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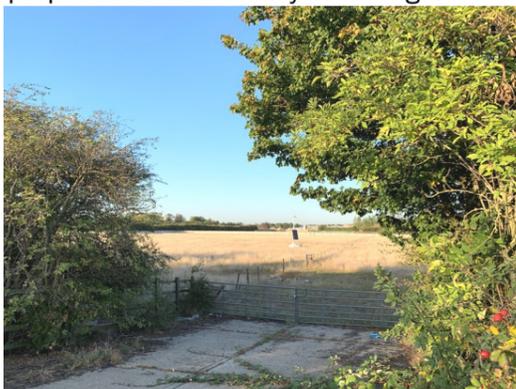
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October/November 2019

PLANS SUBMITTED FOR NEW WALTON SECONDARY SCHOOL

Plans have finally been formally submitted by the Department for Education for a new secondary school off Waterside Drive. The proposed Walton Heathside would have six classes in each year with places for 900 pupils aged 11 to 16 and would mitigate Surrey County Council's forecast deficit of school places. The earliest opening date would be September 2021.

The proposal is for one large building of up to three storeys high. The site would also include a main hall, sports hall, library, dance studio and specialised classrooms. The site includes a multi-use games area, external dining and playground space, football pitches, athletics track and a pond and nature area. Staff, visitor and minibus parking on site is proposed as well as bicycle storage.



The site proposed for Walton Heathside School

The site proposed is in the Green Belt which means the applicants have to prove 'very special circumstances' for the proposal to be approved, including why no other site is more suitable. Another major consideration for councillors will be the traffic impact on local roads, especially Terrace Road.

To see full details of the application and to submit your view visit elbridge.gov.uk/planning and search for application 2019/2157. The deadline for comments formally closed on 20 September, however the Council will accept all comments until the application is decided by Elmbridge Council's Planning Committee. The

aim is for the application to go to the February Committee meeting.

SUPPORTING LOCAL CAUSES

Once a year Walton's Borough Councillors meet to distribute the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), money given by developers who have built in Walton. CIL aims to enhance and create facilities and services which are needed to support new homes in the area.



Cllrs Christine Richardson & Andrew Kelly at the Sea Cadets stall, Heritage Day 2019

The Walton Local Spending Board, chaired by Cllr Andrew Kelly, met on 19 September and awarded over £100,000 to four bids. Funds were given to the Walton-on-Thames Trading Alliance (WoTTA) for new play equipment in Ashley Park; to the Elmbridge Community Fishing Academy, a youth engagement scheme based at Apps Court; to Walton Oak School for a double-decker bus to serve as a new play and learning space; and to the Sunbury & Walton Sea Cadets who are building a new riverside training centre.

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ELECTIONS 2019

It was a case of no change in Walton at the Elmbridge Borough Council elections on 2 May with Walton Conservatives holding two seats and the Walton Society holding one.

Walton North re-elected Cllr Rachael Lake, who has been representing Walton residents since 1997, with an increased share of the vote. Since the election she has become Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at Elmbridge, ensuring councillors effectively scrutinise the work of the new Residents' Associations/LibDem coalition administration. In Walton South Cllr Chris Cross was re-elected for her fifth term with over 50% of the vote.

Chris and Rachael would like to thank all those who voted for them: "We appreciate the continued trust and support residents have shown us, and we will always work hard on your behalf. Your local team of Walton Conservative Councillors work closely together for our town. If there is any issue or concern you want to raise, please do get in touch - our details are on the back page."



Across Elmbridge on 2 May, the Conservatives lost three seats in line with the national trend, two to the Residents' Associations and one to the LibDems. There are now 21 Conservative Councillors, 17 Residents' Associations (RAs) and 10 Liberal Democrats. Despite claiming to be non-political, the RAs (including the Walton Society) immediately joined the LibDems in a coalition which now runs Elmbridge Borough Council.

The new RA/LibDem administration's first act, minutes after taking power, was to increase the number of taxpayer-funded positions for their councillors.

HOMES FOR THE FUTURE

Elmbridge Council is consulting residents on five options designed to meet the housing needs of the borough for the next 15 years. Its Local Plan consultation will help determine how, and where, up to 623 mainly one and two-bedroom homes per year, or 9,345 over the plan period, will be built across Elmbridge.

The Elmbridge Conservative Group strongly backs option 4, which would deliver about 5,300 new homes in existing built areas while pushing back on government quotas. Crucially it includes **no building on the Green Belt** whatsoever. This is the option we instructed officers to come up with during the year to May 2019 when we formed the council administration.



As the consultation began in August, Cllr James Browne, leader of Elmbridge Conservatives, said: "We believe option 4 plans for the future, by providing a large number of new homes, of which 99% would be of three bedrooms or fewer, and nearly 70% of those homes must be at affordable or social rent levels in order to provide homes for the less well-off, first time buyers and key workers such as school teachers, police officers and firefighters. It protects our green belt which stops the London sprawl taking over our borough and, whilst all local areas will see more housing, it will not destroy local character."

