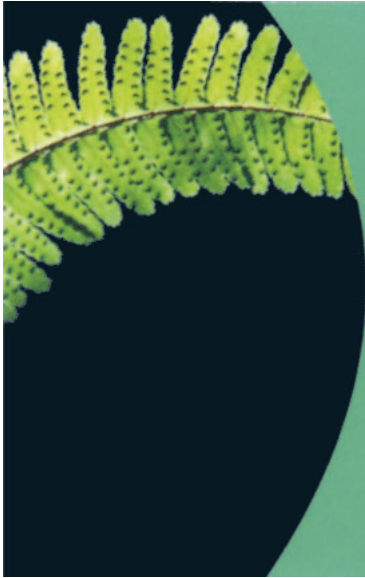


SPRING 2012

THAMES DITTON — TODAY —



THE MAGAZINE OF THE THAMES DITTON AND WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



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Maxine Crinall BTAA BTPA ITEC MNFSH practises at
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THAMES DITTON TODAY

The Magazine of the Thames Ditton and Weston Green
Residents' Association

Spring 2012

Published quarterly since Spring 1970

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You are welcome to submit
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next deadline on 1 May.

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Cover photo: *Spring Solstice – moon at perigee over
Home of Compassion*

www.residents-association.com

Officers and staff of the Association are volunteers, but we must fund costs of this magazine, administrative and election expenses, and other expenses such as spring bulb-planting and the village Christmas tree. The subscription is only £3 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions (in an envelope please) may be left at Boots Chemist, 14 High Street, or Thorkill Road Pharmacy, 94 Thorkill Road, Thames Ditton. Or mail to Membership Secretary Peter Haynes at 6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton KT7 0JJ. Thank you.

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THAMES DITTON & WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



Annual General Meeting

8.00 pm on 20 March 2012, at Vera Fletcher Hall

Agenda:

1. **MINUTES** of the 2011 Annual General Meeting and matters arising therefrom.
2. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT:** to receive, discuss and adopt the Annual Report for 2011-2012.
3. **ACCOUNTS:** to receive the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2011.
4. **APPOINTMENTS:** to receive nominations and appoint officers and an Auditor:
President Vice President
Chairman Vice Chairmen
Hon Secretary Hon Treasurer
Auditor
5. **ELECTIONS:** to adopt candidates to stand at the Elmbridge Borough Council Elections on 3 May 2012
6. **RESOLUTIONS:** to consider any resolutions submitted in writing to the Secretary by 6 March 2012.
7. **GUEST SPEAKERS:** Watch Manager Arwel Hughes and Fire Fighters from Esher Fire Station: Warming Stories and Matchless Advice – fire protection in your home

President: Maureen Sheldrick,
34 The Woodlands, Esher

Surrey County Councillor:
Peter Hickman, Little Lodge,
Watts Road, Thames Ditton 020 8339 0931

Thames Ditton Councillors

Sandra Dennis,
Little Bradley, Thames Ditton 020 8873 2936
Ruth Lyon,
11 Riversdale Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 3396
Karen Randolph,
Deepfield, Giggs Hill Road,
Thames Ditton 020 8398 5005

Weston Green Councillors

Lorraine Sharp,
168 Ember Lane, Esher 07970 874 925
Tannia Shipley, 'Clinton House'
27 Lower Green Road, Esher 020 8398 2484

Officers:

Chairman: Libby MacIntyre,
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7 River Avenue, Thames Ditton 020 8398 4732
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5 Station Rd, Thames Ditton 020 8398 3489
Hon. Secretary: Tricia Bland,
29 Station Rd., Thames Ditton 020 8339 0485
Membership Secretary: Peter Haynes
6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton 02 8398 6019

Conveners of Sub-Committees:

Health and Community:
Karen Randolph (see above for details)
Planning: Graham Cooke
23 Ashley Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 8509
Highways, Drainage:
Andrew Roberts, 1 Boyle Farm Road,
Thames Ditton 020 8786 6882

**THE NEXT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETINGS ARE
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News From the Residents' Association



18 November 2011 – 22 February 2012

Boundaries

Thanks again to all those residents and institutions who made the effort to write with reasoned objection to the Boundary Commission's proposal to split Weston Green down the middle. It worked. The Commissioners altered their recommendations to favour the rational alternative we had proposed. Their draft recommendations had been based on the County Council's scheme which Surrey had earlier submitted over the head of strong objections from our county councillor, Peter Hickman. In the consultation phase we fleshed out those objections, mobilised community awareness of what was happening, researched and presented the sensible alternative. Many, in particular our Weston Green Borough Councillors and membership secretary, trudged around delivering informative leaflets, and we emailed all Association members who furnish their email addresses for substantive messages.

The result was 131 submissions opposing their scheme, citing strong community interests between Weston Green and Thames Ditton. Submissions referred to shared facilities such as the Library, local schools, churches, children and youth activity centres, the Centre for the retired and various sports clubs as well as to the common history of Weston Green and Thames Ditton and, not least, the active Residents' Association.

"We found the evidence relating to community identity and interests compelling and are persuaded that dividing the area of Weston Green would be detrimental to a community that has demonstrated strong links with Thames Ditton... Consequently, we have modified our boundaries in Elmbridge between East Molesey & Esher and The Dittons divisions, to include Weston Green in its entirety in The Dittons division."

Well done, everyone – and well done the Commission. The new arrangements must now be implemented by Parliament, to come into force at the county council elections in May 2013.

Street lights

Thanks to spirited action by Elmbridge's Heritage officers to preserve the special character and appearance of the Conservation Areas (and to continuing background pressure from the Association) there is pleasing progress to report on street lights for those areas. Surrey have now agreed a proper heritage pattern of column and lamp, the "Iffley" (see picture), as a suitable replacement for all the existing swan-necked lights. The Day of the 'Triffids' is over. Moreover, more of this pattern will be provided for other suitable locations within all three of our Conservation Areas, although exactly how many has still to be finalised. So that's another "well done" to be uttered.



the rather cute “Iffley” – well done, Clare

Movin’ on

There was general concern on 1 February when travellers’ caravans appeared overnight on Weston Green, spotted by our councillors who notified the authorities. They had been moved on from a site in Ham. Fortunately, swift, firm, determined yet highly diplomatic action by the Elmbridge Parks management team, notably Ian Gayton, working with the Neighbourhood Police team, defused the situation and persuaded them to move out of the area on the following day. Another plaudit!

