

**MOLESEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN 2008**

www.moleseyresidentsassociation.org.uk



JOLLY BOATMAN AND STATION SITE

The planning application for this very important site is to be considered by the North Area planning committee at a special meeting on 28th October at 7 pm.

The plan includes a 4-storey, 46-bed hotel facing to the Thames; 61 apartments; 5 houses; a 61-bed care home for Star and Garter residents; some shops, restaurants and a refurbished station building.

The only noticeable change from previous applications is a possible change in external appearance for the hotel from 'boathouse' (white boarding) to neo-Georgian.

This Association is appalled at the sheer density of the proposed development. The reason for this, say the developers, is the cost of providing an underground car park. If they gave up the idea of such dense development an underground car park would not be necessary.

Another concern is for the financial viability of the hotel. If it turns out to be non-viable, what would be its future? A block of expensive flats facing across the Thames to Hampton Court Palace? Could this be the long term intention of the developers?

Yet another concern is the car parking associated with the new proposals. The 61 apartments and 5 houses would be allocated just half a parking space per dwelling! Wouldn't many of them have two cars? The Star and Garter care home would have 33 spaces allocated to it for a staff of around 100 people - admittedly working shifts, but there would also be deliveries and visitors trying to get in.

And the proposed hotel has no parking provision for staff or guests - apart from the station underground car park, which will obviously be charged. Can you imagine staff from the shops and hotel, let alone hotel guests, wanting to pay these charges? Where would all these surplus vehicles go? Parked around East Molesey, adding to the already existing problems there?

The developers have been circulating leaflets encouraging people to vote for one or other of the possible exterior finishes for the hotel - but no provision for voting for neither of them! Do people realise that a vote for one or the other is counted as a vote for the total scheme? There seems to be no end to the devices used to get apparent agreement from the public for the proposals.

We think the whole development needs to be rethought along the lines of the planning brief produced by Elmbridge Council a few years ago - which is presently ignored by the developers.

MRA Cllr Ian Donaldson has other ideas about the possibilities for the whole site. However, these ideas must wait until a decision on the present application has been made.

WALTON ROAD REC.

In our last newsletter we reported that the entrance gateway to the Rec needed to be widened to allow the big floats for Molesey Carnival to get in and out.

This widening comes in two parts - the widening of the actual opening and the moving back of the entrance kerbstones.

MRA part-financed the widening of the opening by Elmbridge Council. This was completed just in time for last summer's Carnival and was a great help to the floats but the kerbs still got in the way.

The kerb work has to be done by Surrey CC and MRA Cnty Cllr Ernest Mallett is pushing to get this done but Surrey is slow to move!

MICK BURGESS

Last February, Mick Burgess, one of our very active and long standing Councillors, died suddenly.

Mick had, for many years, been much involved with many community activities, whether it be Molesey Football Club, Molesey Hospital League of Friends, Elmbridge Sports Council, helping out at Molesey Police Station to ensure it stayed open, or many of his other voluntary activities. Mick was an enthusiastic MRA Councillor and was Mayor of Elmbridge a few years ago.

A scheme was proposed to commemorate Mick's life and contribution to the community by installing a seat on the Hurst Park riverside land near to the basketball court (which Mick was instrumental in getting installed) at a spot approved by Mick's wife Carol.

MRA councillors, committee members, organisations Mick had worked with, and friends, responded and the necessary sum of £1,000 was quickly raised.

A couple of weeks ago MRA County Councillor, Ernest Mallett, accompanied by the MRA treasurer, arrived at the site, dug out the required hole for the base, hand mixed and laid the necessary 6 inches of concrete and installed six paving slabs to take the seat - heavy work!

The seat, with its memorial plaque, was installed shortly after and is a fitting memorial to a much missed Molesey man.

Molesey Football Club recently held a memorial match in honour of Mick and named their stand after him. MRA has contributed to the cost of the new stand sign.

St. Alban's School has funded a memorial seat in their grounds. Many thanks to those who contributed to these projects and grateful appreciation from Mick's family.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

The Walton Road traders are running a late night festive shopping evening, as last year, with late openings, tastings and discounts on the run up to Christmas. This will be held on Wednesday 3rd December. MRA will be helping and Ernest Mallett is getting funds from SCC for the Traders proposed Christmas Tree outside Musicland.

Third Molesey Scouts will be turning their scout hut in St Peter's Road, West Molesey into "Santa's Grotto" on December 13th & 14th. Entry is £4 per child or £3 if pre-booked on 8941-0124 and each child will receive a quality gift from Santa. The group has raised £22,000 toward the £30,000 cost of replacing their scout hut roof and the profit will help this good cause.

