

Weybridge Society

Your Residents Association, Working to Keep Weybridge a Pleasant Place to Live



Newsletter

Registered with the Civic Trust

Winter 2007

Hon. Patron - Michael Aspel, OBE

The Next Meeting of the Weybridge Society

will be held on

Monday, 21st January 2008

when a speaker from

SURREY AIR AMBULANCE

will explain the work of the service,
its make-up and the Trust which administers it.

The Meeting will be held at 8 p.m. in

St James' Church Centre, Weybridge

(Please note this venue - ample parking in
Churchfields car park)

All welcome - members free - guests £1.00

The Surrey Air Ambulance Fund, whose motto is 'Saving Time Saving Life' is totally funded by the people of Surrey, and although the Society will be making a donation to the fund, there will be a collection at the meeting should those attending wish to make personal contributions. Caroline Cooper, of the Events Team of SAA asks that as many people as possible should attend the meeting so that the work of this exceptional service may be as widely known as possible. We therefore ask our members to please advertise this event amongst their friends and neighbours.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Richard Marshall, our Chairman says 'I continue to admire the energy and enthusiasm of all our main committee, sub committees and panels. We work harmoniously together, with the support of our loyal and helpful members, who are welcome to add their skills and interests to our efforts on behalf of Weybridge.'

THE STATE OF WEYBRIDGE

The Society has been approached by several residents about the state of Weybridge, particularly the High Street, but also throughout the town, and side roads, because of the unkempt state of pavements, gutters, etc. Weeds growing, cigarette ends and chewing gum on the areas outside shops and restaurants, litter, overgrown hedges and blocked gullies. It is surprising that it seems businesses do not feel responsible for the area outside their premises, as few appear to remove the debris that accumulates. Of course, they do pay substantial business rates, and perhaps feel that this should be enough to ensure that the streets are properly cleaned. However, pride in the town, and giving a good impression to residents and visitors alike should be paramount (especially when the competition from the new centre in Walton is being felt). Overgrown hedges along pavements are not only an inconvenience,

Zone: 85 Membership Number: 1786

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but also in some cases a hazard, when sight lines are obscured, and pedestrians have to walk close to the road edge to avoid them. Apparently the Council can cut these hedges back, and charge the land owner for the cost of doing so - but it would be a better solution for the land owner to make sure that hedges do not overhang the pavements in the first place!



Perhaps of even more concern for the long-term future of Weybridge is what is happening to our shops and facilities, for whilst we have many excellent businesses in Weybridge, with world class visitor attractions like Brooklands Museum and Mercedes Benz World, leading schools and Brooklands College, excellent recreation grounds, conservation areas and listed buildings, historic hotels and restaurants to suit every palate, not all is good. (continued over)

In This Issue...

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- Weybridge Waterways Report
- What Our Members Do
- Police Neighbourhood Panel
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- 100 Years of Scouting
- Church Pharmacy, Queens Road

We have lost our Adult Education with the closing of the Churchfield Institute (though some adult classes are being provided at Brooklands College); several long established businesses have closed down, often because of retirement, or relocation – but none the less, lost to Weybridge – and if all goes according to plan, Elmbridge Museum will eventually move to Walton.

Weybridge Society lobbies both Elmbridge and Surrey County Councils, and our local Weybridge Division Surrey County Councillor, Ian Lake, to make improvements and maintain standards in our town. SCC is responsible for eight main groups of services – roads; footpaths, verges, hedges and trees; bridges and structures; flooding and drainage; safety; streetlights, signals and bollards; local schemes and community works. To report problems on roads and footpaths, you can go on-line at www.surreycc.gov.uk, or by telephone 08456 009 009. The County Councillor may be contacted by e-mail – I.lake@surreycc.gov.uk, or on mobile answerphone 07903 313134. Elmbridge meanwhile is responsible for Planning, Housing, Leisure and Culture, Waste disposal, graffiti and fly tipping, Environmental Health, Recycling, Community Affairs and Safety, and Licensing and a host of related issues. Elmbridge Council web-site is www.elmbridge.gov.uk, telephone 01372 474 474, e-mail civiccentre@elmbridge.gov.uk (out of hours emergencies 01372 466 114).

