

MOLESEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2021

www.moleseyresidentsassociation.org.uk

e-mail contact: mjaxton@live.com



Chairman: Stuart Selleck, 2 St. John's Road, KT8 9JH Tel: 020-8979-2466

Molesey Residents Association Councillors at Elmbridge

MOLESEY EAST

Peter Pope 07773-765482
Lesley Yauner 020-8224-2094

MOLESEY WEST

Ruby Ahmed 020-8979-4210
Mike Axton 020-8979-1502
Tony Popham 07970-107-937

MRA Councillor at Surrey County Council - Ernest Mallett 020-8979-6446

VINE HALL

When the Covid-19 pandemic struck, government regulations meant that no gatherings were allowed inside buildings, including public halls. Since Elmbridge could not make use of its public halls, they were closed pending the regulations allowing their re-use. As time went on, many people feared that the halls, including Vine Hall, would never re-open. Since Vine hall is old and in need of refurbishment (if not rebuilding) this seemed a distinct possibility.

A newly-formed Save Vine Hall Group (SVHG) was very effective in mobilising local support for this important community asset and, following pressure from all the Molesey Councillors, Elmbridge Council (EBC) agreed to look for a local group to take over the operation of Vine Hall when Covid regulations permit, organising its bookings, retaining the income from them and maintaining the hall.

We are pleased to report that, following a formal consultation, EBC is now in an advanced stage of discussions with the Vine Hall Group which will hopefully allow them to manage Vine Hall on behalf of the community.

We wish the group every success in their venture and hope that all goes well for them.



CLOSURE OF PART OF WALTON ROAD

The most westerly part of Walton Road turns sharp right and runs between the QE2 and the Bessborough/Knights reservoirs on its route to Walton. The section between the reservoirs has been closed since April. These reservoirs are critical in maintaining water supplies to the South and East parts of London and the road closure is to allow major work necessary on the large pipework linking the two reservoirs and is expected to last some time – maybe up to a year.

NEW MOLESEY HOSPITAL

Over several years we worked with residents to prevent the closure of the Hospital and were successful in the NHS agreeing not to close it and to look at a long-term solution for the site to be used for clinical services. The reorganisation of NHS providers in Surrey along with the Covid pandemic has resulted in a delay in committing to firm proposals as to the future of the Hospital.

What we now understand is that the Surrey Downs CCG, as the lead care providers, is trying to organise the transfer of the Hospital from NHS Property Services to them so that they can look after it rather better. There doesn't seem to be any current plans to do anything different in the foreseeable future.

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MAY ELECTIONS

Council elections run on a 4-year cycle with Elmbridge elections held in 3 of those years and Surrey County Council elections in the 4th year. Since, due to the pandemic, no elections were held in 2020, both Elmbridge and Surrey elections were held together in May 2021. This meant that an Elmbridge councillor and a County councillor had to be elected in each of the West and East Molesey wards.

We are pleased to report that all of the MRA candidates were elected by a good margin – Ernest Mallett for Surrey in Molesey West and Mike Axton and Peter Pope for Elmbridge (in Molesey West and East respectively). We are excited to welcome our new local Molesey councillor, Peter Pope, who we are confident will learn fast about how to get things done in the Council. Peter is a long term Molesey resident and promotes the interests of local business and the need to do our best to keep shops going in Molesey. His hobby is driving steam engines, including the Flying Scotsman, so we are looking for him to steam through Molesey problems as they arise. Our grateful thanks to everyone who supported our candidates. Full details are in the results box.

We did not put up a candidate for Surrey in Molesey East as, bizarrely, East Molesey is combined with Esher for the Surrey elections and, with a large Conservative vote in Esher, this is a very difficult seat for us, although we have held it in the past. In this ward, Steve Bax, Conservative, took the Surrey seat.

The election results mean that Elmbridge Council is now made up of 21 Conservatives, 18 Residents Association and 8 Liberal Democrat councillors. This means that the Residents Associations, in collaboration with Liberal Democrat councillors, will be in the majority and running the Council with Chris Sadler (Walton Society) as Leader of the Council.

