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SPRING 2011



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THAMES DITTON TODAY

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

Spring 2011

Published quarterly since Spring 1970

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Cover photo: *Cedar Cottage this Spring. Editor.*

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 mail 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



Annual General Meeting 8.00 pm on
22 March 2011, at Vera Fletcher Hall

Agenda:

1. **MINUTES** of the 2010 Annual General Meeting and matters arising therefrom.

2. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT:** to receive, discuss and adopt the Annual Report for 2010-2011.

3. **ACCOUNTS:** to receive the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2010.

4. **APPOINTMENTS:** to receive nominations and appoint officers and an Auditor:

President Vice President
Chairman Vice Chairmen

Hon Secretary Hon Treasurer and Auditor

5. **ELECTIONS:** to adopt candidates to stand at the Elmbridge Borough Council Elections on 5 May 2011

6. **RESOLUTIONS:** to consider any resolutions submitted in writing to the Secretary by 8 March 2010.

7. **GUEST SPEAKER:** Mr. Paul Jeffery, CEO of Caring Homes Ltd.: "Update and plans for the Home of Compassion"

President: Maureen Sheldrick,
34 The Woodlands, Esher

Surrey County Councillor:
Peter Hickman, Little Lodge,
Watts Road, Thames Ditton 020 8339 0931

Thames Ditton Councillors

Sandra Dennis,
Little Bradley, Thames Ditton 020 8873 2936
Ruth Lyon,
11 Riversdale Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 3396
Karen Randolph,
Deepfield, Giggs Hill Road,
Thames Ditton 020 8398 5005

Weston Green Councillors

Lorraine Sharp,
168 Ember Lane, Esher 07970 874 925
Tannia Shipley, 'Clinton House'
27 Lower Green Road, Esher 020 8398 2484

Officers:

Chairman: Libby MacIntyre,
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7 River Avenue, Thames Ditton 020 8398 4732
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29 Station Rd., Thames Ditton 020 8339 0485
Membership Secretary: Peter Haynes
6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton 02 8398 6019

Conveners of Sub-Committees:

Health and Community:
Karen Randolph (see above for details)
Planning: Graham Cooke
23 Ashley Road, Thames Ditton 020 8398 8509
Highways, Drainage:
Andrew Roberts, 1 Boyle Farm Road,
Thames Ditton 020 8786 6882

THE NEXT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETINGS ARE

TUESDAY 22 MARCH (AGM) AND 10 MAY AT 8.00PM

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News From the Residents' Association



18 November – 16 February

Home of Compassion

The squatters were peacefully evicted on 18 November, at considerable expense. Owners Caring Homes then installed resident security and improved defences, and have carried out work to prevent further deterioration of the building, inspected by Elmbridge officials. Paul Jeffery, CEO of Caring Homes, has kindly agreed to speak at our open Annual General Meeting on 22 March and give those attending an update on plans for the Home. Agent Norman Dolland has indicated that Caring Homes would consider offering occasional tours of the Home for residents to see for themselves, and they would also be open to suggestions for occasional use of the grounds – which will be put in better order – should anyone wish to organise an event such as a summer fair.

Planning

The most recent application to develop the **Olde Harrow** site in Weston Green Road was refused by Elmbridge Council. Council Officers concluded that the developers had paid insufficient heed to the Planning Inspector's views on the overdevelopment of this sensitive site. This application has also gone to appeal and the outcome is awaited.



peaceful if costly eviction

The new proposal to develop the properties on the west side of the **High Street** (former bakery and building that houses Hawes) is under consideration by Elmbridge. The officer's recommendation is to grant consent to the application which seems to be broadly supported within the village. Our Councillors will be seeking certain conditions and specification of materials that will, we trust, mean that the buildings will be finished to the design and standard required in the Conservation Area.

The applications to redevelop the Off-Licence in **Thorkhill Road** were refused after a good deal of work by the Association to support the many

objectors. The applications proposed an additional property to the rear of the site which would have been out of character, and a reduction in the size of the retail premises that would potentially have made it unviable as a retail unit.

A planning application to develop the **Old Cottage Hospital** site in Weston Green Road is expected shortly. The developers exposed draft plans to residents in early February. This is likely to feature construction of properties to the rear of the site as well as on the road. At present the proposals are for wholly residential use with no community benefit from this site, originally granted, built, funded and equipped for a local hospital by residents prior to annexation by the NHS.

Architect Keith Garner's case against the contentious overdevelopment at the **Jolly Boatman** site opposite Hampton Court Palace did not find favour with the presiding judge. An appeal is under consideration.

Residents' Associations throughout Elmbridge are keeping a close eye on the government's '**Localism**' Bill which is passing through parliament. We support the principle of giving local people a greater say in what development constraints should be imposed on development in the neighbourhood, and that the planning process should be pragmatic. However, it is noteworthy that when seeking election, our national rulers promised: "We will make the system symmetrical by allowing appeals against local planning decisions from local residents, as well as from developers" But an alarming omission in the Localism bill

is any mention of a third-party right of appeal, or any restriction on the number of times a developer may appeal with essentially the same scheme, which was also a pre-election proposal by the Conservative party.

We will be lobbying to ensure that Localism, when implemented here, does not amount to a charter for developers and their friends.

Traffic

A group of Weston Green residents have formed Road Action Movement (R.A.M.) with the purpose of lobbying Surrey County Council (SCC) to put in place proper road safety signage and markings at the crossroads of The Woodlands, Woodend and Grove Way, Esher (the Crossroads) and to reduce the speed limit. That the Crossroads are a hazard is evident from the high number of vehicle collisions. The Residents' Association supports RAM's contentions.

Surrey County Council proposes to replace the current white lines with double yellow lines at the Crossroads, but we feel that this will not adequately address the safety issues at the Crossroads. By the time this issue appears, R.A.M. will have presented the petition to Surrey County Council's Local Committee supported by their local Residents' Association councillors, Tannia Shipley, Peter Hickman and Lorraine Sharp.

Parking

The much-postponed final phase of **statutory consultation on Surrey's proposed parking scheme for parts of**



do you want these in the High Street?

Thames Ditton is now scheduled to take place for four weeks from 23 February. Councillor Peter Hickman reports that the plans will be on view in the Library and on Surrey's website. Only residents in the roads affected will receive a mailshot; there will also be advertisements in the local press. We are assured that all residents will be able to contribute their views. Whatever residents think of the other proposals, hopefully you will reject the particular one for pay and display bays in the High Street. If there are to be bays for short-term parkers, our Executive's view is that they should be free, with no unsightly machines in the Conservation Area, and accessed on the honour system that works very well at Winter's Bridge with no inconvenience to motorists.