With this newsletter is a FEEDBACK FORM – perhaps you might like to add responses to this "STATE OF WEYBRIDGE" item under Questions 1 & 2 – please use the back of the form, and extra sheets if required!

SAM BEARE HOSPICE UPDATE

On the 1st September Sam Beare Hospice celebrated their first year as an independent charity. The Hospice based in Weybridge Hospital cares for people in North Surrey with life limiting or terminal illness.

Chris Flemington, the Chief Executive of Woking & Sam Beare Hospice commented "I am grateful that with the help of our staff, volunteers and supporters we have achieved our first anniversary.



We have together laid a solid foundation which can be built on, to ensure the population of Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne continue to have their very own Hospice."

A full service is now available at Sam Beare including medical care, in-patient care, day care unit, Community Macmillan Clinical Nurse Specialists, Complementary Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Counselling Team, Chaplaincy Team, and Physiotherapy.

In October TWO Sam Beare Hospice shops opened in Weybridge High Street, a book shop at number 7 and a shop stocking designer clothing, bric-a-brac, and china at number 5. The shops are an impressive addition to the High Street, and will help to increase awareness of our charity and ensure that we are the number one local charity.

We still need a few volunteers to work in the shops to enable us to open 6 days a week. Shift times are normally 9.30 am to 1.00pm or 1.30pm to 4.30pm. Please call volunteers services on 01483 881750 if you are able to spare a few hours a week.

The shop telephone number is 01932 857103.

(This item contributed by Lorraine Weedon, of Woking & Sam Beare Hospices).



WALTON & WEYBRIDGE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

One of our members, Jean Smith, has kindly submitted this note for the newsletter. W&WLHS has a regular programme of meetings and full details may be obtained from the Secretary on 01932 846494.

"Walton and Weybridge Local History Society participated in the annual Surrey Local History Symposium held on 27 October in Chertsey. This year's subject was "Surrey Bridges and Tunnels" and W&WLHS illustrated this with a display of pictures of Walton's sequence of bridges over the Thames. The display, which gained 3rd place in the symposium competition, was assembled by John Smith using images from the Elmbridge Museum collection supplemented by his own recent photographs. John Smith also gave one of the talks on the symposium programme on the subject "Weybridge Railway Bridge: a hard-won bargain".

SURREY LIFE MAGAZINE WEB-SITE

Following the inclusion of an article about Weybridge and Weybridge Society in the August edition of Surrey Life Magazine, and a subsequent mention in the September issue, Matthew Williams, the magazine's editorial assistant suggests that members might like to take the opportunity to use the magazine's web-site forum. This can be found at <http://www.surreylife.co.uk/ForumSurrey.aspx?page=2198>. Contributors are encouraged to swap news, publicise events and generally comment on Surrey issues.

DID YOU KNOW?

A possible solution for anti-social behaviour? In the mid 19th century, before Weybridge had a policeman, if a villain was deemed guilty of any breach of law and order, his neighbours used to duck him in the pond on the green. (This is today's cricket common and there used to be a pond there – members may remember the pictures in the press of someone paddling a boat there after some torrential rain a few years ago – and even in this summer, the green was flooded briefly). The pond had been created due to gravel extraction. *(from a note in Elmbridge Museum, by Mrs Grenside, an early curator of the museum).*



HEATHSIDE HISTORY PRIZE

Members may remember that Weybridge Society gives an annual prize for History to a student at Heathside School. Our Chairman, Richard Marshall, and events organiser, Annette Davies attended the prize-giving on 12th September when our prize was awarded (this year to the value of £40).

Mrs Alison Price, Examinations Officer at Heathside, kindly submitted the wording of the citation as follows:

"The Weybridge Society Award for history is presented to Joanne Leachman. This is in recognition of her outstanding ability and commitment to History. Since year 7 she has shown an extraordinary level of perception of historical issues. Although she has a great natural ability, Joanne has always worked hard and has been prepared to share her knowledge in a most helpful way.

Joanne has joined the Sixth form and is studying History, French, English and Drama as well as Critical Thinking in Year 12."

We wish Joanne every success for her future, and congratulate her on her obvious commitment to her studies.

