

THAMES DITTON AND WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION  
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2006-2007

It is pleasing to report that the Association can look back on another active year in which it has sought to fairly and effectively represent the interests of residents and businesses in the Thames Ditton and Weston Green areas without becoming hostage to national party politics. Throughout the year, not just at Election time, the Association's regular Open Meetings provide an opportunity for any one to raise matters of concern and question our five Residents' Councillors.

Thames Ditton Hall

As I mentioned last year, agreement was reached on what we used to call the Thames Ditton Community Centre and this was refurbished by Elmbridge B.C. and reopened last September under its new name, the Thames Ditton Hall. This marked the successful outcome of a seven year campaign by residents, the user groups and the Association to retain the hall, rather than allow Surrey County Council to sell the site for development.

Thames Ditton Community Hospital

Encouraged by the Association, the Friends of Thames Ditton Hospital, led by Karen Randolph, have continued the campaign to retain the NHS beds in the George Tickler Wing, but the financial woes of the NHS generally, combined with the extraordinary machinations of both the former and the new Primary Care Trusts are conspiring against the Friends. With no attempt at the prescribed public consultation, the PCT has now withdrawn funding for the four remaining beds for the time being.

Flooding and Sewerage

The problems of surface water flooding and in turn sewerage are never far from the minds of our residents in certain areas, particularly in Thames Ditton village, but following years of representations and demands by residents and the Association, Thames Water finally completed the work in the Village and Speer Road. We hope that this, together with the associated extra capacity at the Esher treatment plant has overcome the problem and even the smell by the old bank building has got better!

However, this work and the efforts of Councillor Peter Hickman to get Surrey County Council to clear their gullies and surface water drains together with Councillor Tannia Shipley's dogged determination to alleviate flooding around Esher Station were overshadowed by the events of November 30<sup>th</sup>. The sudden and catastrophic burst of Thames Water's 48 inch main led to the flooding of almost 80 homes and businesses. Thames Water and the Fire Service particularly were very supportive, with local councillors and others helping where they could. The Association sympathises with the many families who had to abandon their homes, some of which are still not yet habitable.

Had the surface water drains been fully functional, the water would probably have dispersed more quickly. Surrey County Council has since allocated more funds to clear gullies more frequently and to try to rectify particular problem areas.

### Policing

At its regular Open Meetings, the Association provides an opportunity for our local police officers to report on any problems, advise on security precautions and answer residents' questions. As Chairman, I have sometimes been asked by Open Meetings to write to the Chief Constable about residents' concerns, one being that whilst we welcome the police foot patrols on our streets, these have normally ceased by the time any trouble starts in the evenings. It is also disappointing that Surrey Police Authority has decided to abandon the Police Community Partnership Groups which provided access to the Authority and more senior police officers. The Police Authority believes that if the existing and more localised Neighbourhood Panels are strengthened and expanded throughout Surrey, these will be sufficient. The Association is effectively already providing such a neighbourhood forum at its open meetings, but it is stressing the need for formal contact on broader issues at a borough level, perhaps.

### Traffic, Highways and Parking

Surrey County Council is responsible for our highways, but as is well documented, it has most unsatisfactorily sub-contracted the day-to-day management and execution of maintenance work to a private company, Carillion plc. However, our R.A. County Councillor Peter Hickman has nevertheless been able to achieve some positive results for our area, the most recent being improvements to the kerbing in Basingfield Road and a review of the parking arrangements for shoppers at Winters Bridge.

The Association has again taken up the initiative on the long-running problem of car parking, particularly in the Thames Ditton Village and Station areas in the first place, but there are similar problems around Esher Station which also should be addressed. Taking the views expressed at a well-attended meeting convened by the Association last November, followed by any further suggestions from residents, our Committee Member for Highways, Ben Ellis and Peter Hickman have done their best to arrive at a consensus of opinion to put to S.C.C. Site meetings have been held with Surrey which will now start the public consultation process, but it has warned that any eventual scheme must have the backing of a majority of residents.

### Planning

One of the Association's most important activities is to review all the planning applications submitted in the two Wards. It is the job of the Committee Member for Planning and here I welcome Graham Cooke, who has taken over the role from Simon

Hacker, to ensure that representations are made where any proposed development is considered to be inappropriate, out of keeping, or conflicts with the Elmbridge B.C. planning policies.

Clearly, the Association will also seek the views of neighbouring residents and provide support and advice. The Association, however, remains mindful of the need for more housing generally and that over time there has to be renewal and improvement, but it should be in the right place and without detriment to the area and its inhabitants.

There have been no proposals of supermarket scale in the past year, but the Association has made representations about numerous proposals which are all very important to their area and to surrounding neighbours. These have all been reported on in detail in Thames Ditton Today, but among those that spring to mind are the Association's objections to the Domino's Pizza on Hampton Court Way and the over development on the site of 43 The Drive. Despite a great deal of effort by our Weston Green Ward Councillors, both were eventually allowed by the Planning Inspectorate. More recently, the Association supported the very strong local concerns at a change of use for the hostel at 5, Ember Lane, Esher. This application was refused by the Planning Sub-Committee when together with residents, our R.A. Councillors Tannia Shipley and Maureen Sheldrick put forward very reasoned and balanced arguments against this sensitive proposal.