As for **Ashley Road car park** which remains under-used after the doubling of charges by Elmbridge's leaders two years ago: along with like-minded councillors from other badly affected wards our councillors put forward a resolution at the December Council calling for a reduction in long-stay charges to more rational levels which, on the Council's own figures, would result in greater use of village car parks and lead to greater overall revenue as well as unclogging the streets. This was again rejected by the Conservatives on the council, voting *en bloc*. However, we have hopes that common sense will eventually prevail, and at the time of writing there are indications that there may be a partial compromise in advance of elections.

The Elmbridge Cabinet's position has been that increased charges which the county now wants to impose for parking on the public highway will drive motorists back into the borough car parks. As a first step, the SCC leadership want to introduce charges for all the areas that currently have parking restrictions but where the likes of shoppers can now stop for short periods without charge. We believe this will further damage passing trade for small retailers. The Surrey Executive member responsible for Highways, Cllr. Ian Lake (Conservative, Weybridge), has said that there will be public consultation, but his colleague the leader of Elmbridge Borough Council told the recent public 'have your say' session that he believed SCC would go ahead despite opposition.

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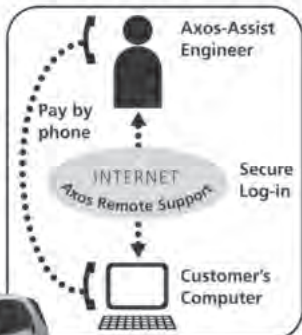
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Nick Ives and Andy Anderson cleared the High Street

Snow

The snow-clearing initiative was twice tested in December. Some residents turned to the task and paths were cleared in the High Street and at some trouble-spots on the first occasion. More residents got the idea for the second snowfall and more paths were cleared. This was an encouraging start – and a tour of wards neighbouring Thames Ditton and Weston Green showed we were ‘streets ahead’ of them. Well done, all who made the effort. However Surrey remain tardy and reluctant to supply sufficient grit or indeed any other practical help to back up their own rhetoric about involving residents.

Drains

Speer Road drains have been cleared by Thames Water after many ‘communication problems’. The embankment culvert has still only been partially cleared by Network Rail and needs clearing down to the level crossing at Summer Road. SCC have begun work for a new gully during half-term, to reduce inconvenience to parents. Meanwhile outside the **Old Bank, High Street**, Thames Water have also so far failed to take effective action to end the stink of sewage that frequently plagues people at the junction with Watts Road. We are pressing.

Around **Esher Station** bridge, Thames Water – under pressure – have lately been carrying out works to remove roots and other blockages from storm drains in Station Road, and a large ‘combo’ drain clearing lorry was spotted on Network Rail property and on the main road, clearing debris. That struggle continues.

Lighting

The last government allocated funds to install a new, unified street lighting system throughout Surrey, with fully automated and dimmable low-energy white lights, monitored centrally for faults. Installation is to take place on a rolling programme and our County Councillor reports that work in Elmbridge should begin in June. There is considerable local concern as to whether heritage-quality lamp-posts and lights will



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be installed in the three local Conservation Areas, at what seems a high additional cost of £1000 per lamp post which reportedly the county now says it will not fund; or whether we will get the standard modern slimline version throughout.

Crime and policing

Local crime rates remain broadly steady, low and mostly petty. There were break-ins at the Post Office in Thames Ditton High Street and the stores on Summer Road. Copper cable thieves again disrupted telephone and internet communications. Direct sales scams, including misrepresentations e.g. for domestic security systems, continue. The best advice is not to respond to those who call without invitation, but to check them out thoroughly and at leisure before entering discussion or any commitment.

In October 2009, Rottweilers attacked a dog and its owners who were walking in Thames Ditton High Street. Our neighbourhood police removed the Rottweilers from the flat above the former Bakery, and their owners were lately convicted at Guildford Crown Court on two charges relating to the incident. Sentence is awaited.

Council tax and services

Council tax is expected to be held at the same rate as last year by both councils and Residents' councillors will continue to support that. The only one of the last four years in which the Cabinet chose to raise council tax – by twice the rate of inflation – was the year when there were no borough elections. Residents' councillors resisted that increase also. There is divergence over cuts in several

small but important services, which appear to be being pursued by the Cabinet through a dogma of 'small government' rather than returning to the taxpayers good value for services that we pay for. At the same time as the current council leadership talk of 'Big Society' they have halved Elmbridge's contribution to the Lower Mole Countryside Management Project, which is largely dependent on volunteers to maintain the commons, ponds and other green spaces. In addition the project gives some employment in the fresh air to youths who are not able to find regular jobs because of some problem or difficulty. The saving is merely £30,000 per annum.

The out of hours nuisance service has also been axed, meaning that on a weekend residents troubled by antisocial noise or other nuisance will have no recourse until Monday morning. That saves a mere £15,000. Yet while saying these cuts are 'necessary,' and that the doubling of parking charges was 'necessary,' the Elmbridge cabinet continues to salt money away in reserves that were already healthy when they took over. Since 2006 they have added about £7m to the reserves, according to a council response to a Freedom of Information request. Even during the past year of supposedly dire circumstances, they have opted to transfer well over £200,000 to reserves rather than maintain the out of hours noise service and the Lower Mole project uncut, and restore some services for the elderly. At current rates of inflation and interest, the reserves are depreciating in value. Meanwhile the leadership has spent over half a million on outside consultancies since 2006 and have lately appointed



Christmas Fair 2010 – village HQ!

another official at a salary of over £100,000.

These priorities are questioned by residents.

Dates for your diary

Following yet another excellent Christmas Fair we look forward to the equally excellent summer fair on Gigg's Hill Green organised by Dittons Scout Group, from 1 o'clock on Sunday 15 May (see also p. 46 for a request from the Scouts). Before that, there is an Easter concert by the local (and very good) Ripieno Choir in All Saints on the evening of 19 March. For devotees of a summer game of passion, or those who are intrigued by the prospect, the Croquet Club at Ember Sports Club will host an open day on 16 April. And on the afternoon of 7 May will be the very

worthwhile Good As New Sale in aid of Cancer Research, at Esher College.

Subscriptions

Subscription forms for 2011 are enclosed with this issue for your convenience. Your Residents' Association, staffed by volunteers, is entirely dependent on your good will and subscriptions, and could not continue to carry out all its work or to publish this magazine without that support. Thank you.

And finally: borough council elections will be held on 5 May. It is, as always, important that people turn out and do not leave the field to a minority of political zealots. Residents' candidates will be adopted at our AGM and the Association would be very grateful if you would support them on polling day.

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Outstanding

– Thames Ditton Junior School



For a number of years, the stellar performance of the Infant School has proved a hard act for Thames Ditton Junior School to follow. Today, however, the tide has turned for TDJS – a happy, thriving school community that is now officially reaching its potential.

Ofsted inspectors last November rated the school not one, but two levels higher than in 2008. They cited exceptional leadership of the Head and his Deputy, together with the excellent support and challenge provided by the governing body. *“Pupils’ achievement is now outstanding. Their levels of attainment are well above those found nationally... they make excellent progress from their already above-average starting points. The school has substantially improved the quality of teaching. Support provided for pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities is exemplary. Their achievement matches that of their peers.”* The grade of “outstanding” puts the school in the top 8% nationally.

