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

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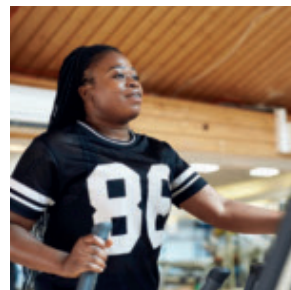
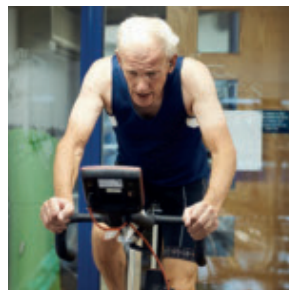
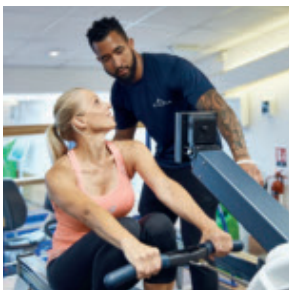
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# THAMES DITTON TODAY

Published quarterly since 1970

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*Cover photo credit: Tony Harris*

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Officers and staff of the Association are volunteers, but we must fund costs of this magazine, administrative and election expenses, and other expenses such as spring bulb-planting and village Christmas trees. The subscription is only £3 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions can be paid via our website [www.residents-association.com](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

## 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: Peter Hickman,**  
3 Elmbridge Lodge, Weston Green Road  
Thames Ditton 020 8339 0931
- Surrey County Councillor: Nick Darby,**  
12 Basing Close, Thames Ditton 020 8398 2382

### Thames Ditton Borough Councillors

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- 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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- Membership Secretary: Peter Haynes  
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- Planning: Rhodri Richards,  
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- 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

January 29 8pm - Vera Fletcher Hall, Thames Ditton  
March 26 8pm - Vera Fletcher Hall, Thames Ditton (AGM)

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# News from the Residents' Association to early November



## A fitting tribute



*The opening of the new village sign*

In September Thames Ditton residents celebrated the inauguration of their new village sign, which was commissioned by the Residents' Association in recognition of Peter Hickman's service as our County Councillor for 12 years, and to the Thames Ditton community for more than 40 years.

The sign is situated at the entrance to Thames Ditton on Giggs Hill Green. Read the article on page 13 to find out more about this striking addition to the village.

## Milbourne Pond

It has been a long time coming but Milbourne Pond finally has water in it! The pond has been re-profiled to tap directly

into the aquifer below it. The site will be allowed to bed-in over the winter and will green up as the vegetation recovers.

As the pond will now have a permanent water supply, plant and animal wildlife will once again be able to flourish. The water table, and therefore the level of the pond, will continue to rise and fall with the seasons; previous borehole data indicates that this will be by 40-50cm. So the pond will be slightly larger by the end of winter when the water table is at its highest.

The project to rejuvenate Milbourne Pond has been spearheaded by the Residents' Association's Highways & Drainage Convenor, Andrew Roberts, and actively supported by RA Councillor Tannia Shipley.

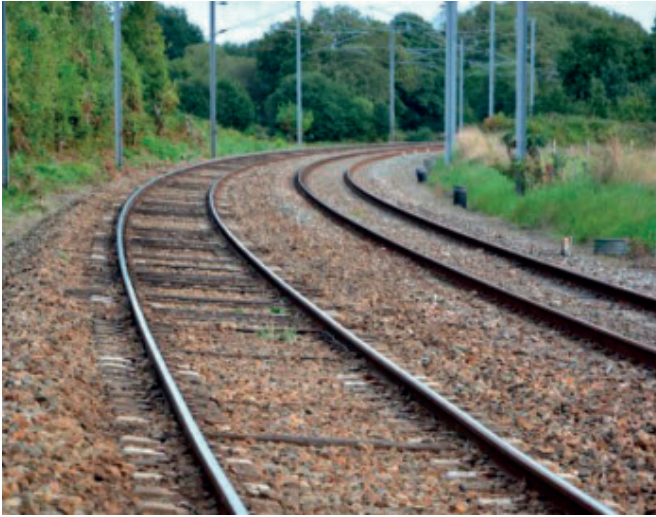
Funding has come from two sources - C.I.L. (Community Infrastructure Levy money through Elmbridge Borough Council) and a long-standing fund-raising programme with support plus financial contributions from the Residents' Association.



*Milbourne pond - one month after restoration work*



## Trains - strikes and other jollier matters



The week-long train strike in October caused misery at Thames Ditton Station, where South Western Railway did not see fit to supply a replacement bus service, nor ensure that tickets would be valid on all alternative routes. The Residents' Association and our Surrey County Councillor have written to Andy Mellors, the Managing Director of South Western Railway, to protest against the non-existent service provided to Thames Ditton commuters on strike days. The correspondence and the reply from Andy Mellors can be found on our website [residents-association.com](http://residents-association.com)

Commuters' access to and from Esher station has been improved with a new all-weather mesh surface on the path by Station Road. This will keep users' shoes out of the mud in wet weather but still allow grass to grow, as appropriate for a common.

Despite pouring rain there was a record turnout of local residents for the autumn/winter planting of Thames Ditton station. The displays at the station have cheered commuters and visitors alike. Their impact was recognised when Thames Ditton In Bloom received a highly-prized Level 2 In Your Neighbourhood Award in the 2018 RHS Britain In Bloom Awards.



*A record turnout for planting out Thames Ditton station*



## Planning

There has been no progress on the retrospective application at **Taggs Boatyard** (2018/1695). Residents and councillors are very concerned that the unauthorised building work has continued unabated throughout the summer.

The application for four five - bedroom houses to replace a single house on **land to rear of 7-9 Embercourt Road** (2017/4062) was rejected at the East Area Planning Committee on 10 September.

This was one of the first applications to be judged against the new National Planning Policy Framework, which states that: *“Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site.”*

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Kingston and North Surrey identifies that the pressing need within Elmbridge is for smaller 1-3 bedroom units, and that we have little future need for 4+ bedroom dwellings. This, plus the fact that Elmbridge's minimum housing density target is 30 dwellings per hectare, means that the application failed to meet these criteria. This potentially has great significance for any further planning applications within the borough.

The retrospective application for a single-storey outbuilding in the front garden ancillary to the existing D1 nursery at **Butterfly Patch Nursery, 1 Weston Ave** (2018/2094) was refused for reasons that would result in significant adverse impact to the host dwelling, the character of the area and the street scene.

## 25th Anniversary of the RC Sherriff Trust



*Ruth Lyon at the 25th anniversary evening*

This year, the RC Sherriff Trust is celebrating 25 years of supporting the arts in Elmbridge. At a recent event Trustees made a presentation to local resident Ruth Lyon for her support of the RC Sherriff Trust - she has just stood down as a Trustee after 25 years of service! Earlier this year Ruth also stood down as councillor for Thames Ditton, a post she held for 45 years, the longest serving member in the history of Elmbridge Borough Council.

## Remembering

RA Chairman Graham Cooke and RA Councillors Karen Randolph and Tannia Shipley laid wreaths on Remembrance Day. See the articles on pages 21 and 27 to read about the local impact of the Great War.



