

**MOLESEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2006**

www.moleseyresidentsassociation.org.uk



WE WISH EVERYONE IN MOLESEY A PROSPEROUS AND HEALTHY 2006

COUNCIL TAX

Yes, it will soon be time for another unwelcome bill to drop through your letterbox.

Conservative-led Surrey County Council did not get a good government grant toward their budget (and hence their council tax demands) this year and are making severe cuts to try to keep the tax to a minimum.

Something like 650 jobs are being cut and various facilities across Surrey are being closed (maybe including Hersham library). SCC's deferment/cancellation of their move to Woking is another cost saver.

It looks likely that Surrey's council tax increase will be about 5%, and since Surrey takes about 2/3rds of your total bill, this will have the biggest impact.

Elmbridge takes only about 1/6th of your total bill and their increase looks likely to be about 4.8%.

The third component of your final bill is the amount required by the Police and there is no indication yet of how much this may be, but it always seems to rise.

Many councils in the South of the country are having difficulty in holding down council tax levels as the annual government grant appears to favour the northern areas of the country, to the detriment of the 'affluent' South.

Although Elmbridge Council has the unenviable job of collecting the council tax for Surrey County Council and the police, only a small part of all the money collected goes to Elmbridge.

DON'T MISS OUT

You have your chance to vote for your MRA candidate by post at the upcoming Council elections on 4th May. For an application form 'phone Electoral Services at Elmbridge on 01372-474182 or 474183 before 18th April.

WHO DOES WHAT?

Who's responsible? Should Surrey County Council deal with a problem – or is it down to Elmbridge?

Many people are confused as to who does what. So here goes:

SURREY is responsible for:

Education – including libraries, youth clubs and adult education (although this is funded directly by government). Much of the government school funding goes directly to the schools.

Social Services – elderly, disabled and children care

Highways – including maintenance of roads, pavements, street lighting and bus service regulation/subsidies

Mineral Extraction – gravel pits, etc

Waste – disposal and recycling

Planning – for minerals, waste, state schools and Highways.

ELMBRIDGE is responsible for:

Leisure Services – including commons, parks, public halls, leisure centre and swimming pools.

Refuse – household collection and street cleaning.

Planning – commercial & residential.

Elections – including electoral roll and running all elections.

Housing the Homeless – working with the Housing Associations. Collecting Council Tax – for Surrey County Council and the Police as well as itself.

Day Centres and Meals-on-wheels – not strictly its job, but Elmbridge does try hard to look after the older generation (with a lot of voluntary help) whilst paying most of the cost.

We shall be holding our
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
in **MOLE HALL,**
WEST MOLESEY
on **FRIDAY 24th MARCH**
starting at **8.00pm.**

All members are welcome and non-members may join at the door - £3 per household.

Come along and hear what's been going on over the past year – and afterwards chat with committee and councillors over free refreshments.

ERNEST MALLET, your County Councillor reports:

Following several accidents, HPR and I are seriously concerned about the safety situation around the new Hurst Park Tesco roundabout and nearby bus stops; hence SCC is now carrying out a safety audit on these and other important road and Tesco traffic problems.

To improve safety for Hurst Park School children, new road markings, signage and improvements to the school entrance sight-lines to the West are being actioned.

I am also pursuing the promised improved signage for the Walton Road/Molesey Road junction. Finally, the general problem of potholes continues to be reported and will hopefully be resolved in spite of County budget problems.

BOOK OF MOLESEY

Ernest Mallett has received over 100 pledges to purchase a reprint of 'The Book of Molesey'. With finance promised by residents and MRA, he expects to go ahead with the reprint. Those who have given pledges will be contacted. For further pledges to pre-buy a copy at £15 (send no money now) contact Ernest at 8979-6446 or 20, Walton Road, KT8 0DF.

Post publication price will be £20.

DAFFODILS - 2006 APPEAL

Some residents were mystified by the white marker stakes at the West entrance to Fleetside.

These are just two of the sites where MRA has planted more daffodils. When they flower we will put up Memorial Boards on the Police Station Green and on the Central Avenue roundabout.

