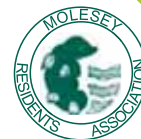


MOLESEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2025

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

Ruby Ahmed 020-8979-4210 Pat Gormley 07983-376419 Tony Popham 07970-107937

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

DON'T MISS OUR AGM on FRIDAY, 21st MARCH at 8PM

Our AGM will be held in Vine Hall, Vine Road, East Molesey, KT8 9LF..

Come and hear what has been going on over the past year and what the future may hold.

After the official meeting is over, you can meet and chat with MRA Councillors.

Non-members may join at the door for the small annual sum of only £4 per household.

THEY CANNOT BE SERIOUS!

Surrey County Council is trying to save money on school transport. It is therefore unfairly proposing that Molesey pupils can walk a muddy, unlit and largely deserted 3-mile path to Esher High School.

They claim that this route, leaving from the back of the Fleetside estate in West Molesey, over parts of Molesey Heath and along the Island Barn Reservoir, measuring, they claim, just under 3 miles, meets their legal right to deny relevant pupils school transport. The estimated walking time is close to 1 hour.

Our view is that Parliament never intended such desolate routes should be used to declare that the school journey is under 3 miles and therefore pupils living near it can be deprived of a seat on a school bus. Our MRA councillors are supporting parents in this matter - which is scheduled to commence in September. Your Molesey contact is ernest.mallett@surreycc.co.uk



MOLESEY CARE NEEDS YOU

Molesey Care is a charity providing support for Molesey residents who may need assistance due to disability or age-related problems. It may be able to provide transport for appointments such as doctor's, dentist's or hairdressing. Assistance may be needed for other activities such as shopping.

In order to provide this service, we need more volunteers. You may be able to help in one of two ways – either as a Driver or as a 'Duty Officer' – which involves responding to telephone requests for assistance from your own home, using our mobile office.

If you are able to give any of your time and would like to find out more, please ring 020-8941-1010.

77-79 Walton Road
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GOOD-BYE ELMBRIDGE – and SURREY?

1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM. The present two-tier structure (County/Borough) will be replaced by single Unitary Authorities with an area population of about 500,000 people. In Surrey there are 11 Borough-type Councils, so Elmbridge will have to merge with 2 or 3 other neighbouring Councils to form a new enlarged Unitary Council. The ambition is for the first of these all-purpose Councils to be in charge by May 2027.

Surrey and the 11 Borough Councils have requested to be in the first wave of new Unitaries and have asked the government to postpone the County elections due this May - and this has now been agreed. Borough and District Councils in Surrey together with SCC itself, will disappear by May 2027.

In May 2026, the new all-purpose Unitaries will hold elections and their councillors will be appointed. These will then be 'Shadow Councils' which will take over responsibility in May 2027.

If a quick agreement can be made on the areas and population of the new Councils, the Minister will cancel the County elections planned for May 2025 - this will save £2.5m.

2. DEVOLUTION. The Minister also wants to agree an overall-arching, all powerful, elected Mayoral system, as in London, to cover Regional areas (say 3 to 4 Unitaries), population 1.5million plus. Like London, the Mayor would have extra powers devolved from government plus finance to fund big projects in his region. These are to be decided but are likely to involve primarily Transport Services and Environmental Matters, plus some strategic direction on Infrastructure, Employment, Housing, Planning, Public Health & Safety.

OUR COMMENT: *Independent democracy may well suffer and residents' views and needs may become of marginal importance. It is likely to be more costly and could be disruptive to present services.*

MOLESEY WETLANDS - UPDATE

The Wetlands are situated between Hurst Road and the Thames and result from previous gravel extractions from old reservoirs. MRA County Councillor, Ernest Mallett, has been tracking this for some time.



The original plan was to provide a car park and visitor centre and open the Wetlands to the public, albeit on a time restricted basis. Ernest has put questions to the Surrey Planning Committee and the answers have been assuring him of progress being worked on. Ernest now has some third-party information which appears to indicate that Surrey may have abandoned the original plan. So, Ernest has written to the Head of Planning - with no reply - so he is pursuing this matter through the Council's relevant legal officer.

MOLESEY WEST MRA COUNCILLOR - PAT GORMLEY

In May 2024 I had the honour of being elected as your councillor for Molesey West at Elmbridge Borough Council. In my 9 months, I have received and responded to 55 queries from residents, ranging across a wide range of issues. The most recent was seeing through the replacement of fencing around the tennis courts at Grovelands which, hopefully, will curtail the vandalism experienced there recently.

But most of all, it has been great getting out and meeting you, whether it was planting trees at Grovelands, sweeping up tree debris or talking to "clients" at Molesey Day Centre. If you have any Molesey problem you want taking up with the council, please do email me on pgormley@elmbridge.gov.uk



SLURS We notice on Social Media that there is a political slur pointing at the Molesey Residents Association and its councillors indicating that, in West Molesey, not much gets done. Well, have a look at Ernest Mallett's report on Grants and Highways (on the page opposite). Also, we get letters thanking us for our help. Of course, not everyone agrees on road safety 20mph and new crossings.

Even Ernest has been told by one lady that he is the worst councillor in the world - all because he had to tell her that the Council would not do tree maintenance on private land!



WEST MOLESEY GRANTS & MOLESEY HIGHWAY SPEND



MRA County Councillor, Ernest Mallett, reports that he is 'Spent Up' on grants and has been successful in getting extra money over and above his £100,000 Highways allocation.

He says:

From my £100,000 Grant Fund, I have arranged the following grants:
£50,000 to St.Peter's Community Hub in West Molesey,(Youth, Foodbank and Night Sleeper facilities). My thanks to the Rev. Alex Monro and his staff for help.
£21,429 to new boats for 1st. Molesey Sea Scouts.

