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

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THAMES DITTON TODAY

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Thames Ditton Today is delivered to an influential 5000 households throughout Thames Ditton, Weston Green and East Molesey. Contact Verity Park for rates for full page, half and quarter page advertising.

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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 village Christmas trees. The subscription is only £3 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions can be paid via our website www.residents-association.com; subscriptions (in an envelope please) may be left at Boots Pharmacy, 14 High Street, Thames Ditton or Thorkhill Road Pharmacy, 94 Thorkhill Road, Thames Ditton. Or mail to Membership Secretary Peter Haynes at 6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton KT7 0JJ. Thank you.

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RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

About the Association

Founded in 1934 our Association is a strong, locally based non-party-political organisation concerned with protecting the amenities and furthering the interests of residents. We work to preserve and enhance the best in our attractive environment and the quality of life of everyone in our community. Through regular meetings, social activities, our magazine and website we keep in touch with residents' views and we raise and spend funds for the benefit of the community, from tree and bulb planting to contesting unacceptable development projects. With six Residents' Councillors covering the two electoral wards we have a strong voice on Elmbridge Council working with other Residents' Councillors to ensure that decisions are based on the needs of local communities and on good management rather than on party politics.

Our Residents' County Councillors Peter Hickman (TD + WG) and Stuart Selleck (East Molesey) represent our views at Surrey County Council.

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The Next Residents' Association Open Meetings are

Tuesday 21 June 8pm - All Saints Church, Weston Green
Tuesday 20 September 8pm - Vera Fletcher Hall, Thames Ditton

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News from the Residents' Association to mid-May



Borough Elections

The May election to Elmbridge Borough Council produced excellent results for Residents' Associations throughout Elmbridge and saw Conservatives lose overall control of the council.

19 Residents' Association councillors will form the new Administration together with 7 Liberal Democrats. Jointly they will lead the Council, against 22 Conservatives, who now have 12 fewer seats. This result was certainly influenced by the Conservative decision to reduce the number of councillors and change many ward boundaries, a decision which was widely unpopular. However, although the Conservatives have lost control of the council, the changes to the ward boundaries cannot be reversed as the final decision was taken by the Government Boundary Commission.

Residents' Association candidates were all returned in our two wards (Thames Ditton, and Hinchley Wood & Weston Green). We are delighted that Councillor Tannia Shipley will be our new Mayor. Three of our local Councillors will take cabinet positions in the new administration: Karen Randolph will be responsible for Planning Services, Ruth Lyon for Social Affairs and Community Services and Janet Turner for Leisure and Culture. In addition they will continue to serve local residents as normal. More details are on page 13.

Our Residents' Association Surrey County Councillors are unaffected by the election.

Peter Hickman continues to serve Thames Ditton & Weston Green, and Stuart Selleck East Molesey.

Queen's 90th Birthday

The Queen's 90th birthday celebrations -which ran from Her Majesty's actual 90th birthday on April 21 until Her Majesty's official birthday on Saturday June 11 - was



High Street flying the flag(s)

a great opportunity to turn Thames Ditton High Street into a riot of red, white and blue.

Fabulous hand-sewn applied Union Jack flags (courtesy of the Retailers' Association Keep the Heart in our High Street campaign) adorned shops and houses. More than 200 metres of beautiful hand-made cotton bunting was specially sewn by the Thames Ditton Crafters to add to the scene. The High Street looked very festive – maybe we should have a Thames Ditton flag to fly?



Publican Mick Pearson and artists William James and Alan Hepburn

At the April Thames Ditton Farmers' Market a very special Royal themed interactive artwork was unveiled.

This was painted by local artist Alan Hepburn and his talented grandson William James in honour of the Queen's 90th Birthday and St George's Day. Great fun was had by all imagining themselves as part of the great Tudor family down the road.

The theme of brightening up the village continued as a dedicated group of volunteers got together in April as part of the Thames Ditton In Bloom project to make Thames Ditton Station a prettier place for commuters and visitors. The local 'Men In Sheds' group put together some super wooden troughs and planters and volunteers planted them out.



Volunteer bloomers!

These colourful initiatives were co-ordinated by Residents' Association Councillor Tricia Bland who said: "I must thank so many people who gave their time, enthusiasm and expertise to make these initiatives possible. Thanks also to EBC Elmbridge In Bloom, to South West Trains for their donations to the planting, and to the Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association for their support."

If you can offer some time to help keep the displays in bloom please contact the team on tdwgra@the-blands.co.uk.

Secret Gardens of Thames Ditton

Keep the garden theme going by taking a tour around the secret gardens of Thames Ditton on Sunday June 19 from 1-5pm. In accordance with fine local tradition tea and cake will also be available!

Victory for allotment holders

Allotment holders across Elmbridge were alarmed in March to hear from Elmbridge Borough Council that their 25-year leases were to be reduced to only 5 years, with only two weeks notice and with a 12 month break clause exposing them to the risk of further changes.

Allotment holders feared the sale of the allotments for development and appealed to Residents' Association councillors for help. Councillor Ruth Lyon co-ordinated the response and together with other RA councillors put a question to the Conservative Leader of the Council, John O'Reilly.

This forced a change of heart by the Council and all the allotment associations in the borough will now have their leases renewed on the same 25-year lease terms.



Victory for allotment holders

The Council's decision had not gone to any committee and no local councillors, regardless of party, were informed or their views sought. We hope that the lesson is learned that important decisions like this must be discussed and agreed by the relevant committee and that the changes in the Council control after the local elections in May will bring about a more sensible and democratic approach.

Ann Bailey from Beauchamp Road allotments said: "A huge thank-you to Residents' Association councillors Ruth Lyon, Stuart Selleck and Nigel Haig- Brown who led the fight."

Planning

Weston Green School (2015/0980)

The Travel Plan is currently being considered by officers and will be reviewed at the Area Planning Sub-Committee in June.

An application has been received for **6 The Broadway, Thames Ditton (2016/0660)** for change of use for part of the electrical shop from A1 Retail to A5 Takeaway, with new

shop front signage and extractor ducting to the rear. (Grilled and fried chicken, chips and similar products).