So, how has this transformation come about? I spoke to Head Teacher Nick Fry to find out how the school has come so far since his appointment two years ago. “I didn’t want to just sweep everything away and try to fix it all my way,” he told me. He worked with Deputy Head Michelle Riley, whose previous experience of the school was of great benefit in assessing its strengths — including some talented



*happy children learn more
– photo supplied by Fiona*

teachers — and weaknesses. Teachers were encouraged to take greater ‘ownership’ of the school, and the morale of both staff and pupils began to improve.

Good communication and shared vision with parents were important. Says Nick: “Our parents like to be involved with the school and to be really listened to.” There’s now a weekly e-newsletter to keep everyone abreast of what’s going on, and most days Nick, Michelle and staff are available for a chat in the playground.

The top academic priority was to improve standards in Maths and English. “The children need to achieve in these core subjects.” But an excellent school needs to offer more than just the basics. “Enjoyment should be an important part

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of school life. When pupils are keen and enthusiastic, they're in the right frame of mind for effective learning," he continues. "Providing memorable experiences for the children gives them the chance to do something exceptional – sports, music, drama, art, playing for the school team, taking part in concerts and assemblies, going on exciting trips, or taking up a new activity."

Opportunities there are aplenty. Thursday afternoons are now dedicated to activities from painting to badminton, cookery, cross-stitch, science, card games, a junk band, Chinese art and calligraphy. There's a Book Group and a club where keen mathematicians learn the ancient Chinese game of Go.

Assemblies are well organized and children have plenty of opportunities not only to perform, but also to use their initiative in directing and producing their own events. Pupils recently staged a talent show, with minimal input from teachers, raising money for charity. This is all part of Nick's wider philosophy that children must learn the importance of self-discipline and take responsibility for their own decisions. Ofsted noted: "*Pupils behave extremely well around the school. Their highly*

positive attitude in lessons contributes strongly to learning and progress."

The school has also received a makeover including new carpets and blinds. The central atrium is being transformed into a brand new library area with a glass roof and the re-decorated main hall and corridors are full of vibrant displays of pupils' work. The school's Gardening Club has been hard at work tidying the grounds and building an eco-greenhouse from recycled bottles.

Parent feedback has been extremely positive: Ofsted reported that 91% of parents felt their child was making good progress and 98% thought the quality of teaching was good. Summed up by one of many parents: "We think TDJS is a lovely, happy school. Our children are stretched academically and are full of enthusiasm."

Nick Fry feels strongly that the school's success is something to be shared. Everyone involved can feel proud of TDJS and what has been achieved collectively. A celebration is planned with children and teachers later in the year. With outstanding schools in the village, the residents of Thames Ditton can celebrate, too.

Fiona Elliot

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Know your Residents' Councillors:

– Karen Randolph



Elmbridge she uses her skills to persuade council officials to respond more positively to residents: *“Ordinary people can find official council letters bewildering, frustrating and even frightening. I like to help them get a better response that means something to them, and have pushed for improvements in communications and procedures”*.

Most calls concern planning, an issue all our Residents' councillors take very seriously, researching every contentious case and trying to get a sensible balance between desirable development and preserving the character of Thames Ditton. *“This year we’ve won some and lost some. I voted against over-development at 15 Queens Drive and we managed to prevent that.*

The tussle to get an acceptably sized development at the old Harrow site continues, but we have lost one other appeal. Even where we don’t get exactly what residents would want, the final schemes are usually very much better than the original proposals so overall the village’s character is preserved better than it might have been without the effort.”

Karen Randolph has lived in Thames Ditton for 27 years and has represented the residents of the village in Elmbridge Borough Council for the past four. It’s a lot of hard work, and she works hard at it.

An accredited mediator, Karen has successfully helped resolve disputes between residents and organisations locally – for example at Guy Salmon and at the local model railway in Claygate Lane. She’s a volunteer for Mediation North Surrey, to which local authorities and the police have recourse, and within

Karen is particularly concerned that the small shops which keep the heart of the village alive should be helped and

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defended. *“Over the past couple of decades the Association has held the line on keeping shops even where, for the moment, landlords claim they can’t let them. On planning issues, it helps that the Residents’ Councillors for Thames Ditton and Weston Green work as a team and help each other.”*



cars forced out by high parking charges – daft!

Related to the shops and offices in the High Street is the issue of parking. *“It is absurd that Ashley Road car park is empty while the High Street is congested,”* says Karen. *“Unfortunately the council’s rulers adopt the dogma that parkers should pay a commercial market price to park. The fear is that if they won’t pay that price, an under-used car park can be sold off for development. It’s not surprising that after they doubled the charges for all-day parking in one fell swoop, Ashley Road emptied again. On their own figures, it produces less revenue now than when the charges were half as much. But when I and my residents’ colleagues put forward a common-sense resolution to try reducing the daily fees to more sensible levels, increasing its use*

and overall revenue, the Conservatives voted it down en bloc! And now, with their chums in Surrey they want to charge motorists similar rates to park on the public highway. This will damage passing trade for the shops.”

Karen is also heavily involved in health service matters. A mother of two, she is a long time supporter of the ‘Born Too Soon’ charity for premature babies and for several years Chair of the Friends of Thames Ditton Hospital which lately has raised thousands from residents to provide high-tech equipment for NHS patients at Emberbrook clinic.

Karen has also been leading the cross-party campaign to prevent community hospital beds being axed here and throughout Surrey. *“Our new government pledged to preserve front-line services for the NHS. But what they say is one thing; what we see on the ground is quite another. Funds for Giggs Hill Surgery and several other Elmbridge surgeries have been cut, and the NHS in Surrey seems intent on closing smaller community hospitals. It is not sensible to have patients recovering from operations in acute hospital beds, when they could be better cared for in less expensive community beds close to their friends and relatives. The bean-counters want them to return home immediately, but won’t provide proper support for that either. Behind their rhetoric it seems that politicians give small priority to solving the real problems people face, in a common-sense manner. But then, that’s why I joined the Residents’ Association – to work without politics getting in the way.”*

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Jacob Hansler

– merchant, secret agent, and local benefactor



In about 1802 wine and timber merchant Jacob Hansler, a Swiss, moved from Westminster to the Red House in Weston Green with his English wife Elizabeth and their six children aged 6 to 27. Smart, rural, and a convenient carriage-ride of something over two hours from the city, Weston Green was a good choice for his family and for commuting to his business in the Strand. Like many a self-made man he named the house after

himself, and ‘Hansler House’ it remained until at least 1895. He is remembered locally for founding and funding the Weston Green Chapel (Congregational) and its associated school. Now the United Reformed Church, the chapel made a lasting contribution to community life, co-existing on good terms with Anglican St. Nicholas. An upstanding fellow, Hansler led an interesting life.

