

# THAMES DITTON TODAY

THAMES DITTON • WESTON GREEN • EAST MOLESEY



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

AUTUMN 2020

FITTER | HEALTHIER | HAPPIER



“**97% of members** believe we have created a **safe environment for their workout...**”

WHY NOT SEE FOR YOURSELF?

**NO JOINING FEE &  
NO LOCK-IN CONTRACTS**

020 8398 7108 | [info@colets.co.uk](mailto:info@colets.co.uk)



terms and conditions apply.



The Magazine of the



Thames Ditton  
& Weston Green  
Residents' Association

# THAMES DITTON TODAY

Published quarterly since 1970

## Editorial Team

Libby MacIntyre & Sandra Dennis  
editor@residents-association.com

## Magazine Design

Guy Holman  
24 Angel Road  
Thames Ditton  
020 8398 1770

## Distribution

David Youd  
6 Riversdale Road  
Thames Ditton KT7 0QL  
020 8398 3216

## Advertisement Manager

Verity Park  
20 Portsmouth Avenue  
Thames Ditton KT7 0RT  
020 8398 5926

## Contributors

You are welcome to submit articles or images. Please contact the Editorial Team well in advance of the next deadline October 25.

## Advertisers

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.

## In this Issue:

News from the Residents' Association .....	7
Update from Nick Darby, Surrey County Councillor .....	10
Albany Reach needs our help.....	11
Cometh the time, cometh the croquet mallet .....	13
You need to know about the Government Planning White Paper ...	15
Keep dancing despite distancing .....	19
Shop local for fine fare and friendly faces.....	21
Meet your distributors – Andy Hughes.....	25
Flooding in Thames Ditton – an update.....	27
Now let's meet again at a hostelry close by .....	31
Stressed working parent in need of help? .....	33
Esher College Adult Education - it's business as usual .....	35
Unitarisation anyone?.....	37
Summer crossword solution and winners.....	38
Autumn crossword .....	39
Services, Clubs, Societies and Groups.....	40
Vera Fletcher Hall, leaving the light on.....	42

Cover credit: Sandra Dennis

[www.residents-association.com](http://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 £5 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions can be paid via our website [www.residents-association.com](http://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.

Published by the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association

Printed by Impress Print Services Ltd., Unit 10, 19 Lyon Road, Hersham, Walton on Thames, Surrey KT12 3PU

**DanceCraft**  
MM

*"We believe that by encouraging our pupils to love dance and enjoy their classes it will not only be exercise for the body but for their hearts and minds too."*

Specialists in Dance & Performance training for Pre-school to Junior aged children.

**Classes in and around Esher.**

Contact: Maria at [mias33@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mias33@hotmail.co.uk)  
Call or text to: 07800 860898  
or visit our website [www.mmdancecraft.com](http://www.mmdancecraft.com)

## PAINTERS & DECORATORS

We are residential painters and decorators with 20 years experience, we offer wallpapering, painting and paint effects for internal and external decorating

We work in a clean and efficient manner, causing minimal disruption in your home and come highly recommended



**Contact Clive Hogg to discuss your decorating needs**

**020 8339 0712**

m: 07957 582296  
e: [clive.hogg.ch@gmail.com](mailto:clive.hogg.ch@gmail.com)

**CDH**  
Painters and Decorators

15 Hampton Court Avenue, East Molesey, Surrey, KT8 0BG

## Woodham and Sons Ltd

Landscape and Fencing contractors  
Est. 1998





**Fencing;**

- Closeboard
- Panels
- Metal/Chainlink
- Palisade
- Fence repairs
- Gates

**Landscaping;**

- Drives
- Patios
- Artificial grass
- Turfing
- Planting
- Decking





**Small enough to care, Big enough to cope**  
**020 8391 2006**  
[info@woodhamandsons.co.uk](mailto:info@woodhamandsons.co.uk)



# THAMES DITTON AND WESTON GREEN 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' Association Councillors covering the two electoral wards we have a strong voice on Elmbridge Borough Council working with other Residents' Association 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 Councillor, Nick Darby, represents our views at Surrey County Council.

### President: Martin Wilberforce

7 River Avenue,  
Thames Ditton 020 8398 4732

### Vice President: Ruth Lyon,

11 Riversdale Road,  
Thames Ditton 0208 398 3396

### Surrey County Councillor: Nick Darby,

12 Basing Close, Thames Ditton 020 8398 2382

### Thames Ditton Borough Councillors

Tricia W. Bland,  
29 Station Rd, Thames Ditton 020 8339 0485

Caroline James,  
Laurel Cottage, 20 High Street,  
Thames Ditton 07970 672723

Karen Randolph,  
Deepfield, Giggs Hill Road,  
Thames Ditton 020 8398 5005

### Hinchley Wood & Weston Green Borough Councillors

Tannia Shipley, 'Clinton House'  
27 Lower Green Road, Esher 020 8398 2484

Janet Turner, 2 Montgomery Ave,  
Hinchley Wood 020 8398 1565

Nigel Haig-Brown  
53 Heathside, Esher 020 8398 4060

### Officers

Chairman: Graham Cooke  
23 Ashley Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 8509

Vice-Chairman: Libby MacIntyre  
24 High Street, Thames Ditton 020 8398 5534

Hon. Treasurer: Christa Silverthorne  
62 Thorkhill Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 7101

Hon. Secretary: Florian Traub,  
33 Portsmouth Avenue, Thames Ditton 020 8224 2880

Membership Secretary: Peter Haynes  
6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton 020 8398 6019

### Conveners of Sub-Committees

Health and Community: Karen Randolph (see above)

Planning: Rhodri Richards,  
Ditton Cottage, Giggs Hill Road,  
Thames Ditton 020 8398 4962

Highways, Drainage: Andrew Roberts,  
1 Boyle Farm Road, Thames Ditton 020 8786 6882

Flooding Tony Thompson,  
Willow End, River Bank, Thames Ditton 07736 677671



## THE NEXT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETINGS ARE

September 22, 8pm – Venue / Zoom to be confirmed, see website for details  
November 10, 8pm – Venue / Zoom to be confirmed, see website for details

**ALL WHO LIVE OR WORK LOCALLY ARE WELCOME**



## **MICHAEL MOULE ANTIQUES**

*CONSTANTLY REQUIRE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS*

All Furniture Pre 1920, Silver and Silver Plate,  
Brass and Copper, All Clocks, Porcelain, Bronze  
and Marble Statues, All Paintings, Gold Jewellery,  
Old Dolls, Books, Pewter, Swords, Curios.

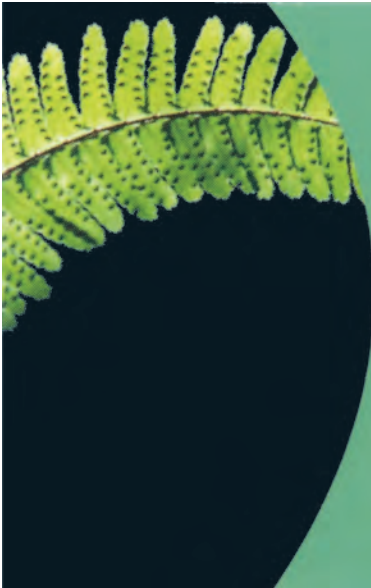
**ANYTHING OLD AND UNUSUAL**

For a fast and friendly service do not hesitate to  
telephone any time, with absolutely no obligation.

**IMMEDIATE CASH SETTLEMENT**

**020 8398 8072**

**26 Basing Way, Thames Ditton**



### **M.P.B. Landscapes**

All aspects of work undertaken:  
hard and soft landscaping, patios,  
fencing, decking, brickwork, turfing.

#### **Mark Blunden**

Landscaping since 1993  
fully qualified, Merrist Wood trained  
Tel: 020 8398 3509  
Mobile: 07957 281 748  
E-mail: [markblunden@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:markblunden@yahoo.co.uk)

# News from the Residents' Association to end August



## **Hello to new Thames Ditton bakery**

Welcome to 'Baker Tim' who has set up a new bakery business at 16 High Street. This follows the refusal of an application for change of use to residential.

Read our article on page 21 to see how lucky we are to have a super set of shops within walking distance.



*New Bakery in Thames Ditton*

## **Secret Gardens 2020 fundraising effort**

Thanks to everyone who supported this year's Secret Garden fundraiser by buying gift cards and posters designed by wonderful local artist Lisa Tolley when we were unable to open the gardens. So far, we have raised £500. There are still some cards and posters left which can be purchased via e-mailing [editor@residents-association.com](mailto:editor@residents-association.com)

## **Farmers' Market returns**

The Thames Ditton Farmers' Market was back on August 29 in a new temporary location: Mercer Close car park. Sadly, it can no longer be held in the George & Dragon car park as this is needed for additional tables and seating to allow for social distancing. Many thanks to the G&D for hosting it until now.

## **Welcome back to Dittons Library**



*Dittons Library at Mercer Close*

It is great to see Dittons Library open again. You will need to observe social distancing and check the current opening times, but it is lovely to see the team back.

