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THAMES DITTON & WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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# THAMES DITTON TODAY

Published quarterly since 1970

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*Cover credit: Libby MacIntyre*

[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.

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# THAMES DITTON AND WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## Annual General Meeting

8pm on 23 March 2021

Via Zoom

### Agenda:

1. **Guest Speaker Kate Ashbrook**,  
General Secretary of the Open Spaces Society
2. **Minutes of the 2019 AGM** (due to pandemic) matters arising therefrom
3. **Chairman's Annual Report**; receive, discuss and adopt the Annual Report for 2019-2021
4. **Accounts**: To receive the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020
5. **Appointments**: to receive nominations and appoint officers and an auditor: President, Chairman, Vice Chairmen, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer, Auditor
6. **Elections**: to adopt candidates for the Elmbridge Borough Council Election 6 May 2021
7. **Resolutions**: to consider any resolutions submitted in writing to the Secretary by 9 March 2021

### 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

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Chairman: Graham Cooke  
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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

March 23, 8pm AGM – via Zoom, see website for details

May 4, 8pm Venue / Zoom to be confirmed, see website for details

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# News from the Residents' Association to end-February



## AGM Speaker: Kate Ashbrook, General Secretary of the Open Spaces Society

We are delighted that Kate Ashbrook is to be our Guest Speaker via Zoom at the Residents' Association AGM on Tuesday **March 23 at 8pm**. Kate is the General Secretary of the Open Spaces Society (Britain's oldest national conservation body, founded in 1865. Its founders went on to create the National Trust in 1895.) Kate is also Vice-President and Chair of the Ramblers Association, a Vice-Chair of the Campaign for National Parks and a member of the Institute of Rights of Way and Access Management.



*Hear Kate Ashworth speak at our Zoom AGM*

The Open Spaces Society campaigns to protect common land, village greens, open spaces and public paths and our right to enjoy them. In Elmbridge they succeeded, after five years of campaigning, to make Burhill Road in Hersham a restricted byway and thus prevented it being opened up for

development, and also supported the 2012 campaign to protect the celebrated pastoral view from Richmond Hill.

We were very disappointed that we had to cancel last year's AGM due to Covid-19 restrictions but are delighted that through the wonders of Zoom, Kate will be able to be our guest speaker and answer questions at this year's AGM.

## May Elections

Local elections will be going ahead on Thursday May 6. Hopefully life will be more normal by then but you may be happier to submit a postal vote rather than attend a polling station.

Obtaining a postal vote is easy:

1. Download and print the postal voting form at [www.elmbridge.gov.uk/elections/voting-by-post/](http://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/elections/voting-by-post/)
2. Complete the form
3. Send the completed form to Elmbridge Borough Council, Electoral Registration Officer, Civic Centre, High Street Esher, KT10 9SD

You can apply for a postal vote at any time but you will need to submit your application before April 20 to enable you to vote by post at the election on May 6. Details are also available on our website [www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com)

## Significant threat to our High Street & Conservation Areas

The innocuously-titled government consultation on 'Supporting housing delivery and public service infrastructure' contained an attack on local democracy



through the extension of permitted development rights, which allow shops to be changed to residential use without the need for planning permission. This could spell death to High Streets like Thames Ditton. It also contained a proposal to allow permitted development rights in Conservation Areas which would make it virtually impossible to protect the character of the Conservation Areas in Thames Ditton and Weston Green.

The RA publicised the consultation and put in a robust response copied to our local MP, Dominic Raab. The full text can be found on our website [www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com) Whilst the consultation is now over you may wish to let our MP know ([dominic.raab.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:dominic.raab.mp@parliament.uk)) your feelings on the matter.

This was the third government consultation in a matter of months containing proposals which could be seen as a ‘developer’s charter’. However, according to analysis by the Local Government Association in 2020, more than one million homes granted planning permission in the past decade had not yet been built. This attack on local democracy is not the solution to the housing crisis.

## Future of the River Mole

The Environment Agency is consulting on the future of the River Mole. It proposes six potential schemes. You can find details at [www.lowermolefloodalleviationscheme.co.uk](http://www.lowermolefloodalleviationscheme.co.uk) Please take a look and have your say. See our article about the River Mole on page 28 for more details.

## High Street lights in dark times

Although spring is now, thankfully, under way the High Street Christmas Lights provided some much-needed festive cheer during the deep midwinter. Many thanks to everyone who made them possible, in a

Covid-secure manner.

## Footpath lighting on the horizon

After much work by RA Councillor Tannia Shipley, Network Rail have confirmed that the work to light the alley from Lower Green Road to Platform 3 at Esher station has been agreed and will be completed this financial year.



Footpath to Platform 3, Esher Station

## Further steps to reduce plastic waste

We are pleased to report that it is now the policy of Elmbridge Borough Council to recommend reusable face masks over the



single-use type, in line with its Single-Use Plastic Active Plan.

The Thames Ditton Boomerang Bag project will be supplying reusable masks to all the volunteers and Council officers at all polling stations throughout Elmbridge on polling day, to help reduce the number of single-use masks being used.

## Creating green corridors

There is a proposal to introduce a ‘green corridor’ along the verge at Hampton Court Way with a view to increasing biodiversity and habitat connectivity and supporting native wildlife. Initially the plan is to re-wild the section which falls between Embercourt Road and Thisteldene to gauge public response.

## Spring bulbs and Fountain flowers

Last autumn Will Bland and John Lyon planted several hundred more spring bulbs all over Thames Ditton and Weston Green. For more than 30 years the Residents’ Association has funded the planting of these bulbs and this spring we can see the results, not only of last autumn’s planting but those that are spreading naturally.

A special thank-you to Francine Brooks for planting the winter pansies and the summer geraniums in the fountain at the Boyle Farm roundabout, and to Andrew James for watering the flowers throughout the year.

## Thank-you to RA Surrey County Councillor Nick Darby

Residents welcomed Nick Darby’s work to get yellow lines in Aragon Avenue to stop the dangerous parking by visitors to the riverbank and in Summer Road and Riversdale Road so that lorries and refuse vans could get through and turn safely.

## Planning

The application to drastically reduce the retail space at **6 High Street, Thames Ditton (2020/0772)** has gone to appeal.

The application for development at **Bransby Lodge, St Leonards Road (2020/0865)** has been refused.

In spite of a meticulously prepared and presented case by our local RA councillors the application to develop **Merrywood, Weston Green (2020/1795)** was successful. However, the developers have yet to acquire access over common land.

We have objected to proposed development at **8 Lime Tree Avenue (2020/3134)** stating that the RA is not against development in principle but that the application represents an overdevelopment of the site.

The Guy Salmon site on the Portsmouth Road has been purchased by Aldi, the supermarket group. Currently no planning application has been submitted for the site.

## Local vaccination success

Despite the recent fire the local vaccination programme at Emberbrook Health Centre has been very successful (see article on page 31). Remember that it was through the efforts of the RA, working through our councillors, the Friends of Thames Ditton Hospital and Elmbridge Council, that in 1996 the two-acre site was obtained from the Milk Marketing Board. It was to be used for a nursing home with the George Tickler Wing of 16 cottage hospital beds on one acre and the Health Centre with GP practice and outpatient services on the other.

