

# The Molesey News

Voice of the Molesey Conservative Residents  Jan/Feb 2012

**BE A COUNCILLOR**  
The Conservatives are looking for Molesey people with ideas, energy and integrity to stand for election to Elmbridge Council in May. If you are over 18 and would like the chance to serve your community please email us for more details.

## Hello and a warm welcome to the first Molesey News of the new year!

It's been a busy couple of months since the last edition. In late November the Pavilion Appeal hearing took place at Elmbridge Civic Centre to decide whether 76 homes could be built in Hurst Lane, on land that was supposed to be reserved for community leisure and sport.

I was grateful for an opportunity to speak at the hearing and was hugely impressed by the passion and professionalism of the Molesey Community Action Group, who were more than a match for the opposition and carried the day.

A big well done to all of those residents and congratulations on a great victory. Looking ahead, 2012 has the potential

## A word from the Editor

to be a truly memorable year for Molesey. The Olympic cycle races in July and August will give our town unprecedented exposure to a massive global audience.

The spectacular views of Hampton Court Palace and the Thames are sure to inspire UK and overseas visitors to come here for a long time to come.

Many of us may have a chance to see the Olympics up close and for free,



and it will be great to our town centre bustling with tourists. I hope this gives a welcome boost to our local shops who have endured some very difficult times recently.

Regrettably the road closures will bring disruption and inconvenience, but overall the benefits will outweigh the bad.

2012 will be a big year for me personally as I will be getting married in July at St Mary's Church, East Molesey. It is likely to be the last wed-

ding officiated by Rev. Carole Bourne before she retires, and is therefore a great honour for my fiancée and I.

You and I will also have the chance to elect new councillors on May 3.

I will be standing again in East Molesey and will be putting forward some positive ideas on how to improve our area.

It would mean the world to me if I were elected your councillor this time, and when you next hear from me I will set out what I hope to bring to the role.

In the meantime I want to hear what your priorities are so that I can reflect them in my manifesto so please email your thoughts to the address above.

My best wishes to you for a happy and prosperous 2012.

# The eyes of the world on Molesey

**M**OLESEY will be seen by millions of people from all over the world this summer when it hosts three cycling races in the 2012 Olympics.

A massive global TV audience is expected to tune in to watch the fastest men and women on two wheels, as they race past the grounds of Hampton Court Palace and along the length of Hurst Road in Molesey.

They will race on to Walton, Weybridge, Woking, Guildford, the Surrey Hills and Dorking - passing hundreds of thousands of spectators lining the route - then lapping Box Hill several times and heading back to Hampton Court Way in Molesey (via Leatherhead, Oxshott and Esher).

The Men's Cycling Event on Saturday July 28th will see the first gold medal awarded of the 2012 games, and one of the favourites is expected to be the BBC British Sports Personality of the Year (2011) Mark Cavendish.

The women's cycling takes place the following day, Sunday 29th, with a time trial cycling event on Wednesday August 1st.

### 'Vast opportunities'

Conservative councillor Jan Fuller (pictured right) has been overseeing Elmbridge borough's preparations for more than three years, and told *The Molesey News* what the Olympics will bring.

"There is going to be tremendous media interest from around the world, and Molesey is a key part of the route," she said.

"Elmbridge has taken the view all along that this has vast opportunities for the residents and businesses of the borough. In 2009 our 'visitor economy turnover' was worth nearly £230million. The Olympics will be a wonderful advertisement for us."

