

# **LOWER SUNBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

## **2022 AGM NEWSLETTER**



### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

[www.losra.org](http://www.losra.org)

**The Annual General Meeting of the Lower Sunbury Residents' Association will take place at The Riverside Arts Centre, Thames Street, Sunbury, on Wednesday 22nd June at 8 p.m.**

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting**
- 3. Chairman's Report**
- 4. Treasurer's Report**
- 5. Election of Officers and Committee**
- 6. Presentation by Ann Biggs, Strategic Planning Manager, Spelthorne Borough Council, on the Local Plan Consultation.**
- 7. Open Forum**
- 8. Any other business**

Please note that we do not circulate the Minutes of the previous AGM or the Association's audited accounts with this notice, because to do so would generate disproportionate printing costs. Copies will be available at the AGM, and will also be posted on our web site. If you are unable to visit the web site but would like to see the documents in advance of the meeting, please contact Paul Thompson, LOSRA Chairman, whose details are included in this newsletter.

## **The AGM features a presentation on the Local Plan by Spelthorne's Strategic Planning Manager**

As we made clear in our Spring newsletter, the Local Plan is at a crucial stage, and on the next page of this edition there is an update on the current state of play.

In short, it is crucial that Spelthorne Council have a current Local Plan in place as a framework for consideration of planning applications. If there is no current Plan, there is a danger of it being open season for developers to submit speculative predatory applications, which, even if turned down by the Planning Committee, would almost certainly be allowed on appeal by a Planning Inspector. This would leave sites like Kempton Park extremely vulnerable.

As our report notes, the Council agreed at a recent meeting that the Plan should go out for public consultation, so it is extremely timely and fortuitous that we have been able to

secure Ann Biggs, Spelthorne's Strategic Planning Manager, as our guest speaker at the AGM

Ann has had overall responsibility for preparing the Local Plan and the associated Staines Development Framework, and she will be detailing the consultation process, and how individuals can have input.

Ann will also be able to answer questions about the detail of the Plan and its approach in terms of balancing housing provision as required by central government against environmental issues across the Borough.

It will be fascinating and enlightening, and is an opportunity to hear from the officer with overall responsibility for the Plan on how Lower Sunbury might be affected by the implementation of the Plan, if it is finally approved, over the coming years.

# At crucial meeting, Spelthorne Council votes in favour of the Local Plan proceeding to consultation phase

At an Extraordinary Council Meeting on 19 May, Councillors voted to progress the Local Plan and move to the next consultation phase so residents, businesses, employees, and visitors to the Borough can give their views.

Whilst the Plan intends to deliver many positives for the Borough in terms of affordable housing, new infrastructure and responding to the climate emergency, it has been a very difficult challenge to balance these benefits against the high number of new homes the Government expects the Council to deliver - from the existing target of 166 dwellings per year to an eye-watering 618!

The protracted years-long evolution of the Plan led the then Leader of the Council to comment: *“The journey has not just been difficult and challenging, it has gone way beyond that. It has been divisive, bruising and at times unpleasant. It has fractured communities and turned councillors against each other. The reason for the acrimony is easy to discern: the government’s brutal housing targets which eclipse everything else in the Plan-making process.”*

## **Bruising acrimony**

Notwithstanding the bruising acrimony, we were faced with the alternative very real risk that, in the absence of a Local Plan, the Council would be unable to defend more of our most precious green spaces against unwanted development.

With a housing target of 618 dwellings it was clear that higher buildings and/or loss of more green belt would become inevitable, like the undeserving condemned man being given the choice of his method of execution.

## **Housing targets**

There has been communication between Spelthorne Borough Council and both Kwasi Kwarteng (Member of Parliament for Spelthorne) and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) regarding the Local Plan and Housing Numbers from July 2018 to November 2021. These exchanges have not produced a single definitive and unambiguous rethinking of the housing target figures.

In his foreword to the Local Plan, already quoted above, the then leader of the Council, Halliford and Sunbury West Councillor Lawrence Nichols, a Lower Sunbury resident, wrote: *“We are charged by the government to keep our Plan ‘up to date’, but to do this we are forced to use data that is now a decade*

*old and we have been specifically banned from using more up-to-date figures. No Spelthorne councillor wants to build on our Green Belt, nor do we want to populate our town centres with sterile, high-rise blocks. But that is what Westminster is demanding.*

*We all recognise the need for new homes, especially affordable housing, but 618 homes per year, compared to the target of 166 in our Core Strategy from 2009, represents an increase that will damage our environment and ruin the character of our small and highly constrained borough. .... The Government methodology is deeply flawed and is focused on a misleading algorithm for what is needed without any real consideration of what is possible. So as a Council we are faced with producing a Plan that pleases no one or having no Plan at all.”*

We would take the view that it is not an ideal Plan, especially where release of Green Belt is concerned, and comes with some risks, but in the circumstances it would have been hard to achieve what we might have liked.