Yellow lines

The situation is not so good here. The arrival of yellow lines was delayed because the subcontractors engaged were found not to be up to the job (reported

Surrey County Council). The new contractors set about the work to mingled cries of joy and anguish among residents, corresponding with strongly-held views on such lines. They did not do it well: they were specifically instructed that within the Conservation Areas there must be ‘heritage quality’ narrow, mustard-colour yellow lines. Instead they painted large ones, bright yellow, broad, blobby and not totally parallel, and right over existing white lines, some of which had been refreshed only days before, to make an unbecoming mess. Surrey have apologised to our Councillor Peter Hickman, whose views on the matter will not pass the censor, for this and other glitches in the process. As we go to press a meeting of officials and contractors was being held to decide what to do about it.

It has been impossible, so far, to evaluate the effects of the new lines on traffic choke-points because of the roadworks (mostly gas mains) that have since plagued Thames Ditton, at times choking everything.

Libraries

The High Court has issued an injunction against Surrey County Council over plans to close 10 libraries if ‘volunteers’ don’t take them on. The fourth council to be taken to judicial review over library cutbacks, Surrey’s hearing is scheduled for mid-March. Actor Stephen Fry has supported fundraising for Surrey campaigners against the county’s plans on his Twitter feed. In Somerset and Gloucestershire, but not in Brent, campaigners have been successful in quashing council plans to close libraries.

Council Tax

More signs that the new county leadership under Cllr. Hodge is being more realistic – while he has the luxury of blaming his predecessors. The new corporate strategy document states: *“In 2008 Surrey County Council was failing Surrey residents. Key essential services were not being delivered effectively. Some were close to failure. Our costs were spiralling out of control.”* You may

distinctly recall that at the time, Surrey’s Public Relations team and Cabinet members were busy disseminating exactly the opposite message to the public. The Council’s corporate communications have scant credibility.

Surrey will increase Council Tax by 2.99% in the coming year – a tiny fraction below the cap. They will thereby forego the Government’s 2.5% subsidy to councils who go for the headline “freeze.”



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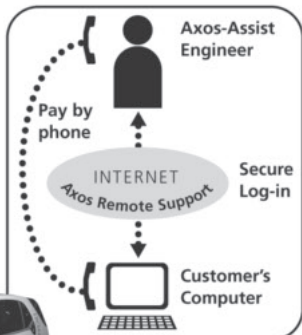
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Baroness Warsi, Chairman of the Conservative Party, has described this as “the wrong decision.” However, freezes always result in distortions and Surrey is in a bad way. Residents would be less unhappy about a CT increase if the County genuinely inspired more confidence that our money would be well and wisely spent on what taxpayers want.

Meanwhile in Elmbridge, Council Leader John O'Reilly promised residents attending the Open Meeting on Council Tax in January that the Borough would again freeze Council Tax next year. However, we see that the draft corporate plan for the borough does actually contain provision to raise CT next year (FY 2013/2014). 2013, of course, is a year when there are no Borough elections. The last time there were no Borough elections, four years ago, the Elmbridge leadership raised Council Tax by twice the rate of inflation.

Schools

One of the reasons for a CT increase advanced by the embattled caucus in Surrey, which has fallen short in planning ahead for adequate school places, is the need to build more schools. They are right. Pressures are again growing to make the temporary four-form entry at Thames Ditton Infant School a more permanent *fait accompli*. This time the admission pressures come from within a reasonable catchment area rather than from outside the area as previously. The issue is complex: debate has opened up in our web forum. Meanwhile the bulge is transferring upwards to the Junior School which is seeking extra buildings. There are also plans to provide more buildings at Esher College.

Local NHS peers into void

As last year, front-line NHS services in Surrey are suffering drastic cuts which affect our local surgeries. The NHS funds fewer patients than exist in reality (so Giggs Hill Surgery are paid for only 6,000 patients of their current 8,000) and on top of that the funding per patient has been slashed by almost forty percent. Government pledges are clearly irrelevant.

The county NHS administration has arbitrarily altered contractual obligations for specialised medical services – such as that provided by Giggs Hill's MEDICS. The issues are complex and opaque but the practical effect is to reduce the number of patients treated by around one quarter. With current uncertainties, patients are likely to find it more difficult to get the treatment needed. The process by which the system was intended to run more efficiently is jeopardised, leaving our local surgeries and clinics precariously exposed.

Planning

Since our last issue there have been three appeals from developers contesting refusal of planning permission by Elmbridge, against the background of new Government guidelines to Planning Inspectors and of Elmbridge's new Core Strategy document. It is reassuring to report that in all three, the local Elmbridge decisions were upheld by the Planning Inspector (the proposed taxi office at Winter's Bridge; six houses to replace 31 Embercourt Road, and a two-bed house at the entrance to Ashley Road car park)

There are two controversial applications now current. One is by

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Colets, to concrete over the grass verge by the Infant School to provide a row of parking for staff cars. As we go to press, this has already drawn 43 objections including one from the Association.

The other concerns the former Crown Inn, acquired by a Thai restaurant chain. Now registered as **Ba Siam Ltd**, they have carried out alterations to install large air-conditioning units, illuminated signs, and an adjacent angular structure the size of a house which is described as a “lantern pergola.” These things were done without planning permission or prior consultation with the authorities, and moreover in the Conservation Area.

A council planning officer visited the site in mid-November and required the developers to submit a retrospective planning application. Elmbridge asked them to halt works, but they did not do so. They sent in an invalid application

towards the end of the year, and Elmbridge asked for the requisite supplementary documentation that must accompany an application. This was not forthcoming by the end of January. They were served notice on 1 February that unless a valid application was in hand within seven days, legal enforcement would be started. The Chairs of both the Association and the Conservation Area Advisory Committee wrote to Ba Siam to express grave concern. After the deadline had passed, sufficient – though meagre – documentation was received to permit the council to register a backdated application. In the statement that accompanies this application, the structure erected alongside the former Crown is described as a “decorative piece.” See photo. The site is surrounded by five Grade II Listed buildings not counting the Home of Compassion and is within close line of sight of the Grade I Listed church.



described as “a decorative piece”

Many residents have voiced objections to the developers' approach, indicating that they will not eat at the new restaurant until it complies strictly with the planning procedure and decision. It is for individual residents to reach their own decisions. There are good eating places in the village whose owners respect planning constraints and have worked with the community, earning the custom of residents. We hope that the operators of the new restaurant will decide to join that number.

Friends in need

In January, the Friends of Thames Ditton Hospital raised a further £4,300 with the pantomime Beowulf plus supper at the Vera Fletcher Hall, sponsored by Dairy Crest. Ruth Lyon and Karen Randolph (Chairman of the Friends) organised the event to raise further money towards echocardiogram equipment for the consultant cardiologist clinics held at Emberbrook. This follows over £60,000 they raised for new equipment for the ear, nose and throat clinics, an advanced electrocardiogram machine and ultrasound, so that NHS patients can be diagnosed quickly, often within two weeks, instead of waiting for up to 12 weeks for appointments at Kingston or St. George's hospitals. The equipment remains in the Friends' ownership so that it cannot be diverted elsewhere by the NHS.