## Residents’ Association

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

We look forward to the return of ‘Dates for your Diary’ in our summer edition



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# Update from Nick Darby, Surrey County Councillor



As part of the over 65 cohort, I recently received my NHS call-up for the Covid vaccination and am thrilled to have had it. The Emberbrook Centre has done brilliantly.

Mental Health is a major issue to come out of the pandemic and there is ever greater need for expanded support. I am hoping that more investment in services in Surrey will quickly be approved by the NHS. This should result in a Mental Health Practitioner being available at every GP practice, to relieve pressure on our stretched GPs.

Cross border charging is something new. Residents may be aware of a proposal by the Mayor of London to charge up to £5.50 per car driving into the London area. So, a trip to Surbiton or Kingston would cost that much. It would be a new tax in all but name, whatever may be said about reducing emissions. There will be significant economic effects on retailers on just the wrong side. Journeys to GPs, Kingston Hospital, Kingston schools would be included, and recreational activities such as football or netball if your team trains or plays across the border. Bizarrely, it would cost you to travel to an away pitch in Raynes Park, but not the other team when they visit you in the Dittons! More on that no doubt as the debate unfolds.

Thames Water problems remain. The good news is that, working with a Surrey Highways officer, we were able to persuade Thames Water to accept responsibility for the flooding problem by Basingfield Road and Thames Ditton Station. Apparently the issue was a wrongly connected sewage pipe feeding into the water drainage. However, accepting responsibility and putting things



*Surrey County Councillor, (The Dittons) Nick Darby*

right are not the same! I will keep up the pressure.

For several years I have thought about how residents in the Dittons might be able once again to use their nearest Recycling Centre - at Villiers Road in Kingston. The deterrent for Kingston Council is the need for them to pay for excess waste going to landfill so no incentive to let Surrey residents in. I am pressing for this to be revisited, as part of a general move to greater cooperation.

I have been asked to consider priorities for Highway repairs for the coming year. My immediate thoughts are for the footways on Watts Road and Station Road. The allocation for each Surrey County Councillor will be higher than last year, but still nowhere high enough to deal with everything needed. There is a new process, trialled last year, which for the first time in years, allows the concrete roads which were asphalted over to be looked at properly.

Stay safe and I very much hope to be meeting you in person soon

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





# Your Residents' Association

Responded to three government consultations proposing to deregulate planning, remove local oversight and threatening Conservation areas and our local High Street

Regular Zoom Open Meetings to engage with the community on important topics

Constant vigilance Conservation areas Green

Notification to residents of key planning applications

Established Foodbank collection points

Twitter residents

Web site maintained as resource for all residents

Agreed lighting of Lower Green Road alleyway to Platform 1 Esher Station

Funding for High Street Christmas trees & lights

Supported residents' objections to inappropriate development

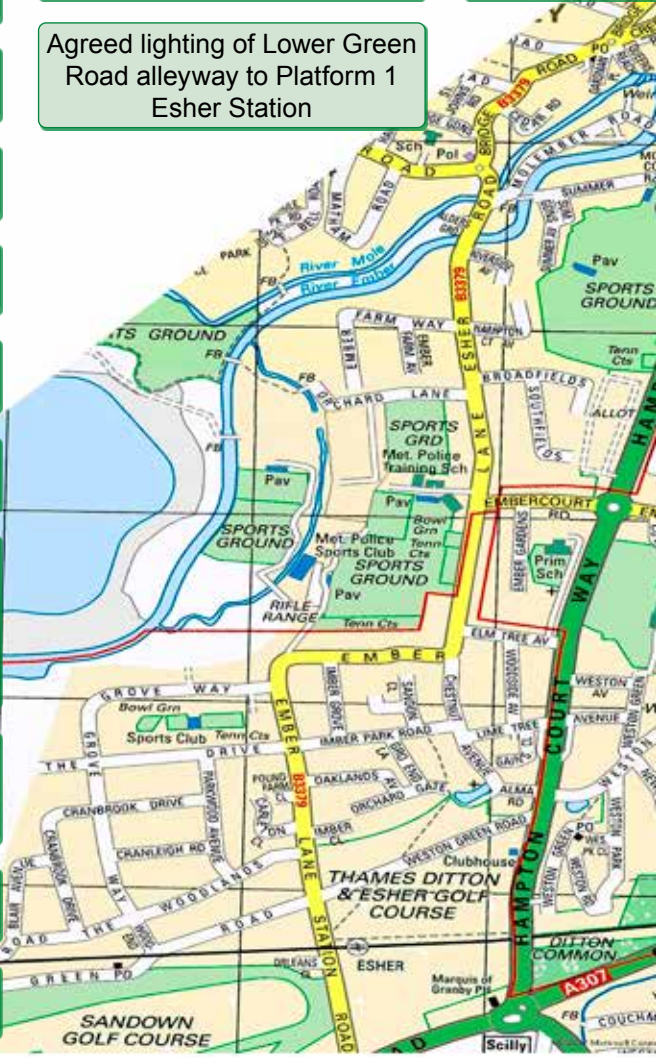
Supported Thames Ditton High Street retailers

Continuing pressure for maintenance to prevent flooding at Esher station, and to resolve other long-standing flooding problems

Supported 'Boomerang Bags' to make Thames Ditton a plastic bag free zone

Supported Mental Health First Aid training in local schools

Road resurfacing in Thames Ditton and Weston Green



# tion in Action 2019-2020



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n Areas and  
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Contacted members to  
offer lockdown support and  
signpost information

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to keep  
informed

Distributed Flood Action  
Leaflets

Persuaded Thames Water  
to accept responsibility for  
flooding in Station Road

Flood Action Committee liaison  
with Enviroment Agency and  
Thames Water

Planted spring bulbs,  
maintained flower beds  
at Fountain roundabout,  
supported Thames Ditton in  
Bloom at the railway station  
and beyond

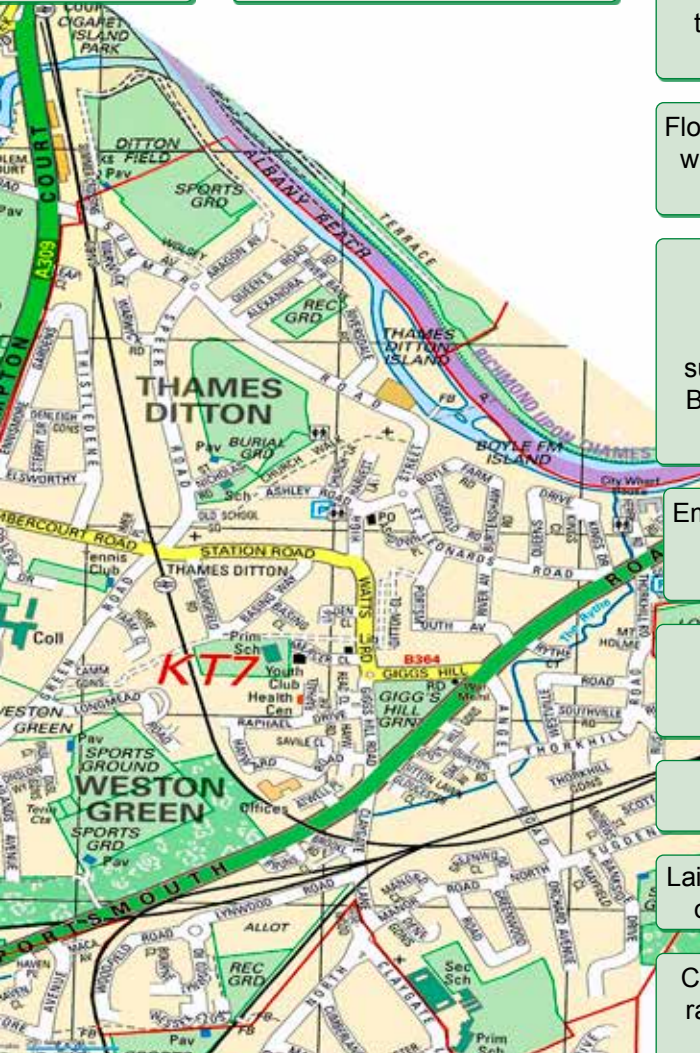
Emergency parking restrictions  
in Aragon Avenue to stop  
dangerous parking

