

LOWER SUNBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION 2010 AUTUMN NEWSLETTER



www.losra.org

London Irish RFC appeal against planning application refusals.

Please register your opposition to the appeals. Deadline date for your letters is 13th December

It seems a long time ago that residents packed the conference room at Kempton Park to hear the Planning Committee unanimously refuse the applications by London Irish to develop their Avenue site and the Hazelwood Golf Course. As expected, London Irish are appealing against the refusals (Spelthorne Planning Refs. 09/00841 & 09/00842/OUT).

Just to remind you, the first application aimed to use the entire area of their site in The Avenue to build a mix of 194 houses and flats, a care home, a site for a potential future health centre and the provision of a new neighbourhood park.

The second was to demolish the clubhouse, driving range and other structures on the Hazelwood Golf Course site in Croysdale Avenue to develop five adult and 12 junior rugby pitches, professional training facilities and a clubhouse, for London Irish RFC.

After long and careful consideration of the issues, the Planning Committee refused both applications. The grounds were complex but included:

- National and local policies concerning Green Belt and protected urban open space
- No over-riding need for housing
- Development out of character with the surrounding area

The Planning Department has written to all those who commented on the applications to let them know who they can write to at the Planning Inspectorate to express their views. All the letters which were submitted by the public on both planning appli-

cations will automatically be sent to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the appeal process.

Residents may submit their comments on line through the Planning Portal using the Planning Casework Service, www.planningportal.gov.uk/pes or by writing a letter (see address below). **If you write a letter to the Planning Inspectorate, you will need to enclose 3 copies.** All representations should be received by 13th December 2010. The Case Officer dealing with the appeal is Leanne Palmer.

References:

Inspectorate Reference for Hazelwood Golf Centre: APP/Z3635/A/10/2138982

Inspectorate Reference for LIRFC at The Avenue: APP/Z3635/A/10/2138983/NWF

Address: Planning Inspectorate, 4/02 Kite Wing, Temple Quay House, 2, The Square, Bristol BS1 6PN.

The appeal documents may be viewed on the Council website or by visiting the Council Offices during normal working hours. They may also be accessed by clicking on the link published on the LOSRA website. Once the date of the Public Inquiry is known we will make an announcement on the website but it is expected to be held in the spring of 2011 and could last around two to three weeks.

London Irish Try to Forestall Reasons for Refusal

The Rugby Club also plans to try and overcome a number of the reasons for refusal before the Public Inquiry takes place. Additional information has been submitted to the Planning

Department regarding:

- air quality at The Avenue site
- levels of playing pitches at the Hazelwood site
- archaeology at The Avenue site
- noise - Hazelwood site
- legal agreement (including education) for both sites

Consultation with local interest groups and residents associations on these additional matters has started and LOSRA will be responding before the deadline of 2nd December.

Please pay your 2010 LOSRA subscription

We apologise for the late circulation of the autumn newsletter, the distribution of which was again delayed until the latest details of the London Irish applications were made known. Its late publication may explain why our subscriptions for 2010 are substantially below our 2009 levels.

Although the subscriptions become payable in January each year, and despite having had one of our busiest years, many residents wait until the final reminder appears in the autumn bulletin. If you have not already done so, please use the tear off slip at the bottom of this newsletter to accompany your £5 membership fee or visit the web site to use the online Paypal facility.

If you are unsure as to whether or not you have paid your 2010 subscription, feel free to contact the Treasurer through the web site or by phone for confirmation.

Latest news on the proposed “EcoPark” at Charlton Lane

Readers will remember the Spring newsletter in which we first announced the plans to construct an 'Eco Park' in Charlton Lane, Shepperton. Since then, a number of public meetings have taken place both with the Residents' Liaison Group and, most notably, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Spelthorne Council. The transactions at these meetings are too numerous and detailed to enumerate here but it is safe to say that residents' anxieties appear to be multiplying as time goes on.

At a recent meeting the LOSRA representative asked questions on public safety which, after all this time, still remain unanswered. Additionally, and at the time of going to press, the written answers to very many questions submitted at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20th October have yet to be published as promised.