FEEDBACK FORM

Enclosed with this newsletter you will find a 'Feedback Form'. As editor of the newsletter for the last 25 issues, I have often wondered if it tells members what they want to hear! Is the Society addressing the issues you wish to see covered? Are the talks and events what you would expect? Please take a few minutes to complete and return the 'Feedback Form' to me, Carolyn Pennycook, so that improvements and suggestions may be incorporated into future editions and your concerns and comments for the continuing improvement of the Society may be addressed. Thank you for your time.

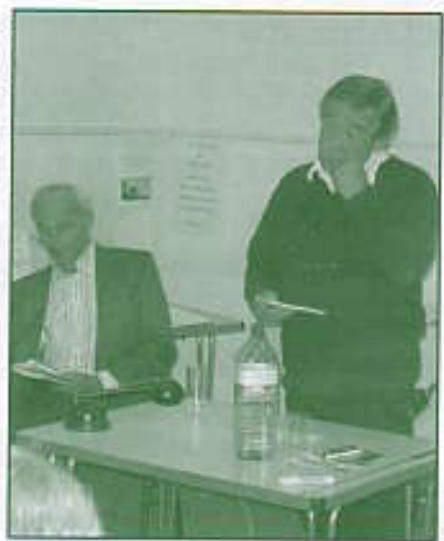
WEYBRIDGE'S PLACE IN BRITAIN'S WATERWAYS – Report of meeting of 8.10.2007

In his introduction of guest speaker Mr Brian Roberts, Weybridge Society Chairman Richard Marshall told a packed audience of Mr Roberts' involvement in the Inland Waterways Association as Chairman of the Central Southern Region. Mr Roberts' passion for inland waterways had developed some years ago as a result of living in a narrow-boat in Oxford when working there, and he has since travelled many hundreds of miles on Britain's canals and rivers.

Mr Roberts spoke on two aspects of waterways – first their routes and coverage of the country. Illustrated by a map, he showed how the River Wey Navigation was one of the most southern, with the network of canals extending to Wales, throughout England, and into Scotland. Canals had been, until the coming of railways in the mid 19th century, major routes for moving cargo of all kinds around the country, to cities and ports. Now they were more usually, but not exclusively, used for leisure pursuits – the building and land preparation work for the 2112 London Olympics is using the waterways, and there are other examples of heavy cargo such as gravel being transported by water.

The second part of the talk, which was excellently illustrated with both old and contemporary photographs, covered the historic aspect of canals, and canalised rivers, focussing mainly on the River Wey Navigation. Going back to its beginnings, as just the River Wey, Mr Roberts led the audience through the many political and physical obstacles which the canal's founder and builder, Sir Richard Weston of

Sutton Place (and his successors) had to overcome to realise his dream of a navigable waterway to carry goods commercially (in the first instance hay – an essential product to feed all the horses that worked in London in the 17th century) from their place of production to the Thames, and on to London. It was interesting to know that the Thames Lock



at Weybridge, where the Navigation joins the Thames, is unusually deep – this is because when it was constructed in the mid 17th century, the Thames was tidal as far as Staines – now of course Teddington Lock marks the end of the tidal area. Cargoes such as corn, pottery and later gunpowder were to be transported along the 14.5 miles Wey Navigation, which celebrated its 350th anniversary in 2003 (the extension of the waterway to Godalming, a further 4 miles, did not take place until 1764). The Stevens family became involved in the Wey Navigation in the early 19th century, firstly working on and managing the canal, and then in 1900 being offered the final shares to purchase it. It remained in the family's ownership until 1963 when Harry Stevens gave it to the National Trust, who own and manage it today. Mr Roberts recommended members of the audience to visit Dapdune Wharf in Guildford, where the NT had an excellent visitor centre and display. In answer to a question from the floor, he said that although some aspects of the Navigation had changed, citing the construction of locks, the basic route and tow path were as they were built, and it was inspiring to him to be able to walk its length, knowing it was in the footsteps of countless people – and horses, which drew the barges – who had used the path since 1653.