## **How much litter?**

An under-reported side effect of Covid-19 seems to be the inability of people to take their litter home. Bins have been overflowing across the country and we have felt the effects here. The litter-picking groups in both Thames Ditton and Weston Green have been in full swing and read the article on page 11 to find out what has been happening at Albany Reach.



*Weston Green litter pickers at Marneys*

## Weston Green Village Sign

The sign's wooden post is rotting at the base and needs replacing. The work will be done by Burrows Lea Forge Ltd (Shere) who installed the original sign. The funding for this has been two-fold: A grant obtained by the Residents' Association (RA) from Elmbridge Borough Council's (EBC) Community Planting fund was match-funded by monies raised from community events such as the Secret Gardens of Weston Green and sponsored walks by children from Weston Green School.

The original sign was installed in 2003 to mark the Queen's Jubilee. It is hoped that the present sign will give pleasure and denote Weston Green for at least another 17 years!

Installation will probably take a day and residents are asked not to congregate to watch, as a lot of space will be needed for the work and safety is a top priority.



Weston Green village sign

## Planning

The RA has objected to the planning application for a significant development of 26 units on land at **Merrywood, Weston Green (2020/1795)**.

The application is for six pairs of two-storey semi-detached houses with rooms in the roof; a detached two-storey building with rooms in the roof comprising of eight flats; and a separate detached three-storey building comprising six flats.

Comments were due by September 4, but late letters are always considered. To date, 240 letters of objection have been lodged, together with three letters of support.

The RA is not anti-development per se. Our letter states: *'Our Association recognises the requirement for sensible and sympathetic development on existing sites to meet government-imposed housing targets, so that development on green belt sites can be avoided. We also recognise that such development should aim to meet local housing need, should include an affordable element where possible, and should be done in a sustainable manner to ensure that local infrastructure such as schools, GP surgeries, and roads are not put under intolerable strain.'*

The RA has objected to the application to replace a bungalow with five two-bedroom flats at **1 Portsmouth Avenue (2020/1420)**.

The application for a block of flats on the corner of Portsmouth Road and Portsmouth Avenue **Corner Cottage (2018/3425)** has been refused on the grounds that it is not in keeping with the surrounding area and would be visually overbearing.



The application at **16 High Street, Thames Ditton (2020/0266)** for change of use from restaurant to flats has been refused.

The RA has objected to the application to drastically reduce the retail space at **6 High Street, Thames Ditton (2020/0772)**. Stitchery ran a successful business on this site for many years and we believe an active High Street is essential to the vitality of Thames Ditton village

**Bransby Lodge, St Leonards Road (2020/0865)**. There has been no decision yet re the application to develop this site with a total of eight flats and a house.

### Boomerang Club milestone



*Avril Naish, sewed 1,000th Boomerang Bag*

Friday July 24 was a day of celebration for the Thames Ditton Boomerang Club as they cheered the 1,000th Boomerang Bag made during the lockdown. Even though the sewing bees can no longer meet weekly they have continued to sew from home in pursuit of their aim to eliminate single-use plastic bags from our village.

Groups and individuals across the neighbourhood have been getting their heads down and sewing reusable face masks. A team from All Saints has supplied more than 150 home-made face coverings across the parish and the Boomerang Bag club are supplying care homes and front-line workers.

Huge thanks to all who are sewing and seeking to save us from being overcome by a tide of single use masks.



*Keep a look out for locally made face masks*

### Dates for your diary

#### Farmers' Market

Mercer Close Car Park  
(opposite the Library),  
9am-1pm Saturday September 26,  
October 24, November 28, December 20.

#### Weston Green Litter Pickers

Meet at Marneys pub on the first Saturday in the month at 10.30am

#### Thames Ditton Litter Pickers

Meet on the third Saturday of the month at the George & Dragon at 11am

### Residents' Association

[www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com) or  
follow us on *Twitter @TDresidents*

# Update from Nick Darby, Surrey County Councillor



This is my second “pandemic article”. Those who serve our community continue to do so magnificently. I have nothing but admiration for them. As lockdown has eased, many have got out more. Cafés, pubs and restaurants have reopened, so we can begin to give them the support they need. I am delighted that our Library has also reopened. In all of this, stay safe and mindful of the need for masks and social distancing.

In being able to get out, our green spaces have become ever more precious, often a tranquil oasis of calm in a world full of turmoil. Our mental health and wellbeing have never been so important.

On that subject, at Surrey, I have been chairing a Task Group looking at Mental Health - the Patient Journey. We have taken considerable evidence, and will be reporting, with recommendations, in early October. Mental Health appears to us very much a Cinderella service. It has been a privilege to be part of this. I hope we can make a difference.

I have been involved as a member of a panel of Councillors deciding school transport appeals. Surrey has recently spent as much as £33m a year on this. Decisions about whether a family has an exceptional case are never easy.

The next parking review is due later in the year. Because of the pandemic, formal advertising of last year’s changes is only now taking place, to be followed by the actual line painting. If anyone has particular concerns or thoughts for this year, please contact me. The same goes for potholes, albeit these can be reported direct to Surrey Highways via the website. I am delighted that at the beginning



*Surrey County Councillor, (The Dittons) Nick Darby*  
of my four-year term, we agreed an annual parking review, rather than only once every three years as previously. Discussion about road safety in the Dittons continues, whether it be traffic speeds, congestion, or problem junctions, of which there are several.

Discussion continues about the possibility of Surrey becoming a Unitary Authority, with Surrey in effect taking over Elmbridge Borough Council’s responsibilities. The suggestion is that this would achieve better value and more efficient services, with no arguments about who was responsible for what. Against that are potential significant reorganisation costs, no guarantee of savings, and unless handled very carefully indeed, the loss of any semblance of true input from local residents. Time will tell, the jury is out, despite this now becoming Government policy. Government also intends major changes to the Planning laws. On the latter, my view is that a strategic approach would be welcome, but also harnessing the local knowledge which clearly exists. Ensuring these aspirations fit together will not be easy.

With very best wishes to all

**Nick Darby – SCC Leader of the Opposition**

# Albany Reach needs our help



April was so quiet on Aragon Avenue it felt quite strange. No traffic, no footfall and no sounds of people having fun as we all *'stayed at home to protect the NHS'*. Albany Reach only saw a few local dogwalkers and residents taking their hour's exercise. The river was empty.

At least the weather was on our side and the sunshine and warm days helped our spirits. As the lockdown eased and people started to get out and about Albany Reach suddenly exploded into life. People from far and wide had discovered Thames Ditton's riverside and descended in droves.

Whilst it was lovely to see people having a good time, we were not prepared for an influx of up to 1,000 people a day. We found that carelessly parked cars were blocking access, including to the emergency services, and it seemed that the coronavirus had affected people's ability to look after the environment as our beautiful riverside space was drowning in litter (and worse).

We are lucky to have the Thames run by our village, but those who live here know how treacherous it can be. The calm surface hides a vicious undertow and the warm surface water disguises a bone numbing cold deep down. It was alarming to see adults and children blithely treating Old Father Thames as if it were a benign swimming pool; we had several reports of near-miss drownings.

My neighbours and I, along with lots of local riverside users, felt overwhelmed by what was going on, but what was to be done?

Well, I learned a lot from my Dad, Peter Hickman, who had spent years serving the



*A couple of canine companions enjoying a quiet Albany Reach*

local community variously as Chairman of the Residents' Association, Board member of the Thames Landscape Strategy and as a Surrey County Councillor. I particularly learned that if you want to look after your community you get stuck in.

First, we needed to help address the litter problem. I talked to Elmbridge County Council (EBC). They told me that Elmbridge Waste Services had been overwhelmed by the vast amount of litter across the county whilst at the same time their staff were restricted through Covid-19 precautions. However, they did increase litter patrols and the bin capacity with a big wheelie bin at the entrance. But still we had litter... So, neighbours got together and set up an Albany Reach Litter Picking Group as a satellite to the Thames Ditton Litter Pickers, who supplied us with Hi Viz vests and litter pickers.

Now, there are those who say that litter is the council's responsibility. I say that litter is primarily the responsibility of selfish people who are not prepared to carry away what they brought in the first place. But, if they don't care, we do, and we will do our bit to keep Albany Reach looking lovely.

If you want to help the Albany Reach litter pickers please do give me a call on 07711 017100. I have vests and litter pickers for you to use. We have found people very friendly. They have also been co-operative when we have given out bin bags and asked them to take their litter away or put it in the big bin at the entrance.

Following discussions with Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) we will be getting bigger, fox proof bins on site. However, there is high demand for these across the country so we may not see them in place until next year! The council have also been visiting to try and tackle some of the environmental hazards associated with people flouting the bylaws and camping overnight.

The second thing we needed to tackle was the blocking of access in the surrounding roads. Surrey County Councillor Nick Darby came down and walked with me as we reviewed the issues. Surrey County Council recognise the severity of the situation and I am hopeful that we will have a remedy soon.

Then on to my third priority, safety of river users. I have been talking to Elmbridge Borough Council and the Port Authority about what can be done to alert people to the dangers as well as the delights of the River Thames and we are hopeful of new signage soon.

