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THAMES DITTON TODAY

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

Published quarterly since Spring 1970

Autumn 2014

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Cover photo: *The changing season* by Andy Anderson

www.residents-association.com

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

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THAMES DITTON & WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



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 the inhabitants of Thames Ditton and Weston Green. 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 five Residents' Association Councillors we have a strong voice on Elmbridge Council, working with other Residents' Councillors to ensure that decisions are based on the needs of local communities and on good management rather than on party politics.

Our Residents' County Councillor Peter Hickman represents our views on Surrey County Council.

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THE NEXT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETINGS ARE

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News from the Residents' Association



to 31 August

What a lovely summer it was until the remnants of Hurricane Bertha lashed the RideLondon-Surrey 100 cycle event and ended the heatwave. More than 20,000 amateur cyclists defied the weather to take part and despite the torrential rain many residents came out to support them and the professional road race. Our own RA Chairman Rhodri Richards completed the course in a very respectable 4 hours 24 minutes! If you fancy a go, next year's event will take place on Sunday 2 August 2015.

Concerns regarding road closure signs at the Giggs Hill junction with Portsmouth Road have been fed back to the organisers. Comments via helpdesk@ridelondon.co.uk.

A rare rainy day in July could not dull the floral exuberance of the Queens Road Hanging Basket Competition and the standard of entries attracted attention from the BBC crew covering the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. This local event has gone from strength to strength as neighbours vie for prizes in three sections: hanging baskets, front gardens and window boxes.

Travellers

A number of Travellers set up a camp on the commons by Longmead Road, Weston Green on 21 July and Councillors were on the case immediately. In order to evict Travellers from a site the landowner (in this case Elmbridge Borough Council)



Competition organiser Pam Bannister with Best Window Box winners – Ian and Simi Lavers

has to apply to the County Court for a Hearing to give them a “Possession Order” and the date of a hearing is completely dependent on the availability of the Court. EBC was given a date of Friday 1st August and served notice on the Travellers on that day. The County Court Sheriffs were due to evict them from the site on Monday 4th, but they left very early that morning. In the meantime EBC provided bins to try and limit the amount of rubbish on the common and conducted a clear-up operation once the site had been vacated.

As we go to print a different group of Travellers has set up camp by Longmead Road and a Hearing date has been set for 1 September.

Post Office

The consultation regarding the proposed move of the Post Office in Thames Ditton from its current location at

the High Street Newsagents to Simply Fresh ended on 31 July. A number of significant concerns were raised by respondents, including matters such as space and access. The independent statutory watchdog for the Post Office network, Citizen Advice, has reviewed the findings of the consultation and requested that Post Office Ltd delays making a final decision on location whilst it seeks additional feedback. This could take a further four to six weeks from the end of the consultation period.

Thames Ditton Councillors and our local MP have met with Post Office Ltd to discuss the proposal in depth and its implications. Retaining a full service post office is of paramount importance. There have also been discussions with the owner of Simply Fresh to seek assurances regarding all residents' concerns.

Planning

The arrival of containers, hoardings and contractors in early July signalled that work has finally started at the **Home of Compassion**, six years after it was sold to Caring Homes. The development contract has been awarded to MP Brothers of Acton and we understand that they have experience of working with listed buildings and residential homes. Owners Caring Homes anticipate the construction programme will take 80 weeks and have appointed the Contract Manager, Naran Raghvani, as a direct point of contact. Security remains tight. The contractors have a presence round the clock backed up by a security system with monitored cameras.

The development of a three-storey townhouse with basement and roof terrace

at **55b High Street** continues to pose concerns to neighbouring shops and residences. To help address these, the developers have been assisted by the Residents' Association to engage in meaningful dialogue.

One of the fears expressed when the ambitious project was first proposed was the likely detrimental effect on the immediate businesses caused by the inevitable noise, pollution, vehicle movements, access problems etc. Regrettably, the prospect of these has already prompted Emma At Home, next door to the site, to close. Fortunately, Lunch at 53 High Street is determined to remain open and hopes the community will continue to support them with their custom. We support these sentiments and hope any outstanding issues can be resolved swiftly and amicably, and that the developers and builders will continue to be mindful of the sensibilities of those living and working close by. Emma at Home is continuing on-line at www.emmaathome.co.uk

The revised application for development at **Taggs Boatyard** (2014/1600) has received many objections from the local community and we have supported these objections. We believe that the latest plan still features over-development of this very sensitive site and we have urged Elmbridge Borough Council to reject the application.

We supported local residents in objecting to an application to build on a site in **Angel Road** (2014/2023), (at the rear of properties in Thorkhill Road) on the grounds of size of the proposed development and its proximity to the

River Rythe. This application was rejected by Elmbridge Borough Council.

The original application from the Co-op for development at **The Ewe Public House** (2014/0243) was withdrawn on 16 August and another application (2014/2729) has been submitted for a single-storey extension, installation of a new ATM and alterations to a boundary wall following demolition of an existing conservatory. As mentioned previously, no permission is required for a 'change of use' from public house to shop.

The application for four detached two-storey houses and new access following the demolition of two houses at **87/89 Grove Way** (2014/1132) was refused for the following reasons: *"the proposed number of houses, their design, size, layout (including the access road/amount of hard-standing) and limited garden depths would result in development appearing cramped and out of keeping with the character of Grove Way and detrimental to the visual amenities of the surrounding area"*. This application caused much concern, reflected in the high number of letters received (76 objections, three in support).

Development Management Plan

Elmbridge Borough Council has now submitted its Development Management Plan for scrutiny by a Planning Inspector. We have made submissions to Elmbridge voicing concerns about a number of areas. Further information can be found on the Elmbridge website under planning at www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/policy/dmp.htm.

The Inspector for the examination is Mr Nicholas Taylor BA (Hons) MRTPI.

His task is to consider whether the DMP complies with the relevant legislation and is sound. He will, we hope, take on board our comments made both in writing and at the Hearing held at the end of August.

Resurfacing

The long-promised resurfacing of Station Road and the High Street was finally completed. The work in Station Road took longer than originally planned as a number of the road gullies had collapsed and took some time to repair.