Mr Roberts congratulated Weybridge Society on its initiative to promote and improve the Weybridge Thames side, in its Thames Gate-Wey project. The project, which had funding and support from Elmbridge Borough Council, and from the Environment Agency, was well under way to making the moorings and approach from the River Thames into Weybridge and the surrounding areas more 'visitor friendly'.

In thanking Mr Roberts, the chairman paid tribute to his depth of knowledge and enthusiasm for his subject, which had culminated in the publication of two books 'Britain's Waterways – A Unique Insight', and 'Britain's Waterways – Cruising Rings and Other Things'. Both books were available for purchase at the meeting. The length and intensity of the applause of the large audience certainly endorsed the chairman's tribute.

(Members may wonder whose boat was featured in the last newsletter – well it was our member Paul Wolstenholme's boat, and you can usually see it moored by the houses of Portmore Quays, when you look over the 'old' Wey bridge towards the 'new' one, on the right side of the river navigation).

web-master wanted

If you would like to be web-master of the Weybridge Society website, please contact Andrew Davis, Treasurer - contact details at end of newsletter.

PLANNING

The following information is summarised from the Weybridge Society Planning Panel's records, it is up to date at the time of writing (October) and we hope that it is a true representation of the committee's opinions.

Oatlands Area

1. Cleves School, Oatlands Avenue (2006/2348)

This outline application to build 7 terraced houses and 7 flats on a small site at the south-west corner of the school grounds was refused in January and the subsequent appeal has been allowed.

2. 22, Castle Road (2006/2639 & 2007/1189)

Following the approval of a new application (1189) for three smaller detached houses, the appeal on 2639 was withdrawn.

3. 46, Oatlands Chase (2007/0114)

This proposal to build a house in the rear garden of 46, Oatlands Chase was refused because it was cramped, dominant and obtrusive to surrounding properties. The subsequent appeal was dismissed.

4. 159a and b, 161, Queen's Road (2007/0276 and 2007/1665)

Application (0276) concerns a site at the corner of Queens Road and Netherby Park, currently occupied by three detached bungalows. This proposal for a 2/3 storey building comprising 2 houses and 12 apartments was refused and the subsequent appeal was dismissed. The more recent application (1665) is very similar, with differences in detail but it is of the same scale. This too was recently refused by the Council.

5. 1, Oatlands Close (2007/0322)

The Council refused this application for the replacement of a single detached house by a block of 10 apartments in April. The subsequent appeal was withdrawn.

6. 1-6, Oatlands Court (2007/0381 and 2007/1900)

The outline application (0381) for 13 flats in 2, 2/3 storey blocks and a 2-storey house replacing an existing block of six flats was refused in April. The outcome of the subsequent appeal is still awaited. A later application (1900) for a terrace of six two-storey houses with rooms in the roof-space and a detached house, was refused by the Council in September.

7. 77-79, Oatlands Drive (2007/0900 & 2007/1718)

Application (0900) for a terrace of 6 town houses was refused by the Council in May and the subsequent appeal has been dismissed. A later application (1718) for a terrace of 4 town houses was refused by the Council in August.

8. 13, and land to the rear of 9 and 11, Hall Place Drive (2007/2114)

This proposal involved building 4 detached houses, one replacing no.13 and three in a small close behind 9 - 13. The Society objected because development would be out of character with the neighbourhood and because of the potential for overlooking. The application was refused on 5th October.

9. Land at Berkeley Court (2007/2171)

This proposal involved the erection of mobile phone mast on the roadside grass verge at the entrance to Berkeley Court. The Society objected on the grounds that it was visually intrusive and out of character in the street scene. The application was refused by the Council
Geoff Banks, Joint Chair, Planning Panel

Weybridge North & South

10. 20&20a Church Street (2005/0184,1437,2576 & 2006/0156, 0950, 1813,2288,2007/0367,0980,1797 & 2501)

This is the site of the old bakery adjacent to the entrance of Weybridge Hospital. The history is complicated with 11 planning applications and 3 appeals. Weybridge Society objected to the latest application on the grounds of density, bulk, mass and access.