The high numbers of people using Albany Reach (which some have been misleading by calling 'Ditton Beach') have meant that anglers, dog walkers, socialisers and river users are butting up against each other. For

example, fishing tackle is blocking access to the water at the shallows, and anglers can get angry when people want to get past their lines. EBC is looking at ways to help with this overcrowding to make the space accessible for all.

Personally, I think it would help if people were a bit more thoughtful of each other and



*Nell (far left) with sons and late dad Peter and mum Julia*

I have been talking to EBC about what can be done to encourage people to do that.

It could be good for the village if we could encourage people to visit the shops, pubs and restaurants and spend money locally, to help keep our village centre vibrant.

I am pleased that people enjoy Albany Reach, I just wish they loved it as much as we do and that they would take care of it and be thoughtful of those that live nearby. I will be keeping the pressure up.

**Nell Hickman**  
**Local resident**

# Cometh the time, cometh the croquet mallet



*A key point in a competitive croquet game*

Ember Croquet Club, a section of Ember Sports Club tucked away off Ember Lane, Grove Way and The Drive, Weston Green, is a gem of a facility within our community.

Thankfully, Sport England Community Emergency Fund recognised this with their award of £908 to help the club with essential lawn and club maintenance costs for the spring and early summer months during the height of COVID-19 lockdown, when the usual sources of income from membership renewals, social events and fundraising were highly uncertain. The grant has been spent on insurance, essential mowing, aeration, feed, moss and weed control which has secured the health of the lawns for this 2020 season and provides a good base for next season, too.

Croquet is an engaging and accessible activity, played outdoors at social distance. The sport has proved remarkably resilient in these lockdown times and provided a

great antidote to the COVID-19 restrictions, promoting well-being, enjoyable outdoors sport, positive social interaction and camaraderie as, indeed, comes with all sporting activity. Early during lockdown, sales of garden croquet sets sky-rocketed as households adapted in so many ways to the severe restrictions necessitated to keep us all safe. For those with a quiet and calculating competitive streak who have found that they can hit balls, run hoops, send the opponent's balls to the far corners of the lawn, and similarly be sent – and still remain friends – Ember Croquet Club provides an excellent facility to move from playing in the garden to competing on a full size 35yds x 28yds croquet lawn, and with a smaller lawn for practice, beginners and winter play.

Similarly, if you have an eye for the ball, young or old, male or female, or if you are not quite as agile on a sports field as you once were but still like to participate in

competitive sport, then croquet may be for you. Often, someone's first introduction to club croquet is as a Christmas, birthday or retirement present (see contact details below). Instruction is available for beginners, and in the finer arts too, from our Croquet Association qualified coach member and from other experienced members who are always willing to lend a hand. Regular internal open and handicap competitions are played by members and, COVID-19-times aside, we also participate in external competitions in the South East Croquet Federation area. Ember CC is current holder of the SECF 'B' league winner's trophy.

As lockdown has progressively eased we have been able to open for club roll-up sessions on Sunday and Tuesday afternoons

for Association Croquet (AC); and Thursday afternoons for Golf Croquet (GC). Other times are also bookable online by members for social and club league or knock-out competition games.

The club is run, managed and financed by members for members and is fully open to applications from new members. As part of Ember Sports Club, which also has Bowls, Tennis and Drama sections, the Croquet Club has the use of, and shares in the management of the main clubhouse facilities, with toilets, bar, kitchen and club rooms.

For croquet enquiries and further information call 07917 017453 or email [croquet@embersportsclub.org.uk](mailto:croquet@embersportsclub.org.uk) Website [www.embersportsclub.org.uk](http://www.embersportsclub.org.uk)

**Simon Charrington**

## FUNERAL DIRECTORS AND MEMORIAL STONEMASONS



### THE FAMILY YOU CAN TURN TO...

Seven generations of our family have been helping and advising local families in their time of need. For over 230 years we have been providing funerals, both modest and traditional, with care and compassion.

<b>ESHER:</b>	78 High Street	01372 463903
<b>EAST MOLESEY:</b>	156 Walton Road	020 8941 1412
<b>THAMES DITTON:</b>	37 High Street	020 8398 4586

**Lodge**  
BROTHERS 1780  
*the family you can turn to*

[www.lodgebrothers.co.uk](http://www.lodgebrothers.co.uk)



**FIPA**  
FINANCIAL  
PLANNING  
AUTHORITY

ASK ABOUT OUR  
PRE-PAYMENT  
FUNERAL PLANS

# You need to know about the Planning White Paper and its potential impact on residents



When I was first elected to Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) in May 2018, my colleagues recommended that I find a subject that interested me and that I am passionate about. It was an easy decision...planning!

Whilst not maybe a headline-grabbing subject, how we live and where we live has a profound effect on every member of our rather special community. And this subject is about to get even more important, for in August, the Government introduced a Planning White Paper (Planning for the Future) and a paper on changes to the current planning system (consultation on changes to planning policy and regulations) which will radically change the way planning applications will be determined in the future. The Prime Minister seems determined to 'build, build, build' our way out of recession.

A straw poll amongst past and present members of the Residents' Association suggests that it was often a particular planning application that led each of them to get involved in the RA. In the 1960s it was our former chairman, the late and much missed Russell Denoon Duncan, who successfully fought off an application to demolish one side of Thames Ditton High Street and turn it into a low-level shopping centre.

In the 1990s, it was the planning application to build a Tesco superstore opposite Giggs Hill Green that kickstarted Karen Randolph's long and continued involvement with the RA and EBC. Graham Cooke (current RA Chairman) led the campaign to stop a large housing development being built



*Caroline James, RA Councillor for Thames Ditton*

in between Ashley and Station Roads. For me it was a large ugly building in the High Street that didn't match the agreed plans and was out of keeping with the Conservation Area.

The last two years have been an enormous learning curve which has only served to increase my interest. So, when news broke about a radical overhaul in the planning system introduced by Housing Minister Robert Jenrick, I sought the opinions of many in preparing this article including Karen, the Portfolio Holder for Planning Services at EBC, senior officers at EBC, councillors from other parties, and an experienced planning consultant who lives in Thames Ditton.

Our current planning system was introduced in 1947; it has evolved over time and with different governments having different views on how to solve the country's housing need.

The current system certainly has its flaws which the government is intending the new White Paper will address. However, it is important to understand the context. There has been much talk about the UK's 'housing crisis' and the Government has declared we need to build about 300,000 houses a year to meet the current need.

Until 2016 Local Planning Authorities (LPA) could calculate their own housing requirements. Under the Core Strategy (the existing Local Plan) which was agreed in 2011, the figure for Elmbridge was 225 new-build dwellings per year for the next ten years. The Conservative government decided that not enough units were being built so, in 2017, it imposed its own model for assessing housing need (called the Standard Methodology) to calculate how many units each Local Planning Authority should build. For Elmbridge, under the 2017 formula the current figure is 623. Under changes to the formula in the proposed new Standard Methodology, as described in the 'Changes to the current planning system' document (just issued), this figure has increased to 774 per year, again for 10 years.

There have been rigorous debates with successive housing ministers and MPs that our figures are unobtainable. At present the arguments seem to be falling on deaf ears. Boris Johnson and Dominic Raab, in the last general election campaign, assured residents that the Green Belt would be protected. I am no planning specialist, but if the Government says we must build 774 units per year for the next 10 years, and with nearly 60% of Elmbridge being in Green Belt, where will all these houses go?

The Government has argued that if the south east of England can build far more units than we do currently, house prices will fall as supply increases. This argument does not make sense to me, especially in

Thames Ditton. People choose to live here as we have the best of both worlds: easy access to one of the world's great cities yet within 15 minutes of wonderful green spaces, good local schools, a world-class teaching hospital and easy access to the road network. We are 15 miles from central London but a million miles away in terms of urbanisation. Thames Ditton has grown - latest figures show an increase from 7,616 dwellings in 2001 to 8,371 in 2018. If housing supply increases in the way the Government wants it to, surely this will only attract more people to move into our community?

As for me and my family, we bought our first house here in 1992 for £129,000 and whilst expensive then, it was at least 'affordable'. At that time Thames Ditton had few families and we were called the 'young'! I think many of us today have the same story. But now people with similar jobs and incomes to those we had in 1992 simply cannot afford to buy a family house in Thames Ditton today.

For those who keep our lives on track, for those who work in our shops and pubs, who teach our children, who nurse us when we are sick, who look after our older parents, the housing crisis is very real.

Land prices in Elmbridge are the highest in the country outside London. We councillors try extremely hard to argue that any development over a certain size must have a proportion of affordable housing e.g. 30% below market value. (Remember that the average price of a house in Elmbridge was £780,000 in 2019!) Developers claim that in a lot of cases they cannot make the numbers add up and providing such housing would make the development 'unviable'. In other words, the very people we rely on day in and day out cannot afford to live in Thames Ditton or indeed the borough. Our



key workers have to travel long distances, often on our poor public transport system, to the detriment of their own quality of life

House prices affect the rental market too: for example, a small studio flat in Thames Ditton village is currently rented out at £875 a calendar month!

