



# Weybridge Society

*Your community association working to keep Weybridge special*

Winter 2017/18

**SPECIAL FREE PUBLIC EDITION**

Hon. Patron – Michael Aspel OBE

## **WEYBRIDGE HOSPITAL UPDATE: GPs BACK ON SITE FATE OF WALK-IN CENTRE UNCERTAIN**

Twenty one weeks after the devastating summer fire that left Weybridge's Community Hospital building in ruins, local residents received a bit of an early Christmas present as GP practices finally returned to their original site.



The cause of the fire is still not known and no announcement has been made about the official investigation, but having cleared the site quickly, space was made for a new temporary facility that includes twenty prefabricated units, all linked into a large single storey building. This facility now houses the two Weybridge GP practices, as well as nurse-led treatment rooms provided by CSH Surrey, and a separate unit housing a Lloyds Pharmacy, which was originally located on the ground floor of the old building.

The treatment room services include clinics for wound care, leg ulcers, phlebot-

omy, ECGs, injections and urinalysis as well as the removal of clips and stitches.

The Practices have made public the following new telephone numbers:

**Church Street: 01932 504450**

**Rowan Tree: 01932 505230**

**Treatment room services: 01483 782818**

It will still be a long wait, however, for a permanent replacement to the community hospital. At public meetings held in October by the North West Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), CCG revealed it would take at least three years to construct a new, fully commissioned building.

Further comments made by CCG officials indicate that the organisation is unlikely to provision the Walk-In Centre in the near future - and it is certainly unlikely to happen without further pressure and community action. CCG's unwillingness to commit comes despite strong feelings in the community that the Walk in Centre should be provided as it was. Well over 3000 people signed an online petition supporting the measure.

The CCG said it has looked at other potential locations for a Walk-In Centre and for now has ruled out anything on the current hospital site, citing the need to leave

enough room for the future new building. In its public announcements, the CCG said “the length of time and costs in refurbishing (for example, lead lined rooms for X-ray facilities) and meeting CQC compliance standards are prohibitive at this time.”

The CCG has given an outline of the public engagement process for the eventual specification of the new building and the services to be provided. Initially the plan is to look at the wider scope of an ‘urgent care’ strategy across the whole of North West Surrey. This will then lead to the creation of a Patient Advisory Group which will consider the services needed in the new Weybridge Hospital, although it “is not likely to meet until well into the New Year.”

The general message is that, apart from the two GP practices, other servic-



es will be based on new models of care, bringing together various care providers in integrated ways for the greater benefit of the wider local population. This will all fall under the work of the new Surrey Heartlands Health and Care Partnership ([www.surreyheartlands.uk](http://www.surreyheartlands.uk)), which involves the CCGs in Surrey, as well as Surrey County Council, all the main hospitals and other health providers.

At the two October CCG meetings, more than 800 residents crammed into St James’ Church to hear about future plans and ask questions, and in November the CCG published on its website a summary of the meetings, with a detailed set of questions raised and the CCG’s replies. The CCG has also provided a comprehensive set of Frequently Asked Questions. See [www.nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk/weybridgehospital](http://www.nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk/weybridgehospital)

**Weybridge Society will be closely monitoring these developments and keeping members updated on a regular basis. We are always keen to hear views from our members on this matter and ask that members of the public please join the Society to help us represent you and keep you informed on these important issues.**

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## WEYBRIDGE REGISTER OFFICE MAY MOVE

Surrey County Council (SCC) is evaluating an option to move the Register Office on Oatlands Drive to the library building on Weybridge’s Church Street. Possible consequences for the building, Rylston, which currently houses the Register, includes its demolition and replacement with luxury flats.

Society members have expressed their opposition to such a move on the grounds

that the library building lacks the gravitas, look and location necessary to make it a suitable replacement for Rylston, a beautiful building with parking and grounds, very much beloved and well suited for the legal ceremonies performed there.

The Society is not aware of timescales involved but has written to Surrey Council expressing its opposition to any such proposal and requesting further details

before any plans are drawn up or a decision is taken. The Weybridge Society believes a full public consultation setting out SCC's proposals and reasoning should take place before any plans to move the Register Office from Rylston are finalised.

Society members and many local residents have used the Rylston site for registering births and deaths, as well as holding marriage and citizenship ceremonies there over the years. Local residents are already expressing alarm on social media at the prospect of losing such a beautiful location for marking life's major moments.



Register Office, Rylston on Oatlands Drive

Built in 1911 in the majestic faux Tudor style that came to dominate the Edwardian period, Rylston is set in an attractive garden environment extending to 0.45 hectares. The land on which Rylston is situated was originally royal hunting grounds at the time of Henry VIII. Rylston was purchased by Surrey County Council in 1963 and became a Register Office in 1993.

While the building has undergone some structural changes over the years, overall the exterior of the house has hardly changed. A detached manor house with a large porch at its entrance, Rylston retains most of its unique features, including leaded light windows with original glass and unusual wrought iron fittings. The ground floor boasts original oak panelling and fireplaces, while a magnificent oak staircase

with stained glass windows sweeps down to French windows leading onto the gardens.