(continued p27)



the former Hansler House – now the Old Red House, Weston Green



Your Residents' Association

web site maintained as resource for all residents

Sandra Dennis elected to Borough council

notification planning

active support for police panels

professional theatre, concerts, opera at Vera Fletcher Hall

supported residents' objections to over-development

set up and funded residents' snow-clearing scheme

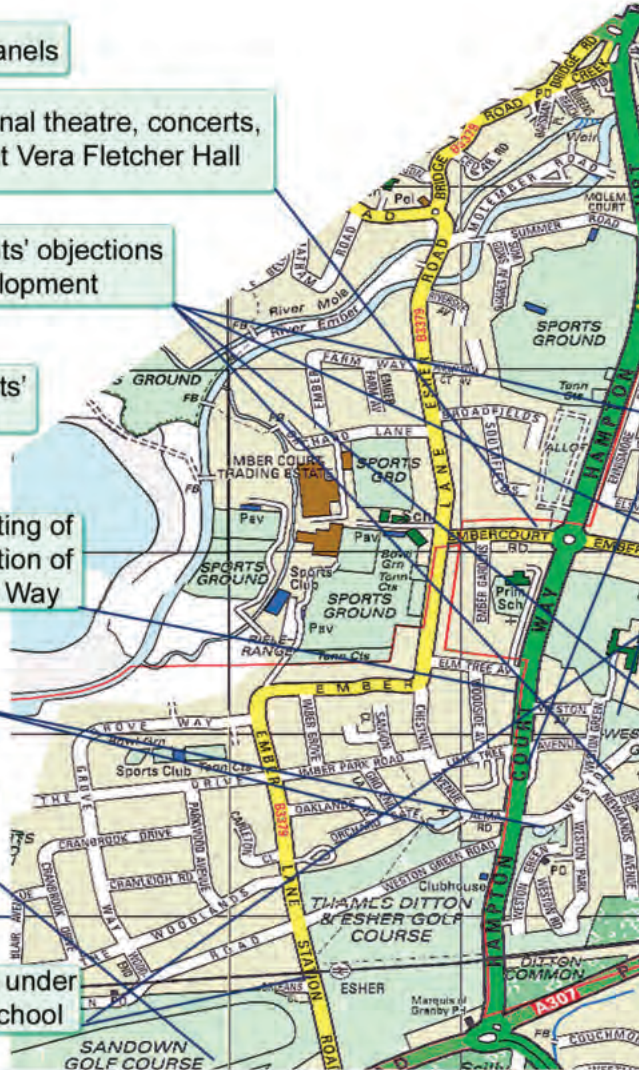
successfully supported rerouting of cycle path, lobbied for restitution of trees along Hampton Court Way

maintenance of Marney's and Milbourne Ponds

backed successful campaign for sensible relocation of proposed phone mast

supported road safety campaign

action to ameliorate flooding under bridge and outside Infant School



ion in Action 2010-2011



to residents of applications

lobbied for better litter arrangements and action against overnight campers

4,000 copies of Thames Ditton Today distributed quarterly

campaigned against unrealistic long-stay parking charges

successful campaign to prevent reduction in manned hours at TD station

enabled and arranged installation of Christmas lights on tree

lobbied for firm EBC action to preserve Grade II Boyle Farm

flower beds planted and maintained

active support for Christmas Fair and tree provided

supported retention of shops

long campaign to preserve Ember Centre and TD Hall culminates in opening of Intergenerational centre with widespread support

raised funds for echocardiograph for NHS patients, campaigned for full use of NHS facility at Thames Ditton hospital, led county-wide cross-party campaign to keep community hospitals



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Spring is in

the air and the forecast from the NAEA is that house prices will probably end the year at about the same level and most economists feel that the number of transactions in 2011 will be similar to last year.

The NAEA has successfully launched its licensing scheme at The House of Commons. Housing Minister, Grant Shapps said “For years I’ve been calling for better standards throughout the industry so I’m delighted the NAEA are taking matters into their own hands and launching a scheme that will ensure their members become known for their professionalism and integrity. This is exactly the sort of measure the housing market needs—simple and sensible changes that are driven by industry and designed to deliver results. In future, anyone looking to buy a home or sell theirs should ask the simple question of their estate agent ‘are you licensed?’” He added “This is an idea whose time has come: It is the right way to go”. Peter Bolton King, chief executive of the NAEA said “Nobody would knowingly get into an unlicensed taxi. However, thousands of people are willing to entrust one of the most important transactions of their life to people who are not qualified or experienced.

LETTINGS

Question

I hired a letting agent to find me a tenant which they did. I paid all their fees. The AST is coming to an end and the agent has advised that I will incur charges if the tenant remains in the flat after the fixed term ends. In my opinion, they don't deserve to receive a penny more for their "service". I would like to keep the tenant and we are happy to deal directly with each other.

Answer

You need to look at your agency agreement. Some agents charge a commission if the tenant stays on but whether this is enforceable or not will depend on whether the clause was properly drawn to your attention at the time you signed the agency agreement and whether the clause is one which could be considered ‘reasonable’ or not

and finally...

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Protestant wine merchant...

John Jacob Hanseler was born in Switzerland some time between the years 1735 and 1750. He became a Landaman (chief magistrate of a canton) in Zurich and will have kept a house there as well as in London, where he established a business at Round Court in The Strand importing wine and fine timber for use in making musical instruments. In 1775 he married Elizabeth Cuthbert at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Westminster (probably his second wife), by which time he had dropped the John and changed the spelling of his surname to become the **Jacob Hansler** that is recorded and remembered.

The Swiss have a strong tradition of Protestantism dating back five hundred years to Zwingli in Zurich and Calvin in Geneva, who found the Catholic theology of the times degenerate. In Westminster, Hansler worshipped at the Anglican St. Martin-in-the-Fields and later at the nearby Orange Street Chapel, where Huguenots fleeing the persecution of Protestants in France established a chapel in 1693. At the time of the Wesleyan revival, Orange Street passed from French to Anglican Protestantism under Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady, author of the hymn 'Rock of Ages' which was first sung in Orange Street. In 1787 it became a Nonconformist Congregational Church with Rev. John Townsend as pastor. Hansler admired Townsend, whom he later invited to preach the first sermon at the new Weston Green Chapel, and there is little to support journalist TS Mercer's assumption that he didn't like Orange Street. It may have been through Townsend, who for a while preached in Kingston, that Hansler discovered our area.

At the time, Britons not taking the Anglican sacrament were forbidden by the Corporation and Test Acts from holding public office or military commissions. Whether under his wife's influence or through a practical approach to his children's future, Hansler's three sons and three daughters were all christened between 1775 and 1796 at Anglican St Martin-in-the-Fields.