Current national and local policy is intended to try and increase the number of smaller and more 'affordable' units (I use that term with a large pinch of salt). So will the new White Paper improve the situation? As always, the devil is the detail and most of the opinions I have heard so far are not confident that it will solve the 'housing crisis'.

The proposal is that throughout England each LPA will divide their area into three zones: a **zone for growth** (large sites), a **renewal zone** (described as 'gentle' densification, a foggy term in my view), and a **protected zone** (AONB, National Parks and possibly part or all of the Green Belt).

The White Paper places considerable emphasis on 'building beautiful' - but beauty is in the eye of the beholder. For some a particular building or street is stunning, to others it is ugly and out of keeping with the surrounding area. I live in a Tudor house which we adore but others would hate. It's a matter of taste and interpretation, and that is what planning debate so often centres on.

Each LPA will be charged with producing a simplified Local Plan within 30 months (just before the next general election). Residents will be consulted on which areas within their communities will be 'zoned'. Building design codes will be decided in advance. And once the Local Plan is agreed, developers will have outline planning permission for development to build with no further involvement from the local community or council!

This worries me. People today lead very busy lives. I think many will lack the time or the inclination to get involved in consultations at such an early stage - and by the time a development starts to be built it will be too late to have any input from residents, councillors or the LPA.

A large number of residents have worked on the current Local Plan process which is reaching its final stage. At the last consultation more than 6,000 residents responded. Currently no final decisions have been made locally about the Local Plan, which in draft form was to go the Planning Inspector later this year. For now, work will continue - but this could all change in the autumn.

The Government assumption is that it is the (local) planning system that slows down or thwarts development. Again, I have to disagree - the vast majority of applications are approved pretty quickly. Problems arise when developers 'sit' on the land (land banking) or put forward such controversial plans it is inevitable that residents have concerns.

I think that if developers talked, and more importantly listened, to the local community far earlier in the process a lot of antagonism between residents and developers would be removed. A good example of a good developer who did it right was the developer who regenerated a former factory in Thames Ditton High Street into a small but attractive terrace of cottages. He is a local developer who understood what would be beneficial to our village. Sadly, the term developer is often a 'catch- all' derogatory term. What we need are good, sensitive developers that the community can trust.

This is a complicated topic but I urge all of us in our community to take this seriously and to engage in conversations with our neighbours, councillors and the Residents' Association. The deadline for responses



*Sympathetic development of terraced houses in Thames Ditton High Street*

to the ‘Changes to the current planning system’ consultation is October 1, 2020, and for the consultation on the Planning for the Future White Paper it is October 29, 2020.

The **White Paper Planning for the Future** and details re the consultation can be found on the government website [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future)

The proposal for ‘**Changes to the current planning system**’ and details re the consultation can be found on the government website

[www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system)

Please make your voice heard.

**Caroline James**

**RA Councillor, Thames Ditton ward**

If you're having an outdoor event, call us & let us put you ...



We specialise in offering a wide range of marquee solutions to suit any social or commercial event in South West London & Surrey



Phone: 020 8398 7219

Mobile: 07867 590 450

E-mail: [undercover.events@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:undercover.events@yahoo.co.uk)

Web: [www.undercovereventtents.co.uk](http://www.undercovereventtents.co.uk)

# Keeping dancing despite distancing



One of our regular advertisers MMDanceCraft Esher will soon be celebrating 21 years of teaching Dance & Performance to local children aged between two years through to early teens. We asked Principal Maria Van Dyke to tell us about the school and how they have managed in the last few months.

*'Teaching dance has been and continues to be my absolute joy, especially now as I am seeing earlier pupils all grown up, many still continuing to follow their love of dance and others using skills gained by attending classes giving them the confidence to follow their chosen path in life. I am passionate about giving young dancers a happy beginning and very much hope to send not only my pupils but their parents as well on their way with magical memories to take with them.'*

*This year has been exceptional because worldwide we are dealing with Covid 19. Many dance schools are doing their best to continue their work safely and in the safest way possible. I am confident that all dancers will 'dance their way through this' until they can once again dance and live their lives normally again. It would be so nice to think that next year we will be able to dance and celebrate our 21st Birthday doing something special together.*

*During this time, many pupils from DanceCraft have been able to take their classes online, it was so good to be able to see each other. Even some of our very young pupils managed to join classes and at the end of term, the little ones wore white and using a pretty scarf they danced their own Rainbow Dance with our wonderful*



*Dancer Emily preparing for the rainbow dance*

*NHS in mind.*

*As well as online classes everyone has been treated to all sorts of extra dance tuition, fun and games via WhatsApp, so never a dull moment and making sure no one has been left out! Working in this way is in no way the same as really being together in class because a dance school should be one big family but keeping in touch is important. Thank goodness for the internet!*

*I really hope that all of us will be able to look back on this very unusual year and still find special memories. As we always say at DanceCraft - Happy Dancing!*





# THAMES DESIGN & BUILD

Call us on 020 7998 7820

Email: [info@thamesdesignandbuild.com](mailto:info@thamesdesignandbuild.com)

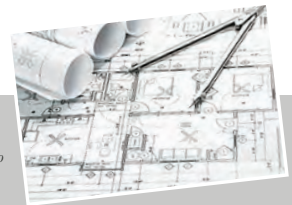
[www.thamesdesignandbuild.com](http://www.thamesdesignandbuild.com)



If you are thinking of extending, converting, or in any way structurally altering your home, **Thames Design & Build** can assist you with any or every stage of your project. As specialists in both architectural services and construction, we can help you to ensure that you achieve your dream home.

Our approach is to offer both elements – architectural and building services – thereby using our experience of each discipline to inform the other.

We pride ourselves on our approachability and our flexibility, so please don't hesitate to contact us for an initial discussion, whether your requirement is design, or build, or both.



*"Thames Design and Build were great to work with and they were ahead of schedule throughout the project. Their team was sympathetic to the impact of the works whilst we remained living in the house, and we were pleased with the quality of their workmanship. The team is well structured, and communication was good. We were always able to discuss issues either with Fred, the site manager, or Paul Merifield, and agree solutions quickly. The final results are fantastic and have delivered exactly the space that we were looking for."* Robin, Kingston

Ditton Garages, Southville Road, Thames Ditton, KT7 0UL

# Shop local for fine fare and friendly faces



*Thames Ditton High Street*

Strange times, strange days. Who better to turn to than an old and trusted friend who has always been there and who will – with your help - be there in the future, come what may.

## **Your local shop...**

The big supermarkets are struggling to adjust to our Covid-world. Amazon is reaping a gluttonous harvest of profit. Delivery drivers, unsung heroes all, play racetrack on our streets. And amid the strangeness, on our very doorstep our local shops open early, close late, stock whatever you want and more, say a friendly hello while picking out your favourite brand of beer or bread, keep an eye on the vulnerable, share a joke or two and always, always, deliver.

Within a short walk from your front door you can get pretty much anything you need, and most of what you want. Why go elsewhere? This is a guide to the good things you can buy on your doorstep – depending on where you start from.

As this is Thames Ditton Today, start in Thames Ditton High Street, looking up from the George and Dragon. A spacious branch of **Costa Coffee** is now Covid-ready and open for business. **Boots** is a healthy beginning, dispensing cures and wisdom in equal measure. **Baker Tim**, the new bakery and pizza shop at the former Italian restaurant is a welcome addition, as is the part-time pop-up shop which dispenses the deliciously local Thames Ditton Gin.

**Budgens** has been a Godsend throughout this crisis, its long, narrow aisles stuffed with everything you need, whether fresh, frozen, tinned, boxed, jarred and more. Kuki and his splendid staff work long hours and still keep smiling. We locals go in so often we call it ‘the larder’. It’s also home to a Post Office branch which has been a real boon in the last few months.

Next door the **Ironing Board** offers laundry and dry-cleaning services as well as ironing. It is also a drop-off point for materials for the Boomerang Bag club.

Over the road **No 30** nods its head to the past and inspires many presents with its well-curated selection of antiques and curios. **View Gallery** does a fine line in quirky gift ideas, cuddly toys, tasteful cards and wrapping paper and delicious Belgian chocolates. **Paul's** award-winning fruit and veg shop, usually staffed by the ever-cheerful Connor, provides your five a day and more. The **Secret Garden** florist has a gorgeous selection of flowers and bouquets and can deliver all round our area. **Thames Food and Wine** does just what it says, opens early and shuts late, and has at least one tin/jar of every product you will ever need.

The **Lime Tree** was back providing delicious goodies as soon as it could and continues to offer excellent coffee, bread, cakes and a selection of gourmet goodies. **Nice Buns** has a great name and even better produce, including lovely bread and sandwiches. The **Organic Nest** sells what it says on the (recycled) tin – a fine selection of organic, veggie, vegan and gluten-free produce, plus an innovative 'refill' system for recharging your everyday cleaning products without adding to the plastic landfill problem. **Lunch** also lives up to its name: scrummy sarnies and cakes, plus an outside ringside seat by the roundabout to watch the world go by.