By contrast, the library building needs refurbishing and a long term plan for its use. Security issues also need to be addressed as recently the building has been a target for delinquent antisocial behaviour.



Weybridge Library

Are you concerned about the Register Office going elsewhere or Rylston being destroyed? The Society is interested in hearing your views, so please send them to us at: [newsletter@weybridgesociety.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@weybridgesociety.org.uk) and get in touch with your councillor for Walton South and Oatlands at Surrey County, Tony Samuels, who is also Vice-Chairman of the Council, at [anthony.samuels@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:anthony.samuels@surreycc.gov.uk), or your councillor for Weybridge at Surrey County, Tim Oliver, who is Conservative Cabinet Member for Property and Business Services, at [tim.oliver@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:tim.oliver@surreycc.gov.uk). Oliver has also recently set up a blog where he posts updates at [Cllrtimoliver.com](http://Cllrtimoliver.com).

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## WEYBRIDGE HALL: BACK TO THE FUTURE?

It could be back to the future for Weybridge Hall, with plans in the works at Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) to return the centrally located, grand old building to its former glory as a cinema.

Luckily local plans are proceeding far more methodically than in the 1980s comedy classic *Back to the Future*, where a mishap with a time machine and madcap professor send a teenager back thirty years to scramble to set things right and return to the present.

In a move supported by the Weybridge Society, EBC, which owns the site, is now preparing plans to refurbish Weybridge Hall and transform it back into a cinema, as it once was nearly a century ago.

The council expects to submit its planning application to be ready in January, with a decision to be made in spring. The plan is to construct a two-screen cinema, with 40 and 60 seats apiece, at the ground floor level. An operator, unknown at the moment, would show different films daily on the two screens in an attempt to cater to a variety of audiences. Above the cinema, five flats would be renovated and remain in the ownership of Elmbridge to be used for social housing.

Because the Hall is located in a conservation area on Church Street, in what was once called the Queen's Parade, it is understood that the planning application will not make any proposals to alter the external appearance of the Hall, though essential renovations would be undertaken, as



in, for example, windows.

Weybridge Hall began life as a shop in 1899 built by Horace Thompson, whose descendants still correspond with the Weybridge Society. During WWI, the hall was used by the Gordon Watney Engineering Company, and in June 1920, Weybridge Hall had its grand opening as a cinema called Weybridge Kinema Theatre.

Extended to 500 seats by the famous developer Walter Tarrant in 1929, the cinema was sold to County Cinema Chain and then became known as the King George's Cinema. In 1937 the cinema changed its name to The County until it shut in the early 1950s. It was then purchased by the then Walton and Weybridge Urban Council to provide a public hall, a function it served as we know it until last summer when it was closed for financial reasons and eventual redevelopment.

Films shown at the official opening of the Kinema in June 1920 were 'Across Canada with the Prince of Wales' and Mary Pickford in 'Ragamuffin.' The first 'talkies' were shown there in 1927. The last film was reputedly 'Gone with the Wind.'

In its later life as a village hall, the site was regularly used for events such as horticultural shows, lectures, jumble sales, film society meetings, dances, concerts and blood donor sessions. In the 1980s Weybridge Society, through the enthusiasm and hard work of member Jim Buckley, brought the cinema back to life by showing films on a number of occasions.

## PLANNING UPDATE

**Disclaimer:** The following information is summarised from the Weybridge Society's Planning Panel's records. We endeavour to make it a true representation of the panel's opinion and our actions and plans, and it is up to date at the time of writing. But for the latest and most accurate developments on planning, please consult Elmbridge Borough Council or our website at: [weybridgesociety.org.uk](http://weybridgesociety.org.uk)

**2016/3151 – Advertisements at Roundabouts – at Brooklands Road, 2016/3155** (Station roundabout), **2016/3158** (Morrisons Roundabout) & **2016/3160** (War Memorial roundabout at the Cricket Green). These four applications relate to advertisements on roundabouts. In our previous newsletter we reported that all were refused planning permission at the July 13 Planning Committee meeting. Unfortunately all of these applications - other than the War Memorial roundabout at the Cricket Green - have been taken to appeal. The general public, which includes the Society, have been denied the opportunity to comment. The Society is currently challenging that decision by Elmbridge Borough Council.

**2016/4076 – 11 Oakfield Glade, additional 2 storey house.** The proposed house was “unattractive” and an over-development totally out of character with the neighbourhood. This consideration was accepted by the South Area Planning Committee. The application has unfortunately been taken to appeal.

**2017/1209 – 11a Portmore Park Road.** This application for an additional two-storey house was refused on July 3. An ap-

peal was lodged in late November and will be conducted using the written representations procedure. The public was denied the opportunity to comment, but the challenge to this has been successful. A decision is expected by March.

### **2016/4126 – Clive House, Queens Road.**



This planning application was reported in our previous newsletter. It covers knocking down the existing building and replacing it with a three/part four-story building with basement to provide 30 retirement flats. The proposed design was out of proportion in terms of mass, bulk and height and its failure to recognise the local environment of a well set back building line. The Main Planning Committee refused the Application but an appeal has been submitted. Determination of the appeal is due in early 2018.