...and probable secret agent

During the period of the French Revolution and the later rise of Napoleon, foreign nationals in Britain were required to register with the Alien Office (1792-1806), a shadowy secret service organisation disguised as part of normal government bureaucracy. The Head of its operational department was William Wickham, Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office with the wonderful title of Superintendent of Aliens. Wickham, later Ambassador to Switzerland, who married a Swiss himself, judged Switzerland to be an excellent place from which to mount operations against France.

With Hansler's Protestant credentials, Swiss nationality, good contacts in Zurich, English wife and London domicile he would certainly have been viewed as a potential agent by the Alien Office. And indeed, in the National Archives there is what appears to be a counter-espionage report from Hansler to Wickham's civil service colleague Hugh Cleghorn in 1793 regarding a German with the Duke of York's army, whom Hansler suspected of betraying a watchword to the French.

Local engagement

On moving to the Red House, where he appears for the first time in 1803 as a

local ratepayer in Thames Ditton parish, Jacob Hansler lost little time in having a convenient place of worship built. He bought an acre of land abutting Hoo Lane (now Station Road) and a short track to Church Walk that is now part of Speer Road. This became known as Chapel Field when the Weston Green Chapel opened on 21 November, 1804. Hansler financed visiting preachers of his own choosing and on his death left the Chapel well enough endowed to support a notable incumbent, Rev. James Churchill, who attracted a significant following.

As well as founding the Chapel and its associated school, Hansler played his part in the Vestry at St. Nicholas, for example in moves to build *'a Place of Confinement for Sabbath breakers, Breakers of the Peace and other Offenders against the Laws, until they be conveyed before a Justice of the Peace.'* With his family's background straddling Anglicanism and Congregationalism he seeded an enduring tradition of co-existence between the two in Thames Ditton. Jacob Hansler died in February 1814 and in April of that year his wife Elizabeth is listed as responsible for the poor-rate contribution for Hansler House. In June she appears in insurance

documents as at the Chapel Cottage, and by 1815 the rates for Hansler house were the responsibility of one C. Hawkins, presumably a tenant. Elizabeth Hansler died in November 1826. The following year, Hansler House was auctioned at the Red Lion together with two adjacent cottages and 5 acres of nearby land.

The Chapel went on to play a significant role in the community. It will have lobbied with other congregationalists for repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts (achieved in 1828) and for exemption from tithes to the Anglican Church. Along with St Nicholas it also petitioned the Lords against slavery. There have been several notable community stalwarts of the chapel. The original buildings no longer remain, for in 1899 Rev. Walter Greig had a new chapel built, which contains a plaque to the memory of Jacob Hansler and his wife.

The story of the Hanslers, however, does not end there...

Like father, like son...

Of the Hansler children, I do not know what became of the daughters Jane (1775), Elizabeth (1779) or Susanna (1790). The eldest son, **Edward Hansler** (1782) joined the King's Royal Regiment of Foot,



the first Weston Green Chapel built by Hansler in what is now Speer Road

formerly the Royal American Regiment of Foot where he was listed as Paymaster in 1804 and as a Lieutenant in about 1810, after which I have found no further record. We must conclude that Edward was killed in action, for on Jacob's death in 1814 the business passed to his second son. Edward's choice of regiment is itself of interest. Conceived by Swiss soldier and adventurer Jacques Prevost, it had been created by Act of Parliament in 1755 "*To enable His Majesty [George II] to grant commissions to a certain number of foreign Protestants who have served abroad to act and rank as officers or engineers.*" There were some English, Scots and Irish officers but also Dutch, Swiss and Germans: the first time foreign officers had been commissioned in the British Army. The regiment fought in the campaign which kicked France out of Canada, and later it played a part in the Peninsular War (1808-1814) during the Napoleonic era, the likely place where young Edward met his death.

The second son, who was later knighted **Sir John Jacob Hansler** (1788 – 1867), would have spent some of his teenage years in Weston Green. He inherited the wine and timber business in the Strand, and lived in Paddington and Tavistock Square. John Jacob became a deputy lieutenant for Essex and a magistrate for Middlesex, Kent and Westminster, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and a Fellow of the Royal Society. He was the first person to be knighted – twice! – by Queen Victoria in 1837. A story goes with it. Apparently the diminutive new Queen found the traditional cutlass too unwieldy, and after a risky slice she asked for a lighter sword, had a second go, and the lighter weapon was used thereafter. A pub

in King's Cross Road was named the Hansler Arms after him – it survived until 2003. His eldest son **Capt. Robert Jacob Hansler** (1838 – 1877) lived in Upper Norwood. When Robert died he left stock producing income to maintain the Chapel in Thames Ditton.

Jacob Hansler's third son, **George Langley Hansler** (1796) was raised in Weston Green and remained connected with our area, while having a merchant business in oil and tallow just off Leicester Square. In 1827 we find him as a member of the Committee to manage the Chapel's 'temporal concerns' and the school. He married Hannah Arnison of East Molesey and at least two children of theirs, Ann (1821) and George (1827) were christened in the Chapel – then known officially as 'Weston Green Independent, Thames Ditton'. Hannah had substantial land interests in Molesey, for her father William owned market gardens from Manor Road to Bridge Road. George Hansler and her brother John Arnison developed the Arnison Estate in East Molesey which includes Hansler Grove.

Today I can find no local Hanslers. However, I've been in touch with Jacob Hansler's great-great-great-great grandson via Sir John Jacob, who lives in north London and works as actor and comedian under the stage name Johnny Hansler. An indication, perhaps, that the genes for service to wine, the British Establishment, the community, and Protestantism come admixed with a sense of humour.

Keith Evetts

With help from internet sources and genealogical web research, Hansler's will, and the Mercer collection.

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Fairtrade

– trading for a just and sustainable world



Recently the British public has lost faith in several of its institutions, such as the banks and politicians. But at the same time we are showing increasing faith in the power of ordinary people to change the world. Last year 7 people out of 10 bought Fairtrade goods, with the most popular items being bananas, coffee, tea, sugar and cotton. Meanwhile, with a 70% recognition rate, the Fairtrade logo is one of the best recognised in the United Kingdom.

In the 1970s Fairtrade was confined to a small number of specialised shops trading to a few minority groups and was very largely limited to craft goods. It expanded steadily in the 1980s and '90s in particular through sales in churches, until early this century it broke into the commercial sector so that all the main supermarkets now stock a wide range of goods, very largely food, with growth averaging 40% a year. In 1998 retail sales of Fairtrade goods totalled less than £17m: ten years later they were over forty times higher and had reached £713m. Recently Cadbury's announced that its Dairy Milk bars would be sourced entirely from Fairtrade products and Starbucks is now sourcing all its espresso based coffees from Fairtrade beans.