This has nothing to do with residents being 'Nimby'. We simply want our questions answered - even if these may have challenged every conventional piety about 'green' waste - and to be satisfied that what we are

being invited to sign up to is in our best interests. Theories that appear effortlessly simple on paper rarely survive the rigours of reality and it is our duty to test those theories.

Above all, it is hard to escape the suspicion that we are being dumped on (no pun intended). The law seems to be quite clear in that full consultation should have taken place before site selection, not the other way round. It is not sufficient to argue that this massive industrial waste processing plant was already included in the Surrey Waste Plan of 2006, because it wasn't. The scale and intention of the proposed plant had not even been conceived at that time, so now, sadly, we find ourselves having to build defences against the twin enemies of executive whim and the vested interests of officers.

The reason for this reversal of planning policy may be attributable to haste and financial expediency. Dr. Andrew Povey, the Leader of Surrey County Council

is quoted as saying: "...the way to achieve this [recycling] is by diverting waste from landfill. The practice is not only destructive to our landscape and environment but the taxation on landfill alone currently costs us over £7 million per year. This tax is increasing at an alarming rate and will have almost doubled by 2013. If we don't act now the Surrey taxpayer could be paying as much as £13m annually in landfill tax alone within four years, so our goal is to avoid putting any waste in landfill by then."

In other words, SCC is in a race against the clock to avoid heavy taxes, and Charlton Lane, despite being situated in an Air Quality Management Area, was presumably considered to be a softer and more uncomplaining target than somewhere which would have affected the wealthy and influential residents of the Surrey stockbroker belt.

To find out more, including forthcoming planning applications, and to become involved, visit Spelthorne Against the Eco Park at: <http://www.satp.moonfruit.com>

Landmark tree removed in error as Hawke Park path is installed

The much-discussed cycle and pedestrian path has finally been laid along the length of Hawke Park, the former TP26 Linear Park.

Reaction to it has been mixed. Many observers believe they were right in saying that the path is too wide and overly dominant of the space. The surface of the path was changed at the last minute from a tarmac-based material to one closer to the one preferred by Friends of Sunbury Park, but it remains to be seen how it will look when it matures. There are concerns about poor drainage and the fact that the lack of width-restricting bollards means vehicles are occasionally using the path.

However, it has undoubtedly improved conditions for the many people who use the route regularly for

going to school and other journeys.

Unfortunately, the path was not laid without a cost. A familiar feature of the Park, the archway formed by a mature hawthorn tree just west of The Avenue, which the Friends of Sunbury Park group had specifically asked should not be disturbed by the works, was felled in error by contractors who misread a map provided at an earlier briefing by Spelthorne officers.

Spelthorne Council could not have been more apologetic, and have undertaken to replace the tree in due course, but it is a very sorry episode which does not reflect well on the way the project was managed.

Crime Survey for homes and businesses - reply by 13th Dec.

Keith McGroary, Community Safety Manager & Economic Development Officer for Spelthorne Council is currently conducting a review of crime and anti-social behaviour in the Borough. Historically this has not made best use of the Residents Association network and its members, who are well equipped to give informed views, and he would like to put that right.

The survey will take about 2 minutes to complete and will influence the strategy of organisations including, amongst others, the Police, NHS, Probation and Council, to tackle crime and disorder issues over the next 3 years.

This is your chance to influence, please take it by clicking on this link:

[www.spelthorne.gov.uk/
community__amp__learning-
ssspriorities](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/community__amp__learning-ssspriorities)

Public Inquiry into Environment Agency site planning appeal adjourned until Dec. 13 & 14

The Public Inquiry into the applications by the Environment Agency to develop the Wheatley's Eyot site, and by Linden Homes to build 86 dwellings on the Environment Agency's Fordbridge Road site, is still in progress as we go to print. Originally it had been hoped that the Inquiry would be completed within four days. Unfortunately the detailed nature of the arguments, both for and against, has meant that a further 2 days will be required, and an adjournment until 13th & 14th December has been agreed.

CAROD (Campaign Against Riverside Over Development), a federated LOSRA campaign

Environment Agency responds regarding clearance of the creek at Rivermead Island

As you may know, we have been in discussion with the Environment Agency about the fact that the creek alongside Rivermead Island is silted up and clogged with vegetation.