Active Litter Picking  
Groups in Weston Green  
and Thames Ditton

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Farmers' Markets

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# Bid to buy the Jolly Boatman site – please help



*From eyesore to exquisite view.....can we make it possible?*

Surrey County Council has announced “Your Fund” to give £100 million for community projects which improve the local area. This is timely for two projects the Hampton Court Rescue Campaign (HCRC) are working on.

The first began when HCRC committee member Karen Liddell met with Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) regarding Cigarette Island Park behind Hampton Court station. This led to EBC costing works to include: improvements and signage at the entrance, removal of brambles, and foliage along the riverbank to reveal views of the Palace and lowering the hedge and trees at the station car park for better views and security. The five-year long-term plan also proposes works to reinforce the riverbank and improve the peninsular viewing point. The estimated cost of this first phase is £20,000.

The second project is to acquire the Jolly Boatman site to form an extension to Cigarette Island Park enabling public access and views towards Hampton Court Palace.

The Park entrance is currently hidden from view behind hoardings erected in 2012.

Despite obtaining planning permission for a landscaping scheme the HCRC and local community were unable to buy the site when it was sold in 2014.

Although the planning permission from 2008 can still be implemented, it has been made public that it's not economically viable. The current owners are struggling to obtain planning permission for an alternative scheme which has over 1200 objections and been undecided for two years. Once again economic viability has been questioned.

The site has been derelict for over 30 years since fire destroyed the Jolly Boatman cafe in 1988. The HCRC believes the local community and visitors to Hampton Court Palace deserve to have access to this land for the enjoyment of river and Palace views and this is a realistic opportunity to achieve it.

HCRC have submitted both projects to Your Fund Surrey.

It is vital that projects receive community support via a “thumbs up” click on the SCC interactive website if they are to be successful at a selection stage later this summer. Therefore, if you would like to support the HCRC to bring the Jolly Boatman site into community use, and see the restoration work at Cigarette Island proceed you can cast your vote for the projects by visiting:

<https://yourfundsurreymap.commonplace>.

[is/comments/5fd206779d963fd035581d4f](https://yourfundsurreymap.commonplace.is/comments/5fd206779d963fd035581d4f)

and <https://yourfundsurreymap.commonplace.is/comments/5fb39b83c935990f111ffe83>

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# Meet your distributors - Geraldine Batchelor



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

**Geraldine Batchelor delivers to Hayward Road, Raphael Drive, Read Close, Savile Close and Atwell Place.**

## When did you start living in Thames Ditton?

In 1994 we moved out of London to a small cottage in Chestnut Avenue opposite the white church. A few years later, with two children and another on the way we needed a bigger house. That's when we moved to Hayward Road, a new development which was still being built. We are still here 22 years later!

## How did you become a distributor?

I was already a 'collector' (one of the local people who collect the subscriptions for the Residents' Association), and when our neighbours decided to give up delivering, I took over. It is one of the biggest 'rounds', but I enjoy doing it because it is a chance to meet neighbours and have a chat.

## A brief 'potted biography'?

I was born in Islington the youngest of eight children. I went to the local Catholic primary school and then on to Maria Fidelis Convent School. My first job was with Barclays Bank at one of their head offices in the city. I left after a few years and temped all over London until I ended up at Unilever.



*Geraldine Batchelor*

Unilever offered me a permanent job so I stayed and that is where I met my husband Alex.

We got posted to Vienna for a couple of years and when we returned we sold our flat in London and moved to Weston Green. We have four children Emily, Phoebe, Joe & Jessica and a gorgeous cockapoo Bertie. I have always been a full-time parent as Alex's jobs have involved lots of overseas travel.

Thankfully, life is not as hectic as the children are grown up and Alex's commitments are now UK based.



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## What hobbies and activities do you enjoy?

Over the years I have been on many committees including the PTAs of the childrens' schools, the Dittons May Fair Committee and Weston Green Guiding. When the children were very small, I helped to run Dolly Mixtures a drop-in play group at the hall in Mercer Close.

I am a regular attendee at Elevate Bootcamp on Giggs Hill Green and have been since it started. It is still going on via Zoom during lockdown!

I used to do Pilates at Esher College but those classes have stopped at the moment. However walking our dog, Bertie, keeps me active.

## Why is the Residents' Association important to your family?

We know the benefits of living somewhere with the strong community spirit which abounds in Thames Ditton. The RA has a clear view of how we can keep the village together, maintaining it as a lovely place to live.

My husband, Alex, has become increasingly appreciative of the benefits of an organisation that has the welfare of all the residents at its heart. He has recently joined the executive committee of the Residents' Association and is looking forward to contributing to and continuing its work.

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

I would miss the river, Hampton Court and all of our lovely friends and neighbours.

**Pat Cooke**



*Geraldine with husband Alex and Bertie the dog*

### Quick Fire Questions

**Wine or G&T?** Both. I drank my first G&T when I was 40 but am a total convert now.

**Eat In or Eat Out?** Again, both! During lockdown family cooking skills have blossomed. I even started baking my own bread! If we could go out, I love The

French Table in Surbiton.

**Holiday Home or Away?** We love our holidays – a favourite would be safari in Africa.

**Cinema or Theatre?** We are lucky to have the Odeon in Kingston and the wonderful Rose Theatre on our doorstep.

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# Elmbridge

## ‘Historic High Streets’ exhibition



Colour tinted postcard of Thames Ditton High Street, 1960s, with C. & N. Hill's shop on left, dairy and coach booking office centre right (221.1998/11). Reproduced by permission of Elmbridge Museum.

In our winter edition we publicised Elmbridge Museum's request for help to prepare an exhibition on Elmbridge High Streets. Although installation of the exhibition has been postponed due to lockdown the online exhibition and heritage trail will launch on March 2.

Amy Swainston, Exhibitions & Interpretation Officer at the museum, says *“the concept of the high street is universally recognised, yet its meaning and identity remain slightly different for everyone. The Museum's latest exhibition gathers the impressions, thoughts and feelings Elmbridge's historic high streets have left within the people of our borough. At the core of each memoir, the community's ever-*

*changing identity has shone through. The exhibition uses them all to uncover how this community has, in turn, shaped our high streets over the years. We've had plenty of public contributions... many of which mentioned seeing the callout in Thames Ditton Today.”*



Local newspaper clipping of The 1966 battle to save the High Street (94.199). Reproduced by permission of Elmbridge Museum.