If it's real treasure you are after you can find it at **Assimi** where master silversmith Bernard Leon hand-crafts unique and exquisite bespoke gold and silver jewellery and other items of silverware; his tiny workshop at the back of the shop is a destination in itself. To save you going anywhere else **Bradley** the fishman from Grimsby can be found selling fresh fish in the High Street on Tuesday afternoons.

Many of us have found that if it is too far to walk somewhere it is very easy to cycle.



*The Organic Nest has a 'refill' system*

Fortunately, we have our very own cycle shop in Thames Ditton. **Cyclelink**, with its professional and friendly service, can help you keep on two wheels.

If you stroll (or pedal) round past the Home of Compassion and down Summer Road, you will reach the divine Mrs Patel at **Jay News**, who has been serving locals for years with every convenience food, newspaper or magazine you need, plus lottery tickets and a useful worldwide money transfer service. Next door the **Summer Road Supplies** convenience store offers much the same plus cold beer and wine galore, and usefully opens early and closes late seven days a week. And don't forget to browse in the surprisingly spacious **Sable Interiors** for a wide range of well-chosen soft furnishings and other tasteful items to make your house a home.

Wander in the other direction to Winter's Bridge and the wonderful **Bachmann's** award-winning patisserie and chocolaterie is a treasure trove of goodies. There is no need to travel for desserts to make your mouth water. Bachmann's added to its range

during lockdown, selling flour and yeast when the supermarket shelves were bare. The convenience stores at Winter's Bridge also continue to serve locals as they did throughout lockdown

If you live in Weston Green then the **Co-Op** on Hampton Court Way has a big selection of everyday needs.

And if you need more than these shops can offer, the cluster of shops near Hinchley Wood station is within walking or cycling distance and has additional goodies to discover.

Locals have long made a beeline for **Crossys Home and Garden** hardware store, a treasure trove of everything you or your pet might need – and if you don't know what you need, the expert and friendly staff can advise you.

**The Children's Trust** charity shop - for children with brain injuries - has a tidy and tasteful selection of clothes and gifts and always the chance of a bargain. Next door **Hinchley Wines** and its knowledgeable, whisky-loving manager stocks much more than the (essential!) grab it and run six-packs; there's also a brilliant selection of higher-end and unusual wines from around the world – yes, the Cloudy Bay will do nicely.

Station Approach, just over the handy Zebra crossing, is an enclave of specialists. The **Surbiton Angling** shop has everything an angler of any discipline needs, with good advice thrown in free – and let's face it, we fishermen have been practicing social distancing for years.

Dedicated carnivores have long made a beeline for **The Butcher in the Wood**, formally Stephens Fine Foods, where a team of expert old-school butchers serve up a mouth-watering window display of meaty treats, including a new 'cold safe' of mighty cuts of premium rare-breed beef.

Two real specialists end the run of shops near the station helping us to repair and re-use items. **thecompleteservice.com** sells and repairs all manner of domestic appliances at competitive prices. Next door **Ashton Davis** co-exists happily, selling and servicing TVs, AV systems and other domestic needs – this is the place to come for advice if you don't know your woofer from your tweeter.



*Thames Ditton Florist*

For those who live closer to East Molesey, and still within easy walking distance of Thames Ditton and Weston Green, Bridge Road has a wonderful selection of shops from café's to groceries to clothes stores and antique shops.

For all the local heroes and heroines who own, manage or serve in these shops these past months have been hard times. Remember to keep the heart in the High Street, whichever bit you use, and support your local shops – there's really no need to get in your car and drive miles to join the long queue of the mournful and the masked at an anonymous superstore.

The phrase 'Use them or lose them' has rarely rung so true...

**Andy Anderson**

# TJB Bathrooms

Free estimates for bathroom refurbishments to repairs.

3D design service from our experienced designer.

Installations by engineers with 30 years of knowledge.



Air Conditioning Units  
Installed by F-Gas registered engineer



Provides hot and cold air for your home using a remote control or mobile app.

121 Anyards Road, Cobham, Surrey, KT11 2LJ  
Tel - 01932 866471 [www.tjbathrooms.com](http://www.tjbathrooms.com)  
Email - [tjbathrooms@hotmail.com](mailto:tjbathrooms@hotmail.com)



# Meet your distributors – Andy Hughes



Your copy of Thames Ditton Today was put through your letterbox by one of our team of loyal volunteer distributors. Who are they and what are they up to when they are not pounding the streets of Thames Ditton and Weston Green delivering magazines?

Andy Hughes delivers to Woodside Avenue, Lime Tree Avenue, Houston Close and Gainsborough Close

## When and why did you move to Weston Green?

We moved from West Molesey in 1975. I came home and my wife, Anna, informed me that she had found a house and it was my job to sort out the mortgage! We needed a bigger house because we had a growing family of a son and a daughter.

## How did you become a distributor?

As I remember, we went to a Residents' Association AGM in the Vera Fletcher Hall because there was an interesting speaker. There I was accosted by a lady called Ruth Lyon who informed me that I was now a distributor!

## Can you give us a 'potted biography'?

I was born in West Middlesex hospital but when my mother spotted a rat under the bed in the maternity ward, she decided we should leave Middlesex and head to Wimbledon which was in Surrey in those days. I attended Wimbledon College. After school I trained as an electronic engineer which was largely funded by various companies, the theoretical side being learnt mainly at Wimbledon Tech. During my varied career I have worked for the International Olympic Committee on the Barcelona Olympics, CBS television and the Government of Libya.



*Andy Hughes in his microlight*

I married Anna on 31st October – Hallowe'en. It was the only day we were both free!

## What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I'm now retired. After I had been retired for about three months, my wife decided I should get out of the house more! I work for Surrey County Council as a Clerk to School Governing Bodies and I have clerked for over 100 schools. The Clerk provides 'back office' support to the governing body.

I play bowls at Ember Sports Club.

I have always been interested in flying. At school I was in the Air Training Corps where I gained my Glider Pilot Licence. Once the children had left home, I started to fly microlites. I was 59 when I got my licence. I now own two aircraft which I fly from Popham Airfield in Hampshire. I fly as frequently as possible but it's fair weather flying only – you are rather exposed in a microlite!

I also make 25th scale model boats and sail them on the pond in Bushy Park. For 10 years I sailed them at the Model Boat Festival in Weymouth. I now have about 10 boats which take up a lot of space as they are over one metre in length.

## What is one thing about you that perhaps people don't know?

I once shook hands with Colonel Muammar al-Gaddafi and in return he gave me an extra month's salary! I was working for the Libyan government at the time.

### Quick Fire Questions

#### Beer or wine?

Beer at lunchtime and wine in the evening.

#### Pub Grub or Restaurant?

Pub Grub - I like the Angel and the George & Dragon

#### Vacation or Staycation?

We have travelled the world visiting our grandchildren. Our daughter and her family have lived in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the Falkland Islands.

#### Gym or Walk?

Walk – a favourite is Chatley Heath

#### Pop or Classical music?

I like distinctive female vocalists and 'belters' – Jennifer Rush, Kathy Kirby and Judith Durham are all favourites.

#### If you had to move away from Weston Green, what would you miss?

All of it! There are such good communications and not many places can boast two railway stations.

Distributor Andy Hughes was in conversation with Pat Cooke

Concerned about the performance of your Personal Pension or Stocks & Shares ISA?



**knightjames**  
Wealth Management

**A friendly, local and professional service**



Mortgages  
Equity Release  
Investments  
Tax Planning  
Commercial Insurance

**Call: 0208 398 6677 - [www.knightjames.com](http://www.knightjames.com)**

6 Station Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey, KT7 0NR

# Flooding in Thames Ditton - an update



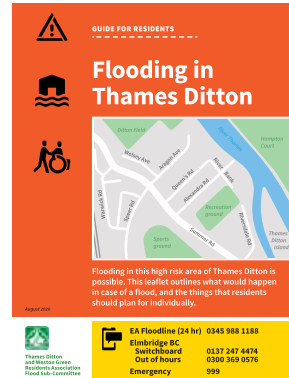
You may not be aware that in late December last year and February this year the River Thames water level rose to within 20cm of the levels reached in 2014, when Alexandra Road and River Bank flooded with water coming out from the street drains and, at its height, overtopping the bank.

Luckily, the Residents' Association Flood Group had arranged for Thames Water to insert a non-return valve in the street drain at the end of Alexandra Road that prevented it from happening this year. The Flood Group are working with Thames Water to identify other drains that may benefit from non-return valves. Possibilities for local raising of the riverbank to ensure that it is all at least 7m are also being examined.

## Flood Leaflet

Based upon information provided by the EA the Flood Group has identified some 280 properties in addition to those on TD Island most at risk of flooding. The Group have produced a leaflet that will be distributed those properties in September to help them be better prepared in the future. The information will also be available on the RA website, [residents-association.com](http://residents-association.com)

The main work of preparation has been undertaken by Josefina Bravo, a PhD student at Reading University. Josefina used this task as a project for her PhD in Information Design (Typography and Graphic Communications). She held focus groups in Thames Ditton to gather information and opinions from people about what information and advice they felt would be helpful. Draft leaflets were



*Flood information leaflet*

produced and reviewed by some local residents, the EA, and Applied Resilience on behalf of Elmbridge Borough Council. The Residents' Association is extremely grateful for the work undertaken by Josefina.