Under the world trade system, purchasers are generally more powerful than producers and can force down the prices they pay. While middlemen like shippers and processors can generally



photo by Fairtrade Foundation

look after themselves, it is the men and women at the beginning of the chain, the farmers and workers in plantations and factories, who get squeezed and work in poor conditions for very little income. By contrast, Fairtrade provides a reasonable price for farmers and other producers for their goods together with a premium which goes back into the community to be spent as the local people decide, eg on a school or a health centre.

Fairtrade also ensures proper employment terms and working conditions. For example, there have long been allegations that much of the cocoa

production in West Africa which is used for the chocolate we buy is based on labour by child slaves. By ensuring that any chocolate we buy is fairly traded, we can be certain that we are not benefitting from that evil. Fairtrade also ensures that workers are properly protected if, for example, they are asked to spray crops with polluting weed killers, a practice which alas is not always followed in the commercial sector generally.

The long term aim is of a world where Fairtrade as such is no longer required because the world trading system itself will be structured and employ practices such that everyone can maintain a decent and dignified livelihood and develop their full potential. Justice and sustainable development should be at the heart of how trade is carried on.

Fairtrade in Elmbridge

A few of us have been working for some years to see Fairtrade better established in the Borough through the Elmbridge Fairtrade Network. Last year we issued the second edition of our directory of cafes, restaurants and shops in the Borough which sell products with the Fairtrade mark. The Fairtrade Network is to have its own website in time for Fairtrade Fortnight, from 28 February to 13 March. On 12 March we shall be in The Heart, Walton all day with a giant Fairtrade tombola (every ticket wins!).

About 450 towns and boroughs in the United Kingdom (and others around the world) are registered as Fairtrade towns, and we have been seeking to achieve all the five goals which Elmbridge must secure if it is to join them. In particular, after a first unsuccessful attempt, we

persuaded the Borough Council to pass a resolution supporting Fairtrade and agreeing to serve Fairtrade products. A range of Fairtrade products is readily available in shops, cafes and restaurants. And we are most grateful to Marks and Spencers at Brooklands for supporting us as the flagship employer.

The only area in which we still need to make further progress if Elmbridge is to become a Fairtrade borough is in showing that local workplaces and community organisations support Fairtrade and use them whenever possible. It is quite possible that many of them do so already, but we have not yet been able to get round sufficiently to find out. So if your workplace, school, college or so on does so, please let us know. If they don't, please encourage them to do so.

Leonard Beighton

The Elmbridge Fairtrade Network is a very small group, (one of whom is from Thames Ditton), and more members would be most welcome.

**Contact: Judy Porter,
davport@dpmail.co.uk
020 8398 6401 or Judi Thompson
at judiwendy@hotmail.com
07786 287270.**



Lorna McKerrow

– Former Chairman of the Residents’ Association



Older residents who remember Councillor Don and Lorna McKerrow will be saddened at the news of Lorna’s death on January 16th. Don served as our Residents’ Association councillor for 26 years, until retiring in 1992 and throughout this time Lorna was equally involved in local affairs in Thames Ditton. Lorna was of a generation who never stopped contributing to the community and after Don’s death when she moved to Usk she worked as a volunteer in the Usk Rural Life Museum until her own death.

Many will remember their work together to help householders hit by the floods in 1968 and then to set up a flood warning scheme. She was involved in many organisations including WRVS, Meals on Wheels, Thames Ditton Hospital Friends and, of course, in our own Resident’s Association where she was Chairman from 1984 – 1986, having served as Secretary from 1966-68. In her last report as Chairman of the Association Lorna highlighted some of the problems and battles she had faced during her period of office. They have a familiar ring – Thames Ditton Hospital, car parking, planning, night flying at Heathrow, the attacks on the Green Belt...

For over 20 years Lorna served as Clerk and then Chairman of the Thames Ditton Almshouse Charity and she knew personally all the tenants. One of her legacies in Thames Ditton are the Bridges Almshouses, Station Road, whose



Weston Park Almshouses opening (Sept 1980)

modernisation in 1977 Lorna oversaw and the 6 replacement almshouses at Weston Park which were opened in 1980.

Lorna combined all her work with being a mother to three children. She and Don married in 1949, after a war which saw Lorna serve as the youngest NCO in the ATS, and after volunteering her services as a young girl at a military canteen in Liverpool, refusing to be evacuated. In Thames Ditton, many enjoyed the hospitality in the McKerrow household – and their taste for fine malt whisky – in their house in Station Road and then in Church Walk, and many more of us owe a deep debt of gratitude to this half of a formidable pair who gave so much of their time, knowledge and commitment. She is remembered with respect and affection by all those whose lives she touched.

Ruth Lyon


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Music for Spring at the Vera Fletcher Hall



Following the great success of our Jazz on a Summer Evening last year with Jake Fryer we have introduced “**Strictly Sunday Shows**” this Spring, all on Sunday evenings with cabaret style seating and bar with wine, beer, coffee, tea, crisps... The season starts with a bang with the return of the **Astraeus Saxophone Quartet** on 13th March – when prize winning young musicians play classic and modern works including Jonathan Dove, Nigel Wood and Eugene Bozza. On April 3rd there is a real treat when the 30 strong **Linden Wind Orchestra**, the South East’s premier concert band, play **Music from Stage and**

Screen – Gershwin, Eric Coates, Richard Rogers, plus the Magnificent Seven, The Big Country... The 1st May sees the return of **Jake Fryer** from Ronnie Scotts and the London Jazz Festival and his top line-up of saxophone, trumpet, trombone with full rhythm section and guest vocalist playing the jazz classics from Duke Ellington, Cole Porter... The season ends with “**In the Mood**” on 26th June with **Five Star Swing** – the vibrant sound of the Big Band era by one of the top Jazz and Swing bands in the UK.

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The Hall has developed a reputation for classical music by world class musicians and this Spring we welcome the return on Friday 25 March of the Cavaleri Quartet (formerly the Harpham Quartet), Anna Harpham (violin, Ciaran McCabe (violin), Anna Beilby (viola) and Rowena Calvert (cello) and with pianist Mark Bebbington. It is quite a coup getting Mark Bebbington – he was described by The Times as “truly a remarkable pianist”, was the BBC Music Magazine’s Instrumental Choice of the Month and praised by the Sunday Telegraph for his “fluent and poetic style”. They will be playing piano quintets including the lovely Elgar Quintet. Amy Tress (violin) and Michael Ierace, (piano) and friends celebrate the Great German Composers on Friday May 5th when they perform works including Bach and Brahms, Beethoven’s Spring Sonata and Strauss’ Violin Sonata. Amy last June was awarded the top First Class Honours degree in Music at Oxford University. This should be a real treat. Both these concerts are supported by the R.C Sherriff Trust and for all our music shows under 16 years are free.

“Enchanting”, said the Financial Times, “Comic clarity and deft touch”,

said The Stage, “Amusing as it is enthralling” said The Scotsman. These are some of the reviews of Karin Fernauld who has performed all over the world and brings her one woman show “The Famous Miss Burney” to the Hall on Friday 1 April. Fanny Burney, diarist, playwright, lady in waiting to George III and Queen Charlotte, was Jane Austen’s favourite novelist. Her diaries were full of shrewd and illuminating comment and of hilariously reported conversations and give a witty and highly personal view of London life.