Memories at the museum include previous battles to save Thames Ditton High Street. For example the 1966 ‘Battle of Ditton’ when more than 300 letters of complaint and 4,500 petition signatures were gathered in protest at plans to demolish a large swathe of the old High Street in order to build a shopping centre

According to Amy the variety of reflections contributed to the exhibition has been incredible, and a few local personalities in particular have stood out. One such contribution was from a gentleman who said:

*“One day I arrived home with a non-working but cheap round-dial wall clock that I had bought at a London auction house. My wife suggested I took it for repair to a chap called Bert Carr who she noticed had a tiny clock shop, opposite the fountain at 53a the High Street.”*

*“After a quick look, he turned up his nose and said, ‘That’s rubbish, mate. It’s a Mickey Mouse clock! It’ll only keep going for 36 hours.’ He went on to explain that if I wanted a proper clock it would need to have a fusee movement. I was given a swift and impressive horology lesson.”*

*“Armed with Bert Carr’s advice I successfully bid for a clock which met with his approval. He overhauled it and replaced broken parts. Forty years on it still keeps perfect time. I would pop in to have a chat with Bert whenever I was in the village. These conversations sparked an increasing interest in clocks, and, over time, I bought a further four wall clocks at auction, all of which Bert restored. Bert died some years ago but my many clocks tick in lasting memory of one of the High Street’s great characters.”*



1960s postcard, view from roundabout with R. E. Grimes’ shop and M & R Stores left (221.1998/12). Reproduced by permission of Elmbridge Museum.

# Take a trip with Hannibal the History Hunter: A Pull-Out Guide



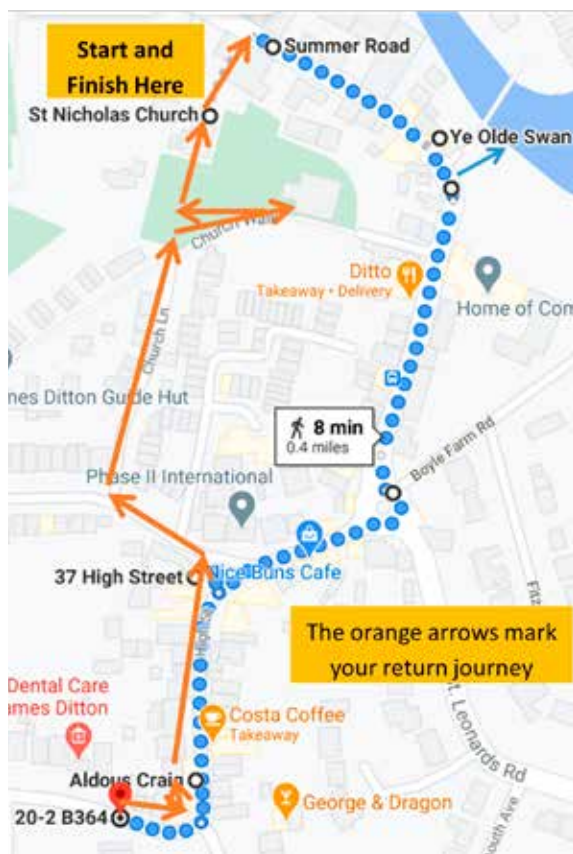
Hi there - I'm Hannibal the History Hunter! Pull out my 4-page guide to take your adults on a short circular tour of Thames Ditton. The nature of the footpaths means that at times it will feel like a zigzag as you will be crossing lots of roads. So watch out for cars and take care.

Visitors to Thames Ditton may be struck by its quiet riverside location, but you will find it is seething with stories of generosity, tragedy, drama and exciting innovations. Let's Go!

Start at St Nicholas Church car park and turn right onto Summer Road. Stop when you reach the entrance to the next car park on your right. Nearby, you will learn of examples of outstanding engineering.

**i** On the wall behind you is the blue plaque marking the site of The Foundry. It was a leader in its field, producing fine bronze statues which can be found in London and around the world. Walk a little further, and at the second set of green gates of the Ferry Works on your left; cross the road to see 3 plaques. Two of these remind us that Willans and Robinson revolutionised the steam engine here. It became the most used in electricity generation because of its high speed. You'll see that it was also the site of AC Cars that made 'amazing cars' (more on them later).

Cross back to the path to pass Ye Olde Swan on your left (like you would have done over 300 years ago). Cross again to take the slipway on the left down to the edge of the river.



**i** I expect you have heard of King Henry VIII? When he was around, Thames Ditton was surrounded by fields and marshes, and so the residents were able to watch in wonder at the building of nearby Hampton Court Palace. However, it was pretty difficult to get around – they didn't even have a bicycle – but in Thames Ditton they did have the river! The Thames was tidal then, and at low tide the Palace workers could walk across here; or at high tide, one of the ferries would take them over. *What do you think they chatted about with the waterman on their morning commute?*

Retrace your steps and turn left to walk towards the village, using the narrow path on the left if safe to do so. When you reach the end, carefully cross the Boyle Farm road and stop on that corner.

**i** Turn your back to the village to look at the mansion which was originally called Forde's farm, then it became Boyle Farm and is now the Home of Compassion. The style of the building has been changed a few times. The Fitzgerald family lived here when it was Boyle Farm – later you'll hear more of their story. *What would you guess about the Fitzgerald family knowing they lived in a large mansion like that?*

**i** Turn to face the village and you will see before you the drinking fountain and cattle trough – now full of plants. My namesake, Hannibal Speer, inherited his wealth, and very generously gave plots of land and buildings to benefit us such as this

fountain in 1879. He also gave our village hall (now the Vera Fletcher Hall) and what was the Cottage Hospital.

It is likely that the fountain was built on the site of the old village stocks which were used to hold down the legs of the offenders so that they could be humiliated by the locals. You'd get a good view of them from here. *Would you tickle their feet?*

**i** Can you see the large white house facing the fountain? Cesar Picton lived there for 20 years. He was a black African orphan from Senegal, brought here by a British Army Officer in 1761. He was given to a local nobleman Sir John Philipps as an exotic servant, along with a parakeet and an African duck. Sir John's wife was kind and brought him up as one of the family. When she died, she left him £100 in her will. He used it to become a successful coal merchant in Kingston on Thames and named himself after Picton Castle in Wales which the family owned. *What is the most exotic gift you have ever received?*

Continue into the village, and then cross over to reach Lodge Bros (37 High Street), and stop to face the way you came.

**i** Now it's time to hear more about the amazing cars of Thames Ditton. Look at the picture of the AC Cars factory. This was their second site until the early 1980s – it is now AC Court and the housing estate. Compare the scene with the opposite photo. *Is there anything that hasn't changed?*

Then look across the road and above the Lime Tree café and Secret Garden you'll see a blue plaque. That's the former



*This photo is from the 1980s. Is there anything that has not changed?*

**i** *Remember Hannibal Speer?*  
Walk along a little further and you can take a look at the Manor where he used to live, marked by a blue plaque.

**i** site of the AC Head Office and it was here that a deal was done with an American called Carroll, to create the Cobra – one of the fastest sports cars of its time.