Guide Hut update

The denizens of the Guide hut in Church Walk are getting excited as their fundraising target is now within reach. With the main heater having failed last winter, they have been grateful that the weather has been mostly mild. All project plans and permissions are now finalised. To complete the refurbishment of the hut

they needed to raise almost £100,000, in the end. So far they have just over £60,000 (thanks, everyone!), and are waiting to hear the outcome of a bid to the councils for a further £30,000. Some pledges depend on other pledges being met, so there is still a bit of juggling for everything to fall into place. There's a final £10,000 to find and they're pulling out all the stops to raise it in time to carry out the works in summer 2012. So, expect to be inundated with requests to 'buy a roof tile' and watch out for Rainbows, Brownies and Guides earning their fundraising badges around the village. You know you want to.

Doings and dates

Congratulations to Thames Ditton resident **Jennifer Anne Edwards** on her MBE for services to People with Disabilities in Surrey. And to Soup Supremo Karen Tanner who won a national competition for a soup recipe, now available tinned in Waitrose.

There have been several events lately for the inhabitants of **Linwood Care Home**, including a visit by SOS Dog Rescue when Linwood residents gave the rescue dogs blankets which they had knitted; and a 'hub' to help residents get online to their families.

On Saturday 24 March, the **Holiday Inn** on Portsmouth Road with **Chris Tarrant**, Patron of Princess Alice Hospice, will be hosting a lively quiz night and supper in aid of the Hospice. The 2010 quiz raised £7,500 for this local cause and another sell-out is expected. The bar opens at 7pm for a 7:30pm start. Tables can be bought, in groups of ten, smaller groups or individually for those

pot-luck matches. Book at £35 per person including fish and chip supper on 01372 461869 or email events@pah.org.uk

The **Dittons Scout Fair on Gigg's Hill Green** will be on Sunday 13 May. The troop is keenly seeking a new Scout leader to replace Ian Yates who is moving away this summer. The leader would take over a group of approximately 30 boys and girls aged between 11 and 14 years. To learn more, contact Hilary Franklin at hilary@franklincoms.co.uk or Laura Clarke on 07518306675

The **AJAX Sea Scouts' Plant Sale** will be on the weekend 5-6 May and their summer **Fair on Esher Green** is on Saturday 19 May starting at noon. Both the Dittons and the AJAX fairs include traditional rides, musical events and other entertainment, plus stalls selling crafts and local products, and are good fun. AJAX are currently looking for more sponsors and additional auction pledges: please email Deirdre Johnson (sponsors@eshermayfair.org.uk). For information about the AJAX Fair, visit www.eshermayfair.org.uk.

The next **Good As New Sale for Cancer Research** will be at Esher College on 5 May.

Snow

Our "Snowman" scheme gathered further momentum with many civic-minded residents clearing their frontages, and in some cases beyond, when snow fell on 5 February. Andy Anderson cleared a path along the High Street, Peter Haynes was out with our modified manual snowplough, and our Snowmen volunteers were also active. Visual inspection that afternoon showed that in many roads of Thames Ditton and Weston Green at least half the frontages had been cleared, and some heavily-used pedestrian routes had been well cleared. Contact Peter Haynes (membership secretary, details on page 5) if you'd like to set up a Snowman unit for your road and get a snow shovel.

Elections, subscriptions

It's that time of year again and we would greatly appreciate residents turning out to vote for your Residents' Association candidates in Borough elections – residents like you, who don't like party politics in town halls. Please also support the Association and this magazine by subscribing for 2012. A subscription form is included with this issue, or see details at the foot of page 3. Thank you.

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O Thames how do I love thee? Let me count the (three) ways...

The river was one of the main draws to live in Thames Ditton and yet, aside from a pint or two at one of our lovely riverside pubs or the odd walk to feed the ducks, it took me almost two years to find a way to get on the water. So in the hope of encouraging others to take the plunge here are three easy ways to start messing about on boats.

Simplest is to buy your own boat, and use one of the many public slipways to launch it. As it happens we have slipways ideally located next to our two riverside pubs, namely the Albany and the Swan. These are both relatively small but large

enough for launching a kayak/canoe or even a small powered craft.

Remember that if you are using your own boat on the River Thames, then it needs to be registered with the Environment Agency and this can be done for a small annual fee. The fee is a lot lower for an unpowered craft and I am hoping that's a good enough reason for you to stick to using muscle powered boats – I guarantee they are more rewarding.

If like I do, you live in a tiny cottage and storage or perhaps transport is an issue then you could invest in a decent inflatable. This was in fact how I first managed to get myself on to the water and from my first paddle I was hooked.

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a shapely skiff

Lugging a boat around can become tiresome and an inflatable has its own disadvantages but luckily for us we have two fantastic boat clubs, sandwiching the Albany, that have slightly different options for the wannabe punter!

To the left of the Albany Pub, as you approach from Queen's Road, is the River Club (the former British Motor Yacht Club's dinghy section). The River Club is a members club in which members own their own boats and store them at the club. There is a very reasonable annual membership fee and boat storage costs. The club accepts sailing boats (some with small motors on them for days with no wind) and also has racks for canoes/kayaks. The clubhouse is yours as a member to use,

whether it is for a nice cup of tea before setting out on the river or storing a cold beer for your return. The club also has a row boat and the club launch available for hire and members can also use the club as a nice place to relax and make use of the basic yet very functional facilities. It's like having your very own private river frontage!

If you'd rather not have your own boat, perhaps prefer a slightly more social offering or if you are a relatively novice paddler then you have a lovely alternative: to the right of the Albany is the impressive Dittons Skiff and Punting club. As the name implies the club has its own fleet of skiffs and punts for members to use, included in the again very reasonable annual membership fee.

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The skiffs themselves deserve a special mention as they are hand built using modern materials to a Viking design and to say they look beautiful is an understatement (just don't ask how much they cost the club to buy!). One look at the sleek river boats will have you itching to get out onto the river no matter how cold the weather! You don't have to be competitive – one skiff is named “Out To Lunch”!

Do not be daunted if you are a novice rower/punter as the club runs beginner days and also will guide you to using the correct technique. The club is very sociable and even has a bar (with very reasonably priced drinks!) and a balcony overlooking the river with an unparalleled view of Hampton Court Palace.

If you are interested in finding out more of any of the above or perhaps would like to know of some other options to get onto the river, from hiring powered boats to riding a ferry then have a look at the Thames Ditton Residents' Association forum online where I am trying to compile a list of all the ways to get onto the river.

Whatever option you do go for – I do hope to see you on the river soon. You'll find it's a lovely friendly place to be!

