

LOWER SUNBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION 2010 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 23rd June at 8 p.m.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the 2009 Annual General Meeting**
- 3. Chairman's Report**
- 4. Treasurer's Report**
- 5. Election of Officers and Committee**
- 6. Talk by Kwasi Kwarteng, MP for Spelthorne**
- 7. Update by Robert Shaw, Chairman of Sunbury Millennium Embroidery**
- 8. Open Forum**
- 9. Any other business**

Please note that we do not circulate the Minutes of last year's AGM or the Associations 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 John Hirsh, LOSRA Chairman, whose details are on the back of the newsletter.

Kwasi Kwarteng, the newly-elected MP for Spelthorne, is special guest at this year's AGM

We are very fortunate that our meetings are generally well-attended by residents, usually because there is rarely a shortage of important issues to discuss. However, we always try to have a special feature at our Annual General Meetings to make them something of an occasion and to provide those who make the effort to come with some special insight or interest.

This year, for the first time in over 20 years, Spelthorne has a new Member of Parliament, and we have struck while the iron is hot to invite Kwasi Kwarteng to come to our AGM to introduce himself to the Association and give residents the opportunity to hear his thoughts on his new role.

We are delighted that Mr. Kwarteng has accepted our invitation at a time when he is no doubt extremely busy not only familiarising himself with life in the House of Commons, but also doing so in a very unusual governmental context.

We should make it clear that Mr. Kwarteng's at-

tendance at the AGM will be dependent on whether he is required to be at the House for proceedings there. Obviously, with the new Chancellor of the Exchequer presenting his emergency Budget on Tuesday 22nd June, the day before our AGM, it is not impossible that Mr. Kwarteng will need to be in the Commons for the Budget debate and related proceedings, and we won't know that literally until the day.

However, he will naturally make every effort to come if he can make the time available. We obviously didn't know about the Budget when we booked the date of the AGM and invited Mr. Kwarteng, so it's just one of those things.

We are sure that residents will be keen to meet our new MP and hear what he has to say, and naturally we would like to ensure we have a full hall to demonstrate to our MP the strength of our Association and to give him a warm welcome to Lower Sunbury, regardless of anyone's political persuasions. We look forward to seeing you there.

London Irish planning applications unanimously rejected by Spelthorne's Planning Committee

The first round in the battles over the London Irish ground in The Avenue and Hazelwood Golf Course were duly won at the special meeting of Spelthorne's Planning Committee on 27th April when the two planning applications submitted by London Irish Holdings were unanimously rejected by the Committee.

This was not a huge surprise, as the Planning Officers had recommended rejection of both the application to build on the London Irish ground in The Avenue and the plan to develop a training and competitive rugby centre on Hazelwood golf course.

However, the way the evening panned out gave LOSRA, as well as SOLID and HAG, the action groups working to oppose the applications, particular satisfaction. There was a large turnout of residents clearly opposing the plans, while there appeared to be surprisingly few London Irish supporters there. Residents representatives spoke eloquently and relevantly in our allotted public speaking slots, while London Irish's people, despite

their use of expensive consultants, seemed under-prepared.

However, the most important aspect was that in both cases, submissions by residents' representatives and local councillors resulted in extra grounds for rejection being added to those recommended by the planning officers. These revolved around the issue of the plans being inappropriate to the character of the area, an important qualitative judgement which will help considerably when, as is expected, the applications go to appeal.

With so much at stake, London Irish will almost certainly lodge appeals against the rejection of the plans, which mean there will be a public inquiry into each application, probably later in the year. We have always expected this to happen, and are geared up to deal with this eventuality.

It will need another round of objection letters to go to the respective Planning Inspectors, and, along with SOLID and HAG, we will make sure that everyone is kept in touch with developments and that the momentum of the campaign is maintained.

“Have Your Say” event on Thursday 1st July at 7pm at Sunbury Manor School

The next “Have Your Say” meeting in Lower Sunbury takes place on Thursday 1st July from 7-9pm at Sunbury Manor School in Nursery Road.

The “Have Your Say” events have replaced the Area Forums, and as Spelthorne Council's web site says “allow you to find out more about issues of local interest, ask questions and let us know your views”. Unlike the Area Forums, they only take place once a year. We have made it clear that we don't think this is often enough, so it's important that we make sure it is well attended and that Spelthorne's powers-that-be are in no doubt that the people of Sunbury think it's important that there are proper opportunities for them to ques-

tion Council policies and actions in an open public forum, rather than the restricted questioning process allowed at Council meetings.