The overnight work in the High Street went very smoothly. Although it meant a couple of disturbed nights for residents it only took two nights to transform the road.

Celebrations continue

The All Saints Weston 75th anniversary celebrations have continued apace. One highlight was 'From Weston with Love', a musical afternoon featuring children and adults singing a variety of popular numbers from stage and screen. With strawberries and cream, cakes and bubbly in demand, the event may become a regular feature in Weston Green.

July also saw the inaugural Food Festival & Bake Off with guest judge, Olivier Blanc. As well as classes for cakes, biscuits, brownies and preserves, there were a variety of stalls to visit, live music, local beer from Claygate and a choice of delicious Korean food or hearty BBQ fare for lunch. Perhaps this will be another annual date for the calendar.

Christmas Party

If the celebrations at Weston Green have got you thinking about the festive season, why not plan to start yours at the

RA Christmas party on Saturday 13 December at the Vera Fletcher Hall?

It is a great local evening with good food, excellent wine and enthusiastic dancing. Get a group together to make up a table, or come on your own and meet new friends. Tickets are £34 and include a welcoming glass of fizz with canapés, a three-course dinner and dancing to an excellent live band. Wine will be available to buy at very reasonable prices on the night. Tickets will be available from Monday November 3 from Sue Dawson on 020 8398 5436.

Farewell

Revd John Silk has retired after 19 years as Vicar of St Nicholas, Thames Ditton. His last service was on 31 August, followed by a farewell lunch. We join with all his parishioners to wish him and

his wife Clare and family all the best for the future.

Congratulations

We offer our congratulations to two sixth-form students living in Thames Ditton (and alumni of Weston Green School). William Pinhey won the nationwide New Views playwriting competition run by the National Theatre with his script 'Is There Wifi In Heaven?' Cameron Finlay was runner-up with his play 'Something Wicked'. The plays were staged/read at the National Theatre in July.

We are delighted that Cameron has offered to write some articles for Thames Ditton Today, the first of which is the story of another inspirational young man, on p 13.

Residents-Association.com



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TUESDAY OCTOBER 7th

Illustrated talk on Buttonhooks by Paul Moorehead, Chairman of the Buttonhook Society. Buttonhooks, since the early 17th century, kept buttons on boots and garments and were made in steel, gold, and early plastic with inlaid gems. World War 1 soldiers and POWs made them in the trenches to use for barter – altogether a fascinating part of social history.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 4th

Illustrated talk on 20th Century Romantic painters by Alan Hepburn – well-known Thames Ditton resident and painter. He will talk on John Piper, famous for his paintings of churches and landscapes, Graham Sutherland, official War Artist in the Second World War and creator of the tapestry of Christ in Coventry Cathedral, and Eric Ravillious, painter, wood engraver and lithographer.

Introducing our new Honorary Secretary Florian Traub



Love and serendipity brought Florian Traub to Thames Ditton. He was born and brought up in Germany and qualified as an intellectual property lawyer before practicing in the beautiful Bavarian city of Munich.

He met his (English) wife Katie when they were both travelling in Canada. An international romance blossomed until Katie moved to teach in Munich for a while. Finally they decided to live, and bring up their family, in England.

When looking for places to live they drew a straight line from West Byfleet (where Katie grew up) to Waterloo and plumped for Thames Ditton. Whilst that might have been a happy accident Florian *'loves living here as it is a 'real' village close to London, and also to the country such as the South Downs – even the coast is not far away'*.

He and Katie now have three daughters, two are at Stepping Stones Nursery and their eldest is due to start at Thames Ditton Infant School in September.

Florian met RA Chairman Rhodri Richards at St Nicholas Church and having *'shown a bit too much interest in local affairs'*, was invited to get involved. However, community service may be in the blood, as both Florian's parents also served as local Councillors in Germany.



Florian and family

When asked to sum up why he wanted to get involved Florian said:

'I believe that little things can make a difference. National government is one thing, but you can do quite a bit on a local level. You can try to influence things for the benefit of your community.'

In any spare time he has, Florian runs: *'I love to explore towns and cities on foot; it gives you a real connection to a place. My ambition is to run the London Marathon.'*

We hope you will come and meet Florian and other members of the RA Executive at our regular Open Meetings at the Vera Fletcher Hall.

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Going for Gold



After the excitement of the Commonwealth Games that rocked the country, residents of Thames Ditton will be delighted to learn of sporting success even closer to home. In August, 19-year-old Toby Gold, who lives in Thames Ditton, was selected to represent the Great Britain Team in the T33 class at the International Wheelchair and Amputee Sports (IWAS) Federation Games in Stoke Mandeville, where he set two senior European records and won three bronze medals in the 100m, 200m and 400m Wheelchair Racing events. Even more exciting is the probability of Toby being called to represent Britain at the Rio de Janeiro Paralympic Games in 2016.

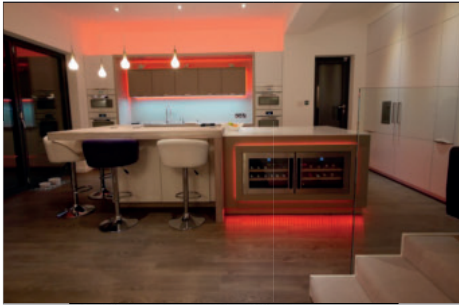
Speaking with him a month before the IWAS games, Toby's story is still nothing short of inspirational, and yet he carries the pride of representing his country with admirable humility. After being diagnosed with cerebral palsy as an infant, Toby says he struggled to find a sport that suited the limitations of his disability. When he was 16 Toby tried his hand at wheelchair basketball and, on the recommendation of a teacher, he then went on to try wheelchair racing. This is only his third competitive season, but he has already excelled to the point where he is the top young athlete in the UK at wheelchair racing and second internationally in the 100m.

Toby jokes that his determination to excel at racing came from sibling rivalry



Toby Gold is making his mark

with his twin brother, also a talented sportsman. However, he chooses to explain that his vast reserves of tenacity have helped him so much during his career. He went from buying his first wheelchair on eBay (a chair for basketball), to competing internationally in a chair costing thousands of pounds. His rise through the rankings of Junior Wheelchair Racing has been meteoric and he is now a figure that many athletes who are just starting out can look up to.