## Flood Barriers

In January and February this year temporary flood barriers were in the news and the EA are investigating the possibility of their use in Thames Ditton. They have provided the following information:

- Temporary flood barriers are portable metal frames, with a waterproof barrier that can be quickly deployed
- When deployed, the barriers create a temporary wall to help reduce the impact of flooding on people, properties and businesses
- They are stored at strategic locations around the country. A logistics contractor supports EA in mobilising them to 'at-risk' communities when flooding is forecast



# Weston Green School

From January 2021, Weston Green is extending its Kindergarten to accommodate children from 2 years of age, all year-round.



For more information and to arrange a visit, contact  
Weston Green School and Admissions Secretary, Rachel Ranger  
020 8398 2778 or email [info@westongreenschool.org.uk](mailto:info@westongreenschool.org.uk)

 [www.westongreenschool.co.uk](http://www.westongreenschool.co.uk)

 Weston Green Road, Thames Ditton, KT7 0JN

- When there is no longer a risk of flooding the temporary barriers are completely removed, checked and put back into storage ready to be used again
- Although temporary barriers do reduce the impact of flooding, the EA cannot guarantee that they will always be deployed and effective in all situations.

The EA needs to find the best alignment for the barrier in order to achieve a reduction to the current risk of flooding to properties.

There is a lot to be considered before the plans can be finalised. They want to be sure that the proposed location for the barrier is the best place to reduce flooding and they have commissioned river modelling to understand this better.

Affected residents will have many questions about the impact of the temporary

flood barrier on them, such as when it might be put up and what it means for access to homes. The EA are in regular contact with the Flood Group and will coordinate sharing plans and asking for residents' feedback.

The EA also need to agree any proposals with the emergency planners at Elmbridge Borough Council and Surrey County Council.

As part of the River Thames Scheme, the EA is also looking at the potential for permanent flood defence measures to protect some communities on the River Thames, including Thames Ditton. Its conclusions are expected in the coming months and we will keep you updated.

**Tony Thompson**  
**Convenor Flood Group**



*Barrier trial deployment in Weybridge in 2018 (left) and in Guildford before forecast flooding in February 2020.*



**Brighten up your Garden!**

Is your garden in need of a makeover?  
 From planting plans to a simple injection of colour  
**Green Room Garden Designs** can help  
 020 8398 5703

Anna 07801 921166 – Kate 07956 641881  
 RHS and Merrist Wood Qualified

# Alan Greenwood & Sons

## Independent Family Funeral Directors



Latest Jaguar or Mercedes Hearses and Limousines  
 Quality Service 24 hours a day  
 Home visit arrangements  
 Golden Charter Pre-paid funeral plans  
 We will not be beaten on price



1 The High Street  
**Claygate**  
 KT10 0JG

**01372 377 377**

57 Fleece Road,  
**Long Ditton**  
 KT6 5JR

**020 8398 0012**

13 Molesey Road  
**Hersham**  
 KT12 4RN

**01932 260 046**

259 Ewell Road  
**Surbiton**  
 KT6 7AA

**020 8399 4455**

Visit Our Website for Full Details of Our Services and to View Our Obituaries

[www.alangreenwoodfunerals.com](http://www.alangreenwoodfunerals.com)

### SPEER ROAD CHURCH

Currently services on Facebook 10.25am  
 Sundays <https://www.facebook.com/newmalDENUR/>.  
 Usual monthly services held on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 10.45am.

### WELCOME TO ALL

Find us at <http://www.tdurc.org.uk>  
 Secretary: Linda Lambert  
 telephone 020 8398 1476



Launching a new business?

Get off to a flying start with...



design  
 logo **design**  
 stationery **design**  
 web **design**  
 brochure **design**  
 leaflet **design**  
 mailshot **design**  
 advertising **design**  
 display **design**  
 marketing  
 print

**flycolours.com**  
 call 020 8398 1770

# Now, let's meet again at a hostelry close by



After nearly four months of enforced closure, the announcement that our pubs and restaurants could open again was felt by most people to be a sign that life was beginning to get back to normal. Some people will have had reservations, but in Thames Ditton and Weston Green all our local businesses have clearly been taking Government guidance seriously and doing all they can to minimise risk.

Our pubs on the river, the Swan and The Albany are well placed to offer customers a safe, al fresco experience. Both pubs encourage you to book a table and request contact details for potential 'track and trace'. For booking details check out the websites.



*Staff at Marneys welcoming customers*

Marneys at Weston Green offered a take-away service during the lockdown, even managing to supply draft beer courtesy of the Big Smoke brewery in Esher, when many large brewers paused production. Landlord Tom, plus manager James and all his staff regard customers safety as their first priority. There is lots of outside space so everyone involved is keeping fingers crossed for the weather to be on their side. Once again, you are encouraged to book a table.

The George and Dragon delayed opening until a little later than others but is now back with us again. Landlord Duncan has been actively supporting East Elmbridge Foodbank during the lockdown supporting community efforts to help those suffering financial hardship at this time.



*Ditto has been redecorated during lockdown*

At Ditto (some of us still refer to it as the Red Lion!), Sam and Joe worked all through the lockdown supplying fruit and veg as well as offering pizza deliveries before re-opening on July 4. They have also redecorated and have a wonderful rear patio area. Take-away pizzas are still

offered, and the latest news is that Sunday roasts are available. Mike and Molly at the Angel have had a very busy time since the re-opening and felt that the 'eat out to help out' scheme had assisted them. Mike told us that he felt the lockdown had seen locals pull together in a way he had not seen before and wanted to say thank you to neighbours and loyal customers

Sextons (formerly The Greyhound) at Weston Green offered takeaway pizzas during lockdown and is now welcoming customers back. Currently it is opening from 4pm weekdays and midday at the weekend.

We send our best wishes for the future to our all our local pubs, restaurants and businesses as they try to get back on their feet after such a difficult time. Please keep checking opening times in case things change.

**Graham Cooke**



*Sextons (formerly The Greyhound)*

As well as pubs we are lucky to have several great local restaurants and takeaways.

**Now open for dine in customers as well as takeaway are:**

**Maisie Thai Restaurant**  
Summer Road, TD

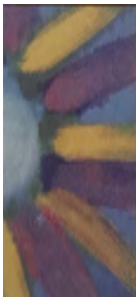
**Han Fu Chinese Restaurant**  
75 High Street, TD

**Also open for takeaway are**

**The Rose Indian and Bangladeshi Restaurant**  
35 High Street, TD

**Rishi Indian Flavours takeaway**  
2 Summer Road, TD

Please check latest opening times as they try to get back to business



## **Delia Ridewood**

Quality Interior Decorator  
Garden Maintenance

**Mobile: 07973800887**

**Email: deliaridewood@gmail.com**



# Stressed working parent in need of help?



Karen Taylor is a Weston Green resident and mother to two young children aged six and three. She is also a working parent.

By the time Karen had children she'd been working in Human Resources in the City for 17 years and understood how mothers struggled to return to work. Statistically, 82% of women approaching a return to work lack confidence even at senior management level (MMB Magazine Return to Work Survey). Fathers also find it tough; many want to spend more time with their young family, and sleep deprivation is a regular occurrence.

Karen experienced many of these emotions when she returned to work, but in 2018 she faced a situation that turned her world upside down. Her 18-month-old daughter became seriously ill. The time spent caring for her young daughter gave Karen the opportunity to reflect on her future. She had always wanted to set up her own business and this was the catalyst.

In July 2019 Helen Whately MP introduced a bill to Parliament making flexible working compulsory rather than the exception for UK companies. *"The 40-hour, five-day working week made sense in an era of single-earner households and stay-at-home Mums, but no longer reflects the reality of how many modern families want to live their lives,"* she said. *"At the moment, too many women are reluctantly dropping out of work or going part-time after having children because their employers won't allow them flexibility. This entrenches the assumption that men are the breadwinners and women are the homemakers. As a result, men don't get to spend as much time as they might like with their children, women miss out on career*



*Karen Taylor, Weston Green resident and founder of Parent Cloud*

*opportunities, and the country loses out on the contribution they could and would like to make."*

While flexible working was a step forward, Karen believed there was more to be done in the workplace to help both employers and employees. *"While flexible working helps give parents more time with their families, it has no positive impact on their mental wellbeing. Working parents are 40% more stressed than others in the workforce and this doesn't improve with flexible working. Also, those working flexibly still struggle to progress in their careers with part-time workers being 50% less likely to be promoted. To maintain employee engagement, mental wellbeing, increase gender diversity and retain staff, employers need to embrace flexible working, and go a step further.*

*Employers need to give flexible workers all the tools they need to thrive.”*

To address this Karen set up her business Parent Cloud. To support their employees, companies can provide them with access to Parent Cloud specialists and resources. The service, which is initiated by the employee is confidential. The company provides employees with a code to access a range of experts that can give professional advice and counselling. The expertise is broad and includes health visitors, midwives, infant sleep, child behaviour consultants, nutritionists, relationship counselling and career coaches. There are also specialists that can advise how to balance home and work life.