## Dates for your diary

### RA Open Meeting

Vera Fletcher Hall,  
January 29, 8pm

### Farmers' Market

George and Dragon car park  
9.30am-1.30pm Saturdays;  
24 November; 16 December

### High Street Christmas Fair

Thames Ditton,  
Sunday December 2, 3-6pm

### Christmas wreath workshop

Our Lady of Lourdes Church  
Saturday December 8, 12-3pm  
Call 07944 745311 to sign up

### Christmas Craft Fair

Our Lady of Lourdes Church  
Saturday November 17, 3-5.45pm

### 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

### Bereavement Cafés

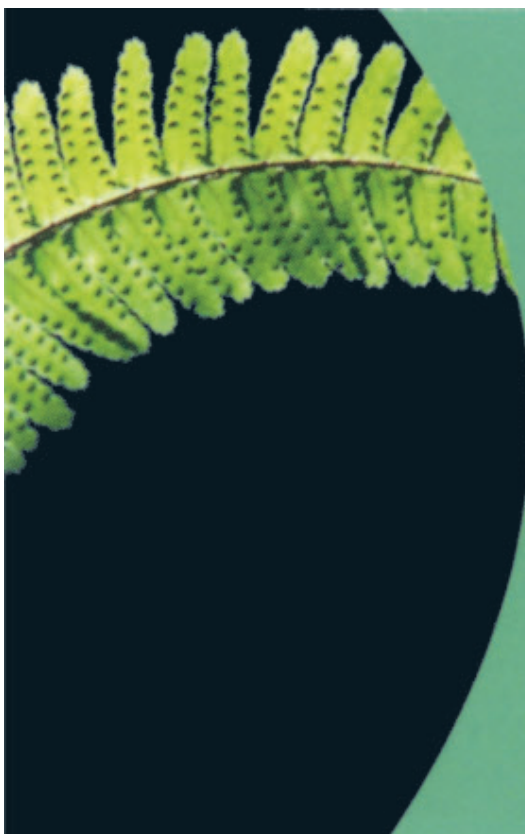
St. Nicholas Church Hall  
10:30-12 noon  
3rd Wednesday of the month

All Saints, Weston Green

10:30-12 noon  
1st Tuesday of the month

St. Mary's, Long Ditton,  
Community Hall

7:30pm-9pm  
2nd Wednesday of the month



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# Update from Nick Darby, our Surrey County Councillor



## Trains, planes, and automobiles

Trains first. As I write this, we are in the middle of a strike. SWR have cancelled all services to Hampton Court and Thames Ditton. Graham Cooke, chair of our Residents' Association, emailed Andy Mellors, the managing director of SWR, to demand fair treatment for our 5,000 households. I emailed Mr Mellors myself, requesting a meeting and pointed out that no trains at all is not a reduced service, just no service. I also added that no rail replacement bus had been provided, and that the apparent lack of effort may be in breach of the SWR franchise

On the Heathrow front, I am delighted that Surrey County Council decided by a 67:1 majority to back a motion that I seconded, to insist that all necessary transport infrastructure (especially a new southern rail link) is in place before any extra runway becomes operational. So there is significant support for this initiative, trying for once to get things in place at the right time!

And now to roads, or in practice the problems we have had in Thames Ditton seemingly since the start of summer. On a positive note, the double and single yellow lines have now been installed on St Leonard's Road, and I hope are making a difference. The latest problem of a drain collapsing started as the welcome resurfacing of the High Street between the mini roundabout and the Swan was ending. Thames Water seemed to take ages to complete their work, but it is now done and resurfaced. Their obligation, as with all utility works, is that they reinstate



*"as was"*.

As these works were taking place another problem occurred, this time blocked drains at the other end of the High Street, opposite the Stitchery. To add to the mayhem, electricity and gas works were scheduled in the same section of the High Street to connect up several new properties.

I have managed to arrange a meeting with Thames Water to discuss, amongst other things, how they might improve customer service.

For the technically minded, Surrey CC receive about 40,000 permit applications a year from utility companies. Most are clearly needed, but last year 6,500 were refused. A reasonable time must be given to complete work. There is no penalty for not occupying the site, and a near 14% failure rate where conditions are imposed. Following a trial in Kent, there is the prospect of a limited scheme for a daily charge to utility companies for road and lane closures.

Here's hoping the various holes are filled before the Christmas Fair!

**Nick Darby**



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# New sign for Thames Ditton village



*A handsome addition to Giggs Hill Green, (photo credit Tony Harris)*

On a glorious sunny Saturday in September residents celebrated their new Thames Ditton village sign when our former County Councillor Peter Hickman cut the ribbon and declared it 'open'.

This was the conclusion of more than 12 months planning and preparation by the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association to commemorate Peter Hickman's long service to our community - not only his 12 years (2005 - 2017) as Surrey County Councillor for The Dittons but over 40 years in the Residents' Association, first as our Treasurer in 1972 and then on three occasions as our Chairman.

During this time Peter served on the Thames Ditton Conservation Area Advisory

Committee, being its Chairman for the past 19 years, and has been an active governor of both Thames Ditton Junior School and Esher Sixth Form College.

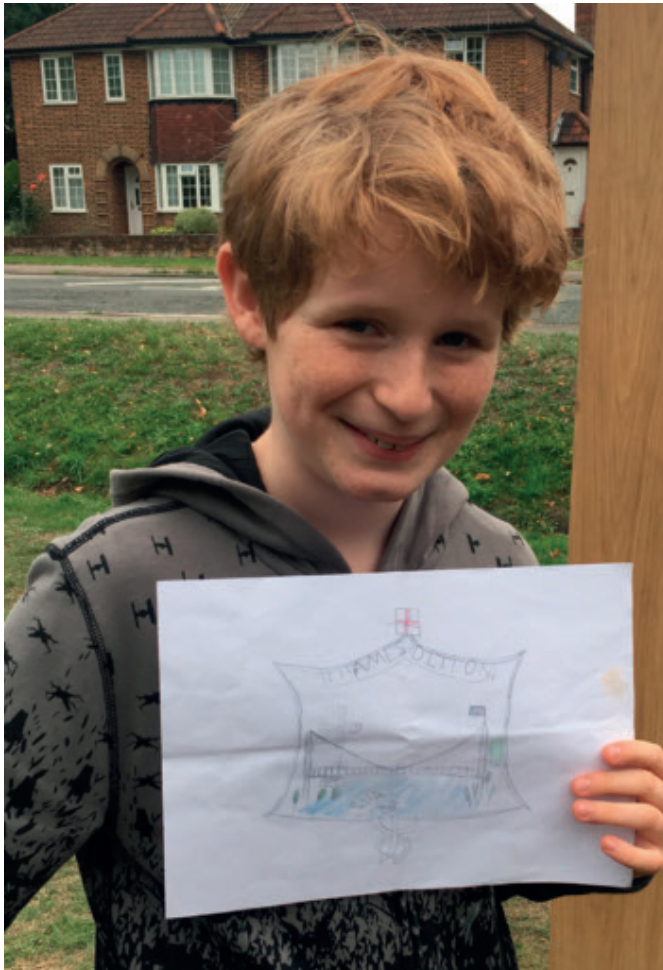
In May 2017 the Residents' Association decided to commission a Thames Ditton village sign, similar to the one at Weston Green which commemorated the Queen's Golden Jubilee. RA Councillor Tannia Shipley advised us on the process, from design, location, licence from Elmbridge Council and planning permission to excavation and erection, and most important of all introduced us to Nick Bates at Burrows Lea Forge in Shere, Surrey, who had designed and made the Weston Green Jubilee sign.

In June 2017 a village sign design competition was held at Thames Ditton Junior School and the top three designs were forwarded to Burrows Lea Forge. Peter Hickman presented the winning design prizes on behalf of the Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association at the school assembly on July 21.



*RA Chairman Graham Cooke with Peter Hickman at the 'opening' of the new sign*





*Seb Wickenden, winner of the village sign design competition*

The winners were: 1st Seb Wickenden, 2nd Sophie Glancy, 3rd Bobby Watson.

The location on Giggs Hill Green was chosen fairly quickly - at the entrance to Thames Ditton from the south, emphasising that both sides of the Portsmouth Road are in Thames Ditton! The final design was agreed in December by RA Chairman Graham Cooke, Peter Hickman and RA Councillors Ruth Lyon, Tannia Shipley, Tricia Bland and Karen Randolph.

We loved the way the sign incorporated elements of the heritage of Thames Ditton village, showing the historic St. Nicholas Church and with the River Thames represented by the Thames Ditton Island footbridge, bulrushes and the swan aloft on the top of the sign.

The new sign, proudly aloft on a 12 foot high oak post, is an attractive and innovative



piece of public art and an enhancement to the identity of Thames Ditton village and Giggs Hill Green. Because of this we were able to get a contribution from Elmbridge Council's Conservation Area Enhancement funds to support the funds provided by the Residents' Association.