An updated planning application for **Wells Cottage, 35 Ashley Road (2016/0659)** is under consideration.

The application at **87/89 Grove Way (2015/3368)** for a pair of semis with room in the roof space and dormer window was refused.



Getting to grips with litter

The Thames Ditton litter pickers have been out and about in their RA high-viz vests helping to keep our local area litter free. At the last count around 20 people had joined the group. For more information or to join the group, email Councillor Tricia Bland: tdwgra@the-blands.co.uk

You will soon be seeing hi-viz litter pickers out and about in a project to **Keep Weston Green Clean**. The vests are on order and if you would like to join in and offer to help please contact Councillor Tannia Shipley: tshipley@elmbridge.gov.uk

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The Home of Compassion

Caring Homes held an Open Weekend on April 23-24 and it was good to see so many locals taking a look around on the escorted tours. Our article on page 19 brings us up to date on the fortunes of the Home of Compassion.

Sport Relief Mile

Locals young and old joined the Elevate Boot Campers in March to run or walk a Sport Relief Mile on Giggs Hill Green. A total of £500 was raised (although it's not clear how much was from running and how much was from eating cake!)



Bootcampers



Sophie Pritchard sent us a photo of her one-year-old daughter Elodie Hall, reading our spring edition. She just turned one, so possibly our youngest fan yet!?

Dates for your diary

Secret Gardens of Thames Ditton Sunday June 19 1-5pm – Tickets are available from the Stitchery and Secret Garden florists in Thames Ditton.

Farmers' Market Saturday June 25, Saturday July 23 & Saturday August 27
George and Dragon car park 9-1pm

Summer Fair All Saints Weston Green Saturday July 2 12.30 – 3pm

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Elmbridge Borough Council Elections – huge support for Residents’ Associations



Thames Ditton Councillors Karen Randolph, Ruth Lyon and Tricia Bland

The recent local government elections produced excellent results for Residents’ Associations throughout Elmbridge and saw the Conservatives lose control of Elmbridge Borough Council.

Tricia Bland	Res Assoc.	1,664
Karen Randolph	Res Assoc.	1,647
Ruth Lyon	Res Assoc.	1,636
Mandy Sanson	Conservative	474
Graham West	Conservative	423
Andrew Reid	Conservative	381
Alanko Jaska	Lib Dem	257

Following the Conservative initiated reduction in the number of wards from 22 to 16, and the reduction in councillors from 60 to 48, the Council representation is now:

- Conservatives22
- Residents’ Associations19
- Liberal Democrats7

In the expanded Thames Ditton ward, which now includes 940 households from East Molesey, the three existing Residents’ Association Councillors were emphatically re-elected. The poll results were:

RA Councillor Karen Randolph said: “We really appreciate the support of residents across the new ward. We are very aware that the boundary changes, which were not supported by the Residents’ Associations, have meant some Molesey residents find they are now in Thames Ditton ward. I can assure those residents that we have always worked closely with our counterparts from the Molesey Residents’ Association and we will continue to do so. We look forward to representing everyone within the ward.”

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Hinchley Wood and Weston Green Councillors; Tannia Shipley, Nigel Haig-Brown, Janet Turner

The three candidates jointly sponsored by the Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association and the Hinchley Wood Residents' Association were also re-elected. The poll results were

Tannia Shipley	Res Assoc.	1,950
Janet Turner	Res Assoc.	1,906
Nigel Haig-Brown	Res Assoc.	1,861
Charlotte Sharman	Conservatives	465
Martin Fox	Conservatives	459
Craig Harrison	Conservatives	441

Tannia Shipley had the distinction of polling the highest vote of any candidate in Elmbridge. We send her our best wishes for her year as Mayor of Elmbridge.

The Government Boundary Commission decision to merge Weston Green and Hinchley Wood into one ward caused some consternation among residents. However,

at the RA AGM Councillor Nigel Haig-Brown said that councillors would be getting to know the new enlarged ward and will represent everyone.

Running a successful campaign depends on the goodwill and help of volunteers. Our marvellous results reflect the benefit of their contributions - delivering manifestos, displaying election boards, and patiently working as tellers at the polling stations. The Association's sincere thanks go to all of them.

Surrey County Councillors Peter Hickman (TD + WG) and Stuart Selleck (East Molesey) are not affected by this election

All our councillors look forward to representing residents in Council.

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A day at the seaside – Weston Green fair



Fancy a trip to the seaside this summer but don't fancy sitting in long queues of traffic to get there? How about popping along to All Saints Weston Green, Chestnut Avenue to enjoy all the fun of 'A Day at the Seaside' from the comfort of a village near you!

This year our summer fair will take place on Saturday July 2 from 12.30-3pm.

Highlights will include many seaside attractions such as Punch and Judy, candyfloss and fish and chips.

For the third year running there will be the annual 'bake-off', judged by Oli Blanc (son of top chef Raymond) and we can expect another super performance from talented local cooks.

We are hoping local young bakers will be inspired to enter a batch of their home-made rock cakes - hopefully not rock hard!

Start planning your prize-winning recipes now. This year we would like you to imagine a family picnic on the beach. Entry classes include sausage rolls, scones and home-made lemonade.

Entry forms can be found in the April/May edition of the All Saints Parish Magazine and on the Residents' Association website - **residents-association.com**

Louise Russell

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Home of Compassion



The transformation of the Home of Compassion (HOC) to state of the art care home has been a journey.

The main building was commissioned by Charlotte Boyle Walsingham in 1786 and remodelled by subsequent owners. In 1905 the house and stables were sold to Anglican Nuns who renamed it the Home of Compassion, and built the priory and chapel. It became a 46 bed nursing home in 1925.

In the 1960's the last surviving sister died and until 2008 the HOC was managed by Trustees of the charity Walsingham Care. The building needed upgrading to meet modern care home standards so in 2004 planning permission was granted for an 80 bed retirement home including a 3 storey wing to the east of the main building and a second floor in the chapel. Building this would require significant investment and expertise. The Trustees decided to sell.

The sale was not straightforward. A covenant restricted use to a care home, single family occupancy or school and the building was Grade 2 Listed so any alterations to the building required Listed Building Consent.