Our children’s shows are always popular with classics such as Image Musical Theatre’s “Stig of the Dump” on Saturday April 2nd – a family participation musical of Barney and Stig’s adventures in a chalk pit. On Saturday May 7th Aesop’s fables are brought to life by Idolrich in “Forest of Fables” – The North Wind and the Sun, the Fox and the Crow...Captivating music with puppets and song.

See page 39 for times and tickets for these shows. You can keep in touch with events at the Vera Fletcher Hall on the website:

www.verafletcherhall.com

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to complement the theatre team at the Vera Fletcher Hall. Fully equipped lighting and sound system. We are looking for a special someone to work with our regular technical team of Esher College students. Approximately 20 shows a year, mostly on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday. Some require full lighting attendance and others only a simple pre rigged set up e.g. for a concert performance. Could well suit a retiree or anyone who has some spare time and wants to give something back to the community.

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Friday 25th March 8.00 pm

MARK BEBBINGTON (piano)

and THE CAVALERI QUARTET

*Anna Harpham (violin) Ciaran McCabe (violin)
Anne Beilby (viola) and Rowena Calvert (cello)*
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Supported by the RC Sherriff Trust

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Karin Fernald as

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“As amusing as it is enthralling” – The Scotsman

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Sunday 3rd April 7.30 pm

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MUSIC OF STAGE AND SCREEN

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plus the Magnificent Seven, The Big Country,
Battle of Britain (William Walton)...*

TICKETS £9 (under 16 years free)

Sunday 1st May 7.30 pm

JAZZ ON A SPRING EVENING

*Jake Fryer Ronnie Scotts and the London
Jazz Festival and his top line-up of saxophone,
trumpet, trombone with full rhythm section
and guest vocalists play jazz classics by Duke
Ellington, Cole Porter...*

TICKETS £9 (under 16 years free)

Friday 6th May 8.00 pm

CONCERT:

THE GREAT GERMAN COMPOSERS

*Amy Tress (violin) Michael Ierace (piano) and
friends perform works by the great German
composers including Bach, Brahms, Beethoven’s
Spring Sonata for violin and Strauss’ Violin Sonata.*

Supported by the RC Sherriff Trust

TICKETS £10 (under 16 years free)

Sunday 26th June 7.30 pm

“IN THE MOOD” with FIVE STAR SWING

*The vibrant sound of the Big Band era,
Frank Sinatra, Glenn Miller and Jazz favourites
through to Jools Holland from one of the top
Jazz and Swing bands in the UK.*

TICKETS £9 (children under 16 years free)

YOUNG PEOPLE’S THEATRE

Saturday 2nd April 2.30 pm

Image Musical Theatre presents

STIG OF THE DUMP

*a family participation musical based on the
modern classic of Barney and Stig’s adventures
in a chalk pit. For 5-11 years*

TICKETS £6

Saturday 7th May 2.30 pm

Idolrich presents

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the Sun, the Fox and the Crow...*

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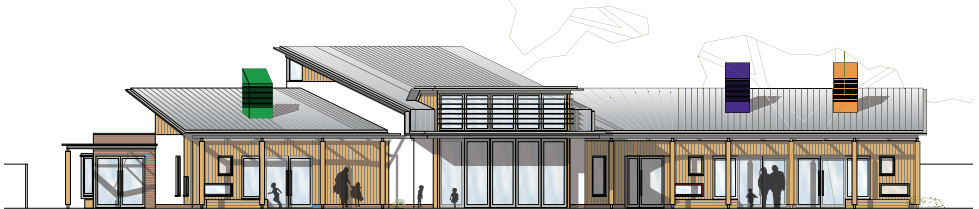


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f: 020 8398 1806
e: info@westongreenschool.org.uk
www.westongreenschool.org.uk

Spring Crossword

By Maureen Willcox



A £5 Voucher for spending in any Thames Ditton or Weston Green shop will be awarded to each of the first three correct entries opened after the closing date of 7 May 2011.

The completed puzzle (or photocopy) enclosing your name and address, with the envelope clearly marked 'Crossword Competition,' should be sent to:

Thames Ditton Today
 Crossword Competition
 6 Church Walk
 Thames Ditton
 KT7 0NW

ACROSS

1. House member of the Swallow family (6)
4. Scattered rain came across the pond (8)
10. Wastes lay any way, anyway (9)
11. Troubled wives' opinions (5)
12. Begin with the first letter (7)
13. Eyes awake? Negative (3,4)
14. Little ones eat ivy, tra-la (5)
15. Opening to photographers (8)
18. Saffron bloomers (8)
20. Sound? I get a duo mixed up (5)
23. A big one produces sepals but no petals in the border (7)
25. Mein Herr descends smoothly by rope... (7)
26. ...though downright perpendicular the drop (5)
27. Dark oriental fluid for his nibs (6, 3)
28. Makes out, not vulgarly but with distinction (8)
29. Sounds like the horse says no (6)

DOWN

1. Times to increase (8)
2. Art emulates life style (7)
3. This clue is of the essence, but abstracted... (9)
5. ...one doesn't get it (14)
6. Strive to hold one's attention (5)
7. Goes stealthily up the wall, does this (7)
8. Rounded edge of step, otherwise in song (6)
9. Trevor and Celia's classic film rendezvous (7, 7)
16. Let Stan alter ce probleme pour vous? (9)
17. Renounces, so freaks may be reconstituted (8)
19. Edith Piaf had none at all (7)
21. Behind the wheel, a force to be reckoned with (7)
22. Bade us mess about, to be ill-treated (6)
24. Spoken in Asgard (5).

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Solution to the Winter Crossword

by Michael Jackson



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

Many entries for this one. Congratulations to the senders of the first three correct ones opened in the shuffle. Each wins a £5 Voucher for spending in any Thames Ditton or Weston Green shop.