*Erecting the new village sign*

So next time you take a stroll or run on Giggs Hill Green do spend a few minutes looking at your new village sign. We hope you will agree that it has enriched our environment.

**Ruth Lyon**

# Travellers – what happens next?



Despite no recent reports of Traveller encampments in our area, the problems experienced this summer are still firmly on the agenda of Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC). The Residents' Association arranged for Ian Burrows, EBC Head of Leisure and Cultural Services, to present at our September Open Meeting to update residents.

We heard that the number of unauthorised encampments has been increasing annually since 2013 and that 2018 was the most challenging summer yet, with 30 encampments across the borough. These were unprecedented in number, size (regularly more than 30 cars and 30 caravans), cost to the taxpayer and also in the degree of anti-social behaviour experienced.

Residents generally agreed that it was not the fact of the Travellers being here that was so upsetting, it was their deliberate anti-social behaviour.

Ian explained the steps the council is legally obliged to take when dealing with an unauthorised encampment, including welfare checks. Travellers have rights as a protected group and action to remove

them from EBC land is constrained by law, primarily by Sections 77 and 78 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, which cover notice to leave and require a court order for removal. The time taken to get a court order depends on court time being available but on average in the last year the time taken to remove unauthorised encampments was four and a half days.

In exceptional cases, Section 61 allows the police discretionary powers to remove an unauthorised encampment and that was used on seven occasions over the summer.

On 16 August, EBC was granted a protective interim injunction banning the setting up of unauthorised encampments and fly-tipping on more than 150 of the borough's parks, open spaces and car parks. This was the earliest that EBC could go to the High Court as it had to demonstrate the impact the encampments were having and present significant evidence to the court.

The injunction authorises High Court Enforcement Officers to move people on if they take no notice of the injunction order. Failure to do so can result in imprisonment, fines or the seizure of assets. Since August,



there have been three breaches of the injunction (one in Weston Green) and these were cleared within a matter of hours.

EBC will return to the High Court in November to seek a three-year injunction and a number of councils across the country are likely to be requesting the same. We will update you on the outcome on the website [residents-association.com](http://residents-association.com) and via our twitter feed @TDresidents

A number of actions have been taken to try to prevent future encampments. There is a review ongoing with Surrey Police Design Out Crime Officer of all open spaces in Elmbridge in consultation with local councillors and £80,000 has been spent to date on security improvements including wooden/metal posts, ditches, tree planting, and height barriers. New padlocks are also being rolled out across the borough - however, access is still required for cutting

and maintenance machinery and this remains a weak point.

Ian reiterated that vigilance by residents is key in trying to stop unauthorised encampments. Residents' action prevented an encampment at Summer Road and a return to Longmead Road.

We can help by reporting any and all encampments; vandalism to posts or padlocks (which may be in advance of an attempt to enter a site); criminal damage and anti-social behaviour. Although it may sometimes seem that nothing can be done, when we report things it all helps to build up evidence and that proved key to securing the temporary injunction this summer.

As mentioned in the last edition the RA has written to our local MP, Dominic Raab on this matter. That correspondence, along with updates as we get them, can be found on our website [residents-association.com](http://residents-association.com)

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# Trials and tribulations of an obsessive Snowman



It doesn't seem like it, but the RA's Snowman programme (clearing snow from pavements) has been running for eight years now. It has worked well, though the snow shovels provided to each Snowman group haven't needed to be wielded much in the past few years. The steel-edged aluminium shovels are very good at removing snow, but as anyone who's used them knows, some muscle power is needed if the snow has been trodden down.



*Snowman Kit Derrick, doing his bit*

Now, as the self-styled Head Snowman, I feel I have to clear a bit more than just my

house frontage, especially as my cul-de-sac frontage is all of eight feet wide. So I do some of my local pavements and out into Weston Green Road where it runs through part of the Green. This area is well trodden by commuters. While the shovel works well, it's hard work covering any distance; so with aching muscles I thought there has to be an easier way - perhaps some kind of pedestrian-powered snowplough.

I looked online and found just the thing - the Dakota SnoBlade. It's American designed, lightweight and clears a 3-foot swathe through the snow with ease. The name and pictures just about sold it to me, and the video had me scrambling for my credit card. When the SnoBlade arrived I assembled it and waited eagerly for snow.

It eventually came one night, so early next morning I headed out, proudly pushing my Dakota SnoBlade. I went about six yards and stopped. Actually I had to stop - the ever-increasing pile of snow I was pushing in front of me was so heavy I couldn't go any further. And then it dawned on me. Yep, you guessed it - we had the wrong kind of snow!

This wasn't the light, fluffy, fairytale kind they get in Dakota. This was heavy, claggy, ain't-gonna-budge English snow. But I'm a resourceful chap, and the solution was obvious - increase the angle of the blade to make sure the snow is pushed to the side. Why couldn't the Americans have done that in the first place! So, with a few pieces of wood I fashioned a frame to set a 45° angle, and two hours later attacked the snow again.





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But old ain't-gonna-budge fought back, pushing my SnoBlade sideways instead. #\$\$@&%\*!! So that's why the Americans hadn't set the blade like that. Nothing for it but to revert to my trusty snow shovel.

Now I'm nothing if not tenacious; so while shovelling I thought, there has to be a better design. I figured an arrowhead-shaped blade would work better, deflecting the snow to both sides equally. So, back in the workshop I cut the blade in half and set it on a new frame. Using most of the parts of the old SnoBlade, I constructed my new snowplough, complete with sprung front wheel (to negotiate our lumpy pavements), and added a steel edge to the blade - to show I meant business. Look out snow!

It was a while before the next snow came, but when it did I went at it with my new improved snowplough. And it worked! Well, sort of. It didn't shift the trodden snow, and if the snow was more than 2" thick it just piled up at the edge and collapsed inwards, narrowing the cleared path to about a foot wide. The sprung front wheel saved me from stopping dead at a ridge in the pavement, but meant I had to keep downward pressure on the middle of the handle to keep the blade on the ground. Great exercise for the abs and pecs - they were killing me by the time I got back home. Even so, clearing a long stretch of pavement was easier and quicker than shovelling the snow away. So my investment and modifications had paid off, eventually.

I'm sure further improvements could be made, but at the risk of wrecking the snowplough completely. And I've grown rather attached to it, with its idiosyncrasies and home-spun appearance. I'll keep it as is, for now. So if you look out one winter's morning and see an odd character hunched over a strange contraption ploughing doggedly through the snow, think kindly



*The 'Head Snowman' in action with his snowplough*

of the poor obsessed soul. And please don't call the police.

*Our many Snowman groups are managing very well with the more conventional equipment provided by the RA. We now have over 30 of them covering most of the well-trodden roads in Thames Ditton and Weston Green, usually those leading to the stations. When it snows you may see one of their shovels in a front garden - for any of their group to use to clear their pavement. I currently have a spare RA snow shovel, so if you'd like to start your own Snowman group in your road, let me know (contact details on page 5 and on the RA website) and I'll provide the shovel and details of the programme.*

**Peter Haynes**





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# We shall remember them



In this centenary year of the Great War many groups, churches and associations have been looking at the impact it had and remembering those people who died. We asked two local people to share what they have found with us to help the community never to forget.

## Remembering Thames Ditton's First World War Dead



*Nine men from Thames Ditton are commemorated on the Menin Gate*

The 11th of November 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the Armistice which ended fighting in the First World War. To mark the occasion, I have researched and written a commemorative book documenting the lives

and deaths of the 108 village residents who I have been able to identify as casualties of that conflict.

The first Thames Ditton man to die was Stoker 1st Class George Tompkins, who



drowned when his ship was torpedoed by a U-boat off the Dutch coast in September 1914. The last to die during the war was Private Thomas Granger, who by a cruel coincidence also drowned, in this case when one of the horses pulling the wagon he was driving bolted over the side of a bridge in northeast Italy.