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However, he refuses to take all of the credit for himself. He firmly believes that no athlete can truly succeed on his own and he says that his greatest help has been the charity READY (Recreation and Easy Access for Disabled Youth). Based in Thames Ditton, READY aims to allow people with disabilities to participate in sports and to increase participation and funding for disability athletics. Funded by local business people, READY has made Toby's transition from amateur to professional much swifter and easier. As well as paying for all his chairs, with the generosity of READY, Toby was able to attend the prestigious Weir Archer Academy in Kingston.

David Weir CBE, six-time winner of the London Marathon and a holder of six Olympic gold medals, runs the Weir Archer Academy with renowned professional coach Jenny Archer MBE, so they can pass their considerable experience and knowledge onto the next generation of disabled athletes.

It is here that Toby trains six times each week for nearly two hours at a time, practising both his endurance and his speed so that he can hold his position at the top of his category and go on to improve on his personal best. Toby speaks with nothing but admiration about his mentors and it is refreshing to see that brushing shoulders with such giants of British sport has not gone to his head.

Toby says he would be nowhere without the support of the equipment he uses. Racing wheelchairs are bespoke, built to suit an athlete's width, height and seating preference, and the final product will usually cost upwards of £2,000. As if the chair didn't cost enough, the best



A blast of speed

wheels for the chair can cost up to £1,400, and as Toby grew up, he needed different chairs. So far, Toby has outgrown two chairs, which is very expensive for any athlete. Together with specialist gloves, repairs and tyres, the costs mount up very quickly. This makes it a particularly difficult sport to get into, but with the help of READY, Toby continues to race.

When he's not training or studying for his degree at St. Mary's Twickenham University, Toby also works as an ambassador for READY, giving talks to the community about wheelchair sports. He even spends his time training and inspiring younger wheelchair basketball players. With the support of friends, family, his coaches and the charities he works with, Toby hopes to raise the profile of wheelchair sports in a way that only a truly great sportsman can.

You can donate to the READY charity via their JustGiving page which can be found on this website: www.justgiving.com/readycharity/

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Esher ‘the community’ College



September is the start of the academic year at Esher College, although at no point in the year are its 1700 students on site at the same time. The perception that they commute long distances to attend this sixth-form college that has remote links to the local community, is far from the truth.

The admissions process commences annually in June and gives priority to pupils attending the two most local schools, Esher High and Hinchley Wood, and to students resident in KT7, KT8 and KT10. A second “open phase” admissions process takes place in September for remaining places which are allocated on a ballot system. Overall, about 40% of places go to Elmbridge students. Entry is non-selective with applicants required to achieve a minimum of 5 A* to C grades at GCSE. I asked Dan Dean, College Principal if government attempts to force universities to take students from the state sector had led to an increase in applicants from independent schools, he said “No, only around 20% of applicants come from the independent sector and this figure has been consistent for several years”.

The college has a record of academic success achieving “Grade 1: outstanding for all areas inspected” in its last two Ofsted reports. In 2013, around 90% of students went on to university. Over 30% of these to Russell Group universities and 15 students to Oxford and Cambridge. This is impressive for a college which unlike many independent schools has a



Exploring Science

non-selective intake. What Esher College offers is “value added”, taking students with modest GCSE grades and helping them achieve excellence. The college offers a wide range of A level and BTEC courses. Summer 2014 results were, once again, impressive. The pass rate at A level was 98.3%, with over half the entries achieving A*, A or B grades.

I asked Dan if there are plans to increase the number of students but he said; “*Not at this time; we are close to maximum capacity. There is no space for any more and currently there is no money for new buildings*”. Some areas of refurbishment include a much needed new music block and improvements to the café and private study areas, but funding is very limited. So will the new café mean fewer students picnicking on Weston Green and less litter? Dan smiles “*We have a great new catering company and with the new facilities we hope so, but students enjoy the freedom to go off campus.*”

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So with 1700 students on roll how does Dan deal with problems of litter, parking and antisocial behaviour? *“At the start of each year I speak to the students and ask them to extend the respect to people and property that we have inside college to our neighbours and local residents, and I follow this up with email reminders throughout the year.”* Students are encouraged to park on site, and parking provision has been extended. They are asked not to park inconveniently in residential roads, on corners or block driveways. Terry Tulley at the college is on hand to deal with complaints and can be reached on 020 8398 0291. He often checks local roads for parking problems and patrols for litter too. In addition the college employs its estates team to litter pick locally.

Dan says the college has a *“zero-tolerance policy towards drugs and alcohol”*. He holds regular meetings with local residents so that issues and information can be exchanged and addressed. Dan is currently seeking 2 new representatives from the local community living in Home Farm Close and Camm Gardens to attend these meetings. If you would like to

volunteer please contact Sharon Kelly at skelly@esher.ac.uk

Students also do voluntary work in the local community, helping in local schools and the Thames Ditton Day centre.

In addition the college has a thriving adult education programme. Over one hundred courses start in September, with places still available. Courses include computer and IT skills, languages, counselling, creative writing, art history, photography, art, jewellery making, and health and fitness. Some courses offer accredited national qualifications, others are just for fun, but all offer local people the opportunity to learn and meet people. Maureen Jay, Programme Coordinator, says that *“Friendships are made; it is very sociable”*. For more information contact Maureen at mjay@esher.ac.uk. And the college lets out its facilities to local groups, including its theatre, sports hall, sports pitches and classrooms. For more information contact Derek Hempston on 07833 526986. This thriving local community is much more than just a sixth form college.

Sandra Dennis



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Welcome to a new Minister



A welcome to new Minister Peter Flint

It's all change here at the Thames Ditton United Reformed Church (URC) – we have a new minister!