Mr. M S Hughes
81 Ember Lane
Weston Green KT10 8EG

Miss J M Harlow
67 Thistledene
Thames Ditton KT7 0YH

Mrs. E Jones
23 Riversdale Road
Thames Ditton KT7 0QN

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SERVICES, CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND GROUPS

Services

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Trudy O Keefe	01372 474555
Dittons and Weston Green Neighbourcare	Sue Mayes	020 8398 6714
Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services		
Information, Meals Services, Community		
Transport, Bus Permits		01372 474552/4
Elmbridge Community Alarm Service		01372 474560
Elmbridge Relief Carers Scheme		01372 474547
Ember Centre for the Retired	Mon & Thurs	020 8398 9870
	At other times	01372 474553
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	020 8398 6132
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Mrs Carole Roycroft	01372 463587
M.D.H.S. Household Services (& garden tidying)	Carolyn Smart (Manager)	01932 248533
Surrey Mobile Library Service		01483 517402
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	Mrs Heather Horler	020 8398 0364
2nd Thames Ditton Rainbows	Nicki Sutherland	020 8398 4202
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Alan Nolan-Davies	020 8224 9262
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	Mrs Helen Hill	020 8398 3135
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Alison Derrick	020 8398 0041
Dittons Scout Group	Laura Clarke	0208 398 3447
Coffee and chat (United Reformed Church)	Mrs. E. Barker	01372 467491
Emberbrook Trefoil Guild	Mrs. Adrienne Nealing	020 8398 5582
Friends of Bushey and Home Parks	Mrs. Julie Cohen	020 8943 2017
Friends of Walsingham Care	Miss Valerie Chicken	0208 398 2932
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: Pat Farmiloe	020 8398 2787
Parents and Toddlers(St Nicholas church)	Information	020 8398 7211
Ripieno Choir	Nick Harris	020 8399 7231
Surrey Bell-ringers	Nick Pattenden	Nick@FSLimited.com

Clubs

Albany Motor Yacht Club	Secretary	01784466651
Arts and Heritage Club	Carol Butcher	01932 867511
Claremont PROBUS Club	Mr. P. Collins	020 8398 3125
Claygate Bridge Club	Hon. Secretary	020 8398 1710
Colets Health & Fitness	Giordano Orsini	020 8398 7108
Dittons Skiff and Punting Club	Hon Secretary	07710 139417
Dittons & Hinchley Wood Royal British Legion	Hon Secretary	020 8398 6263
Ember Players (Drama) Ember Sports Club	Anne Segall	020 8941 4528
Ember Sports Club	Mrs. Pauline Wareham	020 8979 8977

Ember Sports Club: Bowls	Sylvia Jones	01932 788701
Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Dr. David Cooke	01932 862841
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Margaret Robinson	01372 842401
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
Esher Camera Club	Billy Buchanan	020 8398 3169
Esher 41 and Ex-Round Tablers' Club	Dr. R. Tudor-Williams	020 8398 0108
Folk Dance Club	Pam Phillips	01372 373745
Hinchley Wood / Dittons PROBUS Club	Geoff Francis	01932 867771
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Nigel Hardy	020 8398 8361
Long Ditton Garden Club	Mrs. Ann Allen	020 8398 1718
Model Railway Society (Hampton Court)	Secretary	01932 241224
Mothers Union (All Saints)	Jill Cotter	020 8398 4598
Old Cranleigh Rugby Club	Tony Price	07801 837129
Old Cranleigh Hockey Club	Eds Copleston (Men)	07775 940703
	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
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
Thames Ditton Marquetry Group	Jasmine Berry	020 8398 4358
Yoga for Health Club	Mrs. Celia Rowe	020 8398 2700

SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Ember Choral Society	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher Recorded Music Society	Miss S. M. Garrat	020 8398 8541
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Chris Walker (Sec)	020 8398 6651
Hampton Court Way Allotment Association	Lettings: John Morgan	020 8398 3049
Lynwood Allotment Society	Louise Flaig	020 8398 7704
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
National Trust: Richmond Association	Membership Secretary	020 8894 2972
Soroptimist International (Kingston District)	Secretary: Pat Harman	020 8390 3507
Thames Ditton Women's Institute (W.I.)	Secretary	020 8398 8615
Esher & District Amnesty International	Secretary	gettle51@msn.com

OTHER

Cancer Research UK	Mrs. Vivienne Harris	020 8398 6787
University of the Third Age (U3A)	HonSec Anne Brown	01932 881633
Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Helen Mason	08456 528529
	Membership: Sue Morris	020 8224 2536

Please contact the Editor to amend these listings



Resident Marisa Lewis writes that shortly before the end of last year she was turning from Embercourt Road into Weston Green Road one evening when just a few yards from the station bridge her front passenger window exploded. *"I couldn't understand what had happened, and stopped the car to see. Well, I couldn't believe my eyes realizing the whole front passenger window had blown. I told the story to my friends who suggested 'Yobs.'"* But Marisa had second thoughts when she re-read our story about the Phantom Sniper in last Spring's issue! The shattering of the window was inexplicable – but no missile found, no person seen.

Joan Harlow writes that in old times it was customary for villagers and local tradesmen in Thames Ditton to mark Shrove Tuesday, which this year falls on 11 March, by kicking a ball from the Red Lion to the George and Dragon where the ball was 'secured'. Kick-off no doubt followed a 'warm-up' in the Red Lion. There was much ribaldry and horseplay in anticipation of which High Street residents boarded up their windows. This annual celebration was 'discontinued' after 1871. I think it was resurrected one year not too long ago without undue disorder. How about next year?

The Christmas lights on the tree in Thames Ditton High Street were widely and warmly welcomed both by shops and villagers. Small children loved them. Meanwhile, resident Liz Wicksteed emailed to call into question the energy conservation aspects. The lights are very low-energy LEDs. We've calculated the approximate energy consumption, which has been compensated by the replacement of the old high-energy lights on the

annual Christmas tree with similar low-energy LEDs, and a couple of personal pledges by members of the Association's Executive for offsetting energy savings. The high-energy team organising the fund-raising (carbon units emitted by their energy are not counted!) have already managed to secure almost half the amount required to pay off the loan. Warm thanks to all the generous community-minded souls who have contributed.

Carbon units notwithstanding, Scouts learn to make camp fires properly – but they need wood to burn! If anybody has any wood for use in fire lighting activities that they could let the Dittons Scout Group have, please could they contact Dave Clarke on 07719 245436 and it can be collected or dropped off.

Belinda Powrie writes that on Thursday 17 March she is organising what looks to be an impressive gardening Ladies' Lunch at Imber Court, in aid of Help for Heroes. Stalls open at 11.30 for garden goodies, followed by a reception and lunch where Helen Yemm, Gardening columnist for the Telegraph, will answer questions. To book tickets @£40 call Belinda on 07714 214880.

Along with the cuckoo in Spring we will shortly be hearing the calls of politicians from the national parties seeking your vote locally. The trail of broken pledges left by our national leaders is just the latest reminder that what politicians say, and what they do once elected, are entirely different things. You know what to do.

Editor



Two ways to treat your Pet

To keep them healthy, pets should be seen at least once every 12-months by a vet. So why not bring them along to Beech House, Thames Ditton for their regular health checks. This way, we can detect potential illnesses early and nip them in the bud.

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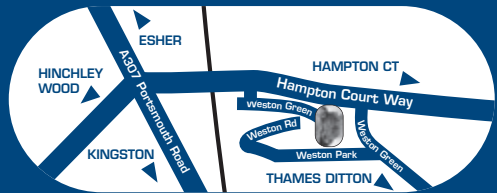
Prevention, we think, is better than Cure.

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