Rakesh Kotecha

Villagers have long enjoyed playing on the water. Our bit of river was the venue for the inaugural event of the world's first Canoe Club, now the Royal Canoe Club, on Saturday 27 April 1867. In a “race over land and water”

entrants had to get out of their canoes to round each of four markers on the banks, carrying their craft. Apart from a cup for the winner, and a canoe called “Cuisine” for the runner-up, another prize was, according to the Ingoldsby Legends: “a beautiful little kitchen, which cooks for two men and weighs 21lb. It now bears the following inscription: ‘Designed by the Captain, presented by the Cook, won by the Purser.’” The current crop of ardent canoeists includes Andrew Roberts, the Association's Highways Convenor, who has twice completed the Devizes to Westminster canoe marathon.

Sisley painted a regatta at this spot in about 1874 and in 1887 this annual event was described as “an Aquatic Sports and Venetian Fête.” The Dittons Skiff and Punting Club was formed in 1923 – see www.dittons.org.uk. There is also the Thames Ditton rowing regatta, organised in May every year since it was established by three keen amateur oarsmen in 1948. The next one is on 12 May.

For the irresponsible, the placid river has its risks. You can lose your butler, which is dashed inconvenient. The press reported in 1836 that, one Saturday night in late November “John Wood, a fine young man, butler to Sir Edward Sugden of Boyle Farm, was drowned by falling from a punt into which he went, after having been previously drinking at Kingston, for the purpose of procuring more liquor at Ditton.” You have been warned.

– Editor

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The Battling Lamberts of Weston Green



the battle of Copenhagen

A few memorial tablets in St Nicholas' Church, a dried-up pond, a row of cottages, a scholarship fund dwindled to a pound or two, a recent plaque... all that remains here of the Lamberts. Yet this family was a major presence in the parish for a century. They served their country and our community well. Could I travel back in time, Christmas dinners at Weston

House would be high on my list. As the port was passed, the tales must have been wonderful.

These were practical fighting men, making history happen. One captained a ship of the line at the battle of Copenhagen; later he commanded the squadron that guarded the Emperor

Community in Action 2011-2012



programme of social events - secret gardens, garden party, race night, quiz, Christmas Party

1000 copies of Thames Ditton Today since 1970 bound and placed in Library

4,000 copies of Thames Ditton Today distributed quarterly

restitution of bins along Albany Reach

litter campaign to energise community

successful campaign to halve long-stay parking charges

paid off Christmas lights on Lime tree and installed lit trees along High St

monitored preservation of Grade II Boyle Farm

flower beds planted and maintained

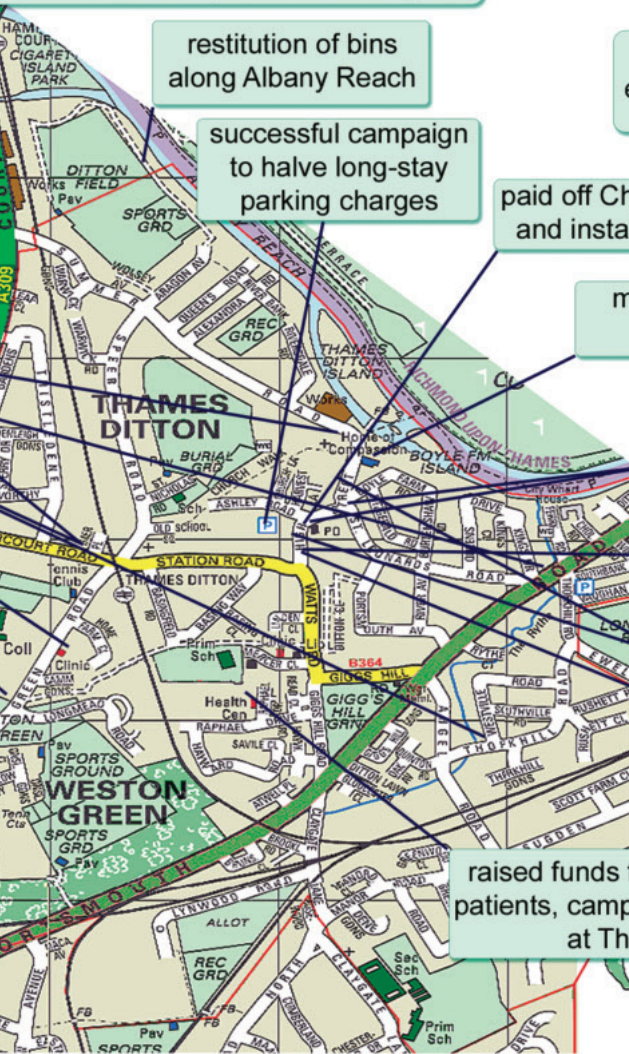
active support for Christmas Fair

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Napoleon imprisoned on St Helena. His younger brother led the 10th Brigade in Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo; another brother battled the Americans as Captain of HMS Java, 38 guns, in a famous naval engagement which led to his death. Another also soldiered in the Napoleonic wars and ended as Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica. The youngest brother played a role in the first (Maori) independence of New Zealand, and later started the second Burmese War.

Of their sons, likewise centred on Weston Green, one fought with the Grenadier Guards against the Russians at the Battle of the Alma. The Alma inn, now known as Marney's, probably took its name from that Lambert connection. Another commanded our naval squadron in Australia: he married a local Campbell girl who in 1886, widowed, was elected the first woman councillor for Thames Ditton. An early photographer, she accompanied her husband *en poste* in Australia, where her photographs are preserved in the National Gallery. Two of our Lamberts were keen cricketers, father and son, playing occasionally for MCC and England on home postings.

With several Johns and several Roberts, disentangling their history has not been easy. Online resources combined with parish records have helped greatly with disambiguation. Weston House, demolished a century ago to make way for the substantial suburban houses along Weston Green and Weston Avenue, was a hub for the family. But its members led peripatetic careers in the armed services, and when in England they also had various rented addresses, including at times The Elms, The Newlands, Ember

Cottage, and other substantial 'cottages' owned or let in Weston Green as well as addresses elsewhere in London and Southern England. To complicate matters, there are several lines of Lamberts in Britain, and at least two baronetcies starting with a Sir John Lambert!

Our Lamberts are not the descendants of Sir John Lambert, a General in Cromwell's New Model Army. Their origins are quite different. In the mid-1600s John or Jean Lambert was a French merchant at Saint Martin on the Île de Ré, just off La Rochelle. He married Marie Le Pevre, also of that island, and their son John was born in 1666, educated in England as a Protestant, and became a very wealthy merchant in London. Three centuries ago our Government was looking to the private sector to take on a crippling national debt (this may sound familiar!). The South Sea Company was formed to do that in return for trading concessions, and John Lambert was one of its founding directors, committing the then fabulous sum of over £400,000. He was made a baronet on the recommendation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and lived at Clarges Street off Piccadilly (formerly Portugal Street) with his wife Madeleine *née* Bedzelin, the daughter of a Rouen merchant.