It didn't win the Le Mans prize BUT there was a scandal. In 1964 AC cars used the M1 motorway to do a high-speed test run. The team's driver, Jack Sears, recorded 185 mph on the motorway and when journalists reported on this, it caused such an outrage that it was one of the reasons that led to the introduction of the 70-mph speed limit that we have on our motorways today. *Why would you call a sports car a Cobra?*

After you've stopped dreaming about fast sports cars, cross over and continue to the end of the High Street. Now cross Watts Road to turn into Station Road and look for the tiny cottage at no. 7 on the left.

That's where the village lamp lighter lived. Over 200 years ago the lamplighter would go out each evening to light the streetlamps using a wick on the end of a long pole and at dawn would put them out again. *Good job he had a pole!*

Retrace your steps and look out for the entrance on the left just before Aldous Craig, and cross over to go into the fittingly named Stags Court.

**i** This is where you'll find the old slaughterhouse used by Richard Porter, the Royal Deer-catcher - probably the only professional deer catcher in England. Vast numbers of acorns were needed as food for his deer, so 'acorn-hunts' by local children were organised. He exported the venison and sold it in his butcher's shop opposite. You can still see the butchers' shop sign high up on the wall across the road. *Where would you go acorn-hunting today?*

Return to the High Street and retrace your steps through the village, to turn left into Ashley Road, then right into Church Lane. At the end, turn right towards the church.

**i** Just a little way along you can peer through the railings of the garden belonging to the house called 'Cooleen' - this means 'small corner' in Irish. There, you can admire a beautiful mosaic. *What animals can you see?*



It was made by the mother of the puppet maker for Thunderbirds and Rupert Bear. It includes a line from William Blake, which he wrote over 200 years ago, to encourage us to take delight in even the smallest wonders in our world.

Continue on the path until you reach the entrance to the church.

**i** King Henry VIII needed a lot of servants for his palace, and two very important ones are remembered inside. Cuthbert Blakenen was his sergeant confectioner and Henry lent him the Manor of Claygate to live in, suggesting that the King was very fond of his creations. John Boothe was the King's usher. He supervised the servants who prepared Henry's bed at night. One would stab the straw mattress while another rolled over it in search of enemies. They would kiss the place where their hands had touched the bed. Cuthbert and John each married the same woman, Julyan. If open for private prayer, you could go in quietly to take a peek at them on the brass memorial that Julyan erected (on the left of the altar in the small Our Lady Chapel). *How many children did they have?*

Leave the church and retrace your steps along the path to turn right towards the church hall.

**i** Just before you get there, on the right, is the large granite tomb of the Speer family where you can say thanks to Hannibal for his generous gifts which still benefit us today.

Continue on the path, and stop when you are opposite the gate into the car park. Now turn right to walk into the burial ground, taking care not to walk on any graves.

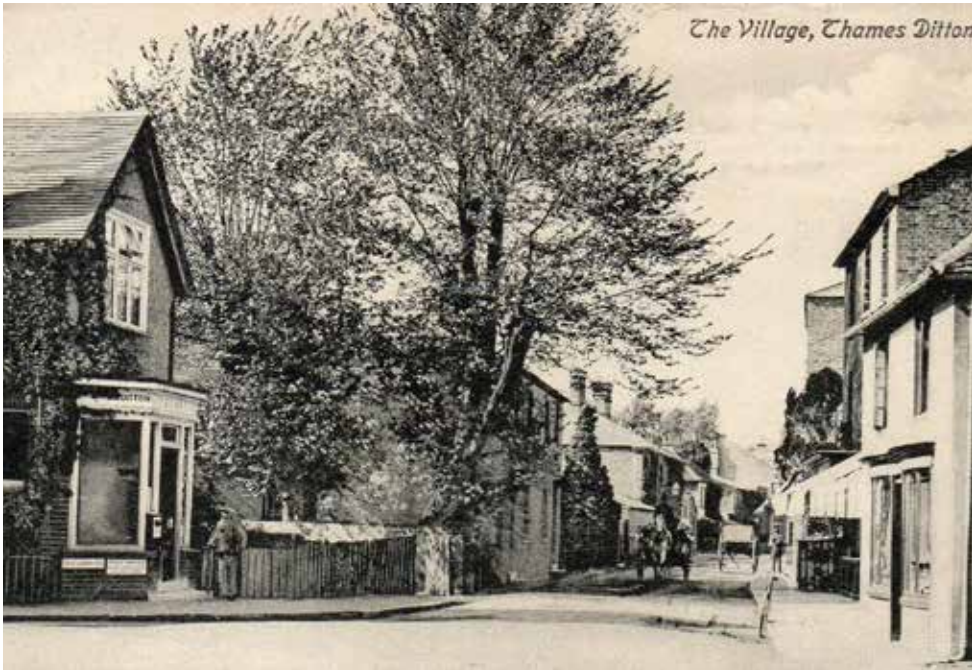
**i** When you reach the 5th row, look for the tomb of Lady Edward Fitzgerald, known as 'La Belle Pamela' – the beautiful.

Pamela was thought to be the illegitimate daughter of the Duke of Orleans (the one who was guillotined during the reign of terror following the French revolution of 1789) and Madame de Genlis (famed for her novels and known to have corresponded with Napoleon Bonaparte). Pamela's half-brother later became the King of France.

She may have been beautiful, but this did not save her from tragedy. Do you remember the stop at Boyle Farm? Boyle Farm was Lord Edward Fitzgerald's boyhood home before he rushed off to France to become a revolutionary. Pamela met and fell in love with him in a theatre box in Paris. They married, had three children and spent happy years living in Ireland and visiting his parents in Thames Ditton. Owing to his involvement in the Irish Rebellion, he was killed in Dublin.

Pamela was no longer welcome at Boyle Farm, as the Fitzgeralds were concerned that this would bring trouble for them. She died in 1831 in Paris and her portrait hangs in The Louvre. She was buried in Montmartre until her tomb was smashed by a German shell in the Siege of Paris and her remains were removed by a loyal friend and eventually brought here. *Can you guess what the French means on the small fragment of her original tomb? Can you find the nearby tomb of her elder daughter, Pamela (Lady Guy Campbell)?*

Return to the car park as carefully as you came. Have a safe journey home - from Hannibal the History Hunter!



*High Street, Thames Ditton, from the George and Dragon (undated)*



*Photograph of High Street, Thames Ditton, taken by Mr. C. R. S. Saunders in the 1950s (130.1983/144). Reproduced by permission of Elmbridge Museum.*

**Images courtesy of Elmbridge Museum, Elmbridge Borough Council**

# The Future of the River Mole



*Pennywort swamps the River Mole*

Those of us who enjoy walks along the River Mole cannot help but notice the gradual increase of the invasive weed Pennywort and the amazing work that has been done recently to clear it. Pennywort lives in slow flowing watercourses where it forms a dense mat of vegetation. It grows very fast, up to 20 centimetres a day and when it takes hold, starves the water of oxygen, forcing out other native plants that invertebrates, fish and birds feed on. Pennywort also makes the river impassable to local residents who enjoy boating and to many people it's downright unsightly.

The Environment Agency has limited resources and direct these at areas prone to flooding and says *“As the River Ember channel is essential for managing flood risk, our main focus on Pennywort is the Ember channel. We work alongside riparian owners (those whose properties directly abut the river) along the River Mole and Imber Court Loop to raise awareness of and manage Pennywort. During the past year a number of riparian owners along both of these areas of river have carried out work to remove Pennywort”* Although spraying is an option the Environment Agency prefer its physical removal.