The 2007/1797 proposal involves keeping the existing shop, and adding a building on the site of the old bakery which is 25% larger than a previously permitted application. The planning application 2007/2501 is to allow vehicles to cross over the pavement near the pedestrian crossing, in order to demolish the existing building. Our Planning Panel has objected to both applications but the West Area Committee of the Council has permitted the 25% increase (1797). The crossover is still to be decided.

11. 133 Queens Rd (2005/2819, 2006/1747 & 2007/1426)

The first application for 14 flats and the second for 12 flats were refused by Elmbridge Council but the second application was permitted on appeal. The Planning Panel objected to a third application, for 28 apartments of sheltered accommodation, on the grounds of height, mass and scale, and being out of character with the street scene. We are pleased to report that Elmbridge Council refused this application.

12. 55-57 Hanger Hill (2007/0831 & 1796)

The Planning Panel objected to the latest proposal for the building of four effectively 4 storey houses. Although the applicant had reduced the ridge height from the previous proposal it was still considered that this would dominate the street scene and overlook other houses and gardens. This application was refused by Elmbridge Council.

13. Bulldogs Island, Little Mill (2007/0715 & 2440)

The latest proposal is for a slightly smaller, but still large, garage and a store. The Weybridge Society has objected on the grounds of detriment to the Conservation Area, flood plain and Green Belt. The Council refused this application.

14. The Monument, Monument Hill (2007/1736 & 2500)

The Planning Panel objected to both these proposals which were to add a 5th floor to the office block at the top of Monument Hill on the grounds of its dominance, being out of character with the street scene and overlooking. The first application has been refused by the Council and we are awaiting a decision on the second.

15. Goodwood Cottage, Brooklands Lane (2007/1719)

This planning application for four 2 storey terraced houses was considered by the Society to be too dominant and not providing good access or parking for cars on this busy school road. It was refused.

16. Land 10 & 11 Chestnut Lane (2005/1269, 2005/2646, 2006/2600, 2007/0369,1696 & 2302)

The first 5 planning applications have been refused by Elmbridge Council. The latest application is for a building which appears to have access from Pine Grove. The Planning Panel has expressed its concerns with regards to this latest proposal again because of the access near the bend of Pine Grove. This application has been refused.

17. Portmore Dental Practice, 4 Balfour Rd (2006/2047,2007/1838,1840 & 1859)

This building has just been included in the Weybridge Conservation Area because it was considered to be a significant late 19thC building.

The last 3 applications were objected to by many residents, the Conservation Committee and Weybridge Society. The proposed buildings were considered to be totally out of character with the Conservation Area, an overdevelopment, too dominant with overlooking and parking problems. We are pleased to report that Elmbridge Council refused all these applications despite the argument that the building was proposed as "Carbon Neutral".



18. 11/15 Park Lawn Rd (2007/1720)

This application to replace 2 houses with five 3 storey dwellings was considered to be an over development and was refused by Elmbridge Council.

19. 27a & b Fortescue Rd (2007/2173)

Weybridge Society's Planning Panel supported many local residents in expressing their concern about the proposal which is to add a second floor of habitable accommodation, with balcony, windows, etc., on a previously two storey building, making it three storeys. This would set an undesirable precedent in the road of bungalows and two storey/chalet type houses, and would be incongruous in the street scene. It could open the way for similar three storey properties elsewhere in Fortescue Road.

20. 39 Thames St. (2007/2556 & 2579)

The first application is for 55 flats and is considered to be a gross over development of this site which is surrounded on 3 sides by existing houses. In our letter of objection we suggested that such a proposal would result in an incongruous 3 storey building with overlooking, parking and drainage problems etc. Similarly, the second proposal, for 14 dwellings, although not such an over development, we considered would not enhance the street scene and would suffer from the overlooking, parking and drainage problems.



21. Former Wallop School Playing Fields, Churchfields Avenue, 2007/2666 & 2007/2674

The Planning Panel has previously opposed the first of these two applications (2007/2666 which is the same as 2006/2810), but also realises that a satisfactory solution for the use of this private land has to be achieved. The Council has permitted 'small' developments on similar designated SOUL - Strategic Open Urban Land - elsewhere in the Borough. Weybridge Society would be against any proposal that did not retain a significant part of this land as open space for public use, with funds to maintain it. The second application 2007/2674, which is new and has some merit in being able to preserve an open aspect towards the Churchfields Recreation Ground, whilst providing some

amenity space and affordable housing, has yet to be fully evaluated by the Planning Panel. The Panel will give consideration to the plans from both the local implications and the wider Weybridge perspective. Only then will the Society make its representations to the Council.