Born in 1732, Robert Alexander Lambert, the second son of Sir John Lambert's son John (the second baronet), had to make his own way. He joined the Royal Navy. Commissioned Lieutenant in 1754, Commander 1759 and Captain in 1760, he led a very active seagoing career, commanding the sloop Jamaica, then captaining in turn HMS Wager, 20 guns, Valeur, 28, Phoenix, 40, then ships of the

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line Dorsetshire, 64, Niger and Leviathan, 64 based in the West Indies.

Fortunately Capt. Robert Lambert, and son Robert who was a midshipman aboard from the age of 8, escaped the foundering of the Leviathan on 27 February 1780, for they shipped home in the Carron and on 22 March, his wife wrote in her diary that “*my Dear Capt. L and my darling Child were restored to me.*” Dear Capt. L went on to become a Commissioner in the Navy, sired his youngest son in 1795 at the age of 63, and died in the early 1800s.

On 19 January 1768 Captain Lambert, who lived near Old Alresford in Hampshire when he was not at sea, later in Mayfair, married Catherine Byndloss. She came with wealth from slave plantations in Jamaica. Her colonial ancestors were closely associated with Admiral Sir Henry Morgan (1635-1688), the famous bloodthirsty privateer, sometime prisoner in the Tower of London, suitor in one of the first ever cases of libel (for being called a pirate), and later rehabilitated.

Now, if ever a woman deserved a national Medal Of Motherhood (MOM?), it was Catherine Byndloss. Of her five warrior sons by Robert Lambert, three of whom came to live in Weston Green, one was to be killed in action, while two became Admirals and two became Generals. Her daughter Maria married another fighting officer, who became a Major in the 6th Dragoons (The Carabiniers).

It was Robert and Catherine’s eldest son Robert Stuart Lambert, born in 1771, who put down anchor here. He had followed his father into the Navy at an

early age, was made Lieutenant in 1791 while serving in the East Indies and then on the Barfleur, 98 guns, under Captain, later Lord Collingwood – Nelson’s colleague. Rising rapidly, Robert Lambert was promoted Commander and given the sloop Swift. Soon Captain of the Saturn at the Battle of Copenhagen, where Nelson turned his blind eye to Parker’s signal, he went on to become a Vice-Admiral.

In May 1798 while still a Captain, he bought Weston House for 3,738 guineas from Mary, Lady Twysden, daughter of the interesting rags-to-riches George Jarvis who may have had the house built.

In December the following year our Capt. Robert Stuart Lambert married Charlotte Pigou and installed her at Weston. She was the daughter of Frederick Pigou, another merchant of French Huguenot extraction, and her grandfather, also named Frederick, was a director of the East India Company, and connected with the tea trade to America. The firm of Pigou and Booth suffered at the Boston Tea Party. Frederick also co-owned a gunpowder factory at Dartford. The Pigous had connections with Kingston upon Thames where, in All Saints Church, there is a plaque to Frederick Pigou the elder who died in 1792.

Alas I can find no photographs or drawings of Weston House, but while it remained in the possession of the Lambert family for many decades, they were of course subject to the exigencies of the service, and during postings they sometimes tried to let it (the couple did have at least one child, but it seems they didn’t survive). For example, in 1812



Weston Green in the 1860s. The large pond, in blue, was known as Admiral's Pond and later Lamberts' Pond. And no wonder – for the orange shaded buildings are some of those at various times during the century either owned or rented by Lamberts, the main seat of the family being Weston House. Note that at the period of this map, the Newlands (which had been named the Newlands since the Williams family had it built in the late 1600s) is known as Weston Grove.

when Capt. Robert Stuart Lambert was posted to HMS Duncan, the following advertisement appeared in the Morning Chronicle of 1 April, which seems to fit the case:

“Weston Green, in the Vicinity of Esher and Hampton Court, 12 1/2 miles from London, to be let for two Years completely furnished, a desirable villa, consisting of an entrance hall, dining, drawing and ante rooms, breakfast parlour and study, five principal bedrooms and two dressing rooms, and six rooms to the attic; good kitchen, cellaring and every other domestic accommodation, with pleasure grounds, a handsome greenhouse and ice house, large kitchen garden, walled and fully cropped; hot house and grapery; a compact farm and farm yard; double coach house and stabling for seven horses, with 35 acres of meadow land, in a ring fence...”

With Robert, the eldest, installed with his wife in Weston House, and on his way to becoming a Vice-Admiral, two of his younger brothers also took houses in Weston Green in between postings – the obituary of the fourth brother, who didn't live here, notes that all the brothers were very close. And now it's time to present the rest of the family.

Robert's first younger brother was John Lambert, later to become General Sir John Lambert GCB. He is believed to have rented The Elms before 1821, when in England; and later he rented The Newlands from 1841 before moving into Weston House which he owned in the years following Robert's death in 1836. The next brother, Captain Henry Lambert,

a highly operational officer, spent most of his time at sea and had been married just a year without issue when he was killed in action at the beginning of 1813. Next, Samuel Lambert, who became a Major-General, like brother John led an active life of soldiering. Along with Henry he is no trace in our local records, but we may be confident that Henry and Samuel will have visited their elder brother Robert at Weston House when on leave. The youngest brother George, also very operational, and later to be known nationally as 'the Combustible Commodore' en route to becoming Admiral Sir George Robert Lambert CGB, at various times rented Ember Cottage from the Taylors of Imber Court, owned a substantial cottage at the tip of Weston Green opposite the Newlands while living in another nearby, or occupied Weston House, eventually renting Norbiton Place before moving to Hastings for his last post as C-in-C The Nore.

The next generation showed continuing vigour. General Sir John's son, John Arthur Lambert, became a General too. He took over Weston House on the death of his father there in 1847. Admiral Sir George's son Rowley Lambert went on to become an Admiral in his turn. Towards the end of his life he rented a house from Hannibal Speer known as Grubbe's House, later called Kingwater, where now is the broad verge of Longmead and St. Helen's at Weston Green Road.

Having introduced these exciting Lamberts, I'll take a look at some of their exploits in the next few issues.