After some to-ing and fro-ing, they agreed that it was indeed their responsibility. Since then we have had a further e-mail from Steve Sheridan of the Environment Agency, which reads:

"Having met with Cynthia Bendickson, Biodiversity Officer for Spelthorne, looked at survey information and subsequently discussed possibilities for enhancement, I think the emphasis should initially be to clear some of the vegetation that smothers the channel - in particular the floating pennywort. Following on from this, some selective tree work to reduce shading in parts of the channel could be beneficial - we plan to discuss this further on site with the arboriculturist."

No timescales are given in the email but there is a recognition at least that the work to clear the channel will be given due attention, and that the EA sees itself as the primary agent responsible for the work.

group, which is also a third party at the Inquiry, and is represented by Queen's Counsel, provided witnesses who put forward a very persuasive case for refusal to the Planning Inspector.

If you are able, please consider attending the remaining days of the Inquiry in the Council Chamber at Knowle Green - it is always good to have a full public gallery at such proceedings and the process is extremely interesting if you have not seen it before.

The Planning Inspector's decision will be published on the web site as soon as it is notified, probably early in the new year.

Outrage at private gate blocking public footpath in Thames Street

A few yards from the Phoenix pub in Thames Street there is a public footpath which provides much valued access to the River. It runs between nos. 32 and 34 Thames Street and, until recently had an authorised "public footpath" sign erected on a metal post.

A number of residents have reported that the authorised sign has been removed from its post which still stands by the door of number 32 (the premises of the late Tim Walters, now sold to new owners) and that a private gate has been erected across the footpath set back from where it joins Thames Street.

LOSRA has been in discussions with the Countryside Access Team of Surrey County Council who are dealing with the matter. They advise that the footpath is still a public right of way and should be treated as such by residents, pushing the gate open as necessary. In the meantime, SCC is now taking steps to have the footpath sign reinstated and the gate either permanently left open or removed altogether.

Money promised for improvement of dangerous Sunbury Cross lane markings

For more than a year LOSRA has been campaigning for repairs to faded lane markings at Sunbury Cross. Most residents using this busy multiple-exit junction will be aware of the problem and are well used to taking particular care when navigating their way around it, and in avoiding collision with drivers who are less familiar with its complexity.

Our concerns are shared by our County and Borough Councillors, the local Surrey Police Accident Reduction Officer and the Highways Agency, whose route engineer agreed that the markings are 'deteriorating and in need of urgent attention'.

It now seems that, at last, these concerns are to be addressed by Surrey County Council Highways Authority, the body responsible for effecting the repairs and which up until now has had insufficient funds for the purpose. LOSRA does not view this project as being one of a desirable upgrade in due course, but one of absolute necessity in the interests of road safety. We can only hope that the £70,000 earmarked for the project will become available sooner rather than later.

Mediation North Surrey offers help in disputes between neighbours

Residents in Lower Sunbury enjoy a reputation for good neighbourliness and consideration of others, but very occasionally, disputes between neighbours do occur and those involved may frequently feel trapped or helpless to do anything about it. If you or anyone you know is experiencing a problem with a neighbour and is anxious for a resolution, Mediation North Surrey can help.

Mediation is a way of helping people explore problems. It is conducted in a safe, sensitive and confidential manner; and solutions acceptable to everyone can be reached without the added anxiety and expense of legal intervention. For more information on how mediation works, visit mediate.me.uk or email: help@mediate.me.uk. Mediation North Surrey may also be contacted on 0870 751 4311. The Web site address has been added to our 'Useful Links' on the home page of the LOSRA Web site.

FRIENDS OF SUNBURY PARK

Carols in the Meadow Tuesday 14th December at 6.30pm

The event which has rapidly become a fixture of the Lower Sunbury Christmas season, Carols in the Meadow, takes place once again this year on Tuesday 14th December at 6.30pm.

The Salvation Army Band will provide the music to accompany the community carol-singing, the local Churches Together group will be serving mulled wine sponsored by The Magpie, and Father Christmas will be putting in an appearance towards the end of proceedings.