Raymond Spary, Joint Chair, Planning Panel

St. George's Hill Ward

22. Carrigrohan, St. George's Road (2007/1306)

Two detached houses Permission granted

23. Woodcote Court, Brooklands Road (2007/1488)

16 houses and 6 flats Refused

24. Arawa, Cavendish Road (2007/1596)

Block of seven flats Refused

25. High Beech, Southfield Place (2007/1936)

This was a "retrospective" application to obtain permission for a garage and wall which were already erected.

We objected as the garage is very close to Brooklands Road. A decision is awaited

26. Warrenhurst, Bridgewater Road 2007/2250

A new application submitted after 2007 /1407 had been refused by the officers.

The application is to demolish the large Edwardian house and replace it with seven terraced houses and one detached house. The new application had relocated some of the houses to avoid proximity to trees on the site, which was the main reason for refusal of the previous application.

The West Area Planning sub-committee refused the application due mainly to the location of the detached house and the overlooking of neighbouring properties.

27. Nyleve, Godolphin Road (2007/2238)

Proposal to replace the current house with a new two storey house. We objected to this application because we felt the proposed house was too large for the plot and the street scene.

28. Weybridge House, Queens Road (2007/2352)

A new application is in for this site after the previous application (2007/0426) was refused in April.

The new application is for the addition of eight flats onto the current 16 on the present "flat roofed" 1960s block.

Four flats are to be inserted into a new high pitched roof, over the main block, with a further four flats in a two storey addition to the current two storey rear block, making it into four storeys.

Although this application is an improvement on the previous one, we are concerned about the substantial increased height of the new block and the overlooking from the rear block over properties in St. George's Road and Bridgewater Road.

It is also a shame that the open aspect of the block frontage, onto Queens Road, is to be sacrificed.



29. **Grove Lodge etc., Old Avenue** (2007/2632)

After several applications on Grove Lodge for demolition and erection of a block of flats, over the past few years, each one being refused by the Council, a new application has been submitted on an extended site to include Selbourne. This new application is for eight large four storey attached five bed houses.

Although we are pleased that an application for houses has been submitted on this site, the Planning Panel are concerned about the overall height of the buildings and the overlooking of adjacent properties. In addition the precedent of four storeys in Egerton Road could be a problem in the future.

Peter White, Joint Chair, Planning Panel.

Don't forget that if there is a Planning Application in your area and you wish to object to or comment on to the council, the Elmbridge web-site has a very good facility for you to view applications and drawings and download them if you wish.

This does save a trip to the council offices or the library to personally view an application. There is also provision for you to object 'on-line'.

Peter Vey, past Chairman and member of the Planning Panel has submitted the following items:-

Heathside School

There was an important condition in last November's appeal decision permitting Heathside School's retrospective planning application to increase pupil numbers.

This required the school to submit a new School Travel Plan within six months and which had to be implemented to the satisfaction of Elmbridge Borough Council.

For the first time the Borough rather than the County Council could decide whether the Travel Plan not only met the needs of the school, pupils and parents, but was also as effective as possible in reducing school traffic impact on residents.

Within a few days of the six months deadline a Travel Plan was submitted. However, it has yet to be considered by Elmbridge Borough Council's West Area Planning Sub Committee having been removed from the agenda on three occasions.

Surrey County Council refused to submit comments on the Travel Plan as it is required to do under the planning process. The County Council claimed that the Plan was out of date and had not been approved by them. It is expected therefore that a new Travel Plan will be submitted.

Local residents are very concerned about the delay and possibly having to repeat the same consultation processes for a new application.

Walton Bridge

The Society's Planning and Transport Panels have been considering its response to Surrey County Council's Planning Application for the new Walton Bridge which was submitted in September.

The saga to replace the existing "temporary!" bridge is almost as old as the century. The Society, whilst supporting the need for a new bridge, was very critical of the original proposals. In its comments submitted to Surrey County Council in 2003 it:-

Objected to the design of the arch support for the bridge as very intrusive on the river landscape.