Keith Evetts


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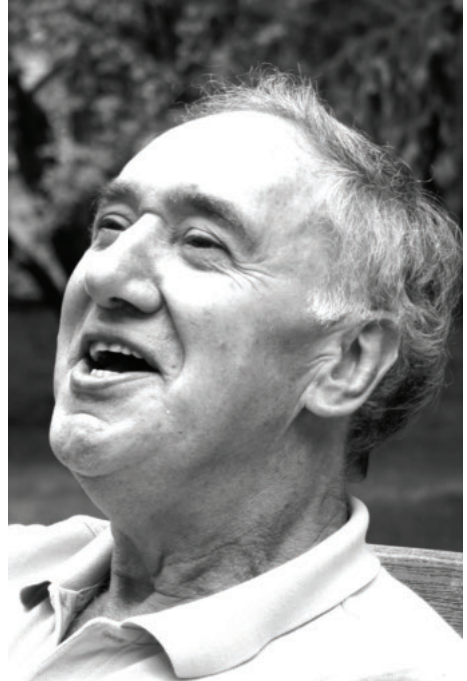
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Councillors David Lowe and Edward Rowe



The Residents' Association and the wider Thames Ditton community have suffered a sad loss in the deaths of former councillors David Rowe and Edward Rowe in December. We have been exceptionally lucky in having two such able and committed councillors serve us for so long.

David Lowe was elected to Elmbridge Council for Thames Ditton ward in May 2002, within a year of his retirement from a senior position with the large computer company I.C.L., and served as councillor until 2010. He will be remembered as a diligent ward councillor – no one ever contacted him without their problem being looked into and a solution found. David brought to the Council his knowledge and experience as the Planning Officer of Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association. In that role he had looked at the many applications in Thames Ditton and Weston Green and supported residents in their representations against over-large or unneighbourly proposals or the threat of shops being converted to residential in the High Street, undermining the viability of remaining High Street shops. As Vice Chairman of the Council's East Area Planning Committee he played an important part in forming Elmbridge planning policies. His experience with ICL was put to good use in committees dealing with IT development where he saved the Council thousands of pounds through his advice on IT contracts.



David Lowe

Outside the Council David was a Governor of Esher College and a very effective Chairman of Governors of Thames Ditton Infants School. He delighted in the enthusiasm of the very young children and one of the parents said of him "David always seemed the perfect father figure". One of his legacies is the Vera Fletcher Hall where as Chairman of the Management Committee he led and oversaw many new facilities- as a result the Hall was described by Elmbridge council as a model community hall.

The Residents' Association was a natural home for David, as it was for Edward Rowe since they both firmly believed that local government should not be dominated by the national political parties. Outside the Council and the RA, David's priorities were always his family, Connie, Dennis, Robin, Melanie and of course the grandchildren – and we thank them all for sharing him with us.

Within a year of retiring from a senior position with Norwich Union **Edward Rowe** became Chairman of the Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents Association 1996 – 1998. From 1998 to 2007 he acted as Advertising Manager of Thames Ditton Today during which the magazine increased in size as he attracted new advertisers and increasing income.

He was a councillor for Thames Ditton ward from 2000 to 2007 and from 2002 to 2006 he was a member of the Residents' Administration which ran Elmbridge Council. He had the most difficult job as the Cabinet member for resources bringing in the budget each year – during the period when Elmbridge was funding and building the new Excel Leisure Centre and the new Heart Shopping Centre in Walton.

For over ten years Edward was Chairman of the Vera Fletcher Hall



Edward Rowe

Association during which time it established itself as the theatre and concert hall in Thames Ditton. Edward attended every show from classic chamber concert to comedy revue. With his Irish charm and wonderful wit he was the best chairman of any organisation I have known. From tight finance committees to contentious public meetings Edward would get through the business remarkably quickly while allowing everyone their say, turning any awkward moment with a light word and leading everyone to a happy consensus without a vote. He leaves his wife Celia and their children Anthea and Russell and our sympathies go out to them.

Ruth Lyon

Music for Spring at the Vera Fletcher Hall



From 19th century opera, through an Edwardian soiree and Twenties dance bands to 1950's jazz classics, the Vera Fletcher Hall will be alive with music this Spring.

Following the great success of our **Strictly Sundays** shows we welcome **The New Foxtrot Serenaders** on Sunday March 11. This vintage dance band, full of vitality and exuberance, recreates the timeless melodies of the 1920s, 30s and 40s. They have performed in venues as varied as the Queen Mary 2, Wiltons Music Hall in London, the Fairfield Halls in Croydon and on BBC 2 and Meridian FM. As with our other Strictly Sunday

shows seating will be cabaret style around candle-lit tables with a running bar. We welcome the return of **Jake Fryer** on Sunday 6th May, from Ronnie Scotts and the London Jazz Festival, with his top line-up of saxophone, trumpet, and trombone with full rhythm section and guest vocalist playing the great jazz classics by Duke Ellington, Cole Porter, Gershwin...

Everyone who came to **Five Star Swing's "In the Mood"** last year will



the Edwardian 'cello

want to come again, on Sunday 27 May to hear one of the top Jazz and Swing bands in the UK who have performed on BBC's Children in Need, and at venues as varied as Kensington Place, the Blackpool Tower Ballroom and on National Theatre tours. Leader Chris Smith played at the Royal Variety Show, Ronnie Scotts and on BBC's Breakfast Show, while trombonist Mike Innes performed with Shirley Bassey and the Pet Shop Boys. For all these Strictly Sunday shows there is free entry for under 16 years.



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We cater for all musical tastes at the Hall, both serious and less serious, and we welcome back **Amy Tress** (violin) and **Michael Ierace** (piano) on Friday May 4th supported by the RC Sherriff Trust. These rising stars in the music world will play late Romantic and early 20th century masterpieces including the beautiful Franck Sonata and works by Janacek and Szymanowski.

This year is the centenary of the sinking of the Titanic. **Michael Lunts**, who gave us his memorable performances of Chopin in “Winter in Majorca” and “The Last Ballade”, returns on Friday 27 April, with Melanie Dunnerly, when he presents **The Edwardian Cello**, a witty recreation of a musical “soiree” from 1912, in aid of “The Titanic Relief Fund”. Melanie Dunnerly’s career spans working as cellist in The Halle and BBC Philharmonic Orchestras and in her spare time as Professor at the Royal College of Music. With Michael on the piano as Secretary of the Great Tottering Music Society and contributing vocal items from Gilbert and Sullivan and other contemporary exponents of the comic song and Melanie as a famous cellist and suffragette sympathiser with cello gems from Saint-Saens to Elgar, the Great Tottering Music Society are doing their bit for this noble cause.

We have a real treat on Friday 23 March when the Yvonne Arnaud and Rosemary Branch theatres present **Sense and Sensibility** – Jane Austin’s classic story of two sisters’ search for love in a society bound by financial fortune, with original music, humour and heartbreak. It has received rave reviews and been

nominated for the Best Production and Best Music Off West End award.