£24,614 to complete new set of band instruments for 3rd Molesey Scouts.

£3,957 in contribution to East Molesey Orchard School for outside facilities.

From my £5,000 Community Grant Fund.(for East and West Molesey):

£500 to Surrey Crimestoppers

£1000 to Walton Road Planters/ Planting Group. (Thanks to Dr.Nick Tate)

£777 to the Barn Theatre for stage drapes

£357 to St, Paul's Church for installation of garden tap

£500 to Headway Surrey for updating of website

£500 to the Brigitte Trust for volunteer training

£1000 to Youth Football 'All Stars' covering Elmbridge for football, gym hire and training

£407 currently being allocated to a charity for a training course

From my West Molesey Highway Spend; Personal Allowance £120,000 (up from £100,000):

£64,350 Upper Farm Road (resurfacing)

£40,000 Second Close (resurfacing)

£17,098 High Street/Chandlers Field (20mph scheme-'delayed')

£400 Weston Avenue & Rosemary Avenue (speed surveys)

£1,848 overspend pushed forward to 25/26

Note that, from central funds, some £250,000 has been allocated for a light-controlled pedestrian crossing on Hurst Road (for the new Hurst Park School). Further, of past 2023/24 expenditure on Dennis Road, Hurstfield Road, Molesey Avenue, Walton Road, Berkeley Drive, The Crescent and Boleyn Drive - some £900,000 was in the West Molesey Division (ward).

CHANGES AT GROVELANDS RECREATION GROUND

It's great to see all the recent activities at Grovelands Recreation ground to improve facilities there.

Championed by local resident Samantha Moore, the council has introduced new facilities within the children's play area, and has just upgraded the trim trail

Pat Gormley, local MRA councillor, has been working with the Council's Leisure and Culture team to replace the fencing around the tennis courts with more robust material, to try to stop the vandalism previously experienced in the tennis courts

Also, Pat Gormley joined residents in November to plant 30 sapling trees, provided by the Council's Greenspace team, opposite the Palmers Grove entrance to Grovelands.



If you have any thoughts on how to improve the green spaces close to your home in Molesey, and would like the council to support, then please contact Pat Gormley, pgormley@elmbridge.gov.uk

FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is collected by Elmbridge Council from new developments to raise funds for infrastructure projects to mitigate the impacts of the new developments.

Part of the levy raised is assigned to support local organisations who have to apply to Elmbridge Council for their projects to be considered for funding. This year, there is £16,000 available to support local organisations in Molesey (East and West) who can submit applications until March 16th.

In June, the Local Spending Board (all six Molesey councillors) will decide on successful applications.

Details at: www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/community-infrastructure-levy-cil/cil-apply-local-funding

YOUR MRA MEMBERSHIP

We hope that you will want to support the Association in looking after Molesey's interests. We are now in a new membership year so, if your membership is not up to date or if, surprisingly, you are not yet a member, you may take out your 2025 membership for only £4 per household for the current year or, to save yourself the job every year, £15 for a five year membership. You can send a cheque or cash to any of the addresses at the bottom of this page or, if it's more convenient, you can pay by bank transfer to Molesey Residents Association at our Santander account **86284805**, sort code **09-01-28**.

If you pay this way, please send an email to mra.subs@gmail.com confirming your name and address so that we are sure who sent us the money! If you can manage to pay for five years, it will reduce our administration load. We will ensure that you receive a membership card/receipt. Thank You!

HARD SURFACED PATHS ON MOLESEY HEATH

Any dog walker or jogger, using Molesey Heath, knows how muddy the paths get during the winter months.

Therefore, the MRA is pleased to advise that many of the paths on the Heath were renewed by Elmbridge Council, just before Christmas with a hard-core/stone surface, using funding made available to them from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

There is some residual work to be done on the paths and litter to be picked up as the digging work churned up some of the rubbish left from when the site was a tip. We are advised this work is scheduled for early February when hopefully the weather is less rainy.

For the avoidance of doubt, this work is being managed by Elmbridge Borough Council and is not related in any way to the new proposed "safe" route (see other article on page 1) that Surrey County Council is using to justify the removal of the free bus service for Molesey children to get to Esher High school.

In fact, the "safe" route uses the footpath from Fleetside beside the Dead River, and does not use any of the refurbished paths.

The Heath is a 'jewel in the crown' for Molesey. It is a wonderful place to walk around, using the new hard-surfaced paths. The MRA urges more Molesey residents to take time out to walk around the Heath. Beyond the paths, shown on the map, there are also two small lakes to discover.



SUNKEN BOATS



Over the last few months there have been an increased number of abandoned and sunken boats on the banks of Cigarette Island and adjacent to Hampton Court Bridge. We are informed that the Environment Agency has sought quotes from private contractors for the removal of all the sunken boats adjacent to the Elmbridge bank of the Thames. Once the E.A. has decided which quote to accept, it may be that it will seek a contribution from Elmbridge Council and/or Surrey C.C. towards the costs of the removals.

Your Membership is Greatly Appreciated

If you would like to pay direct, please return the tear off slip with £4.00 or £15.00 to one of the following addresses:-
20 Walton Road KT8 0DF, 10 Molesey Park Road KT8 2LE or 7 Mole Abbey Gardens KT8 1QD (off New Road)

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



MOLESEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION HOUSEHOLD MEMBERSHIP - SPRING 2025

I enclose £15 for 5 years or £4 for 1 year **Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms.:**

Address **Email** (For our use only)

I may be prepared to help with: Collecting Subscriptions Delivering Newsletters Election Time Work