In 2008 the HOC was bought for approx. £4.2m by Caring Homes Group, one of the largest privately owned care home groups in the UK. This award winning company set up by mother and son team Helena and Paul Jeffrey in 1994, was attracted to the building and setting. Caring Homes already owned Galsworthy House in Kingston so were familiar with the restoration and upkeep of Listed buildings.

In 2008 Caring Homes submitted their first planning application for the HOC, a 65 bed care home including refurbishment of the main building, ground and first floor extensions to the chapel and priory, a second floor extension to the chapel and erection of a 3 storey east wing adjacent to the main building. It took its lead from the previously approved 2004 application but had 15 less bedrooms and its footprint increased by only 67sqm. The new east wing (adjacent to Boyle Farm) was lower than previously approved and featured a large pitched glass atrium roof which was clearly visible. The design incorporated spacious care suites and communal rooms capable of accommodating wheelchairs and hoists. It detailed the amount of work

necessary to restore the building. Despite being granted planning permission it was never built. The world economic downturn put the project on hold.



Main stairwell at risk

Between 2006 and 2014 the HOC was unoccupied and subject to vandalism and squatters. Lead was stripped off roofs causing water damage. Regular meetings took place between Caring Homes and the EBC Heritage Officer (who deemed the building “at risk”) to ensure it was weatherproofed and further deterioration kept to the minimum. It was a period of concern. Behind the scenes efforts were made to protect it. In January 2009 it was boarded up, heaters, security alarms, cameras with movement detectors and perimeter fencing were installed. Squatters who took possession in October 2011 were removed swiftly and security increased. The cost was considerable.

In 2013 with an upturn in the economic climate Caring Homes submitted a second planning application, for a 79 bed care home. Retaining the 3 storey east wing

extension (same size as before), converting the chapel and priory with two new floors, altering the main building and upgrading the dilapidated conservatory. It addressed residents’ previous objections by removing the controversial glass atrium roof from the east wing and the glass balcony from the first floor of the chapel, retaining a tree, and changes to parking provision.

Crucially the application addressed the critical state. Caring Homes had commissioned a “schedule of conditions” as part of their 2008 application, this was updated in 2013 and it formed the programme for restoration works. It was a detailed building survey running to 125 pages covering everything from roof, brickwork, joinery, windows, floors, ceilings, coving, architrave, doors and much more. It listed by location the condition of all items and categorised them A-E according to the urgency for work to be done. The vast majority fell in the A-B categories of very urgent or urgent. Caring Homes proposed to restore much of the building without alteration but where necessary make any replacement compatible with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. These “schedules” are often provided by developers but the integrity of intent can be questionable. Such was the concern about the state of the building that all 3 EBC Residents’ Association Councillors requested the application was referred to English Heritage for advice.

English Heritage made recommendations which Caring Homes took on board. They also requested a planning condition that high quality materials and finishes were used and all architectural details retained as suited a Grade 2 listed building. Particular mention was made of the library which had to be entirely restored. The application was approved.

Local resident David Pascoe followed the situation closely, knew the building well, and believed the library alone made the HOC worthy of a higher heritage Listing. He submitted a report to English Heritage to review this. It took perseverance but the Listing was raised to Grade 2 star, one level below Grade 1 which covers buildings like Hampton Court Palace. This was significant. 92% of Listed Buildings are Grade 2, but only 5.5% are deemed of significant national importance to be Grade 2 star Listed. Any materials used to restore the HOC had to match the original and specialist craftsmen skilled in heritage restoration employed, with heritage approval.

It wasn't until June 2014 a year after the planning application was approved that work could begin. Throughout this time Caring Homes met regularly with Elmbridge Heritage Officers to review materials, approve specialist contractors and the building process. They set up monthly meetings for local residents to monitor the work which continued throughout the build. This was a huge task as every part of the building was scrutinised.



The Library, including the fully restored 'verre eglomise' panels



The library before restoration

The library at the HOC is significant because it contains the "verre eglomise." Charlotte Boyle, daughter of Charlotte Boyle Walsingham was very skilled in the art of verre eglomise, which are painted glass panels. Her 28 black background and gold leaf glass panels, are regarded as the finest work of its period in Surrey. Caring Homes commissioned specialist company Will Foster Specialist Painting to restore them.

The scale of restoration work undertaken to the library alone was considerable. Before work commenced a photographic survey of the room including the verre eglomise panels was taken. Mouldings were made of all decorative features including the cornicing, dado/picture rails, roses and features of the shelving and craftsmen made wooden replacements to exactly match the existing. Floor joists were repaired and lath and plaster used to reinforce the ceiling from above. All wall plaster was repaired using original materials. All metal joinery was refurbished and reinstated. The bookcases were refurbished and 2 secret doors made operational and lockable.

The windows and their shutters, weights and pulley systems were repaired to working order on site. Window glass panels were only replaced where damaged. Timber repairs were minimal due to the high quality of the original timber used. Period paint for the wood and walls was used at significant extra cost.

As the main building is Listed it doesn't have to meet the same standards of energy efficiency as the new build but nevertheless upgrades were carried out to improve energy efficiency including refurbishing trickle vents and adding weather seals in a subtle manner as approved by Historic England. Shutters were restored, the fireplaces refurbished, the chimneys surveyed and repaired and though not in current use can be returned to use at any time. A traditional wet radiator system has been installed with pipes laid in the floor voids. The ground floor, which is a suspended timber floor was upgraded to incorporate fire protection and thermal insulation, all works were done from below to ensure existing floor boards were not disturbed. Doors have to be fit for purpose and meet current fire regulations so many that were missing have been replaced with Regency 6 panel oak doors. Existing roofs were stripped back and re-roofed using reclaimed slate from the existing roof, and slate sourced to match it. All external joinery was stripped, repaired and repainted as necessary. Much of this work has been needed for many decades

Some of the work included removing unsympathetic additions including restoring the original decorative nosings that were butchered when a lift was installed in the 1970's. The lift and lift pit were removed. Skirting and architrave was replicated and replaced- some of which had been damaged by previous owners through

the clumsy installation of electrical and plumbing services.