The meeting will be chaired by Cllr. Andrew Hirst, who represents Halliford & Sunbury West, so at least is in touch with local issues, and we know he is a strong supporter of the idea of better and more effective dialogue between residents and the Council.

Please come along if you can, especially if there is an issue you want to put to the Council. For more information go to http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/your_council/consultation.htm haveyoursay1.htm

Please support the fighting fund against the London Irish developments

If, as expected, the London Irish issues go to appeal, we may need to hire professional assistance in preparing and presenting our case at the Public Inquiries.

This is an expensive business. At previous inquiries, the developers have often had a QC representing them, costing several thousand pounds a day. We wouldn't be in that league, but any kind of professional help will involve considerable cost.

So far this year we have only had about 50% of the annual subscriptions we had last year. These were due on January 1st, so it would help greatly if you could pay those as soon as possible.

In addition, we are trying to build up a “war chest” of funds so that if necessary, we can bring in the right person to assist us. If you wish to make a donation to the fund, please make it in the usual way, and mark the slip clearly “London Irish Fighting Fund” (or send an e-mail identifying it if you do it via PayPal). This will enable us to ring-fence the funds, so that if the appeal does not go ahead for some reason, we can return the donations if people wish us to.

LOSRA contributes to consultation on new Supplementary Planning Guidelines

An example of the more technical behind-the-scenes work which LOSRA does has recently been completed with the submission of comments, in response to an invitation from Spelthorne Council, on the drafting of new Supplementary Planning Guidelines.

The proposals and amendments we have put forward are primarily geared to strengthening the grounds on which the Planners refuse applications, or demand their improvement, based on developments being out of character with the area, especially in the Conservation Area.

This consultation process will continue for the next six months.

Residents' consultation group set up on Charlton Lane "Eco Park" plan

Following the public meeting about the proposal for new waste disposal facilities at an "Eco Park" on the site of the existing Waste Transfer Station in Charlton Lane, reported in our last issue, an exhibition of the plans was held at Shepperton Village Hall during April.

It was extremely well attended, and as a result of the events, SITA, the company contracted to handle Spelthorne's waste management, has proposed setting up a consultative liaison group comprising interested local residents. There has been a huge response from people and organisations wanting to participate.

SITA asked LOSRA if we wished to be involved, which of course we do, and LOSRA Committee member Peter Francis, who

has specific professional expertise in this field, will be our representative.

During the year, it is envisaged that the plans will be developed from their current concept stage into something which can form the basis of a planning application. However, there will be some searching questions to be asked along the way about the technology itself and the implications as far as transport, logistics, air pollution are concerned. The extent to which an unacceptable burden might be imposed on an already over-stretched infrastructure in the most densely populated part of Surrey is also a key issue.

At least the consultative group will give us a chance to monitor this process and have some input into the discussions.

Hawke Park planning application approved

The planning application submitted by Spelthorne Council for Hawke Park, the linear park formerly known as TP26, was approved by the Planning Committee in March.

The primary aspect of the plan is the installation of a shared pedestrian/cycle path along the length of the Park, which was an initiative by Surrey County Council as part of the Safe Routes to Schools scheme before the ownership of the land was passed to Spelthorne Borough (although as far as we know the basis of this transfer has still not been agreed between the Councils).

Concerns were voiced during the consultation process, by the Friends of Sunbury Park group, that the surface chosen for the path was inappropriate. The preferred surface as far as FoSP was concerned was a traditional natural material called Breedon gravel, as used in many paths in Richmond Park and Bushy

Park. The Council elected to use a tarmac-based surface called Fibredec, manufactured by Colas. They did this on the basis that it required less ongoing maintenance costs, although no data has actually been produced to support this.

A request was made that the permission should be given subject to further research and consultation on the relative costs of the two surfaces, but Council officers chose to ignore this, and approved it based on using Fibredec.

We don't know when the plan will be implemented, but it will be interesting to see what people think of the path once it's in place. We sincerely hope that after years of fighting to assure the future of the land as useful and attractive public open space, we don't end up with something that residents don't like!

Planning appeal delayed on latest application for 72 The Avenue

We are aware that many people have taken a close interest in the saga of the succession of planning applications to build two large houses on the site of 72 The Avenue, and will wonder what has been happening since the last application was turned down.

