

LOWER SUNBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

2019 AGM NEWSLETTER



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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 19th June at 8 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting
3. Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Officers and Committee
6. A tribute to the late Peter Francis, LOSRA Committee Member
7. Presentation by David Munro, Police & Crime Commissioner for Surrey, and Inspector Maxine Cilia, Surrey Police Borough Commander for Spelthorne
8. Open Forum
9. Any other business

Please note that we do not circulate the Minutes of last year's 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.

Senior Police representatives coming to AGM to discuss the problem of crime in Spelthorne

In our New Year newsletter, we led with an article about what people perceive as the growing problem of crime in Sunbury, with a spate of burglaries, break-ins and thefts, some of them involving violence, which does not seem to be abating, if anecdotal evidence is to be believed.

We highlighted the potential issue that cuts in police funding might be affecting their ability to maintain an effective visible presence on the streets, or to follow up and investigate enough of the offences, possibly leaving criminals to believe that they can carry out this kind of crime in Sunbury, and indeed Spelthorne on a wider level, with impunity.

That article got quite a bit of response, so we have invited David Munro, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey,

and Inspector Maxine Cilia, Surrey Police Borough Commander for Spelthorne, to come to the AGM to tell us what their view is of the current situation regarding crime in our area based on the statistics they have, and how they are approaching the prevention and investigation of crime in Spelthorne based on the resources available.

The audience will have an opportunity to ask questions, and it should be a chance to get some genuine insight into how the police view what we see as a growing blight in the area, and to get a message about the level of concern that exists.

This should be a very interesting and enlightening session - it's not often that we have the chance to speak directly to the senior people charged with the difficult job of policing the Borough and the County.

Sunbury Health Centre management examining potential offer of new premises

Most people in Sunbury will be aware of the pressure on space and resources at the Health Centre in Green Street.

Health Centre management have been considering several options in relation to premises, including opportunities at their current site and the potential to lease part of the new development at Ceaser Court (formerly Benwell House) in Green Street which is currently at the planning consultation stage.

At the current site they are working to secure additional space as they continue to expand their multidisciplinary team of GPs, Nurse Practitioners, Paramedics, Nurses, Pharmacists, HCAs & Phlebottomists.

There is an opportunity to obtain additional rooms at Green Street as the majority of community services provided by CSH (formerly Virgin Care) have relocated, freeing up a significant proportion of the current premises.

However this needs converting and the Health Centre is exploring funding options with NHS England and the landlord NHS Property Services for this, which remains a challenge.

The Centre believed they had secured funding via NHS England and had advanced plans to redevelop and rejuvenate the current premises, but this funding opportunity was withdrawn in March and nothing more has been heard to date.

Spelthorne Council approached the Health Centre about the Ceaser Court op-

portunity, whereby the ground floor of a proposed new building might be given over to a relocated Health Centre.

The options are currently being reviewed given the following considerations:

- Is Ceaser Court big enough for the practice requirements now and for future growth in patient numbers?

- Is there a requirement to include the remaining community services in Ceaser Court and how much space would this require?

- If there is sufficient space, is the rent and service charge affordable in comparison to the current premises and would this be agreeable to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)?

- Is car parking on the Ceaser Court site sufficient/comparable to the current site?

- What are the implications with the current landlord NHS Property Services if they Centre moved to a property owned by Spelthorne Borough Council?

Management are hoping to meet with the CCG and Spelthorne Borough Council shortly to discuss the answers to these questions and can then make an informed decision about the next steps and will update further in due course.

Whatever the outcome, it's good to know that the local council, even though they have no involvement in NHS services, and the Health Centre are working together to try to improve health care provision for local residents.

A tribute to the late Peter Francis, former LOSRA Committee member

We are sad to report that long-time Committee member and stalwart of the local community Peter Francis died recently from cancer at the age of 80.

With one exception, Peter was the longest-serving member of the LOSRA Committee, having joined in the late 1990s a little while after he moved into the area from Kew after taking early retirement.

He joined LOSRA because he was unhappy about one or two things that he had observed going on and contacted us to ask if there was anything that could be done, as a result of which he volunteered his services to the Association.