The building had significant issues with fungal and beetle infestation so a programme of eradication was put in place before any work commenced. Of course not all work can be predicted by survey. On inspection the timbers in the basement were found to be chronically decayed with insect attack and rot so the floor had to be replaced. Sections of the boundary wall of the chapel and priory elevation on the High Street were found to be dangerous. Agreement was reached with the Heritage Officer to repair rather than replace the wall. This was done by dowelling into the wall at regular intervals and stitching it back to a new steel frame, replacing the outer face of the lower part of the wall.

The handrail on the atrium in the entrance hall was too low to meet safety requirements



Entrance hallway almost complete

so a glass safety screen was installed behind it and the original handrail retained. This was achieved by losing one of the bedroom suites and was done in consultation with Historic England and Elmbridge Heritage Officers and with Listed Building Consent.

The clock tower has been renovated. The weather vane, joinery, clock face and hands repainted, the chimes are now in working order and have been refitted. And the folly has been structurally repaired including all the timbers and a new roof.

The cost of renovation works is in excess of £10m.

However, this state of the art care home includes separate wings for residential, nursing and dementia care, has a hair salon/nail bar, therapy room, activities rooms, cinema, lounges, private dining room, and clinical room. None of this can be achieved

without clever design to incorporate them into the existing.

Few owners would have pursued this project with such precision, more likely sold up and moved on as costs increased. To their credit Caring Homes have rescued what is widely thought to be one of the finest houses on the river between Staines and Windsor and made it their flagship care home. Christine Manly Heritage Office at EBC said “We are delighted to see this important Listed building restored and returned to a use which will safeguard it for the future”.

Let’s hope Caring Homes keep their promise and once again there will be village events at the HOC and that residents, their guests and staff will be warmly welcomed to our village.

Sandra Dennis



simon simpson

BA(Hons) MSc MAREBT BABCP UKCP MNRHP

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Weston Youth Arts Project



Future filmmakers?

Has Hollywood come to Weston Green? A group of teenagers from Weston Green, Thames Ditton and Hinchley Wood have spent the last few months immersed in the world of film and photography, thanks to a community initiative developed by All Saints Weston.

The Weston Youth Arts project, which has been running since January this year, provides twice-monthly sessions with visiting professionals on photography and video skills. Participants have explored how to frame their shots, lighting, composition and other technical skills as well as the mechanics of shooting video, creating a storyboard and how to work on a video shoot.

The group has been privileged to have some fantastic people coming down to work with them – Nick Handel (ex-BBC producer), Jon Ross (Technical Manager at GLive in Guildford), Paul Bamford (Top Gear cameraman), Laurence Catford (freelance film editor) and Becs Gregg (freelance photographer).

Over the last few months as they have been building their skills they have also been planning their video and photography shoots. The team will create a short film made up of interviews and documentary style footage celebrating life in Elmbridge from our young peoples' perspective.



Cameras in use

These films will be shown in a gala screening on Tuesday 28 June at 7.30pm at All Saints Weston which will also launch the exhibition.

The Revd. Phillip Johnson, Vicar of All Saints Weston, said: “This project has allowed us to provide a once in a lifetime opportunity for these young people. The range of working professionals who have contributed to the project is truly staggering and I don’t think that the students can believe their luck!”

One of the participants, Sam Cruthers, 13, said: “I’ve really enjoyed this project. Working and meeting these people has been great, and the skills I’ve learnt have definitely made me think about a career in filmmaking.”

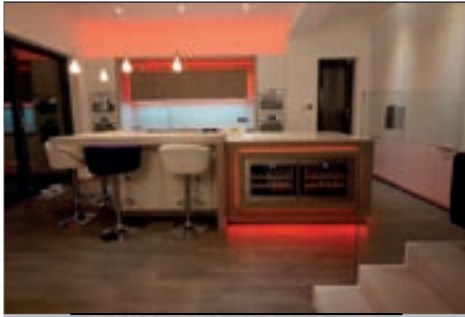
The project has been supported by Elmbridge Borough Council, the Rank Foundation, Residents’ Association County Councillor Peter Hickman, the Rowan Bentall Trust and the Bishop of Guildford’s Foundation. Tickets for the Gala Screening are available from www.allsaintsweston.com or on Eventbrite.

The exhibition will run from Wednesday 29 June to Sunday 24 July and is free to members of the public.

All Saints Weston has a thriving Youth Group that meets on Sunday evenings – all young people (Year 7 and above) are welcome to join. Check out the website www.allsaintsweston.com for more information.



Group work



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Hampton Court Way allotments – a community treasure



Hampton Court Way Allotments

Our site came about as the result of a Compulsory Purchase Order made by the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries in 1949, and completed in 1950/51, to provide a permanent allotment site at Hampton Court Way. The land was purchased from Davis Estates Limited & Captain Lichfield-Speer. It took some time before the site was usable for growing fruit and vegetables and initially only a small section was available to rent.

While getting the allotments up and running various parts were leased to others on short-term tenancy agreements; two acres to a rose nursery based in Chessington, two acres to a local farmer for grazing and two plots for growing Christmas trees.

In 1963 a lease was granted to The Electricity Company and a sub-station was installed on site which is still in use today. In 1993 the allotments became self-governing and a lease was granted to the Trustees in April of that year. A short while later in 1995 the Council sold off part of the site to householders in Broadfields, with the proviso that the land should only be used as gardens. With hindsight this seems a real shame as plots are so much in demand now, although I know this hasn't always been the case. In fact the old adage of "use it or lose it" still applies, particularly when councils are under so much pressure to build new homes. We are under no illusion that our site is in a prime location but it is a treasured and much-valued community asset that we hope will remain for many years more.



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There are 74 full plots on our site but, over the years, many have been split and are let as half-plots. We currently have 98 tenants and 54 helper members. We are also home to the Kingston Beekeepers Society and are lucky enough to have several bee hives permanently on site. If you want to know more, or perhaps join them for a one day “hands on” experience, then take a look at their website www.kingstonbeekeepers.org.uk



A little different? Open day 1995

If, like many people, you think allotments are just for retired people then you would be wrong. At Hampton Court Way we are a very diverse group. Yes some of our members are retired but they are by no means the majority. There are numerous children who are regular visitors and I think our youngest helper is about 10 months old.