This is always hugely well-attended, regardless of the weather, and we look forward to another good crowd this year. There will be a collection to cover the costs of the event, so look out for collectors wielding their buckets.

As we go to press it is still not confirmed whether the Lower Sunbury Business Community Christmas Fair will be also be taking place in the Avenue Parade on the same evening, as had been previously mooted. It needs several more bookings for stalls for it to be a viable proposition. If it goes ahead, we will be sure to post a notice on the LOSRA web site, so please check the site for updated information.

THE LOSRA COMMITTEE

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| David Banks | 38 Kenton Avenue | 789652 |
| Pamela Cabannes-Barrall | 4 Forge Mews | 761131 |
| Elleker Carling | 3 Croysdale Avenue | 882726 |
| Tessa Cook | 125 The Avenue | 700264 |
| Don Cunningham | 2 Parkwood Grove | 889033 |
| Colleen Cuthbert (Secretary) | 8 Maryland Way | 783606 |
| Peter Francis | Linden Lodge, Woodlands Drive | 770661 |
| Jenny Grant | Riverbank, The Creek | 780682 |
| Roger Harding (Treasurer) | Sunmead Cottage, Green Street | 782744 |
| John Hirsh (Chairman) | 21 School Walk | 781363 |
| George Rushbrook | | 788471 |
| Candy Story | 38 French Street | |
| Matt Thomas | 7 Nursery Road | 787709 |
| Paul Watts (President) | 87 The Avenue | 788449 |
| Chris Wills | | |
| David Woods | 47 Sunna Gardens | 786806 |

Sunbury Neighbours needs volunteers

Sunbury Neighbours is an entirely voluntary organisation which puts Sunbury folk who can offer help in touch with Sunbury folk who need assistance. Drivers and Duty Officers are required to help continue to run this long established Volunteer Help Scheme which organises car journeys for those unable to access their own or public transport, for visits to local doctors, hospitals, shopping, Day Centres, hairdressers and various other local trips as required.

Drivers are needed on weekdays only, occasionally, and as available, to strengthen our existing team. Duty Officers are needed from 9.30am to 11.30am on occasional weekdays only as available, to field requests on their home 'phone and organise the lifts with Drivers. We are always looking for volunteers, to whom we pay expenses to cover fuel, on the understanding that whatever time they can offer is appreciated. There is no pressure and "no" is a perfectly acceptable response to a request for help.

Due to our limited resources the service is ONLY able to take requests for help from within Sunbury. For further details on how the scheme works please phone either John (01932 784432) or David (01932 785197) anytime for an informal chat. More details are at: <http://www.surreycommunity.info/sunburyneighbours/>

Visit the LOSRA web site and sign up for regular e-bulletins

It has become evident that many residents, mostly recent arrivals to Lower Sunbury, are unaware of the LOSRA Web site and the abundance of local information which is regularly published on the site. The facility to contact LOSRA in order to receive the fortnightly e-bulletin service is also not universally known.

If you are such a resident, please visit www.losra.org and click onto the 'Contact LOSRA' menu on the top right hand of the Home Page; and leave your email address. In addition to local news items, the web site offers a highly localised and accurate weather forecast service for the area.

We also need more volunteers to help deliver our newsletters. If you can assist, please leave a message via the 'Contact LOSRA' button on the web site.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you have not paid your subscription for this year, could you please help us by paying your subscription either by using the secure PayPal facility on our web site or dropping your subscription in to one of our two collection points using the tear-off slip below. You can deliver it to either of the following shops : Skinners Newsagents/Post office in Avenue Parade; Twirltour Travel in Green Street. Our thanks to these businesses for their help in providing this service. You can also pay by credit card using PayPal by visiting our web site at www.losra.org. As advised in our previous newsletters, the subscription increased to £5.00 from the beginning of January 2008.

Please find enclosed my annual subscription of £5.00 for family membership of the Lower Sunbury Residents' Association for the calendar year 2010. In addition, I would like to make a donation of £..... (AUT10)

Name:..... Address :

..... Tel. no. : E-mail address.....