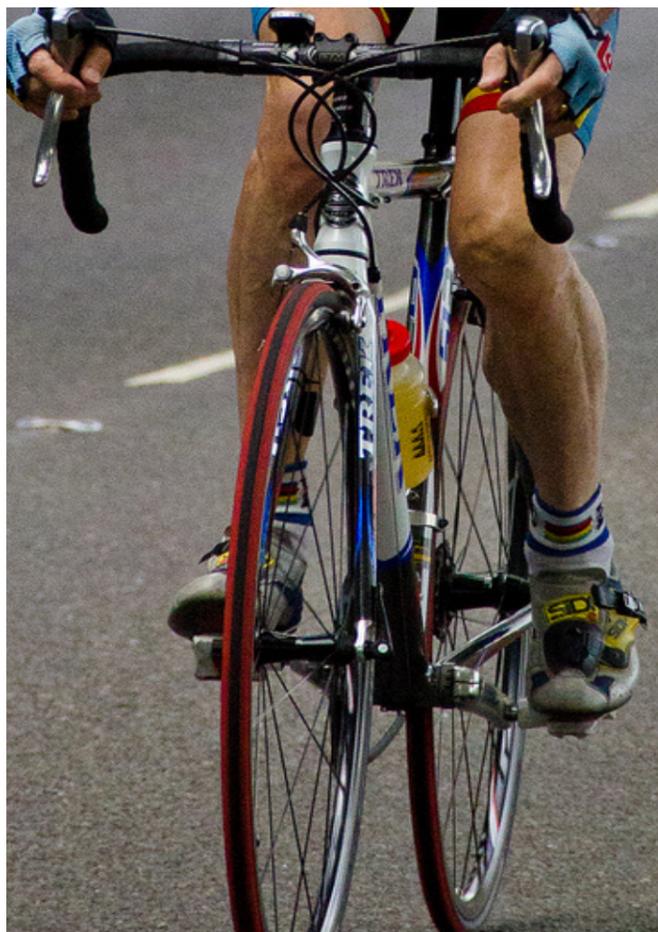
Surrey County Council, which is responsible for roads, will be decorating the route with bunting and flags and Elmbridge will be using funds which it has secured from Central Government for 'one off projects' to celebrate and commemorate the games.

### 'Lasting legacy'

Cllr Fuller, who is the Elmbridge Cabinet member for leisure and culture, set-up a cross-party task group of back bench councillors to draw up a list of projects to celebrate the Olympics and the Queen's 60th Jubilee. The idea being to leave a "lasting legacy" in the borough.

Walton councillor Andrew Kelly, who chaired the group, said: "We will mark the route in a permanent way and this will allow cyclists to enjoy it in future; we will invite sports clubs to apply for funds; put table tennis facilities in some parks; as well as extra plants on roundabouts and hanging baskets in Olympic or Jubilee colours."

The 'Welcome to Elmbridge' signs including the one in Molesey will be replaced to reflect the borough's status as an Olympic



■ Above: Scenes from the Olympic cycling trial event in Surrey last August (pics by Vicky jg and reproduced with her kind permission). Above right: Cllr Jan Fuller.

host borough, added Cllr Kelly.

One Olympic-inspired innovation the council plans to roll out is a 'tourism App', which visitors to the borough can download to their phones to get directions and information on approved local attractions and businesses.

Cllr Fuller said: "People will be flooding into Hampton Court Station. There will be tourists coming in, whether British or from overseas, and station is going to be an enormous hub."

"People will walk out and be right on the route. We hope they will watch the race and then come to Hampton Court Parade or the Walton Road shops to buy a coffee or a meal. I would encourage businesses to think outside the box and make the most of this opportunity."

*The Molesey News* heard anecdotal evidence that some businesses lost trade during the Olympic trial run in August, but Cllr Fuller believes this is because many spectators last year were local people who simply went home after the action had passed by.

**"Hampton Court Station will be an enormous hub. People will walk out and be right on the route."**

- Cllr Jan Fuller

"This year you are going to get the tourists," she said.

One downside of the Olympics passing through Molesey is that the Hurst Road and Hampton Court Way will be closed before, during and for a time after the race has moved on.

This will mean residents in some streets will be unable to leave except on foot. However if the emergency services need to reach any homes cut off by road, then the race will be stopped.

For the Saturday and Sunday races the roads will shut in the early hours to be swept clear of debris. Any cars left on the street will be towed away, but residents will receive leaflets in advance to warn them of the danger.

Cllr Fuller said: "We hope this will be a really good celebration and will leave a lasting legacy for the borough. It will be a once in a lifetime opportunity and I hope people enjoy the spectacle."

**Will the Olympics be good for Molesey? Go to <http://themoleseynews.blogspot.com> to post your comments.**

## Community wins Pavilion appeal

ELMBRIDGE Council's firm refusal to a developer seeking to build 76 homes adjacent to the Pavilion Health and Sports Club in Hurst Lane has been upheld by a planning inspector.

JS Bloor (Newbury) went to appeal in the hopes of overturning the council's decision, and a public hearing took place in Elmbridge Council chambers on November 22-23 with inspector Lesley Coffey presiding.

Her report dismissing the appeal was published on January 10th to the delight of campaigners in Molesey.

Sharon Bolton of the Molesey Community Action Group - which mounted a vigorous campaign against the Bloor proposals, told *The Molesey News*:

"This is an absolutely fantastic result and just shows what can be done when the community pulls together."