Considered that some of the proposals for the junction with Walton Lane would encourage traffic onto the Lane adversely impacting on residential areas in North Weybridge. Later, the Society was also concerned with the impact of subsequent proposals on the popular Cowey Sale recreation area.

In the new proposals:-

The reduction of the height of the bridge arch reduces the landscape impact

Retaining the T junction at Cowey Sale instead of an elaborate, clover leaf junction preserves this important recreational feature and should discourage rat running.

It is encouraging that traffic forecasts appear to show that the new bridge will not lead to significant increases in vehicle movements along Walton Lane

The Society is pleased, therefore, that after a prolonged and complex process involving a public inquiry, the latest proposals meet the Society's main objections and that the popular recreation area of Cowey Sale will be enhanced and not destroyed.

The Society has submitted the following comments on the new application:-

Improvements to Cowey Sale will encourage more visitors. People should be given priority when crossing to the river bank, perhaps by the introduction of pedestrian refuges by the car park access.

There should be signage before the new right turn onto Walton Lane making it clear that this road is unsuitable for HGVs.

Some Planning Panel members felt that the proposed design style of the café looked backwards rather than being appropriate for the 21st century.

While supporting the new plans, the Society is concerned that Surrey County Council largely ignored widespread objections to the original proposals resulting in an extended and costly planning process. The Society hopes that lessons have been learnt so that future projects will be dealt with more effectively.

THAMES GATE WEY PROJECT

Elmbridge Council has started work at the car park adjacent to the canoe club, which may eventually be called Weybridge Thames-side Car Park and picnic area. The best trees have been left but some scrub and self-sown sycamores have been removed, which has opened up the views of the Thames between D'Oyly Carte Island and the start of the Desborough Cut. We have been asked to invite views and support for either a piece of public art or a heritage marker to show that this is Weybridge. It would be good to hear from members what their options for the site might be in connection with a permanent structure to highlight 'Weybridge'. Please contact Richard Marshall with your suggestions, or use the enclosed Feedback Form.

FOOTNOTE – PO Box problems.

Unfortunately some people who have used the Society's PO Box number for contacting us have had their correspondence returned, (including several new members' applications which was extremely unfortunate) as 'box closed, addressee gone away'. This of course, is not the case – or it should not have been the case. Apparently, the box system administration has been centralised – in Manchester – and in the changeover, our box was 'lost' or cancelled. We understand that it has now been restored – PO Box 492, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 8WX, and we hope that there will be no further problems. We apologise to anyone who has experienced inconvenience in the last few months.



TRANSPORT

Joe Hall, Chair of the Transport Panel, and member of the main Weybridge Society Committee (his contact details are at the end of this newsletter) has submitted the following item:

"The Transport Panel has been established for a while now and we are slowly coming to terms with what might be wrong (or right) with our local transport system. There are three topics that we feel deserve our more focused attention e.g.

speeding, safety for cyclists and pedestrians, local buses.

Identifying the problems has been quite easy; knowing what to do about them is more difficult. In this article I'd like to focus on one area - Brooklands Road and Heath Road.

Brooklands Road and Heath Road (both the B 374) are struggling to accommodate heavy goods vehicles from the Brooklands Industrial Estate. These companies save a few minutes on their journey by entering and leaving the M25 at Junction 11 (Chertsey) by passing through Weybridge Town. We are seeking clarification as we understand the agreed route to and from the M25 is via Junction 10 (A3, Wisley).

Most accidents in Brooklands and Heath Roads are caused by drivers losing control when driving too fast, but we feel SCC's (Surrey County Council) solution - adding localised non slip surfaces - is not enough. It does not address the root cause - speed. How can we slow traffic down to an acceptable safe speed? Passive signs with smiley faces are good reminders; but will do nothing to deter an ardent speeder. Portsmouth has adopted an all town 20 mph speed limit. They have embraced a cultural change in attitudes to speed. Meanwhile, here in Weybridge, should we adopt enforcement i.e. speed cameras?