Although a little later than Spring, you should mark your diaries for Sunday 15 July, when Charles Court Opera returns with **La Boheme** supported by the RC Sherriff Trust. We are used to seeing Charles Court in Gilbert & Sullivan and their splendid pantomimes but at heart they are a serious opera company. They have previously brought us *Così fan Tutte* and their *La Boheme* will be sung in the original Italian, (with sur-titles for those whose Italian is not up to scratch!) The story of the seamstress Mimi and her four friends living in a bohemian garret in Paris is full of some of Puccini’s most beautiful arias.

Our childrens’ shows always have music at their heart and Image Musical Theatre’s **The Wonderful Wizard of Oz** on Saturday 24 March is a family participation musical with Dorothy, the Tin Man, Scarecrow and Cowardly Lion all following the Yellow Brick Road... On Saturday 5th May Noisy Oyster presents **The Three Billy Pigs**, the story of three little pigs who set off to build their dream houses only to find that things do not work out as they expect. Live music, puppets and story telling make this an enchanting story for 4-8year olds.

See page 39 for times and tickets for these shows. You can keep in touch with events at the Vera Fletcher Hall on the website at:

verafletcherhall.co.uk

Ruth Lyon



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Mr. Michael Lunts (piano) and
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in a witty recreation of
a musical "soiree" from 1912.
TICKETS £11

Friday 4th May 8.00 pm

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Sunday 15th July 7.30 pm

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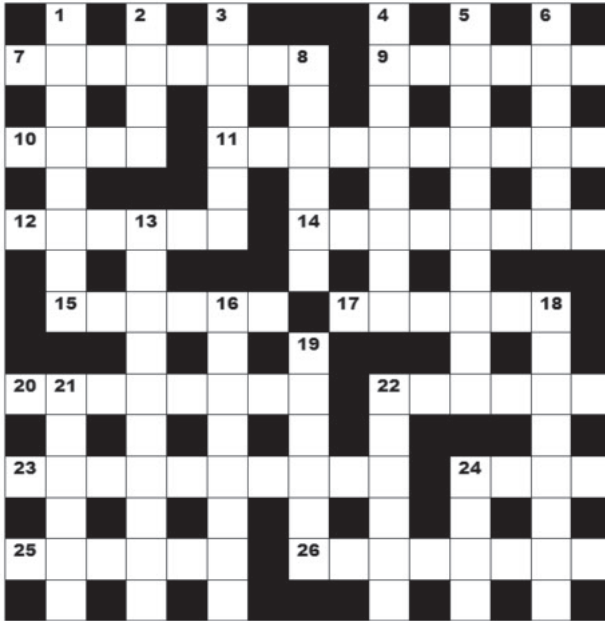
E-mail: info@westongreenschool.org.uk

Website: www.westongreenschool.org.uk

Weston Green School, Weston Green Road,
Thames Ditton, KT7 0JN

Spring Crossword

By Maureen Willcox



The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of 7 May 2012 will win a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

Please send the completed puzzle (or photocopy) enclosing your name and address, with the envelope clearly marked 'Crossword Competition', to:

Thames Ditton Today
Crossword Competition
6 Church Walk
Thames Ditton
KT7 0NW

ACROSS

7. Should your pal snore, 'tis private (8)
9. Don't bet on this horse, girl! (6)
10. Sounds like trim couple o' fruit (4)
11. And wipe own mess for a light (6-4)
12. Spin includes line of very particular meaning (6)
14. Mad at regime, you have to leave UK (8)
15. Personnel embrace Don Diego Vega partly with intense repugnance (6)
17. Change the highs and lows of a map reading (6)
20. Anogram (surely some mistake) (8)
22. Delivers blow to wake somnolent company (6)
23. Ace sensors not as stated: quality lacks refinement (10)
24. First location of forgotten treasures? (4)
25. Russian craft makes wake on lake? (6)
26. Tit'll be tattler, shows how the wind blows (4-4)

DOWN

1. Look again to discover info (8)
2. Crazy rats go for top dog in old Serbia (4)
3. Give it to me Daisy, before I go wholly crazy (6)
4. Describing 23 across, offends society (8)
5. Choir sings with pride, somehow audience is scattering (10)
6. Find in recipe a nutritious snack (6)
8. Just the thing for a bleeding surgeon! Or so they read it (6)
13. Appear rash in other words (10)
16. You hear Popeye's squeeze underpins Mediterranean cuisine (5,3)
18. Moments before parachute opens (4,4)
19. Television's Janet Porter lost her way (6)
21. I gather a wretched gnome gets the girl (6)
22. Skirt expander causes quite a stir (6)
24. Overdue demise (4)

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Solution to the Winter Crossword

by Michael Jackson



Congratulations to **Penny Clarke of 70, Longmead Road, Thames Ditton, KT7 0JF** who sent in the sole correct entry for this one! A mastermind with superior telepathic powers.

Rumblings down the village grapevine suggested one clue in particular caused difficulty: 9 Across.

Many more entrants are expected for the Spring crossword. Go to it.



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SERVICES, CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND GROUPS

SERVICES

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Harry Livesey	01372 474555
Dittons and Weston Green Neighbourcare	Avril Ashworth	020 8398 7521
Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services		
Thames Ditton Centre for Retired People	Mon & Thurs	020 8398 5921
Thames Ditton Children's Centre	Tues, Weds, Fri	020 8398 3772
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride,	ask for service at	
Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers Scheme	central switchboard	01372 474474
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	020 8398 6132
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Sally Dubery	01372 463587
Surrey Youth and Adult Education Service	Elmbridge Area	020 8979 8334
M.D.H.S. Household Services (& garden tidying)	Pam Howard (Manager)	01932 248533

GROUPS

Girl Guiding in TD & WG	Mrs K Williams	020 8398 1300
1st Thames Ditton Brownies	Mrs. Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
3rd Thames Ditton Brownies	Mrs Heather Horler	020 8398 0364
2nd Thames Ditton Rainbows	Nicki Sutherland	020 8398 4202
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Alan Nolan-Davies	0844 414 2826
1st Weston Green Guides (All Saints)	Mrs. Louise Lewis	020 8398 4843
2nd Thames Ditton Guides	Mrs. Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
1st Weston Green Brownies (All Saints)	Mrs K Williams	020 8398 1300
2nd Weston Green Brownies	Mrs J Epps	020 8395 0595
1st Weston Green Rainbows	Mrs Helen Hill	020 8398 3135
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Alison Derrick	020 8398 0041
Dittons Scout Group	Laura Clarke	0208 398 3447
Coffee and chat (United Reformed Church)	Mrs. E. Barker	01372 467491
Emberbrook Trefoil Guild	Mrs. Adrienne Nealing	020 8398 5582
Friends of Bushey and Home Parks	Jean Smith	020 8977 9391
Friends of Walsingham Care	Miss Valerie Chicken	0208 398 2932
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: Pat Farmiloe	020 8398 2787
Parents and Toddlers(St Nicholas church)	Information	020 8398 7211
Ripieno Choir	Nick Harris	020 8399 7231
Surrey Bell-ringers	Nick Pattenden	Nick@FSLimited.com