It is amazing how quickly you become attached to “your plot”. I can’t imagine ever leaving mine and I know some of our members have had plots for over 35 years.

So why have an allotment? Well, there are many reasons: it is a sure way of knowing what chemicals, if any, have been used on your fruit and vegetables. The produce usually tastes great, especially when it is picked and used within a few hours. Although it can be hard work it is also very rewarding and an excellent way to de-stress.

The majority of ‘allotmenters’ are extremely kind and generous people; they will share their knowledge and expertise, give their time freely to help others and share their excess plants and produce including jams, chutneys and all manner of home-made goodies. If you think you would like to give it a go and have the time to take on an allotment why not contact our lettings manager piotr@admojo.co.uk and put your name on our waiting list?

We are a pretty social group and impromptu gatherings, barbecues or picnics are not unusual. Many plot holders enjoy a chat and the offer of a cup of tea, perhaps with the added bonus of biscuits or cake, is rarely refused. Our main social event is a summer barbecue and this is always well attended. It is also when the much-coveted prize for best plot is awarded.

In common with other local allotments we are affiliated to Esher & Molesey Garden Society (EMGS). This allows us to use the trading hut, based at Beauchamp Road Allotments, to purchase garden supplies at reduced prices. We also support EMGS with their plant stall at Molesey Carnival (4 June) and their annual flower show. Not that we are competitive or anything but Hampton Court Way Allotments are the current holders of the Best Allotment prize in the inter-allotment site competition! Why not come along to the next show, Saturday 13 August at St Nicholas Church Hall, Thames Ditton, and see the quality of the produce, share in the refreshments and perhaps obtain a few tips on growing techniques?

Jill McDermott



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Imber Court – now open to all



Mention Imber Court, and most of us will think Met Police and their horses. Well, think again. Whoever you are – be it young family, pensioner or someone who likes to watch the footy on Sky - the enthusiastic staff believe that you will find something here for you.

The Met Police bought the original race course here in 1919 to train horses. The clubhouse was built seven years later with the help of a charitable donation from the Times Police Fund to reward the police for their efforts during the General Strike, and in 1929 the club was established.

Now, Imber Court is a non-profit making private members' club. It offers a diverse

range of leisure facilities to be enjoyed by local residents. It also offers banqueting and conference services which members can access with a discount.

I met Michael, the General Manager, and Kate, his deputy, to ask them about the 'new Imber Court' as we sat on the quiet terrace overlooking the extensive grounds around us. The loyal, and in most cases long-serving, Imber Court staff are very excited about welcoming new members and were keen to show me round their facilities.

Michael told me that at Imber Court you can tailor your membership to meet your needs. The basic membership cost is £100 per year or £10 per month for 12 months. This enables you to get to know the club and



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visit it for the benefit of a quiet drink on a sunny afternoon knowing the kids are safe in the playground, or to use the extensive private grounds, where you can take the dog for a walk or go for a picnic.

You can watch Sky TV in the bar or join in the regular social events and dance classes.

You can then buy additional membership to use other facilities that take your fancy, such as the gym or the pool to get back your fitness, or to play tennis, or bowls and so on. Or you can take advantage of the discounted swimming lessons for your children. It really is a pick and mix!

Each individual member is on an equal footing and has the right to have a say in the club. All profits are invested back into the club and already they are renovating the restaurant with a new chef and planning to build four new hard clay tennis courts over the coming months.

Although it draws on its police heritage to take advantage of access to trained dogs and horses and equipment such as helicopters for its big outdoor events, members associated with the police force have no extra privileges, so it really is open to all.

Kate said: “People have lived near us for 15 or 20 years and they don’t know what’s inside, so we hope everyone will come and have a look. We think they’ll like us.”

To visit Imber Court, you can drop in at any time. At weekends it’s best to make an appointment to avoid disappointment.

Alternatively, go along to their Open Day and Beer Festival on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 September 2016. For further information visit www.imbercourt.com

Julie Royce



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I'm OK; who needs Neighbourhood Watch?



You may think that you have security covered. You have a burglar alarm, security lights, quality door and window locks, and your home is a fortress. Why would you need anything more; you're safe. But are you? You don't live in isolation; you're part of a community, among other houses and neighbours. If the road you live in has security weaknesses it is at risk from burglars, conmen, fraudsters, vandals and other undesirables, and once they see opportunities in your road they will exploit them. In which case you'd better hope your security is better than your neighbours', as they'll pick on the easiest. And if your neighbours' security is weaker than yours, it's a good route into your garden, shed, garage and home.

So what are these weaknesses? A few examples; refuse bins left where they can be moved to help climb over a wall; unlocked side gates in darker areas away from street lights; cars unlocked in driveways; unlocked garages and sheds (can someone get easily into your neighbour's garden, open the shed, take a spade, hop over into your back garden and lever open your window or patio door?) When tradesmen knock at a neighbour's door to sell something / offer to buy antiques / warn about loose roof tiles that need work and give a calling card with only name and mobile number, does your neighbour send them away, call you to warn you and phone 101 or Trading Standards to report it? Or is your door the next to be called at?

Neighbourhood Watch aims to inform you of the risks, including ever more realistic cons and scams, so that you are informed and prepared should you encounter them (these can be from door step callers, phone calls or emails). We advise about security measures such as arranging with a neighbour to put your bins out for bin day (even if they're empty) when you're away and perhaps parking their car in your driveway to make your home look inhabited, advice about siting of security lighting, planting of shrubs to make climbing walls and fences or accessing windows more difficult, and provision of door window stickers and road signs to deter potential miscreants.

This only works properly if you and your neighbours work together; you need to be able to trust your neighbours' security and they need to trust yours. Some of your neighbours may be elderly or infirm and their homes may appear to be easy targets; help them protect themselves and you're also protecting your whole neighbourhood including your own home.

Do you live in an active Neighbourhood Watch? Are you a member? Not sure? Want to join? (it's free!). Contact John Haberfield 020 8398 5256 email: jhaberfi@yahoo.co.uk or go to our website at elmbridgenhw.ourwatch.org.uk

John Haberfield

Please be vigilant

A man called at the door of a local elderly couple. He said that he was from Metrorod and that there was a damaged pipe outside their house.

