

LOWER SUNBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



2005 AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

Solution in sight on Green Street bus depot

The long-running saga of the bus depot in Green Street is reaching a stage where a solution may be only weeks away. Pressure on the new bus operators Travel London (part of National Express) has increased after our local police officers warned drivers about obstructing the road, using Sunbury Park as a toilet, and leaving litter. Local residents have also been vigilant in monitoring bus activity and making complaints.

Representatives of Transport for London, the strategic authority, and Travel London attended the Neighbourhood Police Meeting on Oct. 19th. Under strong questioning from LOSRA and many residents, TfL said that an agreement between TfL and Travel London on moving the driver changeover to Brentford, where proper facilities exist, was actively being sought, and that TfL was likely to agree to foot the bill. The bus company also said that money was not the issue.

This is encouraging, as we have consistently been advised that moving the depot back to Brentford would be too costly – indeed, informal contact with TfL only a week before the police meeting indicated that there was a deadlock over money. However, it seems this may have been overcome as a result of the two parties recognising that the situation is untenable.

Doug Goodison of Travel London promised that working practices are being closely monitored so that drivers do not obstruct the road,

leave their engines running, use the Park as a toilet, or leave litter. If you have any reason to complain on any of these, or indeed any other grounds, please do two things – call Doug Goodison on 07810 770494 and register your complaint, and make a diary note so that a dossier of their malpractice can be compiled if necessary.

However, we have made it clear that regardless of whether they stop the anti-social behaviour, the depot must be moved, and the message seems to have got through. We are grateful to our local police officers for supporting the residents' case.

It is clear from statements made by the bus company that the real problem lies in the fact that Surrey County Council gave permission for the operation of the depot despite the absence of facilities and the fact that the buses would be occupying public roads which might be in use by residents. We are investigating whether Surrey is open to accusations of maladministration on this issue, which could be referred to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Local residents, supported by LOSRA, have already made a complaint to the Ombudsman about TfL's procrastination and prevarication on addressing the problems and we await the outcome.

As usual, we urge you not to hold your breath, as we have been in this situation before, but we are going to step up pressure over the coming weeks, and hope for a positive result.

Planning application for phone mast in Green Street Objections needed by November 2nd

Orange Telecom have made a planning application for a mobile phone mast in Green Street.

We had correspondence with them a few months ago, when they asked our opinion on the possibility of a mast being sited in the NW corner of Sunbury Park, just about opposite School Walk. We replied that we would strongly oppose it, as it would be unsightly and inappropriate in a residential area and right on the boundary of the Conservation Area. In addition, we told them that, since the scientific evidence is still not definitive, there are many people who are concerned about the health issues, as we know from the proposal to put transponders in St. Mary's Church.

It appears from the map on the Spelthorne web site that the proposed site is now at the end of the Linear Park opposite Croysdale Avenue. It provides for an 8 metre telegraph-pole sized mast with associated equipment box. This site is right on a busy road with shops and bus stops, and is heavily used by local children, and we are sure that there will be strong local opposition.

Objections are needed by 2nd November. The application number is 05/00970/T56. Address your letter to P. Tomson, Planning Office, Spelthorne Borough Council, Knowle Green, Staines TW18 1XB, or you can post your comments by e-mail from the Planning Public Access section of www.spelthorne.gov.uk

Development threatened on Platt's Eyot

Plans have been submitted for a huge housing development on Platt's Eyot, the island in the Thames just over the borough boundary into Hampton above Hampton Waterworks. The plan is to restore the listed boathouses, but also to build a cluster of houses on the elevated land, which will reach 20 metres above river level, plus 5 blocks of flats on the lower ground. The development would comprise 172 bedrooms.

The island, with its significant woodland cover, is an imposing part of the riverscape and a haven for wildlife. Much of the tree cover would be lost, and the impact on the environment of maybe 200 people living on the island, with associated traffic, would be enormous.