He's the Revd Peter Flint and he officially joined us on 6th September. Peter comes to us from Dorking URC where he has been a very popular minister for the past eight years. During Peter's 35 years as a minister he has had parishes in Essex, Berkshire and Northamptonshire as well as three exchange ministries in the US. Peter and his wife Judith are keen walkers who have done four of the National Trails and in April 2013 walked 100 miles of the Camino de Santiago. He's also been known to play a round of golf or two! Peter's keen to take an active part in our community and we are delighted to welcome him and his family to Thames Ditton.

Where is the URC? I hear you ask. Indeed, what is it? It's the large white building you pass on Speer Road when you are walking to the station or taking your children to school. It's the place where the flourishing Teddies Playgroup meets as do the Ripieno Choir, the Stagecraft group, tap dancing and karate classes.

It's also where a congregation whose members come from a variety of Protestant backgrounds such as Scots Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists come to worship.

We are a small but active congregation and we believe that the church should play a positive role in the community. So, not only do we open our doors to various groups, but we also have a lively social programme with monthly events such as film nights (*Casablanca*, *Whisky Galore* and *Some Like It Hot* to name but a few), coffee and chat sessions, visits to places such as Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey and Tudeley Church in Kent, slide shows and lunches to which all the community are invited.

Ours is an old church (the first church on the Speer Road site opened its doors in 1804) but, with the advent of our new minister, we are looking forward to an active future. Do come and join us. All are welcome!

Linda Lambert

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I have a question about planning...



Planning is a complex issue. On one side it is governed by national government policy, and on the other by local policy set by Elmbridge Borough Council. However, local residents often ask questions which are asked by local residents which are specific to how planning applications are processed. Residents' Association Councillors Karen Randolph and Tannia Shipley sit on the Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) planning committees and here they give answers to some of the most frequently asked questions.

There is a planning application in my road, why hasn't the Council notified me?

EBC places a high priority on involving residents in the planning process and goes beyond the statutory requirement. (See Council's formal Statement of Community Involvement which is under review). Occupiers of land adjoining an application site will be notified by letter. This will normally be land with a common boundary, but may also include land up to four metres away. Where extensions are judged to be prominent from the front, additional letters will be sent to properties opposite the site unless there's a Site Notice.

Site Notices are displayed in the following circumstances: when the owner or occupier of adjoining land is not known; at non-residential developments

including (change of use); erection of new buildings; conversion of a dwelling or other premises to provide more than three separate dwellings; advertisement applications and applications to fell trees.

Major developments likely to have widespread impact, or where the site has several principal frontages, may need multiple notices and more extensive neighbour notification.

In certain circumstances there is a statutory requirement to place a notice in a local newspaper. Likewise there are additional requirements related to planning applications affecting listed buildings and/or conservation areas (See EBC website).

How do I comment on a planning application?

You can do this via the EBC planning website under its application reference or write to Karen Fossett, Head of Town Planning, EBC, Civic Centre, High Street, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9SD. If you don't have time to list all your objections inform the Council in writing that you object and state that your reasons will follow. You can see who else has objected, and what they have said, by checking the Elmbridge planning website www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning. You must quote the planning application number, your name and your address on any correspondence sent. Anonymous letters cannot be accepted.

How long do I have to comment on an application?

You have 21 days. The start and close dates are shown on the EBC planning website www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning but late letters can be considered. You can search for details of the application using the site address or planning application number and can find the key dates listed under the specific planning application number.

Why are some applications determined by the EBC planning area sub-committee whilst others are decided by Officers?

Normally planning applications are decided by professional Planning Officers. However, if an application is not refused, and there are five letters of objection or more, the application will automatically be promoted to the area planning sub- committee (APS) where it will be determined by Councillors.

Can objectors speak at the area Planning Sub-Committee Meeting?

If ten or more letters of objection are received from separate households the application will qualify for public speaking at APS. The application will go to the committee with a recommendation from the Officer for approval or refusal. Likewise a petition signed by more than 50 signatories will promote an application to APS. In both cases, only addresses within the vicinity of the site will be counted. If an application is eligible for public speaking Planning Services will write to every objector giving them information on how to register to speak. Only the first objector to respond will be

eligible to speak. Where an objector speaks the applicant/agent will also be able to address the committee. If no objector speaks, then the applicant cannot do so either.

Any resident can attend these meetings. You can find the agenda for the East Area sub-committee meetings (these cover our area) on the EBC website.

What is the format when speaking at a Council area sub-committee meeting?

The objector will be invited to speak for three minutes followed by any questions from the Committee. The applicant is then permitted to make a response (three minutes) followed by questions. The application is then debated by the Committee with any additional queries being dealt with by the Committee Officer and a decision is made.

Who are consultees?

This depends on the application. For example, in the case of planning applications at the Home of Compassion the following were consultees: Environment Agency (building in the flood plain), English Heritage (listed building in a conservation area), Surrey County Council (highways and traffic), Thames Landscape Strategy (location on the river), Thames Ditton Conservation Advisory Committee (building in the Thames Ditton Conservation Area), Elmbridge Tree Officer (trees and landscape) and several others.

The list of consultees is entirely dependent on the site and applies equally to very small developments.

Why does EBC appear to have ignored the traffic/ safety issues I raised?

EBC Planning Officers consider every comment which is submitted, but the Council has to consult Surrey County Council which is the highway authority. Surrey County Council has the expertise to advise on road traffic issues and if they raise no objection it is very difficult for EBC to overrule it. However, EBC has policies that deal with the movement implications of development, off-street parking, servicing facilities and cycling facilities.

What are “Planning Conditions”?

Planning permission is often granted subject to ‘conditions’. Conditions will vary but they might be related to materials to be used, or restrict what can be done on the premises, or require the applicant to obscurely glaze a window to prevent overlooking. Reasons for the conditions are always made clear.

An application was approved despite a lot of objections. Why can’t we appeal?

Under statute an applicant can appeal to the Planning Inspectorate if their application is refused by EBC but, as unfair as it appears, there is no right of appeal for an objector other than Judicial Review.

Can an Inspector’s decision be appealed?

Only if you can prove that the decision-making process was legally flawed (Judicial Review).

My neighbour is building an extension next door. Do they need planning permission?

Not necessarily. What they are building may be within permitted development (P.D.) rights.