Several others died from illness after the Armistice while still on active service. These included the youngest and oldest village casualties. Boy 2nd Class Richard Allen was only 15 when he died of influenza in the Royal Naval Hospital in Plymouth, while Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant William Attwell, a veteran of the Boer War, was 52 when he died from what might well have been overwork. Both were returned home for burial, and they lie only yards apart in St. Nicholas churchyard, near the grave of Nurse Eva Prior, the only known female war loss, who died from an infection contracted from a patient while working at a London military hospital.



*Lt Gilbert Waterhouse died on the Somme*

Three quarters of Thames Ditton's war dead fell on the Western Front. Of these, no fewer than 34 have no known grave and are listed on the great Commonwealth War Graves Commission memorials to the missing such as Thiepval on the Somme, and Tyne Cot and the Menin Gate in the Ypres salient. Of these, nine are commemorated on the Menin Gate, including Private William Dunlop of the London Scottish, the first village man to die on the Western Front, who was killed in action on 1 November 1914.

Most casualties occurred during large scale British assaults on well-prepared German positions, two of which cost Thames Ditton particularly dear. Five village men fell on their first day in action in a doomed attack against un-cut barbed wire and enfilading machine gun fire during the Loos offensive of September 1915. Four more would die and a fifth be mortally wounded on 1 July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme. One of those killed was 2nd Lieutenant Gilbert Waterhouse, whose budding reputation as a war poet might explain why his is the only inscription on the village war memorial to include a first name rather than a simple initial.

Some families had to face multiple bereavements. No fewer than six pairs of brothers were lost, one each from the Cox, Dunlop, Hawkes, Pocock, Ridgers and Skilton families. In addition, Sarah Wilson lost her husband and her son in the space of seven months, while Annetta Hawkes lost first her husband, then her brother and finally her brother-in-law.

Every loss was a tragedy, and if my book gives cause for reflection upon each of them, it will have served its purpose.

**Malcolm Cooper**

*Malcolm Cooper's book is titled 'We will remember them' and is available from St Nicholas Church office, the book is £8 and is also available from some local shops and online. Any profits or royalties are going to the poppy appeal.*

# Christmas Fair

**Sunday 2nd December**  
**3-6pm**

Thames Ditton High Street

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TODAY**

The Magazine of our  
Residents' Association



❄ pull-out guide ❄



## All the Fun of the Christmas 2018 Fair!

**Aldous Craig** – Receive a warm welcome, delicious mulled wine and sizzling BBQ with proceeds to local charities.

**No30 Antiques** – Looking fabulously festive, find Cancer Research UK Christmas cards.

**CycleLink** – Stop here for an exciting range of gift ideas for both the avid and leisure cyclist. Also, race a friend on CycleLink's 'virtual racetrack' with proceeds to a local charity.

**George & Dragon** – As well as hosting Santa's Grotto, make your way to the G&D to sample our special recipe mulled wine.

**Hawes & Co** – Fizz and fun – come and play children's Christmas games and Fizz for the parents. All proceeds to children's charity.

**HJC** – The team at HJC would like to invite all our friends and clients to join us in The George and Dragon for nibbles and drinks between 3-6pm.

**Little Foray Hair and Beauty** – a glass of fizz when buying a raffle ticket for the chance to win some wonderful Organic OWAY hair and beauty products and a VIP beauty treatment package with a blow dry! Christmas gift hampers and 10% off gift vouchers. Proceeds go to [childrenwithcancer.org.uk](http://childrenwithcancer.org.uk)

**Lime Tree** – Find a fabulous Italian Christmas experience with sparkling Prosecco and delicious panettone.

**Maud** – A must for luxury gifts plus a 'wish list' service to ensure the special people in your life get what they really, really want.

**Nice Buns Café** – Find piping hot sausages on sticks, mince pies, winter white rocky road, lashings of hot chocolate plus heaps more!

**Organic Nest** – Find Christmas food and beauty hampers and festive organic fruit and veg boxes plus pre-order your organic turkey or goose by award winning Rhug Organic Meats Farm.

**Paull's** – 'Guess how many sprouts?' game to win a large seasonal fruit and veg box, proceeds to the Princess Alice Hospice. Plus pick up your Christmas order forms for Paull's seasonal boxes.

**Red Lion** – The team will be serving up their beer barrel smoked sausages and boozy home brewed mulled wine. Plus play the game: 'catch the present down the chimney' in aid of IYAF (Int Youth Art Festival).

**The Rose** – The place for delicious lamb and vegetable samosas; vegetable pakora, chicken wings and nan. Yum!

**The Secret Garden** – Discover beautiful Xmas wreaths, festive floral arrangements, table and tree decorations.

**The Stitchery** – Visit our Christmas bazaar. Gorgeous Christmas decorations, lights and spectacular gifts. Spend £100 and receive a box of our festive Belgian chocolates worth £10.

**View Gallery** – Featuring a new exhibition from Scottish artist Dionne Sievewright, seasonal greetings cards with local imagery, plus our almost famous Malbec mulled wine with proceeds to Princess Alice Hospice.



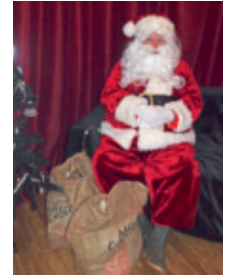
## That's Entertainment – Festive Spectacular Thames Ditton Style!

### Christmas Trees Light Up

This year at the Fair our twinkling Lime Tree Christmas lights are being switched on by Jeremy Hamilton of Stitchery. To celebrate 20 years of trading in Thames Ditton High Street. Make your way to the Lime Tree when Jeremy will flick the switch to set in motion the lighting up of our High Street for the festive Season.

We will have a host of Entertainment in the High Street. **Carol singing, music and dance** to keep everyone enthralled throughout the Fair.

A major highlight is this year's **Christmas grotto** - the 'manger' outside the George & Dragon – has been transformed by the **George and Dragon** into a magical, Christmas setting where you'll find Santa on his sleigh with his fairies and elves and a sack of gifts for the children. This is your opportunity to take a photo of Santa with your little one, so join the queue early to avoid disappointment!



Slap those thighs and high-five-with-a-stick, the **Kingston Morris Dancers** will be making a big sound with their bells-a-jingling.

### On the Programme

The renowned **Hinchley Wood School Choir and Brass Band** will be singing and playing our favourite Christmas Carols and songs.

Students from the **Starlight Academy of Dance and Performing Arts** will display their dance and musical talents. The Academy offers a wide range of classes from ballet to street dance, musical theatre to modern jazz for boys and girls from 2 years to adult.

**Thames Ditton Infant School choir** will be singing traditional Christmas carols.

**Not forgetting...** The Brownies, The Thames Ditton Crafters, The RNLI with Stormy Stan the Lifeboat Man and the Lifeboat Board Game, St Paul's Primary School, Weston Green School, plus community groups and stalls.

## XMAS RAFFLE: OVER 20 FABULOUS PRIZES TO BE WON!

This year's festive raffle is spectacular, with an amazing array of prizes up for grabs so don't forget to purchase your Christmas Fair raffle tickets. Available from early November, look out for posters in participating High Street outlets including **Stitchery**, the **Ironing Board**, **View Gallery** and the **George & Dragon** amongst others. Just **£1** per ticket, or **5 for £4**. Proceeds to **Keep the Heart in our High Street Campaign** supporting our local shops and businesses and the **High Street Christmas Lights Appeal**.



# Thanks to all our Entertainers

**Starlight Academy of Dance  
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01276 476667

**St Paul's Catholic  
Primary School**  
020 8398 6791

**Hinchley Wood School**  
020 8398 7161

**Weston Green School**  
020 8398 2778

**Thames Ditton Infant School**  
020 8398 5842



... and everyone else who takes to the stage and the street, showcasing their fantastic talent, free for the benefit of the community.

# Thanks to all our Fair sponsors/supporters – we couldn't do it without you!

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The Thames Ditton High Street Christmas Fair 2018 is organised by The Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association and the Thames Ditton High Street Retailers' Association – thanks to everyone in the team.