Brian Nason has lived in Molesey for over 15 years and has always enjoyed walks along the River Mole and watching the wildlife. *“I’ve watched the problem get worse over the last 10 years. The EA used to clear it, but it got out of hand accumulating at the sluices and weirs and in the mild winters it just didn’t die back. Over the past four years or so, several local residents had been acting independently trying in vain to keep the weed under control. The weed grows so rapidly and, if allowed, will create a dense thick ‘blanket’ from bank to bank across the river. I started with homemade grappling irons on ropes, progressing to weed rakes, but this approach had limited success”.*

Since he was a boy, Brian had always wanted to try his hand at canoeing. So, he bought a canoe and decided to join his neighbours who were clearing Pennywort from the Mole up river from the Wilderness. *“Tackling the weed from canoes was the game changer and various strategies had been tried. Cutting the weed into manageable blocks with handsaws was the winner, the divide and conquer approach.”* Then came the task of using a rake to pull it onto the riverbank. *“Some of the Pennywort can be 30cms deep so it’s a challenge”.* As he hadn’t done it before learning to manage the canoe wasn’t easy. *“Several outings came to a wet and muddy end!”*

Early last year the regular volunteers were out as usual but for such a huge task, more help was required. *“I think the fact that we had Covid in 2020 actually encouraged people to get out and help. We all had more time on our hands and wanted to get outside and get some exercise. I posted a couple of messages online about what I was doing using social media including Facebook to get more people to join in. I joined several local Facebook groups that were proving really successful in bringing*

*working parties together each weekend.”* Some of the volunteers took to the water but just as valuable were the ones that stood on the banks and pulled the weed onto the bank. *“It’s really hard to pull it out of the water, it’s a dense mass of water filled tubes so it’s heavy. Fortunately, the water drains out quickly, and it composts down. We were able to dispose of it out of harm’s way in areas that are inaccessible along the banks.”* As it’s such hard work people came along for as much time as they were able. Gradually the group of volunteers grew until there were close to 25 people.



*Canoeists clearing Pennywort*

With Covid-19 an ever-present threat, the volunteers had to manage social distancing. *“Those people in canoes were never too close and the others on the bank kept their distance. We were outside and working for a limited amount of time, so it was fairly easy to manage. People were sensible”.* The volunteers have managed to clear the River Mole from Molesey Heath to the Wilderness



sluice but there will need to be ongoing maintenance to stop the Pennywort returning. Ironically although the working parties have never been able to meet properly Brian is hopeful that once Covid abates they will be able to meet socially and get to know each other better, *“It would be really great if we could all get together and have a riverside BBQ. It’s going to be really important that we keep doing this so it would be good to get to know people better.”*

Brian has been amazed and thankful for the feedback from local residents *“This stretch of the river has been weed free for several weeks now and from the comments posted on Facebook\*\*, so many people appreciate the natural environment and amenity of the river and wildlife. It’s very rewarding to be able to help preserve this part of the river for the local community.”*

Since the clearance, ducks, herons and kingfishers have returned to this stretch of the River Mole but sadly a threat looms on the horizon for the project. The Lower Mole Flood Alleviation scheme protects around 3000 homes and businesses in the area from flooding. The scheme runs from Hersham to the River Thames including the River Ember, the side channels at Royal Mills and the Ember Loop. It was set up after the Mole flooded in 1968 - the largest and most severe flood recorded on the River Mole. The scheme was finally finished in

the 1980’s but is now near the end of its life expectancy and action needs to be taken by the Environment Agency. There are six main water structures (sluice gates) that control the water flow and decisions need to be made about their future.

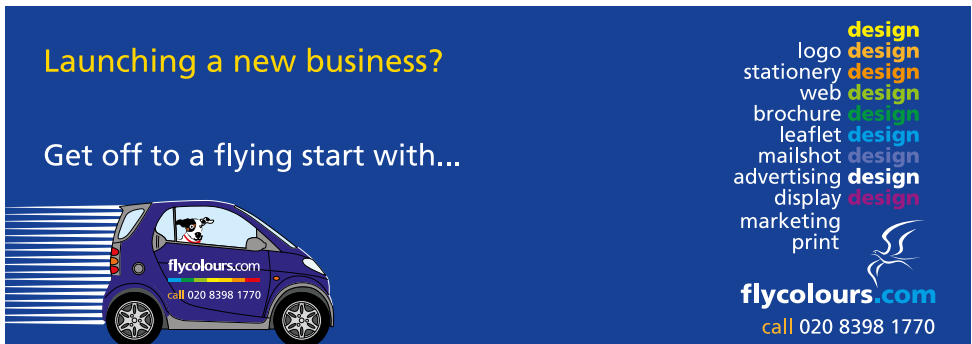
Unable to hold a face-to-face public consultation because of Covid restrictions, the Environment Agency have chosen to use an online consultation. They have proposed six potential schemes. Some of these could cause a reduction of water levels in the River Mole reducing it to little more than a stream in areas during drier periods. This would have significant issues for the wildlife, riverside access, leisure purposes and for residents who have direct access to the Mole from their properties.

The consultation is now live and closes on Wednesday March 24. You can access it at [www.lowermolefloodalleviationscheme.co.uk](http://www.lowermolefloodalleviationscheme.co.uk) where there are detailed descriptions of the proposed schemes, costs, maps, and helpful presentation videos. You can also add your comments and find answers to questions raised previously.

If the River Mole matters to you as much as it does to the Pennywort volunteers, then please take time to read the Environment Agency consultation and have your say.


**Sandra Dennis**

\*\*Brian Nason aka Phil De Lurve.



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# Elmbridge Community Support and Covid-19



I last wrote about Elmbridge's response to Covid-19 in the Summer edition of the magazine when we were 10 weeks into the first lockdown. How things have changed since then!

At first matters improved, the numbers of infection dropped and Elmbridge began to open some of the services being operated out of their seven Community Centres in a Covid-compliant way. Welfare calls continued to those unable to attend the Centres and regular contact and support was given to those who would normally attend specialist groups such as those for Parkinsons or Dementia.

Meals on Wheels continued to be provided by the Centres. This is no mean feat – food sourced, cooked, packed and delivered by a band of wonderful volunteers. More than 50,000 meals have been delivered since the start of the pandemic and this will have increased by the time you read this.

The summer lockdown was challenging but at least we could enjoy some warmth and walks in clean air. Gardens were 'manicured' and vegetables grown in abundance. This second lockdown proved more challenging in the cold and the dark of winter. It has been particularly difficult for families with young children who have had to become parents, carers and teacher. Many face financial hardship and putting food on the table is proving a struggle.

Foodbanks have proved invaluable and the Council has continued to support our four local foodbanks as have local communities.

In the lead up to Christmas when

the weather got worse there was much concern about the homeless. Elmbridge Council stepped in and 33 rough sleepers were moved into settled accommodation. 'Bunkbin' pods were provided in Molesey and the housing division continued to help



*A welcome Meals on Wheels visit*

with home improvements.

Environmental Services continued to operate and our bins were emptied regularly – not easy with Covid restrictions and staff off sick. Amey, the contractors, are to be congratulated. I saw several 'thank you' notes on bins and I know that these are appreciated.

Businesses and High Street traders have been supported with various grants and

'Love Elmbridge' was launched to support the re-opening of High Streets – this work is ongoing.