Have you noticed how difficult and dangerous it is to drive or walk near the station. Other dangerous parts of Heath Road are outside Brooklands College and Heathside School. What are the answers?

We've written to several SCC officers and our local MP (Philip Hammond). Philip Hammond has responded positively and would like to meet us at these locations in order to take our discussions further. SCC have yet to respond.

If you would like to know more or feel you could contribute, please get in touch."

100 YEARS OF SCOUTING EXHIBITION

Elmbridge Museum's next exhibition runs from 10th November 2007 to 6th February 2008. Getting in knots putting up a tent? Ever wondered what a woggle is for? As part of the centenary celebrations for the scouting movement, Elmbridge Museum presents '**100 Years of Scouting**'. The exhibition will look at the history of scouting in Elmbridge, which includes two of the oldest scout troops in the country, and discusses how scouting has changed over the last 100 years.

The Museum arranges activities for children (including Museum trails), and also supplies 'loan boxes' containing artefacts and replicas for hands-on experience to schools and organisations - subjects range from Romans to World War II - please contact the Museum for further information - 01932 843573.

Elmbridge Museum is open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays; 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and 2 p.m., to 5 p.m., on Saturdays. Closed Thursdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Admission free.

POLICE NEIGHBOURHOOD PANEL

At the meeting in St James' Church Centre on Thursday 20th September, PC Richard Bowen, the Neighbourhood Specialist Officer for our area reported considerable successes in combating anti-social behaviour. At the last meeting those present had voted for the Officers to concentrate on the Waverley Road, Melrose Road, Churchfields Recreation Ground and surrounding footpaths, and as a result 75 apprehensions had been made, ranging from alcohol seizure, public order offences, drugs, burglary, criminal damage and carrying an offensive weapon. PC Bowen and the PCSOs were congratulated on these successes, and those present were pleased that the resulting lowering of crime in the area had been achieved. However, PC Bowen stressed that this was an ongoing commitment, as were other areas including the bridge area of the River Wey, the car parks and Desborough Island by the Thames, Churchfields car park, the station area, and various parts of the High Street and adjoining roads.

Since the beginning of the year less than 200 crimes had been reported in the area of PC Bowen's watch, which showed a decrease on previous years. He stressed however that this was not an opportunity for complacency, as there were still significant crime areas to be targeted. Cycling on the town centre pavements was still an issue, and would continue to be addressed. 'Drifting' or high speed driving and braking in car parks such as Churchfields was one such crime, and PC Bowen explained that the option open to him to combat this was a Section 59 order (driving a car in an anti-social manner) when the miscreant was under the order for one year - should he or she offend again in whatever car, officers were enabled to seize that car and have it scrapped. Driving while uninsured or without a licence (or often both!) in addition to the usual charges brought by these offences, resulted in the car being impounded, with a release fee of £115, and a daily 'storage' charge of £15. If not claimed within 10 days, the car was crushed. This was proving a worthwhile deterrent! PC Bowen said issues relating to fly-tipping and graffiti were within the remit of Elmbridge Borough Council, through their officer Colin Flaxman, and any concerns should be addressed to him.

A vote was taken on the issues on which the meeting wished the officers attention to be focussed, and continuation of surveillance and policing of Waverley Road, etc., and cycling on footpaths were the issues agreed.

Whilst sorry to hear that the area would be losing PCSO Ian Harding to become a police officer (and also to hear that PCSO Tom Brown was also to progress along the same career route, but not so imminently) those present were assured that they would both be replaced. The question of stab-vests for PCSOs was raised at the last meeting, and as a result one of the audience, Carolyn Pennycook, had written to the Home Office asking why PCSOs were not issued with this protection as a matter of course. The reply indicated that it was up to the individual police forces to take their own decision on this provision, and Surrey was one that had apparently decided not to issue this protection to its PCSOs. Mrs Pennycook undertook to follow the matter up with the Chief Constable for Surrey, and report back to the Neighbourhood Panel.

The next meeting of the Panel would be held on Thursday, 17th January 2008, at 7 p.m., in St James' Church Hall. PC Bowen can be contacted on 07967 988406; PCSO Ian Harding's number is 07967 986754, and PCSO Tom Brown pn 07967 988866