Little did we know what an extraordinarily valuable asset he would become. Peter was a highly educated and professionally trained chemical engineer who eventually pursued a career in the oil exploration, drilling and refinery businesses.

Over about 30 years, his work took him all around the world, starting with a lengthy stint in Bahrain, followed by assignments in South Korea, South Africa

and the USA, as well as time in the UK.

With LOSRA he got involved in several projects before Surrey County Council's EcoPark project in Charlton Lane was originally floated in early 2010. This was Peter's home territory and he alighted on the issue with alacrity, probably not realising that this would consume the next ten years of his life.

Along with one or two other experts within the community, Peter served on the SATEP (Spelthorne Against The EcoPark) steering group, masterminding the opposition to the project.

His confidence in his own knowledge, which told him that the proposal was deeply flawed and scientifically unsustainable, enabled him to oblige SITA (now Suez) to address some central issues in detailed exchanges over the years during which time his attention to detail, scientific precision and quiet determination made him a formidable opponent.

Frustratingly, having made cogent and scientifically unanswerable presentations to Surrey County Council's Planning Committee, he and his colleagues came

Planning application for houses adjacent to Orchard Meadow refused

As any right-minded person would have seen as inevitable, an application to build three houses in the garden to the rear of 79 Thames Street fronting Rope Walk overlooking Orchard Meadow has been rejected by Spelthorne's planners.

LOSRA submitted a detailed objection citing various grounds, including:

- inappropriate development in the Conservation Area and lack of access and car parking provision - as did many local residents.

What was particularly objectionable about this proposal was that in the application to convert 79 Thames Street into three flats only a year or two ago, the developer cited the fact that the existence of the garden to the rear of the premises, to which the flat-dwellers would have access, offset any possible downsides about density etc., and made the conversion more acceptable.

The garden was promptly annexed, made unavailable to the residents of the flats and declared to be waste land which was ideal for development.

We may need more houses in Spelthorne, but LOSRA feels fully justified in opposing such patently inappropriate speculative proposals, especially in the Conservation Area.

Whether the developer will come back with a revised, reduced scheme remains to be seen. We hope not.

within an inch of persuading them to reject the plan, with one or two votes swayed only by unruly behaviour by some residents.

However, after that he used his knowledge and powers of negotiation to ensure that the worst aspects of the plant design have been addressed and threats to public safety and potential pollution have been properly dealt with. Basically, he has done the work that their own experts should have done.

It was pretty thankless work, done out of a sense of professional duty, which he did until his illness stopped him, and the community owes him a significant debt of gratitude for his selfless dedication to the project.

Despite suffering mindless abuse from at least one Surrey County Councillor for his commitment to the environmental cause, and being patronisingly ignored by vested interests, he was always measured, calm and courteous in his approach.

Peter was a fine man, a true gentleman, and someone all of us on the Committee admired greatly. His work has had a genuinely positive result and we are all immensely grateful to him. We will miss him. Our condolences go to his wife and family - we trust these words will provide some consolation.

Watersplash Farm gravel extraction is a 'live' issue again - your action needed

It has been going on so long that we could all have been forgiven for thinking that it was done and dusted with just the rubber-stamping left.

However, with the planning application from Cemex once again in front of Surrey County Council after issues raised by the Environment Agency have, we thought, been addressed, it seems that there might still be an opportunity to thwart it.

You may have seen articles in Sunbury Matters outlining the questions surrounding hydrology and potential flooding, subsequent to which LOSRA has revisited these matters with the experts from Shepperton Residents Association who have carried out detailed scientific work and been challenging Surrey County Council, Cemex and the Environment Agency with their analyses over the last year or two.

The crux of the matter is that pressure from the local experts over potential pollution from the landfill matter obliged Cemex to include an impermeable layer of clay to secure the void left by gravel extraction. The effect of this on underground water flows would entail substantially increased flood risk.

This risk has increased since the floods of recent years and the introduction of the Climate Change Directive, which has changed the forecasts about frequency of possible future flooding, all of which has happened since the original planning permission for the gravel working.