We know that the flowering of the daffodils brings great comfort to those who would like to remember a spouse, parent, child or sorely missed relative and we will put their names and yours on these Boards in return for a donation of anything from £3 upwards. All donations will be doubled by us and passed to a grateful Marie Curie Cancer Fund.

Will you support this scheme this year? Please send details and donations to Ernest Mallett, 20 Walton Road, East Molesey KT8 0DF and make cheques out to Molesey Residents Association. We will do the rest – Thank You.

Ernest Mallett also replanted the two War Memorial gardens with pansies, daffodil and tulip bulbs.

CAR PARKING

Don't get a ticket! On-street parking regulations are now being enforced by parking wardens. Since January Surrey County Council (which is responsible for on-street control) has instigated tickets for illegally parked motorists. If you get a ticket the fine is £60, which is reduced to £30 if paid within fourteen days. We hope that this will bring an end to the chaos caused by irresponsible parking, especially in the main shopping area in Walton Road.

Enforcement of on-street parking regulations is a necessary precursor to the introduction of paid parking in the Walton Road car park. This will not happen before the middle of this year at the earliest, but will probably occur in late 2006 or early 2007.

As MRA has made clear many times before, we very much regret that car park charging is coming to Molesey, not because of the 40p charge but because of the expected knock-on effects in the residential roads surrounding Molesey's main shopping area and because of the likely effect on Molesey's small businesses.

However, Elmbridge has been one of the very few places (if not the only place) in this part of the country where car park charges have not been the norm for a long time.

The income from the enforcement of restrictions and the future car park charges should, at least, help mitigate future council tax increases (which is what charging is really all about).

CHRISTMAS TREES & LIGHTS

During the festive season MRA, as usual, lighted the Christmas tree we planted some years ago on East Molesey's Police Station green.

MRA County Cllr Ernest Mallett with our Treasurer also dug, transported, planted and lighted a replacement tree on West Molesey's Central Avenue roundabout. Last year's tree suffered from severe vandalism and subsequently died. We were pleased that this year's tree was not touched over the Christmas period (although someone attempted – unsuccessfully – to steal some of the lights). MRA has great hopes that this tree will now take permanent root and become a fixture for each festive season.

We hope that you liked the cheery appearance of the two trees and feel that they brightened up these two areas of Molesey.

POOL ROAD

More cause for concern following the recent controversial decision by Elmbridge Council to grant planning permission for 47 flats on the Survey House/Estate House site. We have recently learnt of an application to build 18 flats (involving an extra floor) at the neighbouring Quadrant House. MRA Cllr Mike Axton is investigating urgently and will ensure that any relevant planning objections are fully considered by the Council.

MOBILE PHONE MASTS

Orange, Marconi and Vodaphone are targeting Molesey.

As we go to press (early February), Orange has applied to put a 30-metre mast (almost a hundred feet tall!) near the rugby grandstand on the Police grounds at Imber Court, which Orange says it needs to 'infill' some areas of poor reception.

The situation has been confused by some rather distorted criticism but MRA Councillor Nigel Cooper has sought assurance from Orange that this mast would make other 15-metre masts unnecessary. If so, it could be supported.

Alternatively, he has tasked Elmbridge officers with making strong representations to the Met. Police to have the mast (if it is really needed at all) attached to one of the tall floodlight pylons on the soccer ground.

Some weeks ago Marconi said it wanted to put an antenna on the roof of Belhaven House in Walton Road opposite the entrance to the car park.

We have recently learnt that Vodafone is considering making an application to install a 15-metre mast by the Mole at the rear of Molesey Park Road.

We find it difficult to understand why these companies don't get together to joint-use masts – it would be cheaper for them and less intrusive for everyone else! MRA Councillor Mike Axton has written to Vodaphone urging this action.

5 YEARS IN ONE GO for £15

Quite a few members have decided to pre-pay 5 years membership fees avoiding the intrusion of annual visits from us and guaranteeing that they will not be subject to any membership fee increases for 5 years.