A pressure group has been formed in Hampton to fight the proposals. It is called CAPPED (Campaign Against the Proposed Platt's Eyot Development). If you are interested in supporting them, call Liz Robertson on 0208 979 0035 or Paul Gossage on 0208 941 7994. Alternatively, e-mail capped@molesey-online.co.uk

This is a key site close to our village and on our reach of the river, so CAPPED deserve our support.

Views sought on cycle path for Linear park

We have obtained information from the joint Surrey County Council/Spelthorne Borough Council team regarding their plans for the TP26 linear park between French Street and Green Street.

They are proposing a package of measures to create a safe and usable public space linking the community. The plan is to construct a shared cycle/pedestrian path of a bonded gravel material to run the length of the Park. There would be landscaping, with trees/bulbs etc. Litter bins and dog poop bins would be provided and bollards placed at each end to deter joyriders.

The team wants to get the community's views on the way this land is to be managed in the future. We are going to try to arrange some kind of exhibition and/or public meeting to view and discuss the plans. Our view is that a proper integrated scheme for the Park is long overdue.

In the meantime, if you have particular views or want to be kept informed, please contact a Committee member and pass on your opinions and your e-mail address.

Environment Agency to sell site for development

You may have seen notices announcing a meeting/exhibition at Riverside Arts Centre a few weeks ago, held by the Environment Agency. The purpose was to advise local people that the EA is proposing to sell off its site in Fordbridge Road for housing development.

The meeting was very much an early warning, so that the EA can tick the necessary boxes to say they have consulted local people - we don't think it was there to sound out opinion in order to influence their decision.

The residents of Wheatley's Ait, adjacent to the site, are already suffering from a huge increase in the cost of their right of access, as well as other difficulties with EA.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of government agencies selling off their land, it looks like this is something we are going to have to deal with. The site will be regarded as "brownfield", so it may look ripe for development. However, it is within the flood plain, and this has become a contentious planning issue in recent years.

Once again, we will aim to keep you posted, but equally if local people get wind of anything before we do, please keep us advised via one of the Committee.

No decision from Inspector on Croysdale land

As noted in the last newsletter, in late July various local people attended a site visit to the land beyond Croysdale Avenue, where car boot sales have taken place and where the owner has laid a tarmac road contrary to planning regulations. The Inspector was considering the retrospective planning application lodged by the site owner in response to an enforcement notice served by Spelthorne Council requiring the removal of the road.

We were advised by the Inspector that we could expect a decision in 6-8 weeks, but we have not heard anything at time of going to press. It would be disturbing if his decision did not support the Council, as this is important Green Belt land. We also understand the site is up for sale. We will make sure the result is in the next newsletter.

Police College to close and site up for sale

The sale of government or publicly-owned sites threatens to become something of an epidemic in Sunbury, as we learn that Police College at the junction of Green Street and Thames Street is to be disposed of.

Apparently it is regarded as surplus to requirements, and interested parties are already being shown round. It is impossible to know at this stage whether someone will buy it to use it as it stands for offices or whatever, or if it is likely to be demolished for housing development.

It is a prime site, so the latter looks likely, and as the existing building is several storeys high, developers will probably look for high density of dwellings. At the moment, it's a case of wait and see - there's nothing we can really influence until a planning application goes in, but it's an issue of which local residents will need to be aware.

SSAGE

www.ssage.org.uk

Sunbury and Shepperton Against Gravel Extraction

Fight against gravel continues

Whilst many of us enjoyed a summer break, SSAGE continued its fight to prevent Surrey County Council's proposals to designate two local areas of Green Belt - Vicarage Farm in Halliford Road and Watersplash Farm in Fordbridge Road - as sites for gravel extraction.

Groups attend stakeholder workshops

SSAGE, LOSRA and the Green Street Action Group were among local groups who attended the first workshop organised by the Council's minerals team in July. So great were the number of issues raised that the two hours allocated to the discussion were completely inadequate.