Cemex are pretty desperate to get the final OK for working, and Surrey County Council also have their reasons to close the issue down, but they have a duty to consider the implications of such a decision.

If it can be demonstrated that there is sufficient public concern about the risks involved in going ahead with the project, and Surrey can be convinced of their potential exposure in the event of future flooding that could be blamed on the gravel extraction, the project might yet be forestalled, or at least Cemex might be forced to go back and re-draft what has become a confused and contradictory dog's breakfast of an application.

If you want to see the detailed arguments and scientific background, a link to the presentation by Shepperton resident John Fennell is available in the news section of the LOSRA web site.

If you wish to lodge an objection, there is still time as the whole thing is still under discussion, although it might come up at a planning committee in a few weeks time. Details of the grounds for objecting and who you should send your objection to are in the same article on the web site.

We are grateful to the Shepperton residents who have diligently pursued this issue and LOSRA has lent its weight to the cause by making a detailed objection to the application.

Are you interested in becoming a Governor of Ashford & St. Peter's Hospital Trust?

The time is coming round when the period of service of the current Public Governors of the Ashford & St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundations Trust is coming to an end and new Governors need to be elected.

Every Trust has a Council of Governors whose role is to ensure that the Non-Executive Directors are reviewing, questioning and challenging the Executive Directors to make sure the trust is running effectively and smoothly as a business - basically holding the hospital board to account.

The Ashford & St. Peter's Council of Governors comprises 14 elected Public Governors from the relevant constituencies, five elected Staff Governors and six appointed Governors, who are local councillors or academics.

Spelthorne needs to elect three Public Governors. In order to stand for election you need to be a member of the Trust. Everyone who lives in Sunbury can become a member, and you do this by filling in the on-line application form at <https://secure.membra.co.uk/AshfordAndStPetersApplicationForm/>

Forms are also available at Sunbury Health Centre, and if you have ever had a letter about a hospital appointment there is usually a form attached to the back of those. Once you are a member you are eligible to stand for election, and as a member you will receive information about the timing of elections and the process involved.

Governors are elected for a three-

year term and their duties involve attending three Council of Governors meetings a year, and also serving on sub-committees - you can obviously choose which ones you make yourself available to serve on. The work of the sub-committees, in particular, is where you can make a real difference.

Governors are generally local people who have an interest in healthcare and care about improving their local health services for the good of the whole community and who are keen to develop stronger links between the trust and the community it serves.

Governors will be expected to abide by the seven principles of public life, otherwise known as the Nolan principles - selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, and will be expected to abide by the Trust's Code of Conduct.

Prospective governors should recognise that the governor role is broader than their own experiences, representing the interests of the community rather than their individual views or needs.

It is a very worthwhile and necessary role and it would be very good to have a Sunbury resident on the Council, as we have had for the last three years in Brian Catt.

Please think about getting involved if you feel it is a role in which you can make a contribution.

Planning application for development of Dart House in Thames Street still open for objections

There has been a lot of to-ing and fro-ing over the planning application for the demolition and development of a block of flats at Dart House in Thames Street adjacent to Flowerpot Green.

The plan, which has undergone some amendments, provides for six flats on four levels, with underground parking.

Along with many local residents, LOSRA has strongly objected on the basis that this a massive and inappropriate development for this site, out of character with the Conservation Area, and causing potential traffic hazard, and with inadequate parking provision.

The Environment Agency originally raised objections because of flood risk issues related to the subterranean parking, served only by a lift, but it seems that their concerns may now have been addressed.

The revised closing date for objections is 31st May, so it may be too late if you have not already objected by the time this newsletter comes out, but it's always worth sending it in anyway, in case it has not been determined.

This is a particularly objectionable example of a completely speculative and inappropriate application, with the developer trying to discourage objections by submitting huge numbers of documents. The file currently runs to 185 documents. We are relying on Spelthorne to deliver the right outcome.

An exciting year for Sunbury Embroidery Gallery

It has already been an intense few months for the Sunbury Embroidery Gallery and it promises to become even more exciting.

