

# The Weybridge News

Spring 2018

Local issues, local action, local Conservatives | [www.runnymedeweybridgeconservatives.com](http://www.runnymedeweybridgeconservatives.com)

## Weybridge has great prospects

**COUNCILLOR Andy Muddyman and local businesswoman Charu Sood will be your Conservative candidates at this year's Elmbridge Borough Council elections on 3 May.**

They will be standing in Weybridge Riverside and St George's Hill wards respectively, which are two key battlegrounds in deciding who runs the council - whether it will be a fiscally responsible, forward looking Conservative administration, with a keen eye on keeping down the council tax, or a continuation of the current chaotic coalition of the Liberal Democrats and seven Residents Association political parties.

Cllr Muddyman is a former commercial pilot and helicopter flight instructor, who now owns and runs an investment company based in Baker Street, Weybridge.

He said: "I have always had a keen interest in local issues and I've tried to bring the skills I learned in my business career to assist Elmbridge Council. I've served on the South Area Planning Sub-committee, the Full Planning Committee, and the Local



Committee, liaising with Surrey County Council. I also represent Elmbridge residents on the Heathrow Community Engagement Board (HCEB).

"It has been a privilege to speak up for your interests these last two years but there is lots more still to do. I hope local residents will give me the opportunity to keep fighting their corner on important issues like housing, roads and aircraft noise."

Charu Sood hopes to succeed Simon Foale

as Conservative councillor for St George's Hill. She is new to council politics but not to public service. Charu is an active member of the community - she serves on the Committee of Brackley Residents Society, looking after maintenance of roads and footpaths, and is also a PTA member at Oatlands School as well as the mother of three girls.

Charu said: "We are lucky to have access to outstanding local schools, family-

friendly amenities and green open spaces in Weybridge. I want to use my skills to make a difference to the local community. My priorities are ensuring a vibrant Weybridge town centre, promoting green initiatives to improve air quality and to make sure that much-needed housing development is appropriate for the area".

She added: "Cllr Simon Foale has worked really hard for residents over the years. I am keen to pick up where he left off and I am looking forward to meeting residents on the doorstep in the weeks ahead."

Elmbridge, under Conservative control from 2006-2016, enjoyed a reputation for excellent services and sound finances. We froze the council tax for seven years in 10, and achieved significant savings without impacting frontline services.

The current RA/Lib Dem Administration has put taxes and service charges up, it sparked hundreds of complaints through its handling of a new refuse contract, but its councillors still awarded themselves a shocking 12.4% rise in their allowances.

It's time Elmbridge got back to strong, responsible local government. We ask you to vote for Andy and Charu at the Local Elections on 3 May.

Conservatives will keep a keen eye on costs and ears open for what residents want from their Borough Council.

## Simon Foale to stand down



**WE ARE sad to be bidding farewell to Simon Foale, who is stepping down as Councillor for St George's Hill this May, having represented residents at Elmbridge since 2014.**

Simon says: "It has been a great privilege to serve all of you over the last four years.

"I am sad to leave this wonderful town and vibrant borough. We have moved to be closer to my wife's extended family in Farnham so I am leaving one lovely part of Surrey for another!

"I have tried hard to support all residents, however you voted, and respond to your issues promptly. I am proud of my contribution to the Weybridge Town Business Group and grateful for the energy, passion and diplomacy of its Chairman Paul Povey. I know there will be more town centre improvements soon.

"It was also great to see the formation of the Triangle Residents Group. I enjoyed working with them to protect the lovely character of the area.

"Thank you for the support which you have given me over the last few years and I wish our candidate Charu Sood all the very best; I know that she will be an excellent ambassador, bridge-builder and champion for our community."

## Potholed roads 'a priority'

**P**OTHOLE-ridden Seven Hills Road and St Georges Avenue may soon be resurfaced following efforts from local county councillors Tim Oliver (Weybridge) and John O'Reilly (Hersham).

They have worked with Surrey highways officials to submit two bids for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds to pay for the works. CIL is collected from property developers by Elmbridge Borough Council and is used to pay for improvements to local infrastructure.

Tim, pictured, told *The Weybridge News* that he is hopeful that the bids will be approved so that works can commence this year. Applications to the £7 million fund will be considered by EBC on 15th March, and Cllr Oliver will update



after that meeting.