## **Staines Development Framework**

Alongside the Local Plan the Staines Development Framework intends to help transform and regenerate the centre of Staines-upon-Thames. The framework will address issues such as parking, improving public transport links, capitalising on the riverside location and enhancing the environment and public spaces.

## **The public consultation**

An online consultation will begin on Wednesday 15 June and run until Monday 5 September 2022. Once live, you will be able to read and respond to the documents on the dedicated consultation web page: [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/currentconsultations](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/currentconsultations).

It’s important to note that feedback from the public will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate unedited by the Council (Regulation 19, The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). The Planning Inspectorate will then arrange for an Examination in Public to take place.

## **What the Inspector will consider**

At the Examination, an independent inspector will review the policies and proposed site allocations in the plan to consider whether they are ‘sound’, meaning they have to meet the following tests:

- *Positively prepared.* The plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neigh-

bouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development

- *Justified.* The plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence

- *Effective.* The plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities

- *Consistent with national policy.* The plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework

## **Examination process & public input**

The Examination will be a series of open public sessions which members of the public can attend and observe. At the Examination, officers and expert consultants appointed by the Council will be questioned by the inspector on how the Local Plan meets the tests of soundness.

It is usual for developers and landowners to attend, often legally represented by barristers, to speak in favour of or oppose elements of the plan. The Council will also be represented by a barrister. There are often complex legal and technical points to be made and defended.

Members of the public and residents’ associations who make representations during the Regulation 19 consultation which is about to start will be asked if they wish to appear at the Examination in person and speak to the Planning Inspector directly on issues of importance to them.

## **Inspector’s report**

Following the Examination, the inspector will issue a report to set out whether the plan can be recommended for adoption and if not, what needs to be changed in order to be found sound.

Once this has taken place, all Members of the Council will be asked to adopt the plan at a formal meeting. If adopted, the policies in the Local Plan and the Staines Development Framework will carry full weight and supersede former policies in older documents.

## **Thanks to Planning Officers**

In closing, a special mention must surely go to the officers who in preparing the complex and weighty Plan have had to both endure, and be caught in the crossfire of, the months of mutual partisan rancour and disaffection both within the Council and the communities affected. They have done a very difficult job in the most testing of circumstances.

# Events at Apps Court Farm in Walton

As we said in our Spring newsletter, Elmbridge Council recently approved a Licensing Application from Wow Factor Entertainment for a series of music events at Apps Court Farm, across the river in Walton, close to Sunbury lock.

Here is a list of the large events that we know are taking place during the summer. Full details of these, so you can understand the scale of them and exactly what they involve, can be found at [www.appscourtfarm.com](http://www.appscourtfarm.com).

Sat. 18th June	One Out Festival
Fri. 24th, June	Metro Fest
Sat. 25th June	Metro Fest
Sun. 26th June	Metro Fest
Fri. 9th September	Steps Concert
Sat. 10th Sept.	Gloria Gaynor Concert
Sun. 11th Sept.	Craig David Concert
Sat. 24th Sept	Just A Tribute (Tribute Band Festival)

As is clear from the fact that some of these feature internationally known artists, these are substantial events with multiple stages and likely to draw big crowds, with some of them camping overnight.

It is impressive that the promoters are bringing artists and events of this stature into this area, which will be a welcome addition to the local entertainment opportunities for many people who live in this part of the world.

However, it is probably reasonable to speculate that one reason that the organisers have secured the necessary planning and licensing permissions is that the site is not particularly close to any areas of housing in Walton and Molesey, which might be affected by noise etc., which might be a primary concern for Elmbridge Council

## Sunbury Embroidery launches community sponsorship scheme for development fund-raising

At the fund-raising Garden Party at Monksbridge on the Saturday of Platinum Jubilee weekend, Sunbury Millennium Embroidery launched a sponsorship scheme to raise funds towards the proposed development of a National Centre for Embroidery by expanding into the gardeners' depot behind the existing building. The highly successful day of events in the village, not only at Monksbridge but in Orchard Meadow and the Gallery, got the campaign off to an excellent start.

Full details of the proposed development can be found at [www.sunburygallery.org](http://www.sunburygallery.org), and there is a display and video devoted to the plans in the Gallery café.