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# Weston Green - one hundred years on from the Great War



*Ember Lane 1913*

At the time of the First World War, Weston Green was part of the Parish of Thames Ditton, and remained so until the Parish of All Saints Weston was formed in 1934, followed by the building of the present All Saints Church in 1939.

However, from 1901 the Mission Church of All Saints in Weston Park (the site is now houses) was at the centre of Weston Green. Housing in the area was growing with developments during the first decade of the twentieth century in Chestnut Avenue, Imber Park Road, Woodside Avenue, Elm Tree Avenue and Ember Lane.

Those from the locality who died in the First World War are remembered on two Memorials. One is inside St Nicholas Church on a bronze Memorial tablet, and also the stone War Memorial on Giggs Hill Green, which also has names from the Second World War inscribed on it.

I have done some research on the names on those Memorials to find the people who had

lived in Weston Green and died during the First World War, and who are remembered on the Thames Ditton memorials. The Weston Green War Memorial behind All Saints Church was erected in 1948 and remembers both civilians and those from the armed services who died during the Second World War.

The youngest and probably the first to die from Weston Green was Able Seaman Harry Potter, age 19, on 1 January 1915, when his ship, HMS Formidable was torpedoed by a German submarine off the Devon coast. He lived at 3 Longs Cottages, Weston Green and had been a Publicans Errand Boy, and was the son of a jobbing gardener before he joined the Navy, aged 16.

Air Mechanic Alfred Lockyer was the son of the Stationmaster at Esher Station, and the family lived at Station House. He died aged 20 in 1917 during an air raid near Freiburg, and had been an Engineering student at Battersea Polytechnic before joining up.



One family who lived at “Westholme”, Chestnut Avenue, lost two sons, Sergeant Major Clement Cox who is buried in Turkey, and Private Thomas Cox. He was 22 and was killed in action on the first day of the Battle of the Somme on 1 July 1916. He was one of 19,240 men killed on that day, with many thousands of others missing or wounded.

Varied jobs and backgrounds are represented among those who died. Lance Corporal John Edwards had been a Golf Professional at Thames Ditton Golf Club before the war, and at the time of joining the army had moved to a club in West Bromwich. While growing up he had lived with his parents at 3, and then 2 Sheath Cottages, Weston Green, and alongside his father had first worked as a domestic gardener. From 5 Sheath Cottages was Private Alfred Hill, who died in 1916 in France.

Weston Road was home to Private Jack Martin who was in the Ambulance Service, and Private Arthur Woods of the Labour Corps who was 41 at his death and had worked as a domestic groom and a cab driver before his war service. Also from Weston Road was Lance Corporal Leonard Onslow, who was killed in action in Egypt, aged 23, and had been an under gardener before the war.

Flight Lieutenant Cyril Ridley, DSC, of 4 Weston Villas, Weston Green, died in 1920 after a very distinguished flying career, and has a separate bronze memorial plaque in St Nicholas. He had built a biplane glider in 1910 while still at Arundel House School, and later flew it at Sandown Park and Crystal Palace. He received the DSC in April 1918 for “distinguished services as a pilot and for courage in low flying expeditions during which he attacked enemy trenches with machine gun fire from a height of 30 feet.” In July 1918 his aircraft suffered engine

failure over enemy lines, and he was taken prisoner. He died after the war in 1920 from a mid-air collision while serving with the RAF in Germany, but is remembered officially as a war casualty.

There is just one woman remembered on the Giggs Hill Memorial: Nurse Eva Prior, who died age 21 in 1918. Her name is not inscribed on the first Thames Ditton Memorial in St Nicholas Church, or recognised by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). Indeed, on the original Graves Registration Report Form detailing those whose war graves are in St Nicholas churchyard, her name is typed in, and then crossed out in red ink, and the words “Not a War Grave” written above her details. She was a VAD, (Voluntary Aid Detachment), a voluntary nurse orderly at the Military Hospital Endell Street London, looking after war wounded servicemen.

However, these volunteers were not regarded as trained military nurses and she was denied the status of being named on the CWGC Debt of Honour Roll. She died from a bacterial disease, probably acquired from her nursing work, and was “loved by everyone for her sweet disposition and her strength of character”. Her home with her parents was at Couchmore, Littleworth Common. Her mother was noted for arranging the altar flowers in All Saints Mission Church.

This is a short overview of those from Weston Green who served and died for their country during the First World War. At this moment around the centenary of their deaths we can look back and value their lives, and through them we can also observe the many changes that have occurred in Weston Green and Thames Ditton during those hundred years.

**Pam Tiller – Archivist,  
All Saint Weston**

# Minded to help others



Pat Hindley with her father, who inspired her to volunteer with Alzheimer's Research UK

*“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give”. That quote, attributed to Winston Churchill, begs the question: ‘what are you doing for others?’*

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) estimates that about 15 million people in the UK are doing something for others through volunteering at least once a month and around 23 million are volunteering at least once a year.

In order to strengthen and develop its role in providing support for the Voluntary and Community Sector across Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell and Mole Valley, two local voluntary action organisations have merged to create a new organisation called Central Surrey Voluntary Action. This includes Volunteer Centres which help individuals to find volunteering opportunities that suit them and also offer advice and support for organisations to develop their volunteering offer and recruit volunteers.

For example, Thames Ditton resident Pat Hindley is a community speaker for Alzheimer's Research UK. Alongside her

busy daytime role working in the Surrey County Council communications team, Pat finds time to promote awareness of Alzheimer's Research UK and help fund-raise for this important research into all types of dementia that, as a whole, currently kills more people in the UK than heart disease or cancer.

Pat's father was diagnosed with vascular dementia and Pat watched him deteriorate over several years before he passed away two years ago. This personal experience and emotional connection helped to propel her to do something about it. Pat's family chose Alzheimer's Research UK as the charity for donations, instead of flowers, at her father's funeral. Later Pat visited their laboratory and through their website she found the ideal opportunity for volunteering as it was flexible and would make use of skills she already had.

As a community speaker Pat was trained by the Alzheimer's Research UK trainer in her own home, and her contribution averages out to no more than one or two hours a week, fitting around other commitments. When she is not delivering talks Pat will spend time on trying to generate new public speaking opportunities. She said: ‘I've enjoyed becoming more knowledgeable about dementia and I get a lot of satisfaction through sharing this knowledge with others. I was very close to my father and this helps me feel connected to him. I'm part of trying to find a cure for this terrible disease so that other people don't have to die like he did.’

Is there a downside? Pat replied: *‘When I'm trying to generate leads for speaking*



*opportunities it can be a bit disheartening when people don't respond - but that is more than made up for when I get the chance to*

*spread the word and see people get a new insight and respond positively.'*

**Julie Royce**

The range of volunteering opportunities available in Surrey is diverse. Please contact [editor@residents-association.com](mailto:editor@residents-association.com) if you would like to appear in one of our future articles about local people and their volunteering activities.



NeighbourCare is a local, long established, registered charity run entirely by volunteer telephone operators and drivers. It is endorsed by Elmbridge Borough Council. Our drivers use their own cars to provide a door-to-door service for the less mobile residents of Thames Ditton, Weston Green, Long Ditton and Hinchley Wood enabling them to get to medical appointments, Day Centres or hairdressers.

**Can you spare a few hours a month during the week at times to suit you, to either work from home answering the telephone to fulfil our clients' requests, or carrying out local drives?**

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# The bookish heart of the community



*Dittons Library*

There have been several landmark moments in becoming an author. Seeing my book serialised in the Mail on Sunday. Discussing it on BBC Woman's Hour. Getting the title wrong on live TV (Balloonomania Babes, anyone?). The Lady comparing my plucky pioneers with cover star Sir David Attenborough. Transatlantic deadlines for the New York Post. That sort of thing.

But absolutely nothing made me quite so happy as watching my book being placed on the shelves at Dittons Library in Thames Ditton.

*Balloonomania Belles: Daredevil Divas Who First Took To The Sky* is about the bonkers lady balloonists of the Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian eras – and I wrote much of it in this library. Now people can read it here too.