My neighbour’s planning application was refused, but they are building anyway. Why doesn’t the Council stop them?

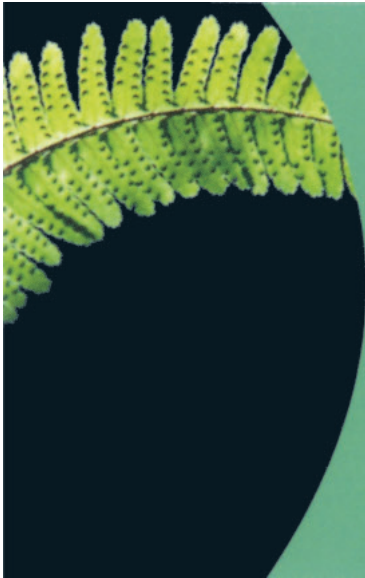
It comes down to the reason for refusal. If what they are building addresses the reasons for refusal your neighbour can submit a new application which may be approved.

There are different periods in which to appeal depending on the type of application. More information can be found on the Planning Portal website. The Planning Inspectorate can take several months to determine an appeal and can overturn the Council’s decision. If the Inspector upholds the Council’s reasons for refusal, and dismisses the appeal, the applicant can submit a new application. As long as this addresses the Inspector’s reasons for refusal it may be given planning permission.

Some applicants will commence building the part of an application that they know falls within Permitted Development Rights (see above). However, if planning permission is required, they are building at their own risk.

My neighbour has built an extension that clearly does not conform to the planning permission they have. What happens next?

You should contact the Enforcement Team in the Planning Dept. at EBC. You will need to complete a complaints form which is available online, or request a hard copy. Your complaint is confidential and an Enforcement Officer will investigate.



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What if the Enforcement Officer finds that what has been built does not comply? What happens next?

The Enforcement Officer will then determine the degree of deviation from the approved plans. If it is minimal there may be no further action, otherwise the applicant will be asked to submit a retrospective planning application. This retrospective application will then be determined in the normal way and could be refused or permitted.

Why are applicants allowed to go to appeal on the same site several times for similar applications?

There is no restriction on the number of times an applicant can go to appeal, but they can only appeal any one application, once. If the Inspector dismisses the appeal, the applicant can endeavour to address the Inspector’s reasons for dismissal and submit another application to EBC. The application is then processed in the usual way. Should the application

be refused by the Council, the applicant can appeal that decision... and so on!

If the applicant submits a further application which the Planning Dept. deems to be identical to the dismissed scheme, then EBC can refuse to register it.

Why was my planning application refused when there were no objections?

Planning decisions are based on a number of criteria which include planning regulations and guidelines, consultee responses, as well as letters of representation from local residents.

These are some of the most commonly asked questions. Planning legislation is constantly changing, so these answers are subject to change. If you have an issue that isn’t covered here, then phone EBC Customer Services for advice on 01372 474474 or contact our Residents’ Association Planning Convenor Graham Cooke and/or your local Councillor. Their contact details are on the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents’ Association website www.residents-association.com



There are additional consultees, related to planning applications affecting listed buildings and conservation areas such as Giggs Hill Green

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Curtain up

– at the Vera Fletcher Hall



The highlight of our Autumn programme for many will be Charles Court Opera's "**Patience**" on Saturday 13th September. Many residents have enjoyed their quirky modern pantomimes with their splendid acting and music, and in "Patience" we have a real Gilbert & Sullivan treat. Its London run received rave reviews – "This is grown-up, witty, divinely frivolous entertainment at its very best" and "Patience has never been funnier". Add to this some of Sullivan's most irresistible and deliciously over-the-top characters and this is one definitely not to be missed.

We always try at the Hall to have a mix of serious music, theatre, children's shows and modern jazz. We welcome back **Amy Tress** and the **London Chamber Collective** on Friday 10th October with a lovely programme including Schubert's Trout Quintet and Brahms' Piano Quartet in G minor; and the return, following concerts in Shanghai and the Krakow Festival, of the **London Mozart Trio** on Friday 26th September with its three outstanding world class musicians playing works by Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms and Schumann.

On the lighter side of music, our Strictly Sundays shows have been a great success with their cabaret-style setting of seating round candle lit tables. The performance by Five Star Swing in May was fully sold out. Jake Fryer, from

Ronnie Scott's and the London Jazz Festival, returns on Sunday 28th September with his "**Jazz on a September Evening**" with his top line-up of trumpet, saxophone, trombone, vocalist and rhythm section; followed on Sunday 12th October by the Linden Wind Orchestra's "**Mediterranean Festival**". This premier concert band will play music including Rossini's Barber of Seville Overture, Bizet's Carmen Prelude and Verdi's Grand March. Singer Gill Manly celebrates the great R'nB High Priestess **Etta James** and jazz soul diva **Nina Simone** in their classic hits such as "You'll be Nice to Come Home To" and "Little Girl Blue" in "**Blues Mother, Soul Sister**" on Sunday 16th November.

2014 is of course the anniversary of the start of the First World War. This changed attitudes to the role of women, and the performance on Friday 19th September of "**Suffragette**", (premiered this year at the Yvonne Arnaud) records the struggle of women to obtain the vote. It's a performance which is in turns exciting, moving and funny. We have all been brought up on the famous escape stories of the two world wars and on Friday 14th November we have Tom Stoppard's "**Heroes**", an escape story with a difference where three war heroes plot their escape from their military retirement home. The play won the Olivier Award for the best new comedy.

Our third theatre offering is the premiere of About Time Theatre Company's "**Under your Spell**" on Friday – Sunday 17-19th October, a ghost story set in an old New York theatre.

The Elmbridge Council's Royston Pike series of lectures always attract a good audience, and on Tuesday 14th October we are lucky to have a former British ambassador, Bryan Sparrow CMG, to recall in an illustrated talk that we should "**Forget the Ferrero Rochers...**" Bryan's eventful life included bringing up a family in Krushev's Russia, fleeing over the rooftops in Tunis when the Embassy was set on fire, opening our first embassy in Zagreb during a civil war and facing a revolution in Cameroon, with more civilized periods in Canada and France. It will be a fascinating talk and Bryan will be happy to answer questions.