**2017/0953 – Arbrook Farm, Walton Lane Gates to the road, and 2017/0196 – area used during construction of the new bridge.** These applications were also reported in our previous newsletter, regarding the retention of a sliding entrance gate, brickwork flanking walls and rising bollards, as well as the area (originally agricultural land) used by Costains during

the construction of the new Walton Bridge. The Society objected to all of these as the original application placed on Costains was that the land should be returned to its original state once construction work had been completed. The Society objected to the use of Green Belt and noted that the land use is meant to be equestrian not agricultural. Furthermore there are highway safety and flood risks. The applications were refused by Elmbridge Council but have now been taken to appeal.

**2017/288 – 20-22 Castlevie Rd.** The proposal is for a terrace of five two-storey houses. The Planning Panel lodged an objection on the grounds of a cramped and undesirable development. Fourteen objections have been received by the Council. The application was refused on Aug. 11.

**2017/1176 – Salisbury House, 20 Queens Road, Weybridge.** This application covers building a rear extension to an existing building which reduces on-site car parking from seven to three spaces. Local residents were concerned this would create significant parking stress in an already saturated area. This concern was ignored by the Officer who recommended a grant based on advice from SCC Highways, which accepted that there was sufficient on-street parking to accommodate the loss of on-site car parking spaces. That was based on on-street parking data provided by the applicant, coupled with two fleeting on-site visits by SCC officers. The local residents group (Triangle Residents Group) undertook a far more detailed and robust parking survey which clearly showed that the data accepted by SCC Highways was highly questionable.

The application was refused by the South Area Planning Committee on Dec. 11 on the basis that the loss of onsite parking spaces would create unacceptable parking stress in the local area and would be detrimental to local residents' amenity.

### **2017/2534 – St George's House, 24 Queens Road.**



This application covers a four-storey building containing 43 single and double bedroom apartments with 34 car parking spaces. The existing building line and trees would be maintained but there would be a significant extension to the rear of the existing building. The Society objected to this application based on the mass, bulk, height and design, all of which are inconsistent with the Queens Road Village environment. The building would also have an impact on the setting of the Grade II Listed Weybridge United Reformed Church. Effects on nearby residents' amenity - lack of car parking and public transport - were also raised as concerns. The application was granted on Dec. 11 by the South Area Planning Committee.

**2017/2086 – 17 High Pine Close.** This covers a detached two-storey house with rooms in the roof space and detached garage in the rear garden. The basis of this

application is for a detached house in the rear of 17 High Pine Close with access for cars, pedestrians and service vehicles from York Road using an existing footpath. Sixty objections were lodged based upon numerous factors: poor access (it is not clear who owns the path from York Road which is used by local residents); effect on neighbours' amenity in terms of separation of buildings and reduction in natural light; and the site being too small for the proposed building. The proposed development was also seen as contrary to the established character of the road and footpath (currently large houses spaced with substantial gaps). The Society supports the residents' views. The application was refused in early September and an appeal was lodged in late November which will be conducted using the Written representations procedure.

#### **2017/1681 – Locke King House, 2 Balfour Road.**



This covers the demolition of Locke King House and replacing it with a two-storey building comprising ten flats, basement parking and landscaping. At the time of writing 14 objections, including that from the Society, have been lodged against the proposed development. These objections highlight the proposed design as inconsistent with the local street scene, detrimental to the Conservation area, and

not enhancing the character of the area. The tenor of the objections is in-line with the view of the EBC Planning Conservation consultant, who has noted there are no substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm to the Conservation area. The Society supports these views. The application is still under consideration.

**2017/2309 – Working Men's Club, 75 St Mary's Road.** The Society took no stand on the proposed alterations to building and façade, but the Council refused them on comprehensive grounds.

**Land at corner of St George's Avenue and Queens Road** McCarthy & Stone held a public consultation on Dec. 19 at the Oatlands Park Hotel during which the developer presented plans for a 59 apartment retirement building with 43 car parking spaces. This would require the demolition of five existing buildings. The frontage of the site on St George's Avenue would be 130 meters (for comparison, Austin Place in Oatlands Drive is around 120 m.) The building design is more sympathetic to its locality than other similar developments in the area, for example St George's House (see 2017/2534 above). The developer plans a four storey mansard design. Efforts have been made to retain all the current trees, which maintains the current tree-lined environment of this part of St George's Avenue. The formal application will be made in early 2018.

**Morrisons Monument Hill (replacement tree).** The Elmbridge compliance officer has confirmed that a replacement tree was available and would be planted when the conditions were suitable.

## WOKING AND SAM BEARE HOSPICE CARING FOR THE WEYBRIDGE COMMUNITY

You've no doubt heard of Woking and Sam Beare Hospice, which has been serving area residents for decades, providing critical end of life care for terminal patients. Maybe you know someone who's been helped there or supported it yourself by donating, taking part in a fun-run or midnight walk, or buying books at its charity bookshop on Weybridge High Street. But how much do you know about the hospice itself?