In one case study a working mother contacted one of Parent Cloud’s sleep consultants. She had returned to work, but for 18 months had only managed to get four hours sleep each night. This was affecting her wellbeing and performance at work. After just a couple of sessions with a Parent Cloud consultant she slept properly for three consecutive nights and this continued to improve. It just took a couple of small changes recommended by her specialist that helped this much valued employee and her company.

Parent Cloud is already working with financial service companies, management consultancies, retailers and FMCG and many



smaller businesses too. A package can be tailor made to suit the needs of individual companies. Karen says that “*Some companies offer their employees 6 or 8 sessions, and others as many as the employee needs and discount codes are offered to employees who want to continue beyond these.*” As an alternative or alongside the 1-2-1 support, there is also membership to the Parent Cloud Hub that gives working parents access to live and recorded webinars and a broad variety of resources to help with their mental health and wellbeing. Companies can commence a trial period and get feedback from their employees.

If you would like to find out how Parent Cloud could help your company, contact Karen on [Karen@parent-cloud.com](mailto:Karen@parent-cloud.com) or visit their website at [www.parent-cloud.com](http://www.parent-cloud.com).

**Sandra Dennis**

**[R P Brown](#)** Est. 1968 - Traditional, reliable and conscientious local **[plumber](#)**

***No call out and no minimum charge, free written estimates, 1 year parts/labour guarantee***



**[www.plumb-master.co.uk](http://www.plumb-master.co.uk)**

Tel: 020 8398 0207 Mobile: 07973 636672



**[e-mail ron@plumb-master.co.uk](mailto:ron@plumb-master.co.uk)**

56 Speer Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey KT7 0PW



# Esher College Adult Education - it's business as usual



There have been plenty of column inches in the press recently about schools returning and the Adult Education Department at Esher College has given much thought about how it can accommodate the range of courses it runs so successfully.

Many people think Esher College is just a 6th form college, but it has a thriving Adult Education centre and the good news is they are ready to start the new academic year from September. The team have measured up the classrooms and will be running with smaller class sizes to maintain social distancing, with more sessions to choose from to meet demand. There will be plenty of hand sanitizers and those taking exercise classes like Pilates and Yoga will be asked to bring their own mats and equipment. Maureen Jay has been managing the Adult Education classes for 12 years and she says *“we have given lots of thought about how we will run our classes this year and we’re confident we can do it and maintain social distancing. All of our courses run in the evenings after the main college finishes, so we can manage our Adult Education students*

*without overlap.”*

There will be 50 courses running with places for approximately 200 students. Bookings are being taken now for courses commencing from Monday September 7, though not all start on this date, some begin later in the year. To find a full list of the courses and how to book see details on page 36.

There is a wide variety to choose from, some are for fun and some offer professional qualifications. Two of the most popular courses are Counselling (which is accredited by the CPCAB) and Life Coaching. The College is one of only five centres in the UK that offer the Life Coaching qualification, and people come from long distances to study, so it's useful there is ample free parking on site. The College is proud of its 100% student success rate, and the opportunity it offers students to start out on a new career path. On completion of Level 4 of the Life Coaching course students will be qualified to set up their own business.

Interior Design is also popular with those wanting a new career path but also with people who want to find out how they can apply their

new skills to decorating and designing their own homes. There are different modules for each term covering colour, space function and style. The tutor, like most of the tutors at Esher, is very experienced and in this case has worked in Interior Design professionally for many years.

The language classes will also be running as usual in French, Spanish and Italian, and it's possible to choose a level that suits, from beginner to the more experienced linguist and even for those who just want to be able to get by on their next holiday! Maureen says that some of the students have been going to the same classes for years, and have become good friends, *“there is a lot of socialising that goes on outside the classes, and people make great friends. It's lovely to think they met at Adult Education, it makes such a difference to people's lives”*

The classes attract a wide age range, for example the IT courses contain younger

people who want to polish up their skills before returning to the workplace and also those who are keen to become “silver surfers”. Maureen says, *“age is not an issue and people of all ages mix well together, the only requirement is that you must be at least 18 years old. A lot of people come back to education once their children have grown up and they have more time for themselves. There are also courses like Art, which are just for pleasure.”*

I asked Maureen what plans are in place in the event of a local lockdown. *“Fingers crossed it won't happen but we're prepared”* she said *“we've had good practice already when our Pilates and fitness classes went online during the last lockdown.”*

If you would like to find out more about the courses on offer, or to book contact [www.esher.ac.uk/adult-education](http://www.esher.ac.uk/adult-education) or by phone – **020 8335 2544**

**Sandra Dennis**



jellycat amuseable  
**rainbow**

**£21.95** – 10% of the profits of every rainbow we sell go to the NHS Charities Together

to help local residents who may prefer to stay at home, we are continuing to offer **FREE home delivery** in the KT7 area (whether it's luxury chocolates, a jellycat, kew gardens hand cream or just a greetings card), plus usual deliveries elsewhere



...and some beautiful homeware just in



**view**  
thames ditton

34 High Street Thames Ditton KT7 0RY 020 8972 9706

 @ViewGallery [www.view-gifts.com](http://www.view-gifts.com)

# Unitarisation anyone?



Have you heard the term unitarisation lately? Who even knew it was a word? Well, it may be the next big thing politically in Surrey.

In July, Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick announced that a government Recovery and Devolution White Paper will be published later this year. It is expected to set out plans for devolving more responsibilities to local government, creating more elected Mayors in England, and more unitary authorities

Currently the delivery of local council services in Surrey is split between Surrey County Council (SCC) and 11 Borough and District Councils, including Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC)

Of your total council tax payment 76% goes to SCC, 10% goes to EBC and 14% funds Surrey Police.

EBC organises refuse collection, planning, community support services, social housing, parks and open spaces, environmental health and licensing. SCC provides adults and children's services, highway maintenance, education, libraries and our community recycling centres.

A unitary authority merges all these services into a single local government body.

Surrey County Council has already been developing plans to abolish Surrey's Borough and District councils and develop the County Council as a single Unitary Council, managing all services for Surrey's 1.2 million residents.

That would make it twice the size of the next biggest unitary authority in



*The 11 boroughs of Surrey*

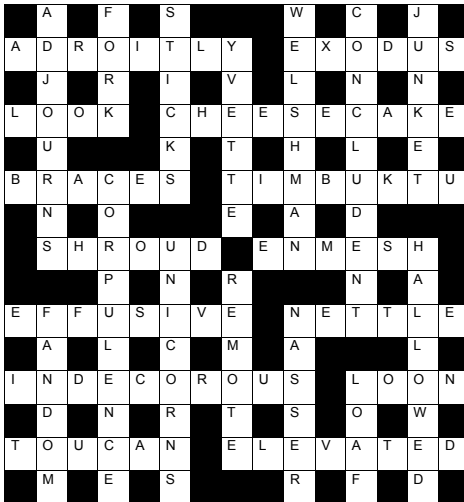
England, Cornwall, at 566,000 residents and marginally ahead of County Durham at 527,000 ([www.adducation.info/](http://www.adducation.info/))

The suggested benefits of a unitary authority are economies of scale and a single point of delivery for services. But there are concerns that larger does not necessarily mean better, and that large authorities weaken genuine local input to the decision-making process.

There are different views circulating about the future of local government in Surrey, and the government White Paper is yet to be published. We expect full consultation on any proposals put forward.

Please watch this space - we must make sure that our views are genuinely considered in any change that may be coming. Keep your eye on our website ***residents-association.com*** and on twitter ***@TDresidents*** and get involved to make your voice heard.

# Solution to the Summer Crossword



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

**Mrs. Catherine E Dunne**  
12, Kings Drive,  
KT7 0TH

**Claire Lascelles**  
Ashley House, Church Lane,  
KT7 0NL

**Sue Howarth**  
104 Summer Road,  
KT7 0QP

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - DRIVERS

We are a local charity. Our drivers use their own cars to provide a door-to-door service for less mobile residents in our community enabling them to get to medical appointments, hairdressers, Day Centres and so on.

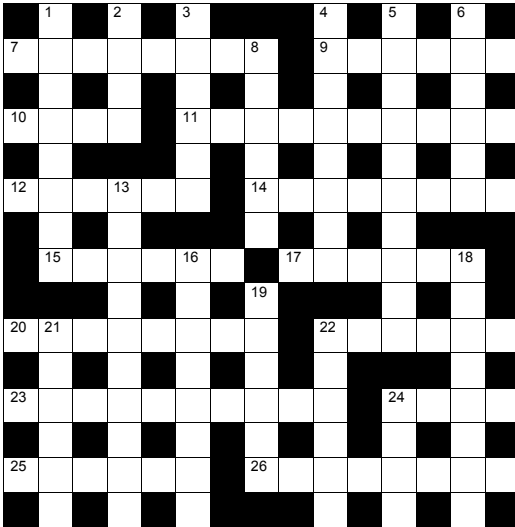
**We need more help. Can you spare a few hours a month at times to suit you, to carry out local drives?**

If so, please call Frankie Bell on 07790 472993.