Following last year's new venture – film shows at the Hall of "Lady Hamilton" and "Topsy Turvy" – on 25th October we have something very different – the all-time classic "**West Side Story**", winner of 10 Oscars and inspired by Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, with music by Leonard Bernstein and songs by Stephen Sondheim, including "Maria", "Tonight" and "America". We won't be selling popcorn but there will be a bar, tea, coffee and ice-creams.

Parents – and grandparents – should note that our children's shows start on Saturday 20th September with the well-known **Noisy Oyster** presenting "**Da Silva Marionette Circus**" – Ringmaster, clowns, acrobats, music and puppets with off-the-wall humour. Garlic Theatre return to the Hall on Saturday 11th

October with their "**Billy Goats Gruff**" – three hungry goats and a grumpy old troll; and Image Musical Theatre present on Saturday 29th November their "**Snow Queen**", Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale of the young boy captured in the ice castle in the frozen north.

The Christmas season is celebrated with "**Beguiled by Betjeman and a Seasonal Pot Pourri**" on Sunday 30th November in aid of the Mayor's Charity, Home Start Elmbridge; and on January 16th and 17th with Charles Court Opera's **Billy the Kid – a Panto Western**.



See page 46 for times and tickets for these shows. You can keep in touch with events at the Hall on the website: www.verafletcherhall.co.uk.

To hire the Hall contact manager Helen Mason on 08456 528 829.

Ruth Lyon

Cracking crypts – John Reeves



SW of the gate to the Garden of Remembrance lies John Reeves

It's always worth scraping moss off derelict tombs in the churchyard of St. Nicholas. You never know what stories it may hide. In this case, as gently I brushed away leaves and muck and prised off the ivy, it was to find a man celebrated for his contribution to botany, zoology and horticulture, indeed recently honoured with an exhibition by the Royal Horticultural Society. This is a man about whom a good deal has been written – though not in Thames Ditton. His collection of work in London's Natural History Museum is described by the museum as one of the most important

there. It contains more than two thousand scientifically significant, accurate and exquisite botanical and zoological drawings and paintings.

For all that, the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography describes him as a natural history collector and an artist, he didn't paint them himself. One of the many reasons I like his story is that he never seems to have got far from the office. Another is that there is an element of the heart. For the inscription on the tomb reads: "In memory of Sarah wife of John Reeves who died the 15th May 1810

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aged 31 years. Also of Isabella second wife of the above who died the 29th October 1840 aged 67. Also of the above named John Reeves FRS LS ZS &c., some years in the H.E.I.C.S. in China, who died at Clapham the 22nd March 1856 aged 82.”

He had the second wife buried on top of the first one, with the clear intention of joining the former, and perhaps both, for eternity. (“You wouldn’t do that to me, would you?” asked my own dear wife). The question is, why Thames Ditton?

John Reeves, born 1 May 1774 in West Ham, did not have the easiest start in life, nor yet the hardest. His father Revd. Jonathan Reeves was an itinerant Methodist preacher before being ordained in the Anglican Church and appointed to West Ham, a tough parish. He preached in Whitechapel and was made the first chaplain of a new charity, the Magdalen Hospital for Penitent Prostitutes. Sunday sermons there – though not those of the indifferent Revd. Reeves – became a fashionable occasion for Society to gawp at the penitent part of the congregation behind a screen. John Reeves, the youngest son, was left an orphan at age 14 but had elder siblings to care for him. He completed his education at Christ’s Hospital school, founded for the orphan children of poor Londoners.

Reeves then entered the counting-house of Richard Pinchback, a tea broker, where (as his 1856 obituary in the proceedings of the Linnaean Society records) “he acquired so thorough a knowledge of teas as to recommend him in 1808 to the office of Inspector of Tea in England in the service of the Honourable East India Company” (the

HEICS on the gravestone). He joined the company on merit and ability rather than through patronage.

Meanwhile he had met Sarah Russell, resident in the civil parish of St George’s Hanover Square, whom he married in February 1803 in the heart of the City of London. The couple had a number of addresses in rapid succession as they produced John Russell Reeves (bap. 7 February 1804, Aldgate); Sarah Reeves (b. 19 September 1805, bap. Whitechapel) when their address was Haydon Square; Elizabeth Reeves (bap. 8 Jun 1808 in Lambeth); and James Reeves b. 29 October 1809, bap. 23 March 1810 at Newington in Surrey. At no time is there any patent connection with Thames Ditton. Although there was a family of Russells here, they seem unlikely relatives. However, the next record after baby James’ baptism in Newington is the one carved in stone eight weeks later in the churchyard of St. Nicholas, Thames Ditton, for tragic Sarah. Why it is here is a mystery; but, because she lies here, John Reeves is buried here too.

In the aftermath of Sarah’s death, The East India Company appointed John Reeves assistant tea inspector for Canton in 1811 and he began studying Chinese. Before his departure from London in 1812 he was introduced by a relation to Sir Joseph Banks, made famous by his voyages as a naturalist with Captain Cook on HMS Endeavour, and by now London’s pre-eminent naturalist, who gave him some collecting commissions. Reeves also joined the Freemasons in London – albeit resigning from his lodge three years later, when he was established abroad. He was based in Macao, with an



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office in Canton during the tea-buying season. How he managed his domestic affairs is unclear, but most likely the children remained in the care of his older sister Elizabeth Reeves in England. A handsome salary of £700 per year in Canton helped.