Weybridge Society members Steve McCarthy, Richard Marshall and Lesia Scholey met Marie Howse and Alice Windsor of the hospice for a full tour of the new Woking site

Feeling a bit 'us neither' - and sheepish for not yet having been to the hospice's new premises - a team from the Society went to meet with staff there in late November. As the Weybridge Society has supported the hospice's work for many years, the visit was well timed – just as the hospice was celebrating the tenth anniversary of its bookshop and offices in Weybridge and gearing up to the Dec. 5 grand opening of its new premises located at Goldsworth Park, Woking.

Founded in 1996 by Rhode Lofting,

the original Woking Hospice opened its ten-bed care facility in Hill View Road, Woking. Meanwhile, a ten-bed Sam Beare palliative care ward was in operation at Weybridge Hospital for nearly four decades, becoming Sam Beare Hospice in 1999. Funded by the NHS from 1999 to 2005, Sam Beare Hospice at the Weybridge site became a registered charity in June 2006. High costs and onerous rents contributed to the decision to shut that site in 2016, though the decision to merge Woking Hospice and Sam Beare Hospice to a state-of-the-art facility in Goldsworth Park, Woking was already in the works, having been taken in 2014.

Located within the same complex that housed the Weybridge NHS doctors' practices and Weybridge hospital on Church Street, Sam Beare Hospice luckily moved out in the winter 2016-2017 before the devastating fire last summer that destroyed the building. Some hospice administration and key community care services did and do remain in Weybridge, located temporarily at Clive House on the Queens Road, but the main in-house hospice care



New hospice at Woking

is now located at the new Woking facility.

The state-of-the-art facility, which can keep up to 20 overnight patients, is partly supported by the NHS but also relies heavily on the generosity of the local population.

‘For every pound funded - which we receive from the NHS - we need to find another four pounds from fundraising,’ said Alice Windsor, the hospice’s Community Fundraising Manager. ‘Many of the rooms and areas in the complex were only made possible by donations.’



The incredible facilities include a well-being centre/common room with individually adjustable sofa chairs, dining area and kitchen, which look out through a glass door wall onto a beautifully landscaped garden. Chelsea award-winning garden designer Charlotte Harris created the garden as a donation of her talents after her mother was cared for at the hospice. The garden also includes ‘The Retreat,’ a small zen-like building that serves as a multi-faith prayer room, donated by Sharaz Homes and affiliated Asian community.

In addition, the ground floor boasts a fully-kitted physiotherapy room, meant not just for one’s last days but the last years when a terminally ill patient needs care and exercise. The rooms allow physiother-

apists to give quality in-house care, but the facilities are open to all who are referred by their doctors to the hospice scheme.

Some critically ill or disabled patients, for example, might come in for a bath or a therapy such as massage, relieving their carers for just a few hours. Two therapy rooms provide the space needed for these all-volunteer therapist activities, while an incredible bath room houses a super high-tech medical appliance bath tub, complete with cranes for lifting people and including all manner of adjustable jets, which alone cost in the order of £20,000.



‘It’s about supporting not just patients but also their carers and extended families,’ said Windsor. ‘We rely heavily not only on funds raised but also on volunteers – we have about 200 paid staff, which covers the clinical and admin team, finance and human resources, but we also have about 800 volunteers – everyone from therapists to café staff.’

Indeed it’s a massive undertaking to provide the variety and depth of care as the hospice also operates a Day Centre four days a week, a set programme of hours and activities for patients both

in-house and out-patient. The hospice also provides funeral care service assistance and bereavement counselling.

'The vast majority want to pass away at home, so our hospice makes that possible,' noted Marie Howse, of the hospice Marketing and Communications team.

Windsor and Howse agreed that counselling is a big part of the Sam Beare care package as about 70 percent of hospice care is outpatient: in care homes or in people's own homes. Together with nurses teams from the Princess Alice Hospice and Marie Curie, the cancer charity, the option always remains to take care of a dying patient at home.



For those who do come to stay at the Woking hospice site, rooms have all the mod cons and high tech smart services, with balconies large enough to accommodate a bed, and the room itself big enough for a caring friend or family member to stay overnight. Down the corridor from upstairs rooms, a small common room with a mini-kitchen allows visitors to relax, watch TV and make a cup of tea. Just across the street from the hospice is a shopping mall with a Waitrose food store, a petrol station and other shops. The fact that pets can visit the hospice too makes the experience of a stay at the hospice as pleasant as possible.

The average patient stay in-house is about two weeks, noted Howse. 'Care here is free, but it's on a case-by-case basis that the doctors and families involved decide. The pathway here is palliative care. Hospitals can make people better, but hospices can only make people comfortable.'

In addition to the outpatient services for Weybridge that are run from Clive House, the Woking and Sam Beare hospice services other boroughs in north Surrey, six in all: Woking, Runnymede, Elmbridge, Spelthorne, North Guildford and Surrey Heath. To access any of these types of care (in-house or out-patient or at-home) local patients must obtain their doctor's referral.