Requests for a further meeting were refused but members of the minerals team subsequently agreed to a tour of the sites. This provided a useful opportunity for the minerals team to see first hand the devastating impact that gravel extraction would have on the lives of local residents.

At the second county-wide workshop held in September, the groups asked for confirmation that their concerns and issues would be taken in account by the Council's officers who will make recommendations on which of the proposed sites will be included in the new Minerals Plan. A summary of the issues raised at the workshops will be published on the Council's website, www.surreycc.gov.uk, later this month.

Decision-making timetable

Subject to final confirmation, we understand the process going forward to be as follows:

Surrey County Council will issue a report outlining their preferred sites for development by the end of this year. This will be presented to a Select Committee in January and to the Council's Executive Committee for final recommendations by Easter 2006.

It is likely that Vicarage Farm and Watersplash Farm will be included in these "preferred options"

recommendations. Following a further period of formal consultation during which there will be an opportunity to object to the recommendations, there will be a Public Inquiry during Autumn 2007 to decide the outcome.

SSAGE intends to oppose any decision to develop the sites throughout this process, but will need consistent local support and possibly financial backing to do so.

County Councillors contacted

SSAGE feels strongly that the County Councillors have an obligation to support the people who elected them by lobbying members of the relevant decision-making committees.

SSAGE has contacted Sunbury County Councillor Frank Davies and Shepperton County Councillor Laurie Burrell in a bid to gain their support.

At a meeting held this month, Cllr Davies confirmed that he was aware of the issues and the volume of opposition to the proposals but is happy to receive further correspondence on the matter. The following extract is taken from Cllr Davies' election material;

"Spelthorne has, over many years, provided enormous quantities of materials for the benefit of the South East generally and now deserves a respite. There will inevitably be a substantial increase in the number of heavy vehicle movements with the consequential dirt and noise nuisance that these create".

You may write to Cllr Davies at 5 Ashford Crescent, Ashford, Middlesex TW15 3EE or e-mail frank.davies@surreycc.gov.uk

Cllr Laurie Burrell has so far declined to meet the group. Shepperton residents only should request his support by writing to him at 48 Stewart Avenue,

Shepperton, Middlesex TW1 70EH or e-mail laurie.burrell@surreycc.gov.uk. SSAGE has compiled a suggested template for your letters and emails. For a copy, please call 01932 789987 or visit www.ssage.org.uk.

MP David Wilshire pledges support

Spelthorne MP David Wilshire has now received hundreds of letters from concerned constituents in Sunbury. Mr. Wilshire has also visited the proposed sites and told SSAGE;

"I am alarmed and determined to do all I can to oppose this. I have been in touch with the Council expressing my concerns and asking them to make sure that I am kept fully briefed".

If you have not yet written to David Wilshire, please contact him at the address below expressing your opposition to gravel extraction. SSAGE has compiled a suggested template. For a copy, please call 01932 789987 or visit www.ssage.org.uk.

David Wilshire MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
office@spelthorneconservatives.com

SSAGE can be contacted on 01932 789987 or via www.ssage.org.uk.

Why not have a tree planted?

Local Tree Wardens have trees available. With authorisation from Surrey CC they can supply and plant trees on roadside sites or other open spaces, and also in private gardens.

There is a charge of £30 per tree, including delivery, watering hose, strimmer guard, stake and tie. There is no charge for planting.

If you would like one or more trees planed near your home or in your garden, contact one of the Tree Warden volunteers : Dave Woods 01932 786806; Dave Huxford 07941 093186; Sally Fletcher 01932 227679 or 07778 370571. The Wardens are part of the Surrey Tree Warden Network, which is a registered charity.