CLUBS

Albany Motor Yacht Club	Secretary	01784 466651
Arts and Heritage Club	Carol Butcher	01932 867511
Claremont PROBUS Club	Mr. P. Collins	020 8398 3125
Claygate Bridge Club	Hon. Secretary	020 8398 1710
Colets Health & Fitness	Giordano Orsini	020 8398 7108
Dittons Skiff and Punting Club	Hon Secretary	07710 139417
Dittons & Hinchley Wood Royal British Legion	Hon Secretary	020 8398 6263
Ember Players (Drama) Ember Sports Club	Anne Segall	020 8941 4528
Ember Sports Club	Mrs. Pauline Wareham	020 8979 8977

Ember Sports Club: Bowls	Sylvia Jones	01932 788701
Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Dr. David Cooke	01932 862841
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Annabel Duncan	020 8786 6318
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
Esher Camera Club	Billy Buchanan	020 8398 3169
Esher 41 and Ex-Round Tablers' Club	Dr. R. Tudor-Williams	020 8398 0108
Folk Dance Club	Pam Phillips	01372 373745
Hinchley Wood / Dittons PROBUS Club	Geoff Francis	01932 867771
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Nigel Hardy	020 8398 8361
Long Ditton Garden Club	Mrs. Ann Allen	020 8398 1718
Model Railway Society (Hampton Court)	Secretary	01932 241224
Mothers Union (All Saints)	Jill Cotter	020 8398 4598
Old Cranleigh Rugby Club	Tony Price	07801 837129
Old Cranleigh Hockey Club	Eds Copleston (Men)	07775 940703
	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
River Club (BMYC)	David Walker	0870 460 3586
Rotary Club, Esher	Geoff Morris	01932 868454
Rubber Bridge TD Lawn Tennis Club	Val	020 8399 9972
Surbiton Croquet Club	Alec Thomas	020 8398 2391
Surbiton Golf Club	Secretary	020 8398 3101
Surbiton Hockey Club	Secretary	020 8398 2401
Thames Ditton Lawn Tennis Club	Chris Lewis	07770 562569
Thames Ditton & Esher Golf Club	Mark Rodbard	020 8398 1551
Thames Ditton Squash Club (Colets)	Dave Peck	020 8398 7108
Thames Ditton Cricket Club	Howard Frish (Secretary)	07947 561449
Thames Ditton Marquetry Group	Jasmine Berry	020 8398 4358

SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Ember Choral Society	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher Recorded Music Society	Miss S. M. Garrat	020 8398 8541
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Chris Walker (Sec)	020 8398 6651
Esher and District Amnesty International	Secretary	gettle51@msn.com
Hampton Court Way Allotment Association	Lettings: John Morgan	020 8398 3049
Lynwood Allotment Society	Louise Flaig	020 8398 7704
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
National Trust: Richmond Association	Membership Secretary	020 8894 2972
Soroptimist International (Kingston District)	Secretary: Pat Harman	020 8390 3507
Thames Ditton Women's Institute (W.I.)	Secretary	020 8398 8615

OTHER

Cancer Research UK	Mrs. Vivienne Harris	020 8398 6787
Elmbridge Fairtrade Network	Judy Porter	020 8398 6401
University of the Third Age (U3A)	Hon Sec Anne Brown	01932 881633
Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Helen Mason	08456 528 529
	Membership: Sue Morris	020 8224 0980

Please contact the Editor to amend these listings



By Hook or Crook



The House of Commons Defence Committee, drawing attention to the devastating effects of a putative hostile, space-based ‘Goldeneye’ weapon focusing an electromagnetic pulse on Britain, has called upon the Government to treat the matter “with the seriousness it deserves.” Leaving aside this classic English ambiguity (why couldn’t they just say “very seriously”?), there can be no doubt that taking out all electronic equipment would cause a frightful degradation of essential services that keep our fragile advanced society working, starting with the bar at the House of Commons.

Just imagine a society where electricity, water and sewage were degraded; where the trains could not be relied upon, the banking system was shot, records were lost or unobtainable, medical treatment was a matter of cash, luck or influence, little food was available in local shops, and you couldn’t drive from one side of the village to the other to pick up your kids from the school Portakabin because everything had seized up completely!

Oh, wait... Yes. whether a Goldeneye weapon would be more devastating than the effects of profligate bankers and borrowers, inept utilities and public institutions, politicians with hardly a spark of integrity, a hamstrung NHS, education that produces people who can’t add up or spell, roadworks scheduled in the working week, and copper wire thieves, is a moot question – to be

considered with the seriousness it deserves. But then, where there are clouds there are also silver linings. Over the past few years around here, there have been some satisfying instances where we the people have rolled back entropic doom at least for a while. We managed to head off plans to sell Thames Ditton Hall, and close the Ember Centre, and that led to a thriving Intergenerational Centre in the village. We helped to start the avalanche that buried Surrey’s pay-and-display aberration. We got longer-stay charges in the car park halved to realistic levels. We got some drains improved at long last.

We’ve beaten off, or watered down, much unacceptable development and encouraged more constructive stuff. We even got a phone mast erected at a more suitable site. And now we’ve got the Boundary Commission to see reason where Surrey County Council would not. We’ve helped build pressure to get better street-lights for our heritage areas – Elmbridge is, I think, the only borough in the county that has done this.

These little victories bring some comfort and hope against the looming slow cataclysm of cuts, recession, impoverishment, and degradation of facilities. They’re achieved by not rolling over; by hard work, making a good case and mobilising active support from you. I raise my glass to you, O residents – the Defence Committee for Thames Ditton and Weston Green. Thanks. Seriously.

Editor



Two ways to treat your Pet

To keep them healthy, pets should be seen at least once every 12-months by a vet. So why not bring them along to Beech House, Thames Ditton for their regular health checks. This way, we can detect potential illnesses early and nip them in the bud.

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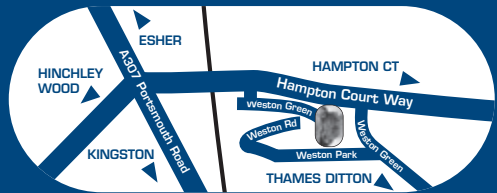
Prevention, we think, is better than Cure.

To keep them happy, play with them, exercise them, give them loads of praise and cuddles and spoil them with some special treats and toys. So pop into the "Beech House Pet Stop" for a wide selection of the very best.

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