In January HRH Princess Alexandra, having had to postpone a planned visit last autumn, visited the Gallery, and more than 100 people associated with the Embroidery project attended the event. It was a delightful occasion, which underlined the high profile the Gallery enjoys in many different circles.

The Embroidery Trustees, after detailed discussions with Spelthorne Council, have embarked on a major expansion project which would see the Gallery extend its footprint into the former gardeners' depot.

This is to enable the project to become a centre of excellence for Embroidery and textile-related arts and crafts. The Gallery has reached agreement with the renowned embroiderer Diana Springall to house her unique collection of embroidery and textile art, so that it can be properly exhibited and used for educational and research purposes.

With the Gallery's proximity to the Royal School of Needlework, Kingston University, and the University of the Creative Arts campus at Farnham, it is uniquely placed to become an internationally recognized resource.

A planning application for the proposed development has been submitted, and if it is passed, the Trustees will launch a major fund-raising programme to enable the project to proceed.

They are exciting times indeed for The Gallery which goes from strength to strength as a popular attraction in the village and beyond.

The Gallery needs more volunteers Can you spare a morning or afternoon?

Over the years the Gallery has lost some of its original group of volunteers and as it continues to get busier, it urgently needs new volunteers either to assist the permanent staff in the café or to man the Gallery desk and welcome visitors.

All the necessary training will be given and it's a lovely environment in which to help out.

If you can give up a morning or afternoon during the week or weekend to either of those things, please make yourself known at the Gallery either in person or by phone.

LOSRA needs more Committee Members

Along with the sad loss of Peter Francis, two other Committee members, George Rushbrook and Mark McCartney have indicated their intention to stand down because of personal circumstances - we thank them for their sterling work over the years, in particular George Rushbrook, who pursued his detailed work on Air Quality Monitoring into his 90s.

We need new members to get us up to strength, so if you have a commitment to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in Lower Sunbury, and are prepared to get involved and take on projects that maybe go beyond just attending a monthly Committee meeting, please contact either the Chairman or Secretary, whose details are below.

Subscriptions due for 2019

If you have not paid your subscription for this calendar year, please could you do so, as set out below.

Things have gone quiet on Kempton Park while the Local Plan process continues, but 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. 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 some of the major issues.

THE LOSRA COMMITTEE

Shirley Agar (Membership Sec.) 87 Manor Lane 765517
Colleen Cuthbert (Secretary) 8 Maryland Way 783606
Iain Findlay (Treasurer) 58 Thames Street 783739
Rashpal Gill 4 Roper Crescent 07889 439519
John Hirsh (Vice-Chairman) 21 School Walk 07515 637474
Neil Huntingford Summer House, Wheatleys Ait 783761
Alan Lacey 19 The Pines 07733 003169
Mark McCartney 2 Forge Mews, Forge Lane 01932 963642
Oliver Parr Orchard House, Thames Street 765229
George Rushbrook, 8 Meadows End 788471
Paul Thompson (Chairman) 12 Brackenwood 07788 107500
Paul Watts (President) 87 The Avenue 788449

LOSRA MEMBERSHIP FOR 2019 PAYMENT OPTIONS

By Standing Order

We have introduced the convenient option to pay by Standing Order (you can download the form from the web site). This will save you the trouble of renewing each year as it will automatically be done for you until you request it to be stopped. Once we see that your Standing Order has gone through, we will confirm it. We hope this will make the process easier for everyone. You can also set up your own Standing Order if you use internet banking. If you do this, please put your postcode and house number as the 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 Shirley Agar, Membership Secretary, 87 Manor Lane, TW16 6JA, or drop into Skinners Newsagents/Post Office in Avenue Parade, or Twirltour Travel in Green Street. Please make cheques payable to LOSRA.

Via web site at www.losra.org using Via Paypal or debit/credit card

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 further information about membership, please contact Shirley Agar, Membership Secretary, on 01932 765517 or by email shirleyagar1@aol.com and we will be pleased to advise. Thank you very much for your continued support.

Membership payment slip 2019 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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