MRA Councillor Stuart Selleck has been Leader for the past 5 years but did not stand for re-election this year. He decided that he had done his fair share and now looks forward to a more relaxed life! Thank you for your dedicated service over those years, Stuart.

For this next year, MRA Councillor Tony Popham is Mayor of Elmbridge.

Whilst on the subject of elections, we will be pleased to welcome to the MRA committee persons who are devoted to Molesey's wellbeing, not allied to any national political party, prepared to put in some work and, maybe, in time, stand for Council, representing MRA. It is not everyone's cup of tea, but many find it all absorbing.

'DAFFODIL' APPEAL



Each year we make an appeal in our Spring newsletter for donations in memory of loved ones departed. Due to Covid, we did not have a Spring newsletter, but Ernest Mallett contacted residents who had contributed in previous years to invite them to contribute nonetheless.

Together with MRA's contribution, those donations enabled us to send £372 to Marie Curie and £200 to the Alzheimers Society – both of which were very grateful for the donations.

A very large 'Thank You' to all those who contributed.

ALAN HOPKINS

We are very sorry to have to report the death of Alan Hopkins who died in December. Alan lived on Hurst Park and, as a long-time supporter of MRA, was a MRA Elmbridge Councillor for many years, was Mayor in 2000/2001 and was Leader of the Council for four years. We really miss Alan and extend our sincere condolences to his wife, Gloria, and family

MOLESEY EAST (Turnout 45.3%)

Elmbridge

ANDERSON, D – UKIP	27
FLATAU, P – LIB DEM	553
HOWARD, L – GREEN	245
<u>POPE, P – Molesey R A</u>	<u>1014</u>
RENDALL, R – LABOUR	186
WANG, X – CONSERVATIVE	892

Surrey (combined with Esher)

<u>BAX, S – CONSERVATIVE</u>	<u>2520</u>
BENNETT, R – LAB	230
HARMOUR, L – GREEN	472
McDONALD, B – LIB DEM	1429

MOLESEY WEST (Turnout 39.4%)

Elmbridge

<u>AXTON, M – Molesey R.A.</u>	<u>1262</u>
SHELDRAKE, D – LABOUR	233
STEVENSON, P – LIB DEM	499
TANCSANE FUCHS, A – CON.	563

Surrey

AJJANE, J – LABOUR	375
<u>MALLET, E – Molesey R.A.</u>	<u>1922</u>
NICKERSON, D – LIB DEM	719
SOOD, C – CONSERVATIVE	1039

MOLESEY FOOD BANK

is now situated in the former Hurst Park School at 357, Hurst Road and is open for donations from 9am to 3pm Monday to Wednesday. Donations can also be dropped off to MRA Councillor, Lesley Yauner, at 42, Beauchamp Road (official drop-off point) at any time. All donations of non-perishable food, toiletries and household products will be much appreciated.

PARKING IN EAST MOLESEY

Surrey County Council recently put forward proposals to introduce Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) in Palace Road, Wolsey Road, Arnison Road, Hansler Grove, Grove Road and St John's Road. The intention was that the CPZs would operate for an hour in the morning from Monday to Friday, effectively preventing commuter parking. The proposal was heavily backed by local Conservative councillors (Steve Bax at Elmbridge and Peter Szanto at SCC)

We understand that the residents in those roads (like many other people in many other roads around Molesey) would be pleased to see the parking reduced in their roads, but we were very concerned that the displaced cars would transfer to other roads nearby, such as Church Road, Vine Road, Manor Road, Kent Road, Park Road, etc. Most of these roads are quite narrow and have very limited off-street parking capacity, whereas the 'CPZ roads' are mostly wide, straight and have adequate off-street parking.

Surrey County Council carried out a survey of the views of residents in the 'CPZ roads' and other surrounding roads and the result was a pretty solid vote against the plan, so the idea has been turned down, as was a similar plan in 2016. Let's hope that this is the last we hear of it.