The Association is monitoring proposals for the Harrow public house site and the proposed over-development at 13, Queens Drive, Thames Ditton. We have also supported very strong local objection to successive proposals for inappropriate back-land development behind 16 & 18 Embercourt Road, the latest of which has again been refused. The Association appreciates that developers keep coming back as in the case of the on-going White Gates site proposals, but it will do its best to ensure that only appropriate and sympathetic development is permitted.

### Thames Ditton Today

As you will all know, our friend and Editor, Terry Ford sadly died very unexpectedly last August. Terry had been involved with our excellent magazine for years, the last twelve as Editor. Under his leadership and with his innovations the magazine developed greatly and he will be sadly missed.

We are very fortunate that Keith Evetts agreed to take over the editorship and in fact completed Terry's last edition. Keith is, of course also responsible for our very active and topical website which reports local events almost as they happen – and some on his alternative website that fortunately have not! We are very grateful to Keith for taking on the additional role and thank him for his dual contribution.

## In Conclusion

The Village Christmas Fayre, supported by the Association was again very successful as was the December Dinner Dance.

You will see from our agenda this evening, that a Resolution to adopt an updated Constitution is to be put before the meeting. Although the changes are largely to ensure that we conform to current best practice and to tidy up some loose ends, the sub-committee spent a lot of time on it and I would like to thank them all, but particularly Lorraine Sharp, who joined us as Minute Secretary a year ago. Her professional knowledge of such legal documents was invaluable and made things a lot easier.

Edward Rowe has decided to stand down as a Borough Councillor after representing us with diligence and humour for seven years. Whilst in the Cabinet, Edward held the demanding Resources Portfolio apart from looking after our general interests, particularly problems relating to flooding and drainage and we thank him for his time and conscientious endeavours on our behalf.

I have mentioned our hard working Weston Green Councillors already, but Councillors Ruth Lyon and David Lowe continue to serve with great energy and distinction. We thank them both for all they do for the Borough and also in so many ways for the Association. David Lowe has helped us a great deal on planning and Ruth Lyon on just about everything else! (With John in the background)

As I complete my allotted term as Chairman, I would like to take the opportunity of thanking my fellow officers and Committee members for their help over the past three years. Time and space preclude my mentioning every one by name, but through their individual contributions and their combined support and advice, they have made my job much easier and more enjoyable. When you, I trust, shortly elect Libby MacIntyre as my successor, the Chairmanship will be in safe hands and I wish her and the Association well.

Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, our Association can only prosper with the participation and support of its members and on behalf of the Officers and Committee I would like to thank you all and in particular those of you who deliver our magazines and election literature and help to collect our subscriptions. Thank you.

Martin Wilberforce  
Delivered to the AGM on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007

# Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association

## Income & Expenditure Account For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006

### ACCUMULATED FUNDS

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>		
	£	£		
Donations and magazine contributions	3,082	3,705		
Subscriptions	3,115	2,000		
Interest - net of tax	810	861		
Fundraising	455	429		
Advertising Revenue	9,004	8,231		
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	<u>16,466</u>	<u>15,226</u>		
	=====	=====		
 <b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Secretarial and administration	405	180		
Subscriptions and donations	175	175		
The Electoral Commission Subscription	50	25		
Insurance	230	230		
Hire of hall	403	392		
Campaigning	719	799		
Environmental expenses	194	161		
Magazine costs	10,066	10,161		
Printing and stationery	204	405		
Bad debts written off	-	170		
Sundry	93	0		
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	<u>12,539</u>	<u>12,698</u>		
	=====	=====		
Excess of Income over Expenditure	3,927	2,528		
Accumulated funds brought forward	30,114	27,586		
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Accumulated funds carried forward	<u>34,041</u>	<u>30,114</u>		
	=====	=====		
 Note:				
	General	Contingency	Magazine	Total
Funds brought forward	4,377	24,570	1,167	30,114
Surplus/deficit	1,907	1,099	921	3,927
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Funds carried forward	<u>6,284</u>	<u>25,669</u>	<u>2,088</u>	<u>34,041</u>
	=====	=====	=====	=====

# Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association

## Balance Sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	33,189	28,966
Sundry debtors	1,196	1,188
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	34,385	30,154
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Sundry creditors and accruals	210	40
Provision for Corporation Tax	134	
	-----	-----
	34,041	30,114
	=====	=====
<b>Financed by:</b>		
<b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>		
General Fund	6,284	4,377
Contingency Fund	25,669	24,570
Magazine Fund	2,088	1,167
	-----	-----
Total Funds	34,041	30,114
	=====	=====

K I Baldwin  
Honorary Treasurer

### Auditor's Report

I have examined the above Balance Sheet and annexed Income & Expenditure Account of the Accumulated Funds, which constitute the Accounts of the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006 and confirm that they are in accordance with the books and records of the Association presented to me.

5 Station Road  
Thames Ditton  
Surrey KT7 0NU

25<sup>th</sup> March 2007

R F Huxster FCA  
Honorary Auditor