She'd be delighted to hear from you



# Autumn Crossword



by **Howard and Bob Cruthers**

The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of October 25 2020 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

- 7 One track transport (8)
- 9 Freudian term for love energy (6)
- 10 Avian safeguarding organization (abbn) (4)
- 11 Unpredictable (10)
- 12 Treaty (6)
- 14 Chinese fruit? (8)
- 15 Addition, on foot? (2, 4)
- 17 Central American country (6)
- 20 Interface between clutch and engine (8)
- 22 Polyphenol giving wine its dryness (6)
- 23 Lamb lap pie mash up is hard to understand (anag) (10)
- 24 Lose garden storage? (4)
- 25 Motorised two-wheeler (6)
- 26 Irish city for writing verse? (8)

## DOWN

- 1 Indoor feline (5, 3)
- 2 Search hair? (4)
- 3 Rank (6)
- 4 Partnership (8)
- 5 Worth doing for Mrs Simpson? (10)
- 6 Small bean (6)
- 8 Fatty lump (6)
- 13 Crescent-shaped water features (5,5)
- 16 Road bridge above another road (8)
- 18 An urgent need (8)
- 19 Worldwide (6)
- 21 Clumsy person (6)
- 22 Relating to heat (6)
- 24 The type to organise? (4)

# SERVICES, CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND GROUPS

## SERVICES

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Mark Michelmore	01372 879321
Dittons & Weston Green NeighbourCare	Frankie Bell	07790 472993
<b>Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services</b>		
Thames Ditton Centre for the community	Mon & Thurs	0208 3985921
Thames Ditton Children's Centre	Tues, Weds, Fri	0208 3983772
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride, Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers	ask for service at central switchboard	01372 474552
Homesupport Elmbridge	Thomasina Breslin	01932 267128
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	0208398 6132
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Sally Dubery	01372 463587
Surrey Youth and Adult Education Service	Elmbridge Area	020 8979 8334

## GROUPS

1st Thames Ditton Brownies	Bronach Hughes	bronachhughes@hotmail.com
3rd Thames Ditton Brownies	Bronach Hughes	bronachhughes@hotmail.com
2nd Thames Ditton Rainbows	Heather Crowe	heathercrowe@hotmail.com
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Carole Needham	1wgbrownies@gmail.com
1st Weston Green Guides	Sumathi Jeevaratnam	sumathi.jeevaratnam@gmail.com
2nd Weston Green Guides	Helen Lawson	helenlawson287@gmail.com
2nd Thames Ditton Guides	Bronach Hughes	bronachhughes@hotmail.com
1st Weston Green Brownies (All Saints)		1wgbrownies@gmail.com
3rd Weston Green Brownies	Gillian Twomey	gtwomey@hotmail.com
1st Weston Green Rainbows	Larisa Strickland	westongreenrainbows@gmail.com
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Alison Derrick	020 8398 0041
Dittons Scout Group	Aileen Widdowson	07783 449666
Coffee and chat (United Reformed Church)	Mrs. E. Barker	01372 467491
Emberbrook Trefoil Guild	Mary Bowen	020 8398 6857
Friends of Bushey and Home Parks	Jean Smith	020 8977 9391
Girlguiding in Thames Ditton and Weston Green		dittonsdistrict.hjh@gmail.com
Friends of Walsingham Care	Miss Valerie Chicken	0208 398 2932
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	Giles Andre	020 8979 1994

## CLUBS

Albany Motor Yacht Club	Secretary	01784466651
All Saints Weston Lunch Club	Val Atkinson	020 8398 1117
Arts and Heritage Club	Carol Butcher	01932 867511
Cercle Francais d'Esher	Brigitte Tiller	01932 860842 brigitte@ptiller.com
Claygate Bridge Club	Hon. Secretary	020 8398 1710
Colets Health & Fitness	Giordano Orsini	020 8398 7108
Ditton Bridge Club	John Dagnall	02083984463



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	Elaine Sesemann	07801 943392
Ember Sports Club	Zenda Hedges	07717 304146
Ember Sports Club: Bowls	Sylvia Jones	01932 788701
Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Dr. David Cooke	01932 862841
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Annabel Duncan	0208 786 6318
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
Esher 41 and Ex-Round Tablers' Club	Dr. R. Tudor-Williams	020 8398 0108
Folk Dance Club (St Nicholas)	David Ford	020 8715 2148
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
Old Cranleigh Rugby Club	Tony Price	07801 837129
Old Cranleigh Hockey Club	Simon Marshall (Men)	07801 737695
	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
Probus club, Hinchley Wood & the Dittons	Edmund Woolley	020 8398 3581
Probus Club, Sandown	Julian Rye	020 8398 2463
Probus Club of Molesey	Roger Marlow	0208 398 5460
River Club (BMYC)	David Walker	0870 460 3586
Surbiton Croquet Club	Alec Thomas	020 8398 2391
Surbiton Golf Club	Secretary	0208 398 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

Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance	Mrs Brenda Denby	0208 398 6054
Ember Choral	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Jean Billett	01372 465961
Esher and District Amnesty International	Cherry Eddy (Campaigns)	0208 398 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
Oxshott & Cobham Music Society	Cherry Eddy (Membership)	0208 398 4377 cherryeddy102@gmail.com
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
University of the Third Age (U3A)	Hon Sec Anne Brown	01932 881633
Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Amelia Crafts	08456 528 529
	Membership: Sue Morris	020 8224 0980

Please contact the Editor to amend these listings

# The Vera Fletcher Hall

## Leaving a light on ...

We are missing our theatre dreadfully at the Vera Fletcher Hall and were hoping that we would be welcoming you all back in October for a great season of drama, film and music. At this time of the year, we would have been expecting our Autumn Season brochure to be dropping on to door mats and our audiences to be starting to make bookings. We have shows from companies postponed from the Spring Season, a joyous Christmas concert from the ever ebullient New Jersey Boys and remain poised to spring into action the minute there is positive news. For the moment, however, we think the most realistic chances of re-opening the theatre side of the Hall is more likely to be in Spring 2021.

When we are able to reopen, we hope that both our loyal audience members and also people new to the Vera Fletcher Hall will be eager to come and join us. Charles Court Opera are waiting in the wings with their production of HMS Pinafore, Cyphers Theatre Company will be bringing their production of Great Expectations and we will be welcoming back the multi-instrumentalists Andante with their latest concert of memorable and nostalgic 60s music, and so much more.

While the theatre is sleeping, we are working on a new-look website, which will be ready in the next couple of months. We are delighted the ever-supportive R C Sherriff Trust has been able to support this and make it possible. All announcements regarding re-opening will be posted there and on our social media platforms and, if you want to be the first to see our news, please sign up to our e-newsletter on the website. We are also looking for new volunteers to help out behind the bar on theatre nights and in lots of other capacities behind the scenes. If you are interested, please contact us directly via email.

The last time we were all at the Hall was at our presentation of our Film Night Screening of Seven Brides for Seven Brothers on Friday 13th March. We are watching carefully the decisions being made by other theatres and as soon as we can return to normal, the curtains will open again. In the meantime, we are always happy to hear from you and answer any questions, and like theatre across the land, we will be leaving a light on until we can return.



## Antique Clock Restoration & Repair

Specialising in Grandfather, Dial, Bracket and Carriage Clocks

**Contact: Mark Rowe M.B.H.I**  
BADA Diploma. Member of the Watch & Clockmakers Guild. West Dean Diploma.



**Tel: 020 8605 0331**

[www.theclockgallery.co.uk](http://www.theclockgallery.co.uk)

Additional Restoration services available for Watches, Books, Ceramics and Fine Furniture. Antique Clocks also bought and sold.



@TDResidents

Follow us on Twitter



**MOORE**  
*By Design*

PROFESSIONAL KITCHEN DESIGN

The Hersham Centre, Hersham

T: 01932 379076

New online gallery with 150 images...

[www.moorebydesign.co.uk](http://www.moorebydesign.co.uk)

## Karen's Angels

The All Needs Carers



Karen's Angels is a friendly local care company, operating in Surrey.

We provide professional 24 hour care, social and personal care services.

We are very proud of the excellent reputation we continue to achieve with our customers, their families, local authorities, GP's and DN's.

For further information please contact

Karen/Andrea  
02082247848  
07760220604



# The world has changed.

**And Claremont Fan Court School has changed with it.**

In some respects, we are as we've always been. We invest in pupils' character, so they unlock potential they didn't even know they had, and achieve what seemed impossible.

We continued to deliver excellence during the pandemic through a full, live virtual learning experience. Combining what we've learnt with our stunning 100-acres of space and fresh air, means we're approaching the future with robust confidence.

To learn more about our virtual open days this autumn, visit [claremontfancourt.co.uk/openevents](https://claremontfancourt.co.uk/openevents)



Be confident in character | Be unlimited in potential | Be strong in understanding  
Independent · Co-educational · 2½ - 18 years

**Claremont Fan Court School | Esher, Surrey KT10 9LY**