Nobody knows the place better than library staff Nicola Tobias and Jon Moore (pictured). Nicola has worked the Thames Ditton shelves for 22 years and Jon for more than a decade.

When we sit down to talk in the sunlit

reading area we start with those book-loving beacons, grandparents. As a child I went to Bradford Central Library with my grandma, I tell them. It was vast and wonderful. It's gone now.

*'My grandfather was a big advocate of libraries,'* Nicola says.

*'They were always a place of sanctuary for him. People could not really afford to buy books so it was a place he could learn and gain knowledge. I'd try to take political and social history books out and the librarian would ask my grandfather whether he minded me reading them!'*

*'He didn't of course. My grandma let me get whatever I wanted too. We were a bit less learned, though. She loaded up on large print Catherine Cookson and I was a science fiction nut.'*

Jon recalls going to the local library on the back of his mum's bike when he was small.

*'That's why I don't wear a tie,'* he laughs. *'I don't want to look like a Victorian workhouse master, which is how librarians came across in the 'fifties.'*





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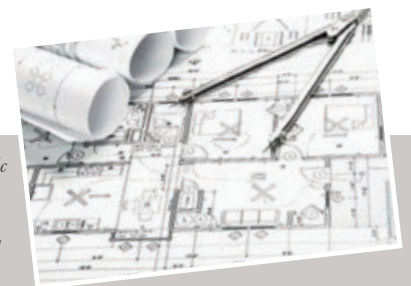
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*"Thames Design and Build were great to work with and they were ahead of schedule throughout the project. Their team was sympathetic to the impact of the works whilst we remained living in the house, and we were pleased with the quality of their workmanship. 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



Library champions Jon Moore and Nicola Tobias

There is nothing Victorian about Dittons, where people get help with everything from finding a good read to using a computer. Storytellers, crafters, reading groups, a bridge club, jobseekers, family history researchers and ad hoc groups all gather at the library.

*‘I think we are welcoming,’ Jon says simply.*

Nicola adds: *‘We do try not to be like the people who say, ‘Shhh! Don’t talk!’*

The area where we sit is called the Atrium and it is also a gallery for local artists. For this we have retired library manager Cloé Dwelly to thank. She persuaded Surrey to glaze over the area to create a relaxed and versatile public space that is seldom empty.

Surrounding us are the books, in their rightful place, which is everywhere.

*“I have never not been a member of a library,” says Jon.*

*“Me neither,”* I say, finishing my coffee before returning to writing my next book.

My publisher would like me to write a blog in the modern manner but I’ve only got as far as the name.

It’s called ‘Hiding in Libraries’ because really, what could be nicer?

**Sharon Wright**, author of *Balloomania Belles: Daredevil Divas Who First Took to the Sky*, Pen & Sword Books ([www.sharon-wright-agency.co.uk](http://www.sharon-wright-agency.co.uk))



simon simpson

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# Bereavement Cafés – making a difference



Bereavement can be one of the most difficult things we have to face in life. The sense of loss, disorientation, and hopelessness can leave us struggling to cope. Bereavement can take a long time to adjust to, but it is not something that we have to go through on our own.

The first Bereavement Café was set up by the Princess Alice Hospice. It was aimed at people who had recently suffered the death of a loved one, with the purpose of providing support through people who had been trained to listen.

Such was the popularity of the Bereavement Café that the Hospice Chaplain, Rev. Steve Nolan, looked to partner with local churches to run Bereavement Cafés in the local community. Churches Together in the Dittons wanted to respond to this offer. Last year, All Saints Weston Green, and St. Mary's Long Ditton launched their Bereavement Cafés. In September, St. Nicholas' Thames Ditton started to run

one and to date the cafés have proved that this is a service that really touches people and can help make a difference.

As a 'Churches Together' initiative, we also have volunteers from the Speer Road United Reformed Church, and Our Lady of Lourdes participate in our Bereavement Cafés too.

All of the people who act as hosts at the cafés have been on a training course run by Rev. Steve Nolan. We do not offer counselling, but we are very happy to listen, provide some comfort, and a warm welcome over tea, coffee and cake.

The Bereavement Cafés are free of charge. You don't have to book – just come along. If you have been struggling with the loss of a loved one, no matter how long ago that was, or you know someone who has, and you think the Bereavement Café might help, then do give it a try. We are there for you.

**Rev. Andrew Cowie**

## Find your local Bereavement Café



St. Nicholas', Thames  
Ditton, Church Hall

10:30-12 noon

3rd Wednesday of the month



All Saints,  
Weston Green

10:30-12 noon

1st Tuesday of the month



St. Mary's, Long Ditton,  
Community Hall

7:30pm-9pm

2nd Wednesday of the month



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



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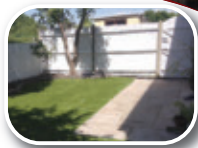
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# Neighbourhood Watch re-invigorated



The Residents' Association has lobbied hard to improve the partnership with the police and our local Neighbourhood Watch (NHW). Following the reorganisation of Surrey Police in 2016, which reduced the neighbourhood policing team, dialogue between the police and NHW ceased and there was no one reporting crime figures to NHW, making its work very challenging.

RA Cllr Tricia Bland and NHW Group Chairman John Haberfield have led a campaign to reinstate the links between the police and NHW arguing that the changes were extremely detrimental, as Neighbourhood Watch coordinators are the 'eyes and ears of the community' and need to work in partnership with the

police to help prevent crime.

Finally, with the appointment of Dallas McDermott as Borough Commander the campaign was successful.

At a recent council meeting Dallas McDermott admitted that the 2016 reorganisation had got it wrong, and he was determined to redress this by reinstating regular communication with NHW and appointing a volunteer to provide the essential feedback on residential crime in Elmbridge. He also committed to a regular police presence at NHW meetings, to ensure the police would once again work in close partnership with NHW.

Please see below the letter that has gone to all NHW members.

Dear NHW members,

I am your new Borough Commander for Elmbridge (as at June 2018) and would like to introduce myself. My name is Dallas McDermott and I've been with Surrey Police since 16 August 1999. I've never forgotten the date as it was a proud moment in my life and continues to be. I am a career uniformed operational officer and have worked on all Divisions across the Force and live in Surrey (Mole Valley). I have been on Northern Division for the past 4 years as one of the Area Policing Team Inspectors based at Staines overseeing response policing and volume crime investigations. I'm relishing the opportunity that neighbourhood policing brings and I'll be doing my all to really make a difference to the Community.

Part of my ethos is that my officers are fully



*Borough Commander Dallas McDermott*

embedded within the community. With the Policing in Your Neighbourhood (PIYN) model that came into effect in April 2016, we don't have the same number of specialist neighbourhood officers in post, but despite



this, I feel that we have stepped away too much from community events/engagement. This is something that I am keen to remedy and I have therefore encouraged my team to attend community events within the Borough, which includes Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) meetings.

I have also recently advertised for a volunteer post at Esher and this is purely about strengthening our links with NHW. We will hopefully have someone in place to provide important and regular updates to NHW in the not too distant future, which I know has been missing.

Mike Bessent, our Design Out Crime Officer (DOC), does his best to provide what he can, but with a volunteer in place, this will really improve the service we can offer. I have also allocated wards to all response officers covering Elmbridge (85 plus officers) and they will be getting to know their allocated wards in more detail when out and about.

I understand that three of the main priorities for NHW on the borough are unauthorised encampments (UEs), burglaries and vehicle crime. We were significantly impacted with UEs in the summer and had twice as many as any other borough across Surrey. Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) now has a temporary injunction in place (since August) and this is working very well. This expires on the 9th November, but EBC will be seeking a 3-year injunction on 8 November.

The good news with regards to burglaries in Elmbridge is that they are down almost 20% Full Year To Date (FYTD). Burglaries are a Force/Divisional priority and I can assure you that we are doing a lot of prevention/detection work in relation to this. We have had some recent good results with three individuals being charged with a number of both residential and commercial

burglaries on the borough. Two of these persons are on remand in prison and the other was given strict bail conditions, although this was opposed by the police. We believe they are responsible for other burglaries that we are still trying to link to them. We are also actively seeking several other individuals who are wanted for burglaries on the borough.