The scheme enables individuals to buy one or more jigsaw pieces that make up a plan of the building, with the different parts of the building priced differently, to enable people to participate at a level they choose.

While the project will ultimately depend on getting major funding from Heritage Lottery or charitable foundations, this scheme enables local residents to contribute in a way that gives them ownership of the project. You can visit the Gallery to choose your pieces and make your donation.

## Pam Judd retrospective Exhibition

There is an exhibition running at the Embroidery Gallery until 17th July which is a retrospective of the work of Pam Judd, who was the Chief Embroiderer for the original project.

Pam, who died a couple of years ago, trained at the Hampton School of Needlework and was an expert embroiderer, with a highly personal and distinctive style, who contributed some remarkable pieces to the Sunbury Embroidery, as well as brilliantly organising the 147 embroiderers who were involved.

She produced some fine works of embroidery during her life, many depicting local scenes, and many of these are on display. We urge you visit the Gallery to enjoy them.

Lower Sunbury is much closer, just a couple of hundred metres away, and it is well known that sound travels very efficiently across water. The noise from last September's equivalent of the Tribute Band event was clearly audible halfway up The Avenue, as the editor of this newsletter can confirm.

In addition, Apps Court also submitted Temporary Event Notices for private events, on May 21st, 10th June and 2nd July - The festival on 21st May was noisy enough to be heard within some Lower Sunbury riverside properties.

On all the dates concerned, especially the larger events, if residents genuinely find the noise unduly intrusive, it is very important that residents complain directly to Elmbridge (link below) as they will log these complaints.

<https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/pollution/report-noise/#:~:text=You%20can%20report%20ongoing%20noise,use%20our%20online%20reporting%20form>.

If no complaints are received, it will quite reasonably be assumed that nobody was disturbed.

Active noise monitoring of the June events will be carried out by Spelthorne Council from Monksbridge, in Thames St., which is one of the closest properties to the Apps Court site.

This will help establish what are acceptable noise levels, which can be advised to the event organisers to try to reach an understanding as to whether the natural level of noise associated with events of this kind is compatible with what is seen to be acceptable on the Sunbury side of the river.

If it is found that events are causing a serious noise nuisance, especially to a large area of Lower Sunbury, and that the noise cannot be reduced to an acceptable level without affecting the viability of the promotions, then clearly this should influence whether permission for such events is granted in future.

## Outdoor gym installed at The Cedars

As part of an initiative to get people fit and active again after the Covid pandemic, Spelthorne Council has installed ten outdoor gyms across the borough, one of which is in The Cedars recreation ground in Green Street.

It's free to use, doesn't need any special skills or training, and is suitable for people of all ages and levels of fitness, and regularly using the equipment can not only improve strength and fitness, but also mobility, balance and co-ordination.

Spelthorne are to be commended for this, and we hope that people will make the most of the gym and enjoy using it.

## Meeting held to discuss traffic issues in The Avenue and Thames Street

In 2019 a petition was presented to Spelthorne Joint Committee about the safety of pedestrians crossing The Avenue to access Chennestone Primary School, and some have campaigned for a 20 mph limit to be extended over the length of The Avenue.

Buddhi Weerasinghe, County Councillor for Lower Sunbury and Halliford, hosted a public meeting on 13 May to hear the views of residents and discuss options, including a 20 mph zone with traffic calming, or retaining the existing speed limit but with traffic calming measures and improved pedestrian facilities at the The Avenue and Manor Lane Junction.

The Surrey County Council highways officer replied to numerous points raised, noting the difficulties of putting a crossing at that location. Other options discussed included extending the 20 mph limit at the southern end of The Avenue further north to Saxonbury Avenue and installing vehicle-activated speed signs.

Residents also raised concerns about the poor conditions of sections of the footpath. The highways officer agreed to provide further data prior to further consultation and discussion.

There were comments about vibration caused by heavy vehicles in Thames Street with nuisance to residents, damage to properties and danger to pedestrians, with lorries exceeding the recommended weight limit. Watch the web site for updates on these issues.

# Friends of Sunbury Park Success of Walled Garden nestbox camera

We reported in the Spring newsletter that with help from our County Councillor Buddhi Weerasinghe's discretionary funds, a nest box with a camera was being installed close to the Embroidery Gallery, linked to a screen where activity in the box could be viewed inside the Gallery.

We thought it might have been a bit late, but within days a pair of blue tits started nesting, and have successfully raised a brood, with three chicks fledging from the nine eggs laid, and leaving the nest during May, surviving the vagaries of the weather and food availability.