They then received a series of phone calls claiming to be from the Council and Metrorod. The last call was from a man with an Irish accent who put a lot of pressure on the couple to pay a deposit of £4500 for a pump by 4pm that day and when they declined, said their house would be ruined because of backed up sewage.

The couple were Neighbourhood Watch members and recognised that this was a scam. They did not pay any money and reported the incident to police providing them with a full description of the culprit; white, good looking, in his thirties, short and stocky with dark hair and wearing a yellow raincoat.



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Hawkes in Thames Ditton



If it were not for our councillors putting forward the name for Hawkes' Yard behind the High Street, nor for a marathon enthusiast at the Cricket Club instigating a road race named after a club President who had just died, there would be nothing now to mark the name of Hawkes in Thames Ditton. Yet this working family thrived in the village for over 250 years. During that time more than 120 Hawkes were born in Thames Ditton, baptised at St Nicholas, and worked in the parish in Thames Ditton and Weston Green. Now there is not one.

Market Gardening

Originating from a small agricultural village in Hampshire, Charles Hawkes married Ann Collins at Hampton in 1728 and they settled in Thames Ditton. Circumstantial evidence suggests that these first Hawkes were market gardeners, joining the growing number supplying London and its environs.

One such market gardener was Joseph Wells, who arrived in the village from Ockham in the 1790s and lived in what has since been known as Wells Cottage, the rear of which now faces Ashley Road. Wells accumulated some 13 acres of market gardening land in central Thames Ditton, including the land bounded by Hoe Lane (now Station Road), the rear of the High Street, Church Walk and what is now Speer Road but was then just a lane. He also held part of a large field complex called the Stones which I believe was north of the west end of Church Walk. This was most likely the place where the men from the workhouse were sent to dig gravel for

repair of the highways, for which the parish was responsible.

The number of Hawkes in the village had grown to around 20 by the time William Hawkes, son of market gardener James Hawkes (1770-1851), married Joseph Wells' niece Kezia Wells from Molesey. The couple lived with Joseph in Wells Cottage, and Joseph, who was unmarried and childless, left "to William Hawkes of Thames Ditton aforesaid Labourer all that piece or parcel of Ground containing two Acres being freehold situate at Thames Ditton aforesaid in one of those fields called the Stones." Following Wells' death there was an argument over the ownership of this land, won by William Speer to whom William Hawkes paid a mortgage thereafter. To Kezia, Wells thoughtfully left "the four post Bedstead with the Bed Bolster Pillows Blankets Sheets Hangings and Appendages thereto belonging which is now in the Room over the Kitchen" at Wells cottage. The four-poster came in handy, for Kezia conceived and bore 11 little Hawkes.

Meanwhile William's uncle Thomas Hawkes (abt. 1773 – 1851), also a gardener, brought his bride Sarah Maish of Teddington back to Thames Ditton where they had seven children. The sixth, and the eldest surviving son, was christened Thomas Hawkes (1812). He too was a gardener. He married Mary Marsh and in 1844 they had their only child in Surbiton – Thomas Henry Hawkes. Thomas Henry Hawkes' factory yard in Thames Ditton would be commemorated in the place name a century and a half later.

The title apportionment of 1843 provides a snapshot of Hawkes residences in the then parish of Thames Ditton. Lot 338 on the title map shows cottages and a garden owned and occupied by a William Hawkes at Weston Green (near where the Cricketers pub is/was). Two other nearby cottages owned by James Dixon were occupied by various Hawkes. Dixon also owned the three old cottages on the High Street opposite Boyle Farm, lots 121, 122 and 123 on the title map, which were occupied by James Hawkes “and others.” The 1841 census shows 19 Hawkes breeding in Thames Ditton, so there may have been several others temporarily rooming without formal leases or copyholds.

Hawkes the bottler

Young Thomas Henry Hawkes’ father died before the 1851 census, which finds him aged six living with mother Mary, widow, at Surbiton Hill where she survived by making hats. When his grandfather also died, in 1855, Mary and Thomas Henry returned to Thames Ditton to live with his grandmother Sarah. We find them in the High Street when the 1861 census was taken, with Sarah, now 84, of no occupation, Mary, aged 51, sewing, and Thomas Henry Hawkes a grocer’s assistant, keeping the household afloat. From the itemisation in the census they were almost certainly not far from the cottage in which Thomas Henry was to establish his bottling business over the following decade, after marrying Ellen Brown of Weybridge, rescuing her from service.

In the mid-1880s ginger beer, made from a fermented “plant” of yeast and sugar, became a highly popular drink. This is held in no small part to have been influenced by soldiers returning from India, where this particular ginger concoction most likely originated (there were other recipes).

At the same time the manufacture of bottles was becoming more organised and they could be sourced from several manufacturers. Thomas Henry Hawkes was able to start, by pure entrepreneurship, a ginger beer manufacturing and bottling plant in Northend Cottage on Thames Ditton High Street (1871 census), almost certainly a cottage on the site of the subsequent bottling plant and one of a pair – the other being Southend Cottage – owned by the Speers.



Former factory in the High Street

Don’t try this at home

Be careful if you try making your own ginger beer, by the way. One of my aunts taught me – but as a young man I was jolly glad not to be on the downstairs loo when one of the bottles in which I stored the stuff there exploded. There was nothing left except powdered glass and the hinged ceramic stopper!

Thomas Henry Hawkes put the family up a class as the factory branched out into mineral waters and lemonade. He and Ellen had four sons, the first two of whom, Arthur Henry and Frederick William, took on the factory in due course while the third, Edward, became a clerk at the foundry and later moved to the rates office at Ripley. The fourth, Thomas Frank, became an architect



– and later lived on Lower Green Road in Weston Green. They had two sisters, Mary named after Thomas Henry Hawkes' mother (who by 1871 was a stationer at the post office in Thames Ditton), and Ellen after Thomas' wife.