YOUR LOCAL CONSERVATIVES WORKING FOR WALTON

YOUR LOCAL WALTON CONSERVATIVE TEAM



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Councillors' Surgery

Walton's Conservative Councillors hold a surgery on the first Saturday of each month (Farmers' Market Day) in the two small meeting rooms at the back of Walton Library from 10am to 12 noon. There is no need to book, please just turn up on the day.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- A new play area by the Xcel off Waterside Drive was officially opened on 31 May. Walton's Conservative Councillors have lobbied since the start of the Sports Hub project for this new play area and we're delighted to see it open and being used. Councillors Chris Cross and Rachael Lake (right) attended the opening event and planted some wildflower seeds to create a 'wild meadow' effect around the play area.



- Elmbridge Borough Council has set up a **Community Planting Fund**. Grants of up to £5,000 are available to charities, voluntary groups, schools and not-for-profit organisations who wish to enhance Elmbridge's green spaces. Applications are currently open until 31 October and will open again from 1 February to 31 March 2020. For details and to apply visit elmbridge.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/community-planting-fund/

- Over 100 objections have been received after a proposal was submitted to knock down **La Dolce Vita (formerly Zio's) restaurant** and a neighbouring house in Ashley Road and replace them with a restaurant/café unit and 18 flats. The application seeks to construct a 4-storey building with a 'distinctive and contemporary' appearance. There would be twelve 1-bed and six 2-bed flats. Six parking spaces, including one disabled space, are proposed. Elmbridge Borough Council is currently considering the application.

- The Walton-on-Thames Trading Alliance (WoTTA) organise regular community litter picks which normally take place every few months on a Sunday morning. For details of their upcoming litter picks, visit www.wotta.co.uk/litter-picks. Walton Litter Pickers, a community group formed last year, organise regular litter picks and volunteers commit to keep their street tidy. More information can be found at <https://walton-litter-pickers.business.site/>
Conservative campaigner Kristopher Januszajtis-Neale, Cllr Andrew Kelly & Cllr Malcolm Howard at WoTTA's March litter pick

- The world's first documented game of baseball took place in Walton's Ashley Park in 1749. To mark this historic event WoTTA, the British Plaque Trust, Walton Cricket Club and BaseballSoftballUK got together and organised a day of celebration called '**Baseball's Coming Home**' on 7 July at the Cricket Club. The day included the unveiling of a blue plaque, family activities and games of baseball and softball. A softball team called 'Walton 49ers' has now been formed and welcomes new members - details at wotta.co.uk/walton-49ers.



Mayor's Consort John Sheldon, Cty Cllr Tony Samuels, Mayor of Elmbridge Cllr Mary Sheldon, Cllr Alan Kopitko & Cllr Christine Richardson at 'Baseball's Coming Home'

- Walton Central's Cllr Christine Richardson recently asked PA Housing about the slow progress of work at the **former Dairy Crest site** at the end of the High Street near the War Memorial. A planning application for a retail showroom and 18 flats above was permitted in 2015. PA Housing explained to Christine the reasons for the lengthy construction, including issues with the original sub-contractor and delays to the connection of the utility services. They are aiming for completion in November.

- A proposal to knock down 13-19A High Street (**WHSmith and Boots**) and replace it with four retail units and 30 flats has been turned down by Elmbridge Borough Council. Councillors felt the 'appearance, scale, mass, and height' of the 4-storey building would have a detrimental impact on the town centre. They also felt the 11 parking spaces were insufficient.

- We are aware of social media rumours that **Homebase** could be replaced with housing. Councillors have not been informed by any developer of such a proposal. However, Cllr Christine Richardson found an article online suggesting a developer has bought the site and is proposing 300 retirement homes plus commercial and retail space and a children's nursery. The article is here: <https://healthcarebusiness.co.uk/legal-and-general-expands-its-urban-later-living-business-with-new-site-in-walton-on-thames/> We will keep residents updated when we hear more.

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FORT HOUSE MOVE APPEAL

In our February/March *In Touch* we reported that an application by the local NHS to move the Fort House Surgery from Hersham Road to an unused ward at Walton Hospital in Rodney Road had been refused by Elmbridge Borough Council. The NHS has now appealed this refusal to the Planning Inspectorate, an independent government body, who will decide based on written submissions from both sides.

The Council's decision followed over 600 objections to the proposal and nearly 300 letters of support. The main concern of objectors, including GPs at the Red and White practices at the Health Centre opposite the Hospital, was the parking impact of another GP Surgery in Rodney Road. Surrey County Council had recommended a cap on the number of patients due to these concerns.



YOUR LOCAL CONSERVATIVES WORKING FOR WALTON