The focus now is the roll-out of the vaccine and supporting people who may be confused and concerned about attending the vaccine centres. Elmbridge and the RA website constantly update this information. Elmbridge Community Transport team have been helping to get people to the sites in a Covid-compliant way. People, especially when older, can find it difficult to venture out having been confined to home for so long.

Residents on the NHS shielded list and identified as 'Clinically Extremely Vulnerable' are being offered help and support via a helpline. Central Surrey Voluntary Action, working with EBC, has been invaluable in helping with shopping and prescription collection.

It is impossible to cover all the good work going on. The support given by our local council is astounding. Working remotely is difficult but officers have risen to the challenge and are to be congratulated for their hard work and achievement. Our councillors have also had to adapt and cope with numerous Zoom meetings to carry on with 'business as usual'.

Surrey's infection rate is now dropping, the vaccine roll-out is happening at an astounding pace and things are looking more positive. We are all looking forward to a more normal life and to see our seven Centres for the Community buzzing with activities once more.

**Tannia Shipley**

**RA Councillor**

**Hinchley Wood/Weston Green**

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Social Affairs**



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# Volunteers and our local Vaccination Hub



*By February 9 the Emberbrook vaccination centre had given 10,000 vaccinations*

A successful vaccination hub was set up at Emberbrook Health Centre in December 2020. This hub has been providing vaccinations throughout our local community. Led by Glenlyn Practice, it incorporates seven GP Practices in total.

Following a fire which broke out at Emberbook on Saturday February 13, an alternative site for the vaccination hub was swiftly established and thankfully the amazing vaccination service to our community can continue. Staff and volunteers worked round the clock to prepare the hub at Thames Ditton Centre in Mercer Close - just a three-minute walk away - meaning there was no break in the planned schedule.

Establishing such a successful hub within the community has been a tremendous achievement by so many people. Enormous thanks must go to all the clinicians who have given up so much of their time and to the staff who have organised the schedules and rotas for each day.

This is a huge logistical effort and delivering the vaccine with such efficiency represents an extraordinary achievement for all those involved who are also trying to run a GP

Practice at the same time.

The first tranche of patients was called to the Emberbrook site over the weekend December 18-20 when 985 over 80-year-olds were vaccinated. By February 9 10,000 people had been vaccinated. With a current rate of more than 1,000 a week.

The surgery continues to be overwhelmed with offers of help from members of the local community, including those who have brought baked goods to the Centre daily for those on duty. Everyone is very grateful for the tremendous community support in so many different ways.

Volunteers have taken on various roles, including carparking and traffic management, IT issues, providing refreshments and, of course, attending to patient 'check in' and general buddy support. High viz jackets, signage and PPE are provided to keep everyone safe and by mid-February over 1,100 shifts had been undertaken by the volunteer team.

In the early weeks, volunteers were helping elderly patients to their appointments with wheelchairs where necessary and for many of the elderly and those shielding, this was the first time they had left home since the



lockdown last March. The sense of gratitude is evident across the many, many patients who have come forward to be vaccinated: they are so thankful to be able to have the vaccination and appreciative that this can happen on their doorstep.

There has been a wonderful atmosphere at the vaccination hub as the community has come together in this unprecedented situation. Dr Richard Strickland, a Partner

at Glenlyn Medical Centre, commented that *'the logistical challenges have been enormous, but the involvement of the volunteers has helped create a wonderful, positive atmosphere of collective effort and goodwill. We couldn't have done this without volunteer involvement. What a caring community!'*

**Louise Russell (Volunteer)**



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## 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



# Ann Levick 1929 - 2020



If she were here, she would probably say thank you for the opportunity to serve Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association - as Honorary Secretary for 11 years 1992 - 2003 and then as President until 2010. As it is, Ann is on her next journey, transformed and transforming after dying from Covid-19 on December 4 2020.

When Ann was born in Japan, Samurai still walked. She moved to Shanghai with her parents in the mid 1930s to the international settlement. Her father, a teacher late of Kanazawa University, taught English for the Shanghai municipality by day, and helped Chinese thinkers with English by night. Outside the settlement the Kuomintang and gangsters were in control.

In 1942 the Japanese invaded Shanghai. Ann and her family were interned as enemy nationals. They starved and she suffered personal abuse, but most lived.

After she married, she and her husband Brian lived and worked around the globe, from improving cattle breeding in Sudan in the last days of colonial rule to selling petrol in Brazil, where stomachs noted *'how much meat there is, how easy life wends compared to grim post-war England!*

Thailand before mass sex tourism was canals, temples and grace. She had an amah to look after her two new children. The Princess came round, and she still visited Thai friends when they came to London 30 years later.

The family moved, in the early '60s across the Singapore Straits to Brunei, to the oil field in Miri. A local rebellion came to



Ann Levick in Khartoum in 1952

within two hundred yards of their house. Women and children were taken hostage. Her late husband said, *"return the women and children take me"*. They did. Nobody knows how he was released. In the end they watched the Argyll regiment fly in against the wind.

Thames Ditton appeared tranquil amidst the storms. During a UK posting she and husband Brian bought a house here in 1964,

Aden in '66 was more bullets and more beautiful beaches, followed by Beirut, the Paris of the East, with high society and

rumblings of the incipient civil war. Posted then to Khartoum, the house was large, coups continued.

On their second stint in Beirut, this time in the middle of the civil war, her husband was kidnapped (again). He was beaten and subjected to mock executions. Through all, women held families together; men made money and took decisions – some good, some bad.

On her return to the UK in '76, Ann was a founder member and Hon. Sec. of the Three Hundred Club - so named to get 300 Women MPs elected out of 600 plus MPs – with the slogan "A Woman's Place is in the House"

She was a key member of the Thames Ditton Residents' Association Executive and fellow member Ruth Lyon remembers, 'as you can imagine she was a superb

Secretary, effortlessly and quietly efficient'.

Amidst teaching TEFL, and the RA, in the relative calm, she campaigned successfully as Hon. Sec. for the Association of British Civilian Internees in the Far East (ABCIFER). They won some compensation from Japan and most importantly ex-internees met up in good shape as victors, not victims.

Ann was a person who refused to give up, however bad the situation. Risk had been company since Shanghai, so she disliked lockdowns – isolation, impoverishing the young, and dulling the active. She loved liberty, and the honest commerce that underpins it, unto the end. She died as generous in spirit as she lived.

**Corin Levick**



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# Ditton to Ditto ... and someday back to Ditton



Ditton Crafters was set up by Jenny Avon who also started Boomerang Bags in Thames Ditton. On Thursday mornings in Thames Ditton Library, the seated foyer would fill with creative atmosphere as a group of local crafters got out their knitting, felting, quilting or embroidery project. The creativity didn't stop there. While they crafted they chatted, and solved life's little challenges, over a cup of coffee provided for a small fee by the kind library staff.

So, it's no surprise to hear that when the pandemic came along, they applied their creativity to work out how they could keep going – they weren't going to be beaten by Covid-19.

As you might expect, they tried Zoom, but as soon as lockdown was lifted, those who could, started to meet on Giggs Hill Green. Seated 2m apart on their portable chairs with flasks at the ready, while the rules allowed, they continued to meet; gradually adding blankets and hot water bottles as the weather became colder.