BOAT YARD FIRE



This huge blaze engulfed the boat yard on Platt's Eyot in early May and was photographed from the towpath behind Hurst Park. Firefighters were in difficulties because the only access to the island is by a small bridge on the Hampton side of the Thames. Hence no vehicles could attend the fire and all equipment had to be manhandled across the bridge. As you can see from this picture, the affected buildings were burnt down to their skeletons before the fire was eventually put out.

HAMPTON COURT BRIDGE & ESHER ROAD BRIDGE

A Molesey Group has been formed to try to get the riverside area between Hampton Court Bridge and Molesey Lock tidied up with a proper walkway and landscaping. If you would like to get involved contact Ernest Mallett on 020-8979-6446.

Rumours are always around that the River Mole Bridge on Esher Road is to be replaced. Frankly, this has never been on the County budget and County is using its funds on general maintenance of the many miles of Surrey roads. Replacing the Mole Bridge is entirely beyond the County's Highways budget and were the Bridge to fail, our view is that it would simply be closed for a long time, if not permanently.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

We have not been collecting subscriptions door-to-door during this Covid year. However, we do need incoming subscriptions to cover our expenses, such as the production of this newsletter, and to enable us to continue representing Molesey on a long-term basis. Everyone on the MRA committee is a volunteer so all income is used solely to cover our expenses.

If you would like to take an active part in supporting MRA in maintaining Molesey as a great place to live and work or, if you have not yet renewed your subscription for this year, it would be a great help to the Association if you could forward your subscription to any of the addresses at the bottom of this page or, if you prefer, you could make an online payment to Molesey Residents Association at Santander account number **86284805**, sort code **09-01-28**. Please also send an email to mra.subs@gmail.com with your name and address – to make sure we know who sent the money! We will make sure you receive a membership card/receipt. The annual household subscription stays at only £3 per year (hardly the cost of a cup of coffee!) – or, to save having to subscribe every year, £15 for five years. If you could see your way clear to making the 5-year subscription it would help greatly in reducing the amount of administration involved. A big Thank You in anticipation of your support.

MUDBATHS

We have areas in West Molesey of open space and verges which, due to being needed to accommodate resident parking, turn into mudbaths. Our councillors have continually tried to get parts of these areas into hard standing parking spaces. This has been frustrated by funds not being allocated by Elmbridge or Surrey, plus by national highway policy which says increases in parking spaces causes unwelcome increases in car ownership.

However, everyone knows that we are in the age of the car which is not going to change any time soon. MRA Councillors Ernest & Mike are battling on and hope to improve such areas as First Close, Second Close, Molesham Close & Belvedere Gardens. Ernest has had a major breakthrough in Central Avenue by getting one side of churned up verge into hard standing.

GARDENS

Our MRA gardening enthusiasts have been very active in Spring planting our small public gardens and some of the Highway verge areas, so take a look at the gardens on the Police Station Green, the Horse Trough planting in Bridge Road and planting under the house number 'sign boards' on Fleetside. The snowdrops and daffodils are now over, but have been replaced with African Marigolds, Dianthus, Petunias, Geraniums and Begonias. There is also some planting of Dahlias which will be prominent in the Autumn. If you are looking for plants to survive drought conditions, Ernest advises Petunias and Begonias as well as the more expensive Geraniums.



YOUR FUND SURREY

Money might be short but County is borrowing £100 million and intend giving it away at the rate of £20 million a year. This is intended to be for YOUR BENEFIT. The idea is to put Surrey in the forefront of having the best infrastructure and resident facilities and environment in the country. We know that the scheme has quite a lot of bureaucracy in it and it may not be easy to extract a grant from it, but if you are planning, or would like to plan, a community improvement scheme, then you qualify to get on board. For information, it should be possible to access 'Your Fund Surrey' information on the internet or phone the Surrey Council on 03456-009-009.

Your Membership is Greatly Appreciated

If you would like to pay direct, please return the tear off slip with £3.00 or £15.00 to one of the following addresses:-
20 Walton Road KT8 0DF or 42, Beauchamp Road KT8 2PG

We will make sure you get a Membership Card *Thank You*



MOLESEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION HOUSEHOLD MEMBERSHIP - SUMMER 2021

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