There followed a prolific period of collecting plants, birds and animals and shipping them to London while Reeves discharged his duties as a tea buyer. The Chinese imposed tight constraints on “foreign devils” and they were generally confined to Canton. In letters Reeves sounded off, in the style of a true British expatriate, at “the villainous government of this vile country”. Out of season, life was probably easier in Macao, administered by the Portuguese, but a claustrophobic territory. Reeves set about his naturalist interests by hiring locals. He bought fish in the markets – known to Chinese cooks but unknown to London’s scientists – and paid Chinese artists to paint them accurately and methodically under his supervision. He engaged Chinese collectors of plants, birds and animals, commissioned drawings and paintings, four copies each, potted on plants and shipped many of them to England. Emil Bretschneider in his *History of European Botanical Discoveries in China* (1898) wrote that Reeves “was either the immediate or indirect source from which we derived the Chinese Azaleas, Camellias, Moutans, Chrysanthemums, Roses and numberless other treasures... Not a Company’s ship at that time sailed for Europe without her decks being decorated with the little portable greenhouses which preceded the present Wardian cases.”



*Reeves' Pheasant – Syrnaticus reevesii –
a jewel among birds, two metres long*

Bretschneider listed nearly 50 plants as Reeves’s introductions – although Reeves was not the first to introduce *Wisteria sinensis*, attributed to him for many years. In 1817 he was made a Fellow of both the Linnean Society and of the Royal Society. He also became a Fellow of the Horticultural Society and the Zoological Society. His name was bestowed on a genus of plants and nearly 30 species, including Reeves’ muntjac, a small deer, and the glorious and stunningly novel Reeves’ pheasant, which he brought back with him on his final return from China. His collection of fishes, together with some 340 drawings, was the basis for Sir John Richardson’s seminal study “On the Ichthyology of the Seas of China and Japan”. In 1827 his eldest son, John Russell Reeves, went out to China to work with his father, and carried on the work there after Reeves finally returned to England.

Reeves had visited England temporarily in 1816-1817 and 1824. During the first visit he married Isabella Andrew, a spinster aged 43, on 20 June 1816 in Camberwell. After his final return in 1831, Reeves resumed family life. Isabella died



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on 29 October 1840 in Clapham and Reeves arranged for her to be buried on top of his beloved Sarah in Thames Ditton eight days later: Revd. Henry Smith Pollard, the temporary curate during Revd. Wilfred Speer's suspension for drunkenness, officiated. In the 1841 census John Reeves' household was at Hampton Court Green with his eldest sister Elizabeth, his son John Russell Reeves, the latter's wife Elizabeth and their two children along with John's daughter Sarah. By the 1851 census he was in Clapham Old Town. His sister Elizabeth died there, aged 91, in 1853, and John Reeves followed three years later.

As well as his extensive obituary by the Linnaean Society, The Gardener's Chronicle 1856 announced his death as "...a name dear to all who are familiar with England and her gardens, one of the Nestors of Horticulture." Much of his collection of fish drawings (those fourth copies) was bequeathed to the British Museum by his son's wife in due course. His residual private collection of artefacts, of considerable value, was auctioned off by descendants in November 2008. The Royal Horticultural Society sponsored the restoration of a collection of botanical drawings in 2010, the occasion of a superb article in The Plantsman that

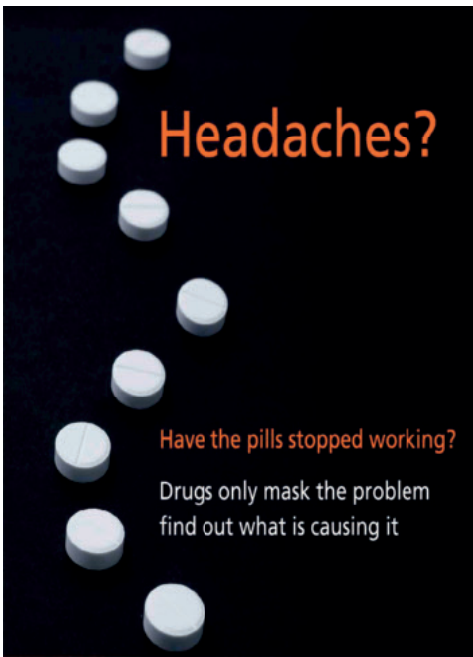
December by Kate Bailey who studied Reeves intensively and was involved in the restoration.

In his will, Reeves doesn't stipulate where he should be buried, but the intention is clear from his decision to bury his second wife in Sarah's grave. Sarah was the mother of his three surviving children who may have had a hand in the matter. In view of his significance it is a pity that John Reeves' grave is disintegrating in our churchyard, apparently abandoned, and I hope to use this article to arouse the interest of the RHS or others in putting it in order. His biographers may not know the grave is here, because Reeves died in Clapham, and when you look up his burial in the central bishop's records it's recorded as "St Mary Thames Ditton", confusing it with Long Ditton. However – seeing is believing...

Keith Evetts



Reeves' office in Canton – note the absence of PLANTS...



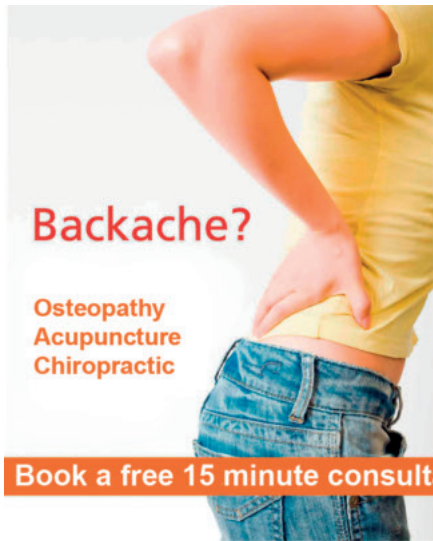
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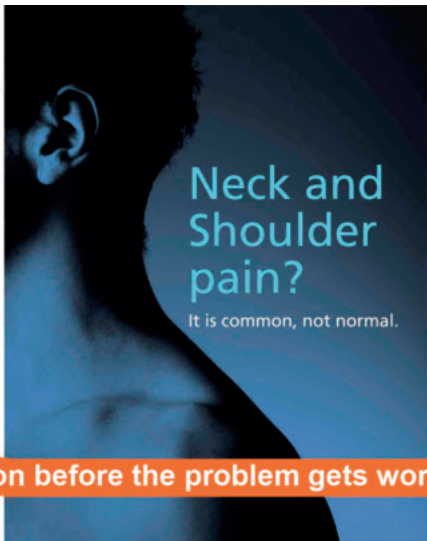


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Music with a Russian flavour



One of the nice things about the professional series of concerts in Claygate each winter is the variety of music. Although one can be sure that there will be a concert featuring a string quartet, and another probably with a famous continental pianist, or even specialists in Spanish Baroque music plus a dancer (!), one can never tell until the programme is announced, what enticements there will be. So, as expected, the unveiling of the coming season revealed something unusual, with each of the six concerts, beginning on October 4, showcasing an important or unusual work by a Russian composer.