Then the rains came and they discovered the Ditto restaurant with its lovely walled garden, heaters and rainproof roof. Using the rule of six, Joe and Sam the owners were very happy to accommodate the eccentric bunch and jokingly replied, *“as long as you knit us some jumpers!”*

Curiouser and curiouser Joe became, of this strange group of crafters knitting and sewing in his garden. Eventually, he told them about his plans for the Ditto refurbishment and asked if they would make him some cushion covers. *“Do what you love”* was his brief, *“as long as it goes with my colour scheme”*.

A selection of the Ditto cushions made by Ditto Crafters



Hence, the Ditton crafters became 'Ditto crafters' and produced 15 cushions in various styles – some of which were inspired by the Queen's Silver Jubilee embroidered mural, produced back in 1977 by local crafters, and still hanging in the reference room of Thames Ditton library.

Eight of the crafters got involved. Alison Brown said, *“When I was travelling in Pakistan, I was gifted a beautiful embroidered dress panel. I had stashed it away, waiting for inspiration for its use and the Ditto cushion was the perfect fit”*. Jean Hipwell is addicted to patchwork following





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Thameside care home review score\*  
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\*carehome.co.uk review scores are based on independent reviews with a maximum score of 10. Review quoted and rating correct as of 20/01/2021.

a year living in America, and designed a cushion using the 'Disappearing Ninepatch'.

Everyone involved was inspired by the project, and hope that the cushions will be enjoyed when the Ditto reopens its welcoming doors. Joe said, 'We are delighted to support our local community – it's really important to us. This was a win-win – the crafters felt welcome here as their new home during the pandemic, and we got all these lovely bespoke cushions helping us to improve the Ditto in a unique way.'

**Julie Royce**



*Beautiful new cushions adorn Ditto*



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# A new church in Thames Ditton



In our Summer edition 2020 we reported that The United Reformed Church in Speer Road, Thames Ditton (dating from 1804) was likely to close unless it could find new members to help or form a partnership with some other group.

Happily, King's Church is now using the venue, giving a burst of new life and a spark of hope for the future. Prior to the pandemic, King's Church met at the Rose Theatre, Kingston. Member of the church leadership team John Ford said: "We are excited to be meeting at Thames Ditton United Reformed Church and very grateful to Rev. Peter Flint and the congregation of Thames Ditton URC for allowing us to use their building."

"King's Church believes that following Jesus Christ should make us a family for the lonely, a home for the lost and a place where people can explore questions about faith, life and meaning. Jesus said, 'I have come that you may have life in all its fullness' (John's Gospel)."

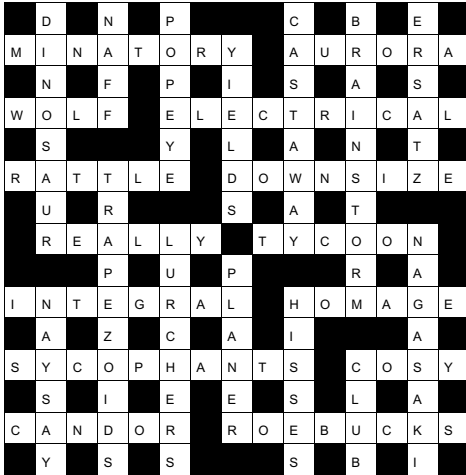
At present the church is only able to meet online; a service is live-streamed on Sunday mornings, 10.30am, from Thames Ditton. However, the plan is to gather in person and have Sunday services in Thames Ditton and to actively serve the Thames Ditton community as lockdown measures ease.

John added: "We would love to invite everyone to join our online services from the comfort of their own sofa. Or, if the uncertainty and challenges of 2020/2021 have caused anyone to ask big questions about God, life and meaning they might like to join our next online Alpha Course. Each session examines a different aspect of Christianity and is a safe space to ask any questions about the Christian faith. Most of all, as soon as we can we are looking forward to welcoming people to our services and becoming part of the community."

If you want to find out more go to [www.kingschurch.com](http://www.kingschurch.com)



# Solution to the Winter 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.

Carol Dickinson  
130 Ember Lane  
KT10 8EJ

Mr & Mrs Bloom  
30 Newlands Avenue  
KT7 0HF

Mrs Gail Porteous-Butler (nee Bond)  
22 Castle Road  
Colchester (*Gail used to live at 61 High Street. She would be delighted to hear from any former neighbours – contact [editor@residents-association.com](mailto:editor@residents-association.com) for details*)



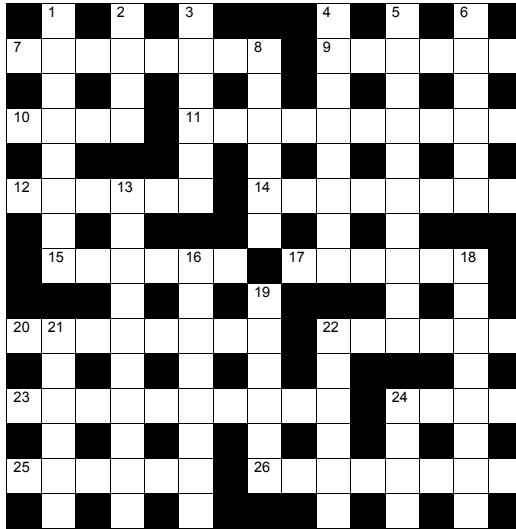
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# Spring Crossword



by Howard and Bob Cruthers

The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of May 4 2021 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 Havoc may ensue if this is ticking (4, 4)
- 9 Executes (6)
- 10 Woodwind instrument (4)
- 11 Seer (10)
- 12 Essential fastener? (6)
- 14 Depressed, about the weather? (8)
- 15 Hurtle towards profession? (6)
- 17 Each of two compounds with the same formula but a different arrangement of atoms (6)
- 20 Mixed up salt mine makes complaints (anag) (8)
- 22 Tiny time? (6)
- 23 Mingling with the great and good (10)
- 24 Sweet sport? (4)
- 25 African capital (6)
- 26 Valuables or National? (8)

## DOWN CLUES

- 1 High blood sugar sufferer (8)
- 2 Just a lake? (4)
- 3 Foam (6)
- 4 Openings to unlocking (8)
- 5 Riders coming to the rescue? (10)
- 6 Small river, from the internet? (6)
- 8 Worried, about young animals? (6)
- 13 Firestarter (10)
- 16 Elevated in rank (8)
- 18 Noisy snakes (slang) (8)
- 19 Help, a goal? (6)
- 21 Pressure line (6)
- 22 Elevated train transport system (6)
- 24 Don't know exam success? (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	gsl@westongreenscouts.org.uk
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)		lwgbrownies@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.ljh@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 Cranleighan Rugby Club	Tony Price	07801 837129
Old Cranleighan 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	01932 976994
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
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**





We continue to wait for some good news on the re-opening of the Vera Fletcher Hall.

Our new website is now launched and not only did the R C Sherriff Trust support us in that but they have made the decision to continue their generous grant to support the work of the Vera Fletcher Hall so that we are able to re-start operations with confidence when restrictions lift. We are always happy to hear from our hall users and audiences and so if you have comments to make on the new site or a request for when we are able to re-open the theatre, please do contact us at [pr@verafletcherhall.co.uk](mailto:pr@verafletcherhall.co.uk).



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