Historic ginger beer bottle

Descent to Harry Hawkes

Arthur Henry Hawkes as the eldest son seems to have inherited the main interest in the bottling factory. He married another Ellen, from Ripley, bought a semi-detached house on the new Ashley Road, laid down at the very end of the 1800s, and named it Clovelly, now more prosaically No. 23. His father Thomas bought the one next door at No. 21. They cost about £200 the pair. Meanwhile Arthur's brother Frederick, who also worked at the factory, bought Elmdene in Church Walk (No. 31) just around the corner. Thomas, the founder of the factory, died in 1915.

Thomas' grandson Albert Henry Hawkes – known as Harry – was Arthur's eldest son, born 23 November 1906, and he led a life of relative comfort. No stranger to the George and Dragon, he devoted much of his leisure time to cricket. Harry was sent to Cranleigh School, where he played for the school XI in his final year, batting no. 10 (highest score 9 not out) and bowling (highest tally two wickets).

He joined the family bottling business and lived with his parents in Ashley Road well into adulthood, staying at Clovelly when first, his father died in 1932, and later his mother died in April 1945. As well as his beloved cricket, he played golf, and squeezed in a golfing holiday in the South of France immediately before the outbreak of war. Harry Hawkes managed to avoid conscription, as far as I can establish, and I provisionally conclude that as manager and owner of the factory (his brother Frederick having died at the end of 1934) he qualified for a reserve occupation – and conceivably the factory may have supplied bottled water to the armed forces during the War.

Harry was still unmarried, and an unmarried but solvent man of 39 living with his mother in those days might prompt some contemplation. From local anecdotal record he spent part of the wartime years chasing girls, especially when he could cadge petrol for his bull-nosed Morris to drive them to the promenade at Brighton. After the war, he bought Garden Cottage in 1948. Its tenant was Mrs Mollie Brine, whom he would eventually marry in the autumn of 1959 when he was about 53 and she was 69. Not long after, at the end of the decade or start of the 1960s, Harry sold the business to R. White & Sons Ltd, famous for lemonade made from real lemons, who not long after were taken over by Whitbread and later (and to this day) became part of Britvic.

On the face of it Mollie Brine and Harry Hawkes would make an odd couple. Mollie's life seems somewhat chequered. Various described as tiny and gorgeous, easy to picture as a 1920's flapper, she had had at least two, and possibly three, husbands before Harry. From her death certificate we know she was born on 28

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May 1890, and when in the autumn of 1926 she married George Brine, son of a Surbiton builder and himself a riding master or groom, she was listed in the civil register as May Atkinson and/or May Green. From oral evidence her name beforehand was Green, and I can find an earlier civil marriage in Edmonton of William Green to May Atkinson, in 1920.



May or “Mollie” as she was later known would have been 30 at the time, and so Atkinson is possibly yet an earlier married name, for I can find no birth or christening record that fits. Her marriage to Green was recorded in the civil register but there seems to be no church ceremony. I can find no birth records of young Atkinsons or Greens, nor Brines, associated with Mollie who, moreover, left no will.

From electoral records, George Brine left Mollie in their flat in the Old Manor House to work with horses at Bookham near Dorking, where he set up house with his elder sister, while Mollie moved into Garden Cottage in 1939 when it had lately been built by the owner of the New Manor House. It was three years after George died that Mollie married Harry Hawkes. By all accounts, Harry remained devoted to Mollie, caring for her until her death in September 1978. Harry himself died on 17 September 1984 after watching the last cricket match of the season at Giggs Hill Green. He left £63,899 to his elder sister and her family, but nothing to the Cricket

Thames Ditton Cricket club started the Harry Hawkes run in his honour

Club which had been his delight for 50 years and which was to honour and preserve his memory with the Harry Hawkes Run!

Now, puritanically-minded readers might contrast Harry’s life of ease with that of his entrepreneurial grandfather who, with his father dead early, set up the business that kept subsequent generations comfortable until Harry sold it. However, I have to say that of all the people I have researched, Harry - described as “a Bertie Wooster” figure around the village - was the most universally loved, for his charm, insouciance, gentle manner, good humour, love of cricket and of children. And Mollie likewise, for her very well-kept appearance, flamboyant dresses and the interior décor of Garden Cottage, with zebra stripes, leopard spots, figurines in the garden and a weird African carved figure in the loo from which a mighty erection popped up when disturbed.

So make of that what you will!

Keith Evetts

Solution to the Spring Crossword

by Maureen Wilcox



	S	I	N	G	L	E		L	A	P	T	O	P		
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L	E	M	O	N	I	C	E			U	N	C	U	T	
Y				A		E		R		N				H	
F	E	A	S	T				T	E	S	T	T	U	B	E
R		U		U		T		T					N		P
E	L	D	E	R	B	E	R	R	Y		I	D	O	L	
S		I		A		M		I		N		R		O	
H	O	T	E	L		P	R	E	V	A	L	E	N	T	
		O		L		E		V		I		S			
	P	R	A	Y	E	R		E	N	L	I	S	T		

Congratulations to the senders of the first three correct entries opened in the shuffle. Each wins a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

Lesley Haynes
6 Onslow Gardens
KT7 0JJ

Mr K Fuller
11, The Island
KT7 0SH

J Harlow
67 Thistledene
KT7 0YH

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Hersham

KT12 4RN

01932 260 046

259 Ewell Road

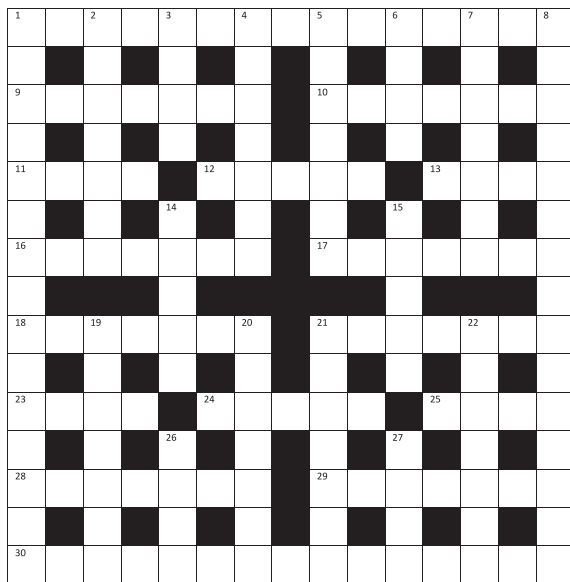
Surbiton

KT6 7AA

020 8399 4455

Summer Crossword

by Michael Jackson



The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date 6 August 2016 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
24 High Street
Thames Ditton
KT7 0RY