Tim is keenly aware of how important roads are to residents: "I know how much frustration and annoyance there is about the condition of roads. The weather has been unusually hard on the roads this winter, and the repair gangs have been working extra shifts throughout the week and weekend to keep up.

"We have added a jet patching machine, which carries out a rapid repair treatment, mainly on residential streets to help out too. But for some roads resurfacing is the only adequate solution."

With the massively increased cost of adult social care straining the County budget, the amount of money left for roads is limited.

However, Cty Cllr John O'Reilly said that there might be some good news around the corner: "Next year's budget for local highways will be doubled and we may have around £200,000 in total for work in Elmbridge. This will certainly be a help but much more needs to be done. I will keep on fighting!"

However, a long-term solution for road funding needs to be found.

Conservative councillors are lobbying the government to change the way funding for roads is calculated. Currently, the County receives a set sum per mile irrespective of the volume of traffic using it. This penalises counties with very busy roads like Surrey.

Finally, we need your help. There are over 3,000 miles of road in Surrey, so if you see a pothole on the network then please use the 'Report It' function on the Surrey County Council website.

You can keep up with developments on Tim's blog: <https://cllrtimoliver.com/>

## Have your say on Heathrow runway

**HEATHROW Airport is seeking residents' views about its plans for a possible third runway, and air space reforms which are happening regardless of expansion.**

Those who live in the Weybridge Riverside ward are likely to be most affected as they are under the flightpath when the airport is on westerly operations.

Cllr Andy Muddyman (pictured with Cllr Michael Freeman) is the Council's representative to Heathrow. He said: "This consultation is an opportunity for all of us to be heard, not only about flight paths and departure routes but also the impact on the M25 and other surface transport."

Heathrow is holding a number of public meetings. The next local



one is at the Cecil Hepworth Playhouse in Hurst Grove, Walton on 12 March, 12pm - 8pm. Or go to [www.heathrowconsultation.com](http://www.heathrowconsultation.com)

The airport is also seeking views on reforming airspace including spreading the pain of overflying.

## A word from the Editor

**HELLO and welcome to The Weybridge News, your regular community newsletter produced and delivered by the Weybridge Conservatives to keep you informed of what's going on in our area.**

I am John Rowland, the editor, and once again I'm pleased to bring you a packed edition. We are looking at two pressing local issues - the shortage of housing, particularly for first time buyers, and the state of our roads with responses from your elected representatives.

Surrey County Council is wrestling with the ever-increasing cost of providing care to elderly residents and people with disabilities. Conservative councillors are lobbying government to put in the necessary funds, and some progress is being made around the area of business rate retention. This is crucial to ensure we can continue to help the most vulnerable in our community.

With Elmbridge Borough Council elections coming up, I'm delighted to be able to introduce you to our candidates Andrew Muddyman, who will be known to many of you, and Charu Sood. We are also saying goodbye to Cllr Simon Foale who has worked tirelessly for residents of the St George's Hill ward since his election in 2014.

He has moved away from the area and we wish him and his family all the very best for the future.

- John





Hersham County Councillor John O'Reilly with Whiteley Village residents

## Ground-breaking for Whiteley Village care hub

ESHER and Walton MP, Dominic Raab and Marjorie Lewis, at 105 the oldest resident of Whiteley Village, shared the honours in breaking ground for the Village's new, £10 million care hub.

When it opens in 2019 it will provide a wonderful social space for Villagers, their families and friends, as well as 30 beds for people who would otherwise be in hospital or a nursing home.

These will be arranged around a family space with open plan kitchens

and living areas, creating a homely feel that is comfortable for patients and welcoming to visitors.

The hub will also be the base for care workers and for state-of-the-art technology. Carers will help people live independently and happily in their own homes as they age, among their friends in the Village.

Whiteley will deploy robotic pets, modern communications and all sort of aids to help them live well - a truly groundbreaking concept.



## Thousands back hospital petition



SINCE local resident George Farrell opened a petition calling for the replacement of a Walk-in Centre on the Weybridge Hospital site five months ago, the response from Weybridge residents has been phenomenal.

Nearly 3,500 residents have signed it, sending a strong message about how much the community valued the facility before it was destroyed by fire last year.

The rapid reinstatement of the two GP practices on the original site was warmly welcomed by Cllr Michael Freeman: "The efforts the NHS has gone to get things back on track are greatly appreciated. We hope NHS decision-makers take note of the views of local residents on reinstating the walk-in centre."

The NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, which is responsible for making a decision, has not yet committed to a replacement.