Surrounded by other much loved classical pieces, compositions such as the superb “*Pictures at an Exhibition*,” by *Mussorgsky* will be performed by the brilliant young Ukrainian pianist, **Alexei Grynyuk, on October 4**. The second concert highlights two of the major works for flute, the Sonatas by Poulenc and the Russian, *Prokofiev*, and this will be on **November 1**. These two wonderful pieces full of melody, quirky twists and turns, and fun, will be performed by the Juilliard trained, young Principal Flautist of the Scottish National Orchestra, **Kathryn Bryan**.

November 29 features *Shostakovich’s* harrowing *Eighth String Quartet*, written when he saw the devastation of the bombed Dresden, and will be played by the **Cavaleri String Quartet**, who won the Hamburg International Competition in 2012.

After Christmas, Holy Trinity Church, Claygate, with its wonderful acoustic and comfortable seating, will host three more concerts. On **January 10**, the Royal Academy String Sextet plays Brahms Sextet No. 1 and the very tuneful “*Souvenir de Florence*” by *Tchaikovsky*. This will be followed on **February 28** by the season’s **Celebrity Concert** to be given by the **Fibonacci Sequence Ensemble** performing, amongst other works, the Kegelstatt Trio (Mozart), Dohnanyi’s Sextet and excerpts from *Gliere’s* “*8 Pieces for violin, cello and piano*”.

The final concert on **March 28** will be given by the **Kammerphilharmonie Europa**, a chamber orchestra from Germany, making a much anticipated return visit. Their exuberant playing and musicianship was one of the highlights of a previous season. They return to play a programme including works by Schubert, Albinoni, and Nielsen’s “Little Suite for Strings”, op. 1, plus, with their excellent Russian trumpeter, the Hummel Concerto. The Russian item will give a rare opportunity to hear *Gliere’s* “*Octet*” – op. 5 in D major.

The entire programme is given under the auspices of the Oxshott and Cobham Music Society in its 73rd season. Full details of concert programmes, membership and ticket prices for individual concerts can be seen at www.ocms-music.org.uk or obtained from Mrs Glynis Kortright, Rex House, St Andrew’s Square, Surbiton, KT6 4EF. Tel. 020 8399 6389.



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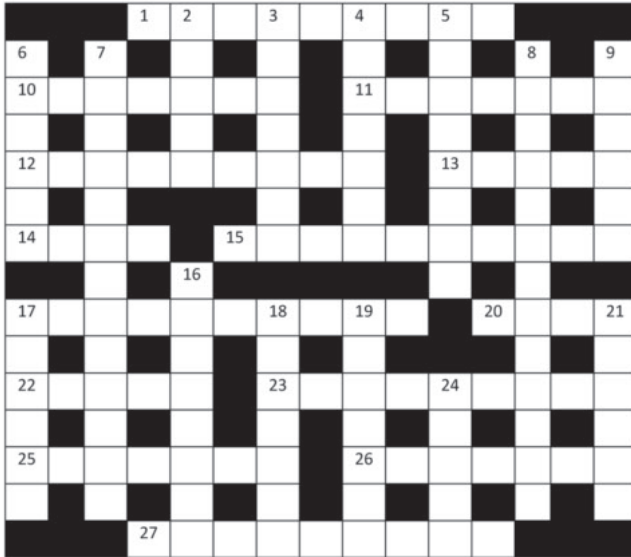
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Autumn crossword

By Maureen Willcox



The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of 15 October 2014 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

1. No livestock reared here (5,4)
10. Take a breather... (7)
11. ...and make sure this order is obeyed (7)
12. Former singer's home (9)
13. Past, present, future – that is the answer (5)
14. This is a simple clue (4)
15. Would we all be without this duo (4,3,3)
17. Not a good idea (10)
20. This bridge has more than one (4)
22. Can one believe a word he says? (5)
23. Tread on these with caution (9)
25. To state this is a meaningless remark (7)
26. And what a state to be in! (7)
27. Very upset (9)

DOWN

2. I love Miss Oyl! (5)
3. Sheltered from the elements (7)
4. If convicts were fed more they'd gain their liberty (7)
5. Proving this clue is incorrect (8)
6. One of a pair once worn by peasants (6)
7. Please S.O.S Anna as it is inevitable we'll hear of her murder (13)
8. A nice pram will be his welcome gift (6, 7)
9. Firstly, realise each volunteer earns respect equally (6)
16. Perhaps 22 across has a role to play (8)
17. Close (6)
18. Seen in Bushy Park perhaps (3,4)
19. It takes nerve to etch AG on a family heirloom (7)
21. Member of a light cavalry regiment (6)
24. One feels sick to exert effort (5)

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Solution to the summer crossword

by Michael Jackson



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

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

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Thames Ditton Centre for Retired People	Mon & Thurs	020 8398 5921
Thames Ditton Children's Centre	Tues, Weds, Fri	020 8398 3772
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Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Sally Dubery	01372 463587
Surrey Youth and Adult Education Service	Elmbridge Area	020 8979 8334

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2nd Thames Ditton Rainbows	Nicki Sutherland	020 8398 4202
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1st Weston Green Rainbows	Mrs Helen Hill	020 8398 3135
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Ember Sports Club	Zenda Hedges	020 8398 7038
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	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
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Sunday 28th September 7.30pm

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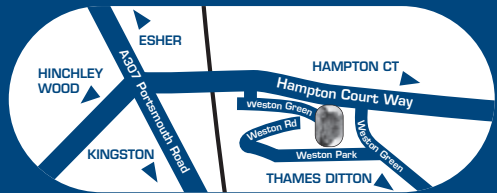
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