**Would you like to support the Woking and Sam Beare hospice with a donation or get in touch? Visit [www.wsbhospices.co.uk](http://www.wsbhospices.co.uk)**

## Care in Weybridge Seeking Drivers

Care in Weybridge is a local charity established in 1987 which provides volunteer drivers to take KT13 residents to and from medical and other appointments. We're now looking for more drivers to join our team!

We provide full reimbursement for any expenses, and volunteers decide for themselves how many trips they wish to make. Most of our drivers do a run every three or four weeks, with three days or more notice in advance.

If you might be interested, please learning more by contacting Nigel Yallop at [nigelyallop@talktalk.net](mailto:nigelyallop@talktalk.net)

## HRH THE COUNTESS OF WESSEX GCVO OPENS WOKING HOSPICE

After a period of huge transition, Woking & Sam Beare Hospice enjoyed a Royal opening of its brand new state-of-the-art hospice in Woking, Surrey on Dec. 5, with HRH The Countess of Wessex leading celebrations.

Her Royal Highness met with patients and their loved ones, as well as the hospice's team of staff and supporters, who have all contributed to the success of the hospice as a patient-led care centre.



Building work on the new hospice, which incorporated the blue print and shell of an old office building, began in November 2015. The facility opened informally to hospice staff in March 2017. During the last months as interiors were completed, the hospice began its transition processes over to the new site while also delivering compulsory orientation and

training to all staff. Doors opened to the hospice's first in-patients in May 2017. Prefabricated offices for support staff behind the main hospital building were craned in and completed in August 2017.

Throughout the build the Sam Beare and Woking Community Teams continued to operate as normal. The Sam Beare Community Team remain based at Clive House in Weybridge.

"The decision to merge Sam Beare Hospice in Weybridge and the Woking Hospice to a brand new state-of-the-art purpose build was primarily because we put our patients at the heart of all we do," said Jayne Cooper, CEO of Woking & Sam Beare Hospices. "Hospice care over the years has changed, and the demands on our services have increased. We provide very personal and unique care and support plans for patients who often have very complex needs."



The new build means the hospice is now able to provide the very best in facilities as well as creating a hub and centre of excellence in palliative care, which in turn enables more effective services to the changing and growing demands of communities across Surrey.

**For more information, contact the hospice, Goldsworth Park Centre, Woking, Surrey, GU21 3LG, or visit: [www.wsbhospices.co.uk](http://www.wsbhospices.co.uk)**

## Woking & Sam Beare Hospices Snapshot

- Deliver 8,760 hours of care and support each year
- Team of specialist healthcare professionals caring for patients 24/7
- Care for approximately 1,400 patients each year
- Over 70% of care delivered in patient homes or care or nursing homes
- Referrals for patients across Surrey
- Specialists working with GPs care for patients with advanced progressive complex needs
- Care for adults of all ages 18 – 85+
- Services FREE of charge
- Support services for carers and family members
- Child and teenage bereavement counselling
- Wellbeing Centre offers a range of treatments and therapies
- Depend on more than 800 volunteers to keep the facility running
- Needs £4 in donations for every £5 of costs incurred
- Needs to raise more than £8 million a year to deliver services

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## SHORT HISTORY OF SAM BEARE AND WEYBRIDGE HEALTH SERVICES

Changes to our local health system have happened so quickly that few remember that a mere forty years ago general practices (GPs) were mostly run from the doctors' own homes and operations were carried at small local hospitals.

During the post-war years, from the 1940s until the 1960s, a highly respected local GP and surgeon by the name of Sam Beare worked at the Weybridge Hospital, a solid pre-war hospital funded by the local Locke King family and public subscriptions.

In the 1970s, most local hospital func-



Weybridge Hospital

tions were moved to St Peter's Hospital and elsewhere, and a dedicated health centre was built for Weybridge, expressly for the purpose of accommodating var-

ious GP practices with shared facilities. In 1976 one of the three hospital wards which remained in Weybridge was dedicated to palliative and terminal care and named after Sam Beare. The Sam Beare Hospice Charity was created to contribute to its costs.

The old Weybridge hospital where Dr. Beare worked was demolished in 1999, and hospice beds were moved into a new building on the same site. When separate NHS funding ended in 2005, the hospice was linked with Woking Hospice, so that ten beds remained on each site. But in December 2016 the hospice site in Weybridge closed and all beds were moved to the new Woking site, a converted building

near Goldsworth Park, northwest of Woking, then still in varied stages of construction.

The Weybridge NHS building was therefore empty of overnight patients in hospice beds by the time of this summer's tragic fire. Meanwhile at Woking, the work for a state-of-the-art facility continued, culminating this month in the hospice's formal grand opening, as the Countess of Wessex cut the ribbon on the new Woking and Sam Beare Hospice on Dec. 5, 2017. Maintaining its strong links with Weybridge, an outpatient service remains based locally, temporarily housed at Clive House, Queens Road, from where palliative care is managed in peoples' homes.

## UPDATE ON LIGHTING SCHEME FOR MEMORIAL AT MONUMENT GREEN



Moving ahead with a project of longstanding interest to Society members - to light the War Memorial at the top of Monument Hill - the Weybridge Society is now working on an application for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. This funding would go to a study by lighting engineers, generating a specification report that will form the basis upon which

we can obtain quotes for implementation.