"Now we need to get the site in use for leisure and sports purposes as it was intended."

When planning permission was granted for Kings Chase in 1984 it was agreed that the remaining land would be retained for recreation.

Bloor had sought to mitigate this by promising football pitches at Waterside Drive in Walton and money for play facilities in East Molesey.

An offer of 30% affordable homes was increased to 50%. But the inspector decided Waterside Drive was "too remote" from the appeal site, and the harm to the surrounding area would outweigh any benefits.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

WHAT was it like to live in Molesey during the dark days of World War Two?

A new exhibition from the Molesey Local History Society will offer an insight for those of us too young to remember or a trip down memory lane for those who were there.

The exhibit will be at the Royal British Legion in Walton Road, East Molesey, on March 9th and 10th.

Find out more at [www.moleseyhistorysociety.org](http://www.moleseyhistorysociety.org)

MOLESEY has a new police sergeant following the appointment of Andy Grapsas, who replaces Sgt Greg Turner.

Andy, who takes charge of policing East and West Molesey, Thames Ditton, Hinchley Wood and Esher & Claygate, is 'delighted' to be back in Elmbridge as he spent five years at Molesey Police Station earlier in his career.

If you have any questions or concerns about policing, the next panel meetings will be on March 7 from 8.15pm at Mole Hall, and March 20, 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall.

THE 3rd Molesey Scouts has asked *The Molesey News* to pass on its thanks to all of the families who supported it by attending the Santa's Grotto at their headquarters in St Peter's Road, West Molesey.

The group made £1,000 profit which has gone towards the purchase of a new minibus.

SURREY County Council has invited worthy local groups to apply for a share of a £750,000 Community Improvement Fund.

Council leader David Hodge unveiled the initiative in December saying it will allow residents to bid for money to "realise their aspirations."

Bids must be between £10k to £50k and be for one off projects.

ANYONE planning on using the Molesey Road to get to Hershams between April 1 and 16 should be prepared for heavier traffic and delays.

This is because the Hershams Station bridge is being part-demolished and rebuilt after being weakened by impacts with lorries.

Diversions will be in place while the work is completed.

MOLESEY FC has submitted a planning application with Rushmore Homes for 20 houses to be built on land by the club.

It says the deal is vital to safeguarding its financial future and has appealed for the community to support it.

The council has received around 200 letters some in support and others against. Last year a scheme for 11 homes on the land was refused by Elmbridge councillors.

THE Friends of Molesey Library hold their inaugural AGM at the library on January 31st from 7pm.

The meeting will appoint a committee and adopt a constitution. If you can't attend visit <http://moleseylibrary.blogspot.com> for more information.

# 'Free car park could de-clutter roads'

A SURVEY conducted by the Molesey Conservative Residents suggests there is a groundswell of support for the Walton Road car park to be made free to stop town centre users parking in residential streets.

Following the lead article in the last *Molesey News* we invited householders to go to our website to tell us their views on 'nuisance parking' in side streets.

Some 87% felt the Walton Road car park charges of 10p for half hour, 20p for an hour and a £2 all day were reasonable.

But many expressed a view that a free car park would be the 'only way' to entice shoppers, shop workers and commuters, to use the Walton Road car park instead of clogging up residential streets.

A Bell Road resident said: "This is the only solution. Even the smallest charge is an incentive for people to park in the streets. I have lived in East Molesey for 22 years. When it was free, I used the car park regularly. Now, I never do; not because I can't afford it but because I worry I may get delayed and end up with a parking fine."



A resident of Spencer Road added: "I object in principle to charging for the car park. I walk or cycle around Molesey due to parking difficulties, but every resident I speak to wants to return to free parking. It would be a brave and honest council who admitted it was a mistake and hasn't worked."

One view from Kings Chase was that there should be signage at Hampton Court Station asking commuters to use the car parks and "show more respect to residents".

However a Manor Road resident

who supports the status quo, said: "If the business community need a free car park let them fund it."

An Arnison Road correspondent claimed free parking would not deter commuters from parking in side streets because they "wouldn't be prepared to walk to Hampton Court Station from Walton Road".

Elmbridge has 28 car parks and only one is exempt from charges - the tiny 21 space Thamesmead car park in Walton.

Molesey's 128-space town centre car park generated a £16,011 loss

in the last financial year due to its £48,000 'operating costs', which include lighting and maintenance and enforcement, and business rates. However the council made a £950k profit from Elmbridge car parks as a whole.