ACROSS CLUES

1. Fantastic artist of ‘Rhône’s Boy’ much is restored (10.5)
9. The sound of 23 being extracted (7)
10. Browsing the rollers? (7)
11. Kiln for drying hops (4)
12. Reveille’s instrument (5)
13. Burden (4)
16. Butlin’s soldier (7)
17. Luminous patches in the sky:galaxies (7)
18. Famous organ piece by Wider (7)
21. Undaunted (7)
23. Irish town (4)
24. Carved city in Jordan (5)
25. Old line from Kings Cross (1.1.1.1)
28. Northern race course (7)
29. Accountant and Politician getting fresh air; enjoying drink (7)
30. Top teachers accolades for decoding Thesis – ‘Ham Spread’ (15)

DOWN CLUES

1. Doctors swear by it (11.4)
2. Revealed (7)
3. American State (4)
4. Curdled milk drink (7)
5. Greek letter (7)
6. The Severn has a tidal one (4)
7. Small herb in mountain grass (7)
8. Travelling on these at night dire shapes are disturbed (4.5.6)
14. Wanderer (5)
15. Towards the stern (5)
19. Seaport in N.W. Spain (7)
20. Never growing old (7)
21. Sac in the internal ear (7)
22. Italian gypsies (7)
26. Plant; a spirit (4)
27. Novelist Kingsley (4)

SERVICES, GROUPS, CLUBS, AND SOCIETIES

SERVICES

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Harry Livesey	01372 879321
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	0208 3983772
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride,	ask for service at central	
Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers	switchboard	01372 474474
Homesupport Elmbridge	Pam Howard (Manager)	01932 267128
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

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	Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
2nd Thames Ditton Rainbows	Alexandra Lyall	07779 616463
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Carole Needham	07975 842423
1st Weston Green Guides (All Saints)	Mrs. Louise Lewis	1westongreenguides@gmail.com
2nd Thames Ditton Guides	Mrs. Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
1st Weston Green Brownies (All Saints)	Mrs K Williams	020 8398 1300
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	020 8398 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
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: John Haberfield	020 8398 5256
Parents and Toddlers(St Nicholas church)	Information	020 8398 7211
Ripieno Choir	Nick Harris	020 8399 7231
Surrey Bell-ringers	Nick Pattenden	Nick.Pattenden@cassiopae.com
Thames Ditton Villagers	Mark Badcock	07941 948177

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	Zenda Hedges	020 8398 7038
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	Heather Harvey	020 8398 2642
Model Railway Society (Hampton Court)	Secretary	01932 241224
Mothers Union (All Saints)	Mary Redington	020 8398 1189
Old Cranleigh Rugby Club	Tony Price	07801 837129
Old Cranleigh Hockey Club	Simon Marshall (Men)	07801 737695
	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
River Club (BMYC)	David Walker	0870 460 3586
Rotary Club, Esher	Geoff Morris	01932 868454
Robber 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

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	Cherry Eddy (Campaigns)	020 8398 4377
Hampton Court Way Allotment Association	Lettings: Piotr Hennig	020 8398 5358
Long Ditton Youth Club	Toni Izard	07749 633973
Lynwood Allotment Society	Gill Vickers	020 8398 4870
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
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

Chairman's Report to the AGM



Chairman Rhodri Richards opened by referring to the primary objective of our Residents' Association: to protect our amenities and to further the interests of local residents, unfettered by party political constraints. He said: "It has been a challenging year in many ways, with successes in some areas and setbacks in others, but all our councillors, officers, and volunteers have done their very best to uphold these principles." He went on to cover the following:

- The impact of the Government Boundary Commission's decision on the composition of local electoral wards, which were changed as a result of cutting the number of councillors from 60 to 48
- Wards were redrawn to ensure comparable numbers of electors, with the result that some wards have been 'carved up', others merged with their neighbours, and others expanded. (See articles in the previous editions of Thames Ditton Today giving the background to the changes, available at residents-association.com)
- Thames Ditton ward would be expanded to include the Ember area of Molesey East ward and those 1,500 residents were welcomed to their new ward. RA councillors looked forward to representing their interests
- The difficulties in deciding which candidates to put forward and to support for the new ward of Hinchley Wood and Weston Green
- The candidates that the RA was supporting for the all-out elections for Thames Ditton and Hinchley Wood and Weston Green Wards and the fact that there would be three candidates for each ward (see article on page no 13)
- The strength of the 'Heart in the High Street' campaign and that the RA proposal for 13 short-stay parking bays in the retail centre of Thames Ditton was adopted by Surrey County Council. There has been positive feedback from retailers and residents alike
- Parking issues have arisen in other areas and our councillors continue to look for solutions to the problems
- It is encouraging to see new businesses in the High Street, attracted to the village following their appearance at the highly successful Thames Ditton Farmers' Market
- Once more the High Street Christmas Fair and Christmas lights were a huge success, thanks to the work done by our RA Councillor Tricia Bland
- Weston Green also had community Christmas lights for the first time, thanks to work from RA Councillor Ruth Bruce
- Work to improve Milbourne Pond in Weston Green continues, with the project led by Andrew Roberts. The latest plan is to restore the pond to a 'dew pond' and test pits are in place to ascertain the depth of the water table
- Our RA councillors have been heavily involved in providing local planning oversight, working closely with residents to ensure that any new development respects the character of the area
- RA volunteers continue to maintain a pleasant environment for all who live and work here including maintaining flowerbeds, planting bulbs and picking up litter
- We are lucky to have so many people who are willing to devote their time and efforts for the benefit of the local community.



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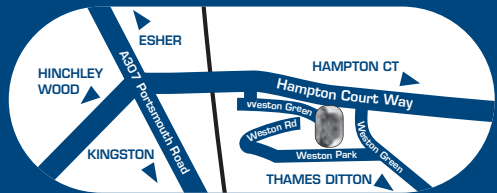
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