Already a 12-page report has been prepared by member David Bounds, outlining in great detail the history of this special Weybridge memorial located at the roundabout near the cricket green. The report includes best practices surrounding the lighting of memorials, the planning and building consents needed, architectural considerations, impact on residents, issues concerning the lights themselves, light pollution and energy efficiency. The report also dealt with costs and maintenance, as well as additional proposals for improving the Weybridge War Memorial, and was annotated with detailed measurements and photography.

The Society thanks David Bounds for his incredible work, and any members interested in obtaining a copy by email should get in touch with the Chairman at: [chairman@weybridgesociety.org.uk](mailto:chairman@weybridgesociety.org.uk). Anyone from the general public interested in seeing this and other Society work

in detail should first become a member by following the links on our website at [www.weybridgesociety.org.uk](http://www.weybridgesociety.org.uk).



For the lighting scheme to move forward, discussions will first take place with Elmbridge and Surrey to secure their backing for the project and ensure that the Society's programme is in line with any requirements the councils may have. The Society then hopes to sub-

mit its application in early 2018. Comments from members at this stage would be welcome, please address them to [warmemorial@weybridgesociety.org.uk](mailto:warmemorial@weybridgesociety.org.uk).

The Weybridge War Memorial, unveiled in 1923, was produced by a prestigious firm of the day, R.I. Boulton and Sons, which made the country's leading ecclesiastical sculptures and claimed as patrons Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, the Pope, and the Dukes of Norfolk and Westminster as well as the Dowager of Denbigh. The architect J. Hatchard Smith was responsible for a number of other Surrey and London war memorials, and the Weybridge War Memorial is listed Grade II under the Planning Act of 1990 as a construction of special architectural and historical interest.



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## WEYBRIDGE SOCIETY TAKES ACTION ON PROPOSED FOOTPATH ON WEYBRIDGE HEATH

The Weybridge Society is taking action on a proposal by Surrey County Council that requests permission from the central government to create a surfaced path for pedestrians and cyclists along Heath Road. This proposal would require the loss of some Weybridge Heath common land (see Surrey County Council website for complete details) running alongside Heath Road from Weybridge Station down to Brooklands Lane, the street opposite the British Volunteer pub, close to the crossing used by residents and Heathside students.

Following up on responses by Weybridge Society members to our email of Nov. 1, the Society sent a formal letter on Nov. 24 to the Commons Team at the Plan-

ning Inspectorate based in Bristol (contact: [commonlandcasework@pins.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:commonlandcasework@pins.gsi.gov.uk)) regarding this proposed footpath.

Having long supported turning the existing rough path from the Brooklands College entrance down to the open Heath land into a proper surfaced pavement (with the assumption this would have minimal impact on the Heath common land), the Society found the Council's proposal would take this a lot further by making the whole stretch from the station right down onto the grass area into a path (width mostly of 3.8 metres (12.5 feet) except for the final section which would be 3 metres.) It is assumed this significant width was put in the proposal so

that a separate cycle lane can be created, which in turn would necessitate taking down the trees adjacent to the existing path and also moving the street lights.

In its formal response to central government (the Inspector of Commons at DEFRA, where Secretary of State is Michael Gove), the Society clarified and stated the following view:

*“Surrey Countryside’s proposal is a surprise since previously we were told that not even one tree could be removed to make a safer route near the dangerous bend in this road. That bend (created historically to align with the 19th century railway bridge) remains prone to the risk that cars might leave the road and hit the pathway north of the bend.*

*Many of our members do approve in principle that Common Land be used for footpath purposes but some have reservations about a 3.8 m tarmac path. While a few members regret loss of nature and trees, we think in this case that the remaining Heathland would be sufficiently wide to make some loss of natural habitat worthwhile for the advantages of a wider public pathway that is better segregated from this*

*over-used B road. We point out that this wide tarmac path would create a visual effect like a dual-carriageway in character, but might open up the aspect of the Heath with better access to the other paths in the woods if overgrown holly is removed.*

*Some people fear that a shared tarmac cycle/pedestrian path on this steep hill would endanger pedestrians by becoming a ‘race-track’ for cyclists (two ways). Warning signs for cyclists to respect pedestrians and slippery surfaces would be necessary, suggesting a speed limit.*

*As funding has yet to be obtained, a less ambitious scheme might end up being proposed within the permission, which might meet some of the public’s preferences in detail.”*

The Society awaits a response from central government and Surrey County Council. However, as both Elmbridge Leisure Department and Surrey County Council support this proposal, which is part of a longer distance shared path, it is likely the Inspector will judge that some use of common land for a path alongside Heath Road is an acceptable way to mitigate an old traffic danger.