Mixed outcome on licensing hearings

The round of applications from local pubs relating to new licensing hours has resulted in a range of different potential hours. We know that local residents from the specific areas around the pubs made representations regarding potential nuisance from late hours, which seemed to carry particular weight in the case of the Magpie, which is restricted to the existing closing time of 11pm (10.30 on Sunday).

Other times (all plus 30 mins. drinking-up time) are: Three Fishes Sun.-Thurs. 11pm, Fri.-Sat. 11.30; Admiral Hawke Sun.-Thurs. 11pm, Fri.-Sat. Midnight; Flowerpot Sun.-Thurs. Midnight, Fri.-Sat. 1am.

It's now up to residents to monitor the situation to see if problems occur - if so, representations can be made for the hours to be reviewed.

Spelthorne Development Plan Questionnaire

The September edition of the Spelthorne Bulletin was devoted to a questionnaire about options for the Spelthorne Development Plan.

The published closing date for responses is October 31st, so if you haven't responded and want to have your say, please do so straight away. The format of the questionnaire is not ideal, as it restricts the range of issues and possible answers - if you have strong feelings about things they have not addressed, you will need to write a separate letter.

LOSRA's aim is to restrict the amount and density of development, as Spelthorne is years ahead of its housing target, and the infrastructure is under enormous and increasing pressure. Every voice that supports this view is valuable.

Friends of Sunbury Park Carols in Orchard Meadow Wed.14th Dec.

After last year's well-attended inaugural event, the "Carols in Orchard Meadow" evening is taking place this year on Wed. 14th December - look out for notices with further details. A permanent Christmas tree is being planted in the Meadow, and community singing will be led by a brass band. Let's hope for good weather and another big crowd.

Subscriptions needed!

If you haven't paid your LOSRA subscription for 2005, please use the form below and drop it into one of the designated local shops. We are delivering more newsletters because of the gravel issue, so costs have increased, and your subs will help us meet these.

THE LOSRA COMMITTEE

Pamela Cabannes	4 Forge Mews	76113
Tony Cannings	90 Manor Lane	789750
Elleke Carling	3 Croysdale Avenue	882726
Pat Carrick-Allan	Adelphi, Parke Road	
Don Cunningham	2 Parkwood Grove	889033
Peter Francis	Linden Lodge, Woodlands Drive	770661
Cathie French	173 French Street	789157
Roger Harding	Sunmead Cottage, Green St.	782744
John Hirsh (Chairman)	21 School Walk	781363
Andy Mason (Secretary)	Fairlawns	
Anne Nowicka	9 The Pines	885545
Mike Rigby (Treasurer)	26 Queensway TW16 6HB	789013
Patrick Smith	6 Maryland Way	
Paul Watts (President)	87 The Avenue TW16 5HZ	788449
Alan Wells	100 Thames Street	784632
David Woods	47 Sunna Gardens	786806

LOSRA stalwart Frank Burman dies

Sad to report the death in September of Frank Burman, who was Secretary of LOSRA from its inception in the 1960s. He was a doughty champion of residents' interests, and was especially involved in the campaign against lorries in Thames St., the abandonment of the TP26 road scheme, and the stopping of the Heathrow-Gatwick helicopter link. He and his wife Alison lived in Vereker Drive and The Avenue, before moving to Shepperton, where he was involved in the Residents' Association there. He was a principled and cheerful man, and Frank's work helped lay the foundations of the Association's work and establish its credibility with the authorities, which we have tried to continue.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please note that we are no longer collecting subscriptions via collectors undertaking personal calls to your house. We are now into a new membership year, so could you please help us by dropping your suscription in to one of our three collection points using the tear-off slip below. You can deliver it to any of the following local shops : Skinners in Avenue Parade; Londis in French Street; Twirltour Travel in Green Street. Our thanks to these businesses for their help in providing this service.

Please find enclosed my annual subscription of £2.00 for family membership of the Lower Sunbury Residents' Association for the calendar year 2005.

Name :

Address :

.....

Tel. no. :

(AUT05)