The survey asked whether people were in favour of residents parking permits as a way of de-clogging residential streets, such as School Road or Palace Road (pictured left).

A resounding 80% said they did not want permits and would be grudge having to pay for them.

Steve Bax of the Molesey Conservative Residents said: "My thanks to those who took part in the survey or who sent emails. It helps to build up a picture of the scale of the problem in Molesey and what people want - and do not want - to see done about it."

"The prevailing view at the council is that the cost of running car parks should be borne by those who use them, rather than from council tax which everyone pays regardless of whether they own a car."

"But I think further debate is needed and would encourage you to email me your views and ideas."

## Boatman landscape offer

HISTORIC Royal Palaces, which runs Hampton Court, has offered to landscape the Jolly Boatman site in time for the Olympics.

It will pay for the derelict, fly-tipped site to be transformed in time for the August cycle races, or it will send in its own gardeners.

Elmbridge Council is backing the idea and will press the site owner, Gladedale Ltd, to agree, at a meeting scheduled for early February.

Conservative candidate for Molesey East, Steve Bax, also welcomed the move, saying: "I am fully supportive of this generous offer from the Historic Royal Palaces and I would urge Gladedale to agree to it."

"The idea of clearing up and landscaping the Boatman site for the Olympics - when we'll have TV crews and aerial filming - is something I have raised with the leader of the council on several occasions since last year."

"I am delighted it has a chance of becoming reality but we mustn't forget that the site is in private hands and the council can try to persuade the owners, but ultimately it is Gladedale's decision. I hope they will snap up this offer."

Gladedale and Network Rail currently have planning permission to build a 46-bed hotel at the Boatman site, as well as homes, retail, parking and a care home on land surrounding Hampton Court Station.

But the scheme has been on hold for three years due to a legal appeal brought by the former Hampton Court consultant architect, Keith Garner. The appeal has been widely

supported in Molesey where many people fear a hotel will obscure views of the palace.

In November the Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal, meaning that as things stand the way is clear for the developers to proceed.

Elmbridge will make enquiries at the February meeting about what the developer intends to do.

Under planning law construction must begin by June 16th 2013 or the developer will need to go back to the council for fresh planning permission.

We will keep you posted on what happens with the Jolly Boatman.



## 'Molesey Shield' found after seven year search

A DOGGED pair of local residents have tracked down one of Molesey's most significant historical artefacts.

Paul Gossage and Steven Baker spent seven years searching for the 'Molesey Shield' - a 3,000-year-old Bronze Age shield which was discovered in the Thames near Molesey in 1864, and has been missing for four decades.

They painstakingly trawled through records at Surrey Archaeological Centre, and enlisted the help of Marion Uckelmann - the leading expert on European Bronze Age shields - to determine that an artefact on display at the Hunt Museum in Ireland was in fact the 'Molesey Shield'.

Paul told *The Molesey News* that the shield was first discovered by a boatman in the 1860s, during a low river, and about a mile upstream from Molesey.

Shortly after its discovery it was bought by a James Milner of Palace Road, Molesey, and was featured in the prestigious Victorian periodical 'The Gentleman's Magazine'. In 1867 it went on display at the eminent Society of Antiquaries in London.

Paul and Steven believe the shield stayed in Molesey until 1882 when it was sold to a collector named Augustus Pitt Rivers for his private museum in Dorset.

Over the years its provenance was lost and in the early 1970s the

shield was sold by Pitt's grandson to the Hunt Museum along with two other items from North-East Ireland. It became known as the Antrim Shield, a name still used.

Paul, 57, a former ambulance technician, said: "We think there is a really strong case for it to be renamed The Molesey Shield - its a far more honest and descriptive title - and the museum has accepted its provenance."

He added: "When we found out it was in Ireland my first thought was to get it into the British Museum", but the irony is it is being better displayed at the Hunt Museum and has pride of place."

Paul and Steven (who's father

is the Molesey historian Rowland Baker) are creating a Wikipedia page on the internet to tell the fascinating story of the shield.

And a display has been put up at Molesey Library in Walton Road.

The shield is 64cm in diameter with a dome shaped central 'boss', and is a superb example of the craftsmanship of its time.

It will have been created from a single block of bronze, forged in an open fire and beaten thinner - a painstaking process that will have been repeated at least 200 times.

It most likely had a ceremonial use and may have seen battle before it was placed in the Thames as a 'votive offering' to the gods.