The applicants have appealed against the refusal, but there is apparently a backlog of cases within the Planning Inspectorate, and no date has yet been set for the appeal to be heard. Thanks are due to all those who have continued to send letters of objection in response to successive applications and appeals.

Meanwhile it is slightly sad to see the house and its delightful front garden start to look somewhat run down and neglected.

Rivermead Island creek maintenance - talks continue with Environment Agency

Despite work by volunteers during the winter to help clear growth and debris from the creek that runs along Rivermead and Swan's Rest Islands, the creek is still choked with vegetation and silt, and urgently needs dredging to maintain water flow, and keep it healthy as wildlife habitat and as drainage relief.

As reported in our last issue, LOSRA has been in discussion with the Environment Agency, who apparently now accept that the creek is part of the main river and therefore comes under the Agency's jurisdiction, so they are at least partly responsible for its maintenance.

The work would be costly, however, and there is doubt as to when funds could be found for the work. We are intending to broker a discussion with Spelthorne Council to see if it could be done as a partnership, and are also progressing the possibility of obtaining a grant under a scheme for environmental improvements sponsored by the British Airports Authority

FRIENDS OF SUNBURY PARK

Friends Of Sunbury Park Annual General Meeting Tuesday 15th June at the Embroidery Gallery

The AGM of Friends of Sunbury Park takes place at the Embroidery Gallery at 7.30pm on Tuesday 15th June. The meeting is open to all, and provides an opportunity to hear reports about the management of the Park, Orchard Meadow, the Walled Garden and Hawke Park.

There is a Management Plan in place for the Park, prepared by Surrey Wildlife Trust, and aspects of how this is being implemented are under constant discussion within the Friends group along with Spelthorne Council's Environment Services team, which includes a Biodiversity Officer.

Current discussions include the timing and location of the hay cut to promote the high quality fescue grasses and wild flowers, and avoid prejudicing overwintering butterfly and moth pupae, and the possibility of introducing cattle grazing.

It promises to be an interesting meeting so if you use the Park and are interested in how it is managed, we look forward to seeing you there.

THE LOSRA COMMITTEE

| | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|
| David Banks | 38 Kenton Avenue | 789652 |
| Pamela Cabannes-Barrall | 4 Forge Mews | 761131 |
| Elleke Carling | 3 Croysdale Avenue | 882728 |
| Don Cunningham | 2 Parkwood Grove | 889033 |
| Colleen Cuthbert (Secretary) | 8 Maryland Way | 783606 |
| Peter Francis | Linden Lodge, Woodlands Drive | 770661 |
| Cathie French | 173 French Street | 789157 |
| Roger Harding (Treasurer) | Sunmead Cottage, Green Street | 782744 |
| John Hirsh (Chairman) | 21 School Walk | 781363 |
| George Rushbrook | | 788471 |
| Matt Thomas | 7 Nursery Road | 787709 |
| Paul Watts (President) | 87 The Avenue | 788449 |
| Chris Wills | | |
| David Woods | 47 Sunna Gardens | 786806 |

Don't miss Sunbury Open Gardens Day on Sunday 27th June

The Open Gardens Day has become one of the most popular events in the village since its inception in 2003, providing one of those marvellous "win-win" occasions when a substantial sum of money is raised for charity while a large number of people have the chance to visit a selection of the beautiful domestic gardens in the area and enjoy an absorbing and interesting day out.

This year it takes place on Sunday 27th June. We don't have full details yet, and there is a notice on the Open Gardens web site that details will be posted soon, so keep an eye on www.sunburyopengardens.co.uk. News will no doubt also be on the LOSRA site and in an e-bulletin shortly before the event.

Last year, 600 people visited the seven gardens that were open, and from the entrance fees, the raffle and sales of ice creams, cakes, drinks, jams and plants, a total of £6,065 was raised for St. Mary's Church and Shooting Star Hospice.

Thanks are due to those residents who make their gardens available for the day, and we are sure that this will once again be a special occasion in the village.

Sunbury Neighbours scheme needs volunteers. Can you help?

Drivers and Duty Officers are required to help continue to run Sunbury Neighbours, the 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 needs, 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, who deal with telephone requests are also needed, 9.30am to 11.30am on occasional weekdays only to organise the lifts with Drivers, from their home phone. Contributions to car and phone costs are made periodically. For further details on how the scheme works please phone John (01932 784432) or David (01932 785197) any time for an informal chat.

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 website at www.losra.org 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 website 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 £..... (AGM10)

Name:..... Address :

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