Molesey Centre (used to be called Molesey Day Centre) in School Road will hold its annual Christmas Fayre on Saturday 22nd November between 11am and 1pm. There will be cakes, toys, presents, crafts, plants and much more. Make sure you're there!

RESURFACING

At last Grange Road has now been resurfaced and Kelvinbrook and Linkfield are scheduled for this Autumn – not before time!

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

Now the growing season is over, please make a point of cutting back any foliage overhanging the pavement from your property. The effect on pedestrians can vary from inconvenience (walking round the obstruction) to outright danger (to an unsighted person). Please do this for the good of all!

A GOOD XMAS PRESENT?

Many people have bought 'The Book of Molesey' from us but may be unaware of the follow-up book 'Thameside Molesey'.

This is as good a read as the first book, covering events over the years around the Thames in Molesey, including the suffragettes burning the race course grandstand and the activities of one Fred Karno.

These books really make excellent inexpensive Christmas presents, are only £15 each and may be obtained from Ernest Mallett, 20 Walton Road or 8979-6446.

MONEY

Whether we like it or not, most things can be achieved with money (ask Chelsea Football Club!). But local facilities need money too and to this end MRA County Councillor Ernest Mallett (often in conjunction with County Cllr Tim Oliver) has been successful in obtaining the following grants for local needs:

- £1950 – Barn Theatre- projector, etc
- £990 – Trading hut shelving for Esher/Molesey Garden Soc
- £7000 – Car park surfacing at Beauchamp Rd Allotments
- £2500 – Team Motor Skills for attention-disorder pupils
- £1741 – Computers/printer for Molesey Community Church
- £4000 – Neighbourhood Watch signs
- £4873 – New windows for Methodist Church
- £3250 – Elderly person's taxi vouchers
- £7345 – Artist display screens for Elmbridge Artists
- £4240 – New boiler for Esher CAB

Grants of this sort are essential for local (often voluntary) organisations and schemes to function.

MOLESEY CAR PARK

As reported in our last newsletter, we were very pleased that, as the result of forceful arguments presented at Council by MRA Councillors, the cost of parking in the Walton Road car park was reduced from 50p per hour to the 'village' rate of 20p per hour or 10p per half hour with no charge on Saturdays or Sundays.

Since then the Conservative controlling group at Elmbridge Council has engaged consultants to review parking arrangements throughout the borough. One of the points made in the review is that car parking space that is underused 'could be used for other purposes' – which is, in effect, saying that it could be sold off.

The implication of this is clear – **use it or lose it!**

Since the reduction in charges the car park is still not as heavily used as it was before charges were introduced and we would ask local residents and shoppers to make greater use of it – 10p for half an hour or 20p for an hour's parking is cheaper than anywhere else in the area and we can't afford to lose this valuable facility.

YELLOW LINES

MRA Cllr Mike Axton has long been pushing for the removal of some unnecessary yellow lines around Molesey to allow short-term parking to support our local shops.

For example, outside Sewells, newsagents in Bridge Road, and outside the shops opposite the Europa pub. Surrey County Council is now taking notice and some of these restrictions could soon be removed. Well done, Mike.

GRAFFITI

If you see graffiti near you, ring 01372-474775 to report it - and it is usually removed within two days.

NEWS IN BRIEF

We are horrified by the sudden demolition of one of Molesey's finest houses (9, Wolsey Road) and are taking this up with the Council.

Ernest Mallett advised 3rd Molesey Scouts to apply for a special grant, and they are delighted to get £5,000 out of the blue for their new roof.

Cllrs Mike Axton and Ernest Mallett have been pressing SCC to get the shopping forecourt at Central Avenue repaired and most of it is now done.

MRA Cllr Liz Cooper is pushing for new lamppost motifs for Christmas and extra Christmas lighting for Central Avenue and High Street, West Molesey.

In spite of objections by your MRA Councillors, the application to demolish houses at the junction of Down Street and High Street in West Molesey to build blocks of flats has been granted permission with only minor amendments.

Surrey CC has now abandoned plans to build on the Chandlers Field school land beside Molesey Hospital and is compensating the developer. MRA has long strongly objected to these plans and is glad to see the withdrawal of them.

Other matters engaging your councillors are road repairs; road signage at the junction of Walton Road/Molesey Road; bus places for Molesey's school children and lack of school admissions capacity for 5-year olds.