## JOIN THE WEYBRIDGE SOCIETY

Founded more than fifty years ago, the Weybridge Society has recently become a registered UK charity. As ever the Society provides an opportunity for residents to keep abreast of events and issues affecting our community, and with charity status your donations go even further. We welcome new members and membership can be either individual at £8 annually or joint (for two people at the same address) at £12. The QR code alongside provides a link directly to the joining page. Full details can also be found on our website: [www.weybridgesociety.org.uk](http://www.weybridgesociety.org.uk)



## 20 MPH LIMITS IN SURREY?

Opinion from the Chairman

Based on a decision made in 1934 - for more than 80 years now - the traffic limit in so-called 'built-up' areas of Britain has been 30 miles per hour. As reassuring as that longevity may seem, the original decision was taken without any study and data to support it. And while cars back then were much slower and less dangerous to pedestrians, and fortunately the density of traffic was much lower, this is no longer the case. **The Weybridge Society thinks it is time for a review.**

Current statistics ring crystal clear on the issue of road safety: speed kills. And a reduction from 30 mph to 20 mph brings significant benefits. Of the 130,000 reported casualties on built-up roads in the UK in 2016, 106,000 occurred on 30 mph roads. About 11 persons per week (588 in total) were killed, while a further 246 people each week (12,849) were seriously injured on 30 mph roads. Moreover, depending on age, survivability at being hit at 20 mph vs 30 mph is about seven to ten times higher, with stopping distances halved from 23 m to 12 m. Even the World Health Organisation (WHO) advises that "a safe speed on roads with possible conflicts between cars and pedestrians, cyclists or other vulnerable road users is 30 km/h (20 mph)."

This composite of figures should be more than enough to fuel action in Surrey, especially since the county has some of the most congested roads in the country and one of the highest levels of car ownership per head of population, increasing the risk of accidents. Many Surrey roads are also poorly designed for modern times, with inadequate pavements and narrow carriageways, though they are still expect-

ed to provide safe travel for a mix of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

Nationally, inadequate speed regulation has shown to have real knock-on effects besides death and injury. Excessive speed of cars is cited as the main reason why people fail to use roads to walk or cycle, making our nation's young and elderly particularly vulnerable if they lose mobility because 30 mph vehicle speeds are endorsed even in areas where people live, work, shop and attend school with little thought as to how they might manage fast traffic. Taking a decision not to walk or cycle - to remain a shut-in or only use a car to get about - adds not only to personal inconvenience and ultimately traffic and pollution, but also to the national bill of health. Inadequate speed regulation thus carries implications in matters such as costs of obesity and other illnesses related to lack of exercise.

All these compounding factors have been highlighted by many cities throughout the UK which are now implementing 20 mph limits. **Nearly 14 million people now live in 20 mph areas.**



Cars speeding on Oatlands Avenue. Shortly after this photo was taken the inappropriately parked green car was hit at such speed that it was smashed beyond repair.

Surrey County Council has the authority for setting speed limits on all its roads except trunk roads and motorways, but Surrey highway officers generally have not

supported the introduction of 20 mph limits. Their argument is that it would unenforceable and that funds are unavailable to provide the necessary traffic calming measures. Borough Local Committees have been given delegated authority for setting local speed limits – and as we mentioned in our summer newsletter edition, the Triangle Residents Group (TRG) located in the Queen’s Road village area recently submitted a petition to the Elmbridge Local Committee for a 20 mph limit to extend throughout their area. But we at the Weybridge Society would argue that this is not enough.

There are now more than a dozen locally based campaigns in Surrey for the implementation of 20 mph limits in built-up areas, and they are starting to work together in order to influence Surrey Councillors to change policy. But Surrey County’s position remains opaque in this matter, having recently issued the following statement: *“The county council is plan-*

*ning to review its policy on setting local speed limits. It is intended that this will be informed by research commissioned by the Department for Transport on the effectiveness of signed only 20 mph schemes. It is expected that the research commissioned by the DfT will be published early in the new year. Work has not yet begun and there is no set timescale as yet as to when the speed limit review will be completed.”*

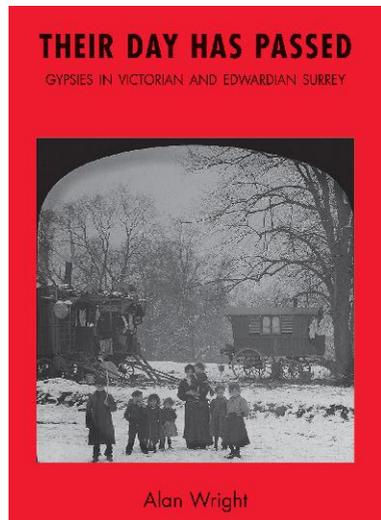
If research does show that meaningful speed reductions can be obtained by sign-only schemes, then this would remove the need for speed calming measures and significantly reduce costs for implementing 20 mph limits. However it seems unlikely that Surrey will make any significant change to its policy on 20 mph limits until well into 2018.

**Do you have strong views on this matter? Would you like to see more 20 mph zones? Get in touch with us at [transport@weybridgesociety.org.uk](mailto:transport@weybridgesociety.org.uk)**

## Society Member Publishes Book on Gypsy History

Inspired by research undertaken on behalf of the Surrey History Centre, Weybridge Society member Dr. Alan Wright recently published *Their Day Has Passed, Gypsies in Victorian and Edwardian Surrey*, a non-fiction book that illuminates the experiences of gypsies in Surrey in the 19th and early 20th centuries, a time when the county covered large areas of south London.