*Cllr Tricia Bland and NHW group Chairman John Haberfield with Dallas McDermott*

Vehicle crime has increased just over 5% FYTD and I have tasked PS Greg Turner to conduct a full review of this and we will then be putting a plan together to tackle it. Although vehicle crime isn't down as one of our Force/Divisional priorities, I know that it matters to the local community, hence why I am keen to put a plan in place to target this. This will also include a plea to the community to ensure that their vehicles are always secured. We have specific offenders who will only target unlocked vehicles in order to avoid having to carry articles to use in the commission of an offence and it also lessens their chances of leaving a forensic trace.

Strengthening our links with NHW is something that I am determined to do. You are the eyes and ears of our community and I will be putting the value on NHW that it deserves!

**Dallas McDermott**

# A mirror on the past



*Surrey History Centre one of several local resources for investigative historians*

I am sometimes accosted in unexpected places, such as the showers at Colets, and asked to research someone's house or family, or even things like the Waterworks. Rarely is payment suggested! Or I'm asked where I got the information to write these stories on local history. I'll set out here what resources are easily available to you, so that the fun - or as it might be, the burden - of historical detective work may be shared out.

## **The Library and Mercer Collection**

The best starting point for residents of Thames Ditton and Weston Green is the Dittons Library in Mercer Close. A Library card is available free. T. S. Mercer, a former journalist who lived on Speer Road, spent his retirement going through the parish records and back numbers of the parish

magazine, transcribing much of them, and collecting wherever he could documentary material, reference works, biographies, papers, photographs, and articles written by himself and others mainly in the 1950s and 1960s. He indexed and cross-referenced them-which is immensely useful - and had some collections bound for permanence and convenience. When he died in 1972 he left the entire collection to the Library, where it is housed in a locked cabinet. Residents can sign in and be given access on request to the staff.

Mercer also wrote a couple of books: *Tales and Scandals of Old Thames Ditton*, and *More Thames Ditton Tales and Scandals*, updated in 1968 and 1970 and self-published. These are available on loan from the



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Library. Mercer's journalistic background and human interests prompted him to write more about people than about things, and in an entertaining way. Although I have heard others criticise a lack of rigorous sourcing in the books, my own view is that Mercer was commendably accurate; most of his sourcing can be identified in the papers in his collection, and when he ventures speculative opinion it's clearly signposted.

Mercer did not write a "History of Thames Ditton". A successor historian, another Residents' Association stalwart and editor of this magazine for several years, Philip Burchett published "A Historical Sketch of Thames Ditton" in 1985. There is some additional information to that available in the Mercer Collection, but alas Burchett introduced some errors through guesswork, romance or misinterpretation.

As well as laboriously-typed extracts of parish records and other documents going back to the mid-18th century, in the Mercer collection you will find Mercer's transcriptions of Land Tax documents and the Tithe Apportionment of 1843. The library has a copy of the tithe apportionment map in a back room. These facilities are a help to those trying to trace the history of local houses.

You can borrow other books containing local history facts, for example on the railway, and on adjacent areas: Kingston: Biden 1852, (much good stuff, some flights of royalist fancy); and June Sampson 1972 "The Story of Kingston" and 1985-1991 "All Change: Kingston, Surbiton & New Malden in the 19th Century". Readable and I believe accurate. On Long Ditton there is Peter Fussell's "Fish Off The Slab" 1994, and on Claygate, Peebles' "The Claygate Book" 1983 (containing several questionable assertions).

I have found occasional errors in many publications including works of reference

such as the Peerage, The Gentleman's Magazine, and the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. I have doubtless made some myself. It is a hazard for any researcher. You should find as many corroborative primary sources as you can.

## Surrey History Centre

Having hoovered up the information close at hand, you should head for the Surrey History Centre at 130 Goldsworth Road in Woking. There's free car parking or it's ten minutes' walk from the station. To use the collections, you will need your Surrey County Libraries ticket or a County Archive Research Network (CARN) card. You should also have official proof of ID and address, such as a driving licence or bank statement. A CARN is available if you present your county Library ticket at the centre and will enable you to use other archives throughout the UK as a reader.

The Surrey History Centre (SHC) is a splendid institution, and one to be cherished and protected from budget cuts. It was established in 1998 by the County Council to hold and develop collections formerly housed in the Surrey Records Office, Kingston, Guildford Muniment Room and Surrey Local Studies Library. Millions of documents dating from as early as the 1100s are preserved in carefully controlled conditions, all catalogued and indexed. The staff are knowledgeable and helpful.

The original tithe apportionment, and Land Tax records are there in full, and there are several historic maps of the area. There are local newspapers on microfilm, with several microfilm readers available; and many other local publications ranging from clubs and societies to this very magazine. Our parish records, and the manorial records, are among local documents kept at SHC. There was, I believe, quite a bit of local



squawking when these were requisitioned for the centre, and thus removed from convenient local access, but in favour is that the documents are properly protected and conserved. Researchers will often find that a trail crosses parish borders, and as data is centralised at SHC you don't have to make multiple visits to other places, or roust out churchwardens, to dig out bits and pieces from archives.

As to whether the Mercer Collection should be moved to the SHC (which the staff there sometimes angle for): I think it should remain where it is, in our local library. Two reasons: first, Mercer bequeathed it specifically for residents here to have local access; and second, the killer argument in my view, nearly all of the collection is comprised not of original documentary material but of transcripts or clippings of material, whereas the original documents are already housed at SHC.

## Online Resources

Earlier historians did not enjoy the huge advantages of the Internet. Not only do you have the powers of Google and other search engines, but the National Archives at Kew have accumulated a vast and searchable index of documentation, including data held at many other UK archives. From many of these you can order a specified document online - for example, a Will - and receive it immediately for a modest payment. The Surrey History Centre collection is also searchable online - see the website. It's a good idea to do this before visiting the SHC in person to view documents, - but not all the SHC collection is indexed online, so a visit is likely to be necessary once you have targeted your research.

Then there are the tremendous genealogical resources of the likes of Ancestry and

Find My Past, with access to many official and parish records, census information, military records, local directories, electoral registrations, and more. If you don't have a paid subscription to these you can still access them free from our local library via Surrey's history/genealogy links: you have to log in using your library card number, and you can do so either from the desktop computers at Dittons Library, or take your own tablet or laptop.

Do not assume that these databases are free of error. When I was researching the Speer family it became evident that Ancestry had erroneously attributed the entire parish record of St. Nicholas, Thames Ditton, to St Peter's, Woodmansterne. I contacted Ancestry and they eventually corrected this mix-up. It is also inadvisable to rely absolutely on other people's research into their own family trees, unless there is convincing sourcing from proper documents. People do like to claim ownership of ancestors who are in some way rich or distinguished, even if all they really share is a surname.

Also thanks to Surrey, online, via their website, library card holders can access for free invaluable databases such as the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, or a searchable database of almost all of England's newspapers in the 1800s.