In the meantime, residents are having to travel to alternative hospitals for treatments that were previously available on their doorstep.

You can sign the petition at: <https://is.gd/equasat>

## Where will the homes go?

Elmbridge must build extra 600 homes a year for decade



**HUNDREDS** of new homes are to be built in Elmbridge every year to help young families and key workers to get on to the property ladder.

The Conservative government is determined to address the chronic shortage of housing nationally which has pushed up the average cost of a home in Elmbridge to around £600,000 – beyond the reach of most first time buyers and key workers.

Elmbridge, like other Surrey boroughs has been asked to plan for around 612 new housing units a year for the next decade. It is a tall order and one that requires imagination and creativity – not at all what we've seen so far from the coalition of Residents Association political parties and the Liberal Democrats which currently runs the borough.

As Cllr James Browne (pictured), the Elmbridge Conservative Group spokesman on Housing explains:

"The Administration's response was so crude and unimaginative.

"They proposed building nearly 3,000 homes on three large tracts of the greenbelt [at Long Ditton and Cobham/Oxshott]. The plan was totally unacceptable to residents and the Coalition was forced into a retreat after a predictable outcry.

"They wasted the best part of a year on a plan that was never going to work and which we made clear we wouldn't support. Just imagine what would be in their literature now if the Conservatives had proposed building thousands of homes on the greenbelt!"

A Conservative Administration, if elected in May, will seek a more nuanced approach to meeting the housing challenge.

We will give careful



thought to releasing public land, building on brownfield sites and greater intensity in built-up areas, such as three-storey terraces. Developers will be put on notice that they are less likely to get planning permission for large 'footballer mansion' homes than previously, because that is not what we need in the borough now – it is starter homes and affordable homes.

The current RA/Lib Dem administration has also failed to approve an updated Local Plan setting the guidelines for new development in the borough.

This creates a potential free for all for developers and stacks the deck in their favour if they take the Council to an appeal against refusal to grant planning permission.

Cllr Browne added: "The lesson is clear – if you want to safeguard the greenbelt and want a competently run Council then you need to vote Conservative in May."

## COMMUNITY NEWS

WEYBRIDGE County Cllr Tim Oliver has allocated £4000 from his local good causes fund to support the regeneration of the Key Stage 1 playground at St. James Primary which accommodates some 210 children. The play equipment will allow children to test themselves, but in a safe environment.

FOLLOWING a spike in burglaries in the area, Surrey Police has launched Operation Spearhead. There are extra overt and covert resources being deployed resulting in a number of arrests. Additionally, Surrey Police is offering the services of specialist 'Designing Out Crime' officers to help improve security. Officers have also increased use of social media and 'In the Know' emails to raise awareness.

WALTON Firs is holding its North Surrey Mud Runner event on Sat 10th March. There are 3k and 5k routes. From more information visit [www.waltonfirs.co.uk](http://www.waltonfirs.co.uk)

PARENTS at Manby Lodge have contacted local councillors pointing out that there has been a marked increase in dog fouling on Princes Road, resulting in children having to have help cleaning their shoes on a nearly daily basis. It is also an issue near St James Primary. This is not only unpleasant but a health risk. If you have a dog please remember to clear up after it - it's also a civil offence.

CALLING Whiteley Village Residents: the next dates to meet your local councillor is Wednesday 25th April. There's a 2pm start in the social club followed by 2.30pm in Ingram House.

DEVELOPER McCarthy & Stone has applied to build 59 retirement flats with associated parking in St Georges Avenue, Weybridge. Their application is listed as 2018/0038 on the Elmbridge website and open for public comment until 9 March, with a decision due in May.

STAGECOACH Walton is running a youth theatre for 15-19 year olds who feel the call of the stage. Teachers are West End performers and trial classes are available. Go to [www.stagecoach.co.uk/walton](http://www.stagecoach.co.uk/walton) or call Tony on 01932 506806.

## Spending a penny

THE RA/Lib Dem run council may not be flush with money but it has decided to spend £350,000 on buying five new toilets.

Swedish 'Tetragonal Classics' will replace automated services around the borough, mainly in RA-held wards. It will cost around £60k a year to maintain them, which works out at £164 a day to spend a penny.

Cllr Ian Donaldson called on the Administration to take more time and properly consider the locations, suggesting that outdoor spaces like the Thames towpath and Brooklands are better locations.

But the coalition councillors say they cannot delay the new contract.



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