The title *Their Day Has Passed* takes its cue from a letter written in 1912 by a Surrey County Councillor, Admiral Swinton Colthurst Holland, to High Court Judge



and local Surrey landowner, Sir Reginald Bray, reflecting the attitude of some (though not all) sections of the settled community towards various travelling groups.

“I wanted to highlight an important and little documented aspect of local history,” said Dr. Wright. “The lack of records left by the Gypsy and Traveller communities left a lot of unanswered questions about their presence and experiences, which I hope my book will go some way towards answering.”

The book sets out the historical context in which a common perception developed that Gypsies were an anachronism from earlier times and needed to be controlled. *Their Day Has Passed* throws fresh light on what such attitudes meant in practice on the ground: the focus on Surrey and South London in particular shows how urban expansion, changing economic circumstances, ever more intrusive legislation, and the growth of misconceptions and prejudices, all challenged the travelling way of life at the dawn of the modern era.

The book is available for £9.99 at all good bookshops and on Amazon, where readers can make use of the ‘Look Inside’ facility and take a sneak peek at the contents. Dr. Wright also hopes to give talks locally on the topics covered by the book in spring 2018.

A retired civil servant and long-time resident of Weybridge, Dr. Wright currently engages in a range of volunteering activities, including working as trustee to ElmWey Learning Trust (responsible for Heathside), supporting Elmbridge and Runnymede Talking News and acting as a committee member of the Triangle Residents Group and the Weybridge Society Planning Committee.

It was his continuing interest in histo-

ry – his doctorate based on research into the decline of the Liberal Party and the rise of Labour in the late Victorian period – which led Dr. Wright to volunteer to work with the Surrey History Centre.

There he compiled case studies and data bases on the Gypsy and Traveller presence in Surrey. Having identified a lack of studies based on surviving archive material, he sought to break new ground in writing this book.

“These groups tend to leave little in the way of formal records, but I was keen to show that detailed evidence of the Gypsy experience could be pieced together by detective work on the wide range of surviving written sources, such as newspapers, parish records and various manuscript archives left by the settled community,” said Dr. Wright.

The book might challenge some perceptions, he noted, but said he hopes it will encourage and shape further research, by providing an objective context and a model for such studies.

“It should prove interesting to the general reader wishing to know more about the local origins of this itinerant community, as well as fascinating for local and family historians eager to follow their own travels into the past,” he said.

## AGM on APRIL 12

The Annual General Meeting of the Weybridge Society will be held on Wednesday April 12 in the Small Hall of St James' Parish Church (parking in Churchfield Road car park). Doors open 7:30 for 8:00 pm. All welcome.

## ANTIQUE VEHICLES RACE AT BROOKLANDS

Antique car enthusiasts were out in full force at Brooklands Museum on Nov. 29 for a re-enactment of a race that took place 120 years ago. In particular it was a day for die-hard fans of the De Dion Bouton, a kind of sporty little motorised tricycle manufactured between 1896 and 1902, now well known to those who follow the annual Brighton Car Run for pre-1904 veteran cars each November.

No less than twenty De Dion Boutons took to the track at Brooklands, where the section known as the Finishing Straight was recently liberated from a WWII hangar that had been plonked on it for 70 years. An oval course was laid out around bollards, and spectators cheered on for two hours of cheerful puttering in familiarisation runs, heats and the final race. Meanwhile competitors countered the intense cold by leaning in on corners and pedalling whenever the little vehicles could do with the help.

Variations in vehicle design were readily spotted, with different developments evident in the wheelbase, tyres and carburation. Unsurprisingly there was the occasional reluctant starter (pedestri-

an pushers were in demand) as well as the odd mechanical problem. But most of the vehicles lasted out the day, which also included a talk and convivial lunch.

Count de Dion and his collaborator M. Bouton were among the first motor vehicle manufacturers at the turn of the 20th century and seen as the most prolific and advanced. Having recognised that higher engine speed led to greater efficiency and power, De Dion Boutons were running at 2000 rpm and more, even as pioneer Benz engines could hardly reach 750 rpm.

At a time when the universal speed limit in Britain was 4 mph (France was not so unambitious), De Dion Boutons were capable of up to 20 mph on the flat. With one air-cooled cylinder of only 137cc and only one gear, De Dions struggled on hills, and for that reason they retained pedals like an un-motorised tricycle. The pedals were also critical to starting the engine. With band brakes both on the front wheel and at the rear, together with an ignition switch to stop the engine, retardation was good – except when rain reduced the efficiency of the band brakes.

**For more information on this and other related events, see [www.brooklandsmuseum.com](http://www.brooklandsmuseum.com)**



*News Letter Comments - Did anything catch your eye in this newsletter, or would you like to make a comment to the editor? Your feedback would be appreciated. Please let us know through [newsletter@weybridgesociety.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@weybridgesociety.org.uk)*

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