## Local societies

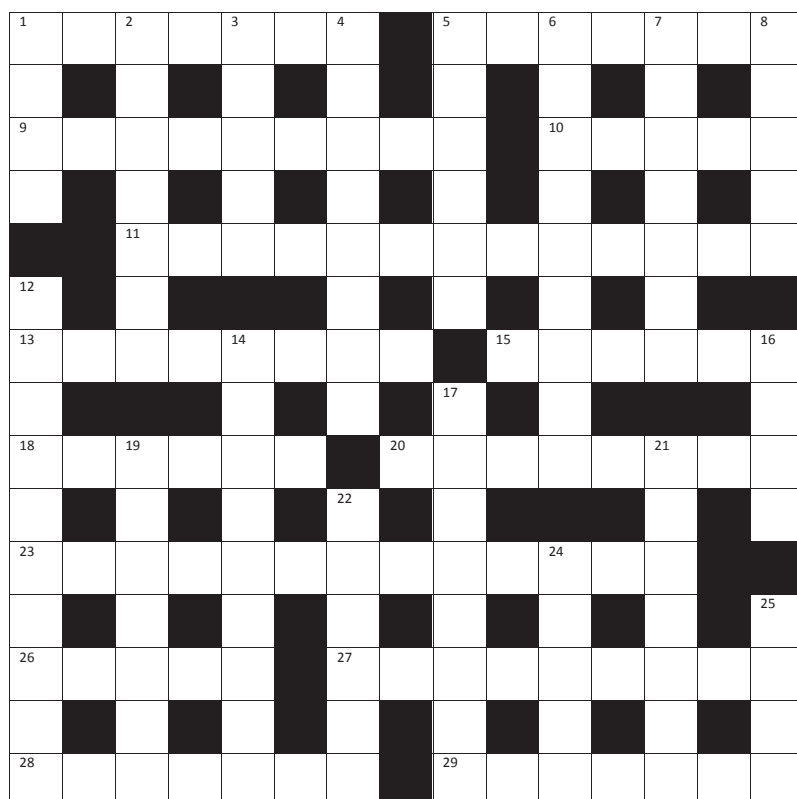
Space does not permit comprehensive treatment, but you will find help through the Esher and District Local History Society, the Surrey Archaeological Society (and its Villages working group), and the Kingston Upon Thames Archaeological Society, KUTAS.

I wish you good hunting.

**Keith Evetts**

# Winter Crossword

## by Tom Eddy



We would like to introduce a new crossword compiler to Thames Ditton Today **Tom Eddy**.

The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of 5th February 2019 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:

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Crossword Competition  
24 High Street  
Thames Ditton KT7 0RY

### ACROSS CLUES

1. After the altar (7)
5. You hope to do this (7)
9. When Hemingway died? (9)
10. Lady penguin (5)
11. Anne goes backwards (13)
13. As big as they sound these dogs (8)
15. After the baby (6)
18. Not long ago (6)
20. Where are the candles? (8)
23. You will learn something here (2,1,10)
26. Like a little fairy (5)
27. Part of Titania's bed (9)
28. Belligerent fan of white roses (7)
29. Even Lancashire cricketers can do these (7)

### DOWN CLUES

1. Bring up behind (4)
2. Often happy (7)
3. Add London to choice (5)
4. Heavy work for petty thieves? (8)
5. You may choose to do this (6)
6. Not a glamorous lady (9)
7. A Christmas risk (7)
8. Oddly they may be these (5)
12. They do this at Hampton Court (10)
14. Not guilty on this scooter (9)
16. Can be stale or checked (4)
17. Badly behaved chickens do this (4,4)
19. Bit of a joker at harvest time (7)
21. Unite to help the farmer (7)
22. Powerful, ruler didn't have a meal (6)
24. She or he has it (5)
25. This queen was not so bad (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

Girl Guiding in TD & WG	Mrs K Williams	020 8398 1300
1st Thames Ditton Brownies	Mrs. Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
3rd Thames Ditton Brownies	Deborah Daoud	020 8398 5521
2nd Thames Ditton Rainbows	Alexandra Lyall	07779 616463
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Carole Needham	07975 842423
1st Weston Green Guides (All Saints)	Mrs. Louise Lewis	020 8398 4843
2nd Thames Ditton Guides	Mrs. Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
1st Weston Green Brownies (All Saints)	Mrs K Williams	020 8398 1300
2nd Weston Green Brownies	Mrs J Epps	020 8395 0595
1st Weston Green Rainbows	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
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
Claygate Bridge Club	Hon. Secretary	020 8398 1710
Colets Health & Fitness	Giordano Orsini	020 8398 7108
Dittons Skiff and Punting Club	Hon Secretary	07710 139417
Dittons & Hinchley Wood Royal British Legion	Hon Secretary	020 8398 6263
Ember Players (Drama) Ember Sports Club	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
Hinchley Wood / Dittons PROBUS Club	Edmund Woolloy	020 8398 3581
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/Dittons	Edmund Woolley	020 8398 3581
Probus Club, Sandown	Julian Rye	020 8398 2463
River Club (BMYC)	David Walker	0870 460 3586
Rotary Club, Esher	Geoff Morris	01932 868454
Rubber Bridge TD Lawn Tennis Club	Val	020 8399 9972
Surbiton Croquet Club	Alec Thomas	020 8398 2391
Surbiton Golf Club	Secretary	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	Chris Walker (Sec)	0208 398 6651
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



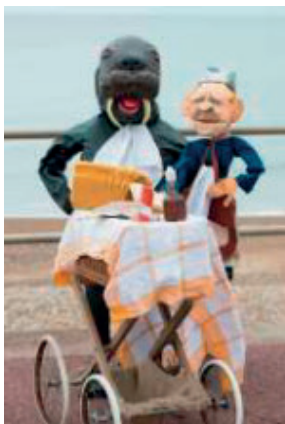
We are delighted to be introducing our **Fish, Chips and a Play Nights** in March. These evenings offer the opportunity of a traditionally British supper and then a play to round off a convivial evening. For our inaugural events, we are welcoming on **Friday 8 March**, for the first time, **Farnham Maltings** and their production of **Title and Deed**. Farnham Maltings produces work of a very high quality which it tours to village halls and smaller theatre venues. **Title and Deed** is a play by celebrated American playwright Will Eno and is a haunting, funny and quietly moving examination of what it is to search for 'home'. Our second Fish, Chips and a Play Night is on **Saturday 30 March** when **James Pellow** returns to the VFH with his latest gentle comedy **Her Majesty Fed an Elephant** in which two contrasting characters, both played by James, vie for possession of the same table in a local coffee shop, wryly observing and commenting.



Each evening costs **£19**, which includes the supper. All tickets must be purchased in advance and there will be a limit on numbers, so early booking is advised. We are also welcoming back **Giles Shenton** (Old Herbaceous, My Dog's Got No Nose) with an adaptation of the glorious **Three Men In A Boat** by **Jerome K Jerome** on **Friday 1 March £14**.



We have much for the music lover this season with the return of **Andante** on **Saturday 2 February**, the multi-instrumental band and their brand new show **Times Are A-Changin'** featuring the songs of the 60s and 70s by **Don McLean, The Kinks, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, John Lennon, Simon and Garfunkel** and many more. For Musical Theatre lovers we have on **Friday 25 January**, new to the VFH, **Nick Barstow** and a trio of West End performers presenting a rich evening of musical theatre, from **Hammerstein to Hamilton** and back again. Local **Cobham Band** will be return on **Saturday 23 February** with a night packed with marvellous music.



For children and families we have **The Walrus and The Carpenter** on **Saturday 19 January** from **TheatreRotto** and **The Mystery of Memory Lane** from **Hand to Mouth Theatre** on **Saturday 9 February**. Our Film Night this season is the **Ealing Comedy Passport to Pimlico** on **Friday 15 February**, a pre-Brexit treat about a part of SW London declaring independence from the UK when it finds it is actually part of the dukedom of Burgundy.



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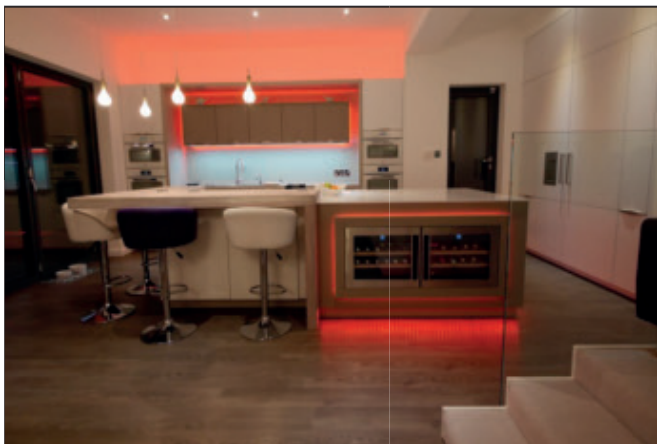
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