This was a great outcome, especially as the nest box is only a few metres from the Gallery entrance, and with gallery patrons able to see the chicks' progress from inside. Who knows, they might even attempt a second brood.

The old adage that says that "if you provide the environment, then the nature will come" has never proved truer and it is with great optimism that we look forward to next year's breeding season.

## Cows return to Sunbury Park

Cattle grazing has resumed in Sunbury Park for the summer, as part of the biodiversity and grassland management programme. There are nine Aberdeen Angus steers, who have readily made themselves at home.

As always, we would urge dog owners to keep their dogs under control and ensure they don't disturb or chase the cattle. They are very docile and will generally not approach people in an aggressive way.

Obviously, it is unfortunate if the presence of the cows deters people from using the Park, but they are an important part of the strategy to maintain and enhance the quality of the Park for the benefit residents and Park users.

## Wildlife booklets available in the Gallery

Just a reminder that there are excellent illustrated booklets available for sale in the Embroidery Gallery with information about the birds, butterflies and flowers in the Park, which will soon be joined by one about the trees. They are a great way to enhance your enjoyment of the Park

# LOSRA needs more Committee Members

With one or two recent changes to the LOSRA Committee, we have some vacancies for new members who are interested in working to help deliver our objectives to protect the local environment and amenities, and enhance the quality of life in Sunbury.

If you are interested, and think you can bring useful skills and knowledge to the table, please contact our Secretary Colleen Cuthbert on 01932 783606 or colleen.cuthbert@btinternet.com.

## Subscriptions due for 2022

It's great to be back with printed newsletter again to supplement our web site news service and e-bulletins, but with gaps between newsletters, and subscription-collecting opportunities like our Annual General Meeting, plus the Regatta and Christmas Fair, not happening over the last couple of years, our paid-up membership has fallen off a bit.

With the Local Plan process under way, it would be a surprise if we do not have a fight on our hands over that or another big issue before too long that would need funds for legal representation. It also gives us extra clout if we are able to cite a substantial number of paid-up members when we are making submissions on major issues.

Please help us by paying your 2022 subscription using one of the methods set out below. Many thanks.

## THE LOSRA COMMITTEE

John Carey	07801 635106
Colleen Cuthbert (Secretary & Membership Secretary)	
8 Maryland Way, TW16 6HR	01932 783606
Iain Findlay (Treasurer) 58 Thames Street	01932 783739
Rashpal Gill 4 Roper Crescent	07889 439519
John Hirsh (Vice-Chairman) 21 School Walk	07515 637474
Neil Huntingford Summer House, Wheatleys Ait	01932 783761
Chris Hyde 29 Queensway	07854 147935
Oliver Parr Orchard House, Thames Street	01932 765229
Stacey Pinto 37 Sutherland Avenue	07894 834277
Nigel Spooner 36 Kingsmead Avenue	07887 898874
Paul Thompson (Chairman) 12 Brackenwood	07788 107500
Paul Watts (President) 87 The Avenue	01932 788449

## LOSRA MEMBERSHIP FOR 2022 PAYMENT OPTIONS

### By Standing Order

You may pay by setting up a standing order with your bank. Please make payments to Lower Sunbury Residents Association at Barclays Bank, Account number: 90581194 Sort Code: 20 46 73. Subsequent payments to be made on 1st January each year. Please use LOSRA with your house number and post code as a reference.

### By cheque or cash

The annual subscription is still just £5 per household and voluntary donations are always welcome. For payment by cheque or cash, please use the form below and deliver to Colleen Cuthbert, Membership Secretary, 8 Maryland Way TW16 6HR or any other committee member as listed. Alternatively drop your payment into Skinners Newsagents/Post Office in Avenue Parade, or The Good Estate Agent/Twirltour Travel in Green Street. Please make cheques payable to Lower Sunbury Residents Association.

### Via PayPal

This can be done on the web site at [www.LOSRA.org](http://www.LOSRA.org)

### Life Membership

There is also the option of Life Membership of £100 with a one-off payment.

If you are not sure that you are up to date with your payments or you need more information about membership, please contact Colleen Cuthbert, Membership Secretary, on 01932 783606 or by email [colleen.cuthbert@btinternet.com](mailto:colleen.cuthbert@btinternet.com)

Thank you very much for your continued support.

### Membership payment slip 2022 for CHEQUES OR CASH

I wish to pay the annual subscription to LOSRA for £5.00 per household and a donation for £..... (please enter amount, if you would like to make a voluntary donation)

Name/s. ....

Address .....

.....Post Code.....

email .....

Telephone..... Date .....

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