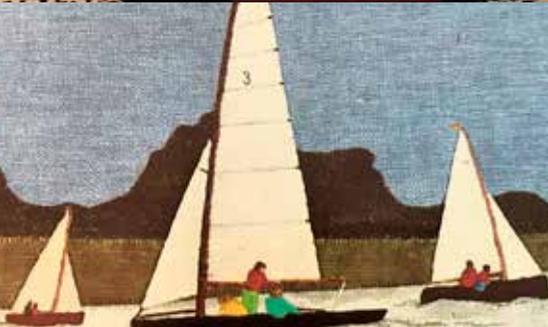
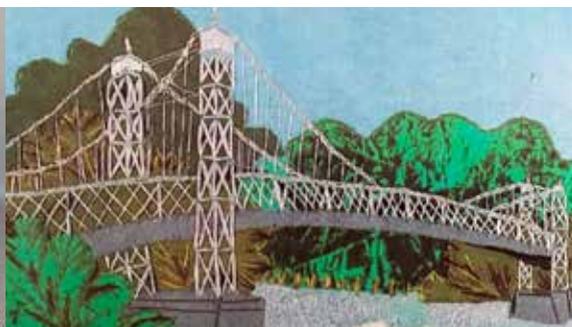


# THAMES DITTON TODAY

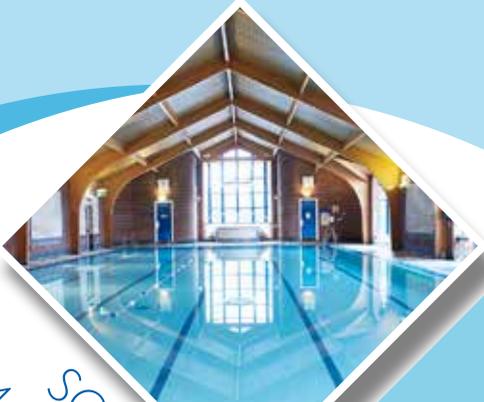
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# THAMES DITTON TODAY

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*Cover: Selection of images from Silver Jubilee wall hanging and Surrey Artists*

[www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com)

Officers and staff of the Association are volunteers, but we must fund costs of this magazine, administrative and election expenses, and other expenses such as spring bulb-planting and village Christmas trees. The subscription is only £5 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions can be paid via our website [www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com); subscriptions (in an envelope please) may be left at Boots Pharmacy, 14 High Street, Thames Ditton or Thorkhill Road Pharmacy, 94 Thorkhill Road, Thames Ditton. Or mail to Membership Secretary Peter Haynes at 6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton KT7 0JJ. Thank you.

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# THAMES DITTON AND WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## Annual General Meeting

8.00 pm on 29 March 2022  
at Vera Fletcher Hall

### Agenda:

1. **Minutes of the 2021 AGM** Meeting and matters arising therefrom
2. **Chairman's Annual Report**; receive, discuss and adopt the Annual Report for 2021
3. **Accounts**: To receive the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021
4. **Appointments**: to receive nominations and appoint officers and an auditor: President, Chairman, Vice Chairmen, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer, Auditor
5. **Elections**: to adopt candidates for the Elmbridge Borough Council Election 5 May 2022
6. **Resolutions**: to consider any resolutions submitted in writing to the Secretary by 28 February 2022
7. **Guest Speaker Nicola Andrews Palaces Group Director, Historic Royal Palaces - "Behind the Scenes at Historic Royal Palaces"**

### President: Martin Wilberforce

7 River Avenue,  
Thames Ditton 020 8398 4732

### Vice President: Ruth Lyon,

11 Riversdale Road,  
Thames Ditton 0208 398 3396

### Vice President Tannia Shipley,

27 Lower Green Road, Esher 020 8398 2484

### Surrey County Councillor: Nick Darby,

12 Basing Close, Thames Ditton 020 8398 2382

### Thames Ditton Borough Councillors

Alex Batchelor,  
12 Hayward Road,  
Thames Ditton 07710 943140

Caroline James,  
Laurel Cottage, 20 High Street,  
Thames Ditton 07970 672723

Karen Randolph,  
Deepfield, Giggs Hill Road,  
Thames Ditton 020 8398 5005

### Hinchley Wood & Weston Green Borough Councillors

Gill Coates,  
The Oaks, Orchard Gate,  
Esher 020 8873 3040

Janet Turner, 2 Montgomery Ave,  
Hinchley Wood 020 8398 1565

Nigel Haig-Brown  
53 Heathside, Esher 020 8398 4060

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Membership Secretary: Peter Haynes  
6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton 020 8398 6019

### Conveners of Sub-Committees

Health and Community: Karen Randolph (see above)

Planning: Rhodri Richards,  
Ditton Cottage, Giggs Hill Road,  
Thames Ditton 020 8398 4962

Highways, Drainage: Andrew Roberts,  
1 Boyle Farm Road, Thames Ditton 020 8786 6882

Flooding Tony Thompson,  
Willow End, River Bank, Thames Ditton 07736 677671



## THE NEXT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETINGS ARE

AGM Tuesday 29 March, 8pm – Vera Fletcher Hall

Tuesday 3 May, 8pm – Vera Fletcher Hall

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# News from the Residents' Association to end February



## AGM

The 2022 Residents' Association AGM will be held on Tuesday 29 March, 8.00pm at the Vera Fletcher Hall.

Our guest speaker this year is Nicola Andrews, Palaces Group Director, who will talk to us about “**Behind the Scenes at Historic Royal Palaces**”



*Nicola Andrews - AGM guest speaker from Historic Royal Palaces*

Nicola is a local resident and she joined Historic Royal Palaces in August 2018 as Palaces Group Director for Hampton Court Palace, Kensington Palace and Kew Palace. She also oversees The Banqueting House and Hillsborough Castle & Gardens.

Nicola is responsible for operations across all of these sites, as well as for the management and maintenance of the palaces and their grounds and estates.

She joined Historic Royal Palaces following 23 years at the National Trust where she gained experience in a wide variety of roles from conservation to finance, operations to external affairs.

We are looking forward to her insights in to what it takes to care for our rich heritage, especially as Hampton Court Palace is on our doorstep.



## Queen's Platinum Jubilee

We have been exploring ideas to mark the Jubilee in our community and would love to hear your views and ideas. To contribute your thoughts, or get involved in initiatives to celebrate the Jubilee, please contact Gill Coates on [gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk](mailto:gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk)

So far, we are considering the following:

*Tree planting* - we don't have enough public green space to plant 70 trees, so one idea is to find homes in private gardens for 70 trees, which we can plot on a commemorative map. If you'd like to volunteer your garden to plant one or more trees, please let us know at [gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk](mailto:gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk)

*Jubilee Beacon* - these are being lit on Thursday 2 June and we are exploring the possibility of lighting a beacon for our community, where we can come together and celebrate.

Turn the villages red, white and blue - we are encouraging everyone in Thames Ditton and Weston Green to decorate their houses and gardens in red, white and blue for the Jubilee weekend.

*Street Parties* - we hope many of our roads will hold a street party on Sunday 5 June as part of the 'Big Lunch'. Please let us have your photos of the day to [editor@residents-association.com](mailto:editor@residents-association.com)

You can find out what you need to know about closing your road for a street party on the Elmbridge Borough Council website [elmbridge.gov.uk](http://elmbridge.gov.uk), search Street Parties



*Flags flying in the High Street*

This is the last issue of Thames Ditton Today before the Jubilee Weekend, so please watch our website [residents-association.com](http://residents-association.com) and Twitter account [@TDresidents](https://twitter.com/TDresidents) for further updates.

## **Flying The Flag**

Thames Ditton High Street is marking the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by displaying the Union Flags on shops, businesses and residences throughout the June celebrations.

A special commemorative poster and limited-edition tea towel have also been

designed, in collaboration with local artist Lisa Tolley.

These initiatives are spearheaded by Thames Ditton's local charity, the Thames Ditton Foundation (TDF) which will also be hosting a special Platinum Jubilee Garden Party in the grounds of Garden Cottage on the afternoon of Saturday 4 June.

For further details please email TDF Trustee Tricia W. Bland [tricia@the-blands.co.uk](mailto:tricia@the-blands.co.uk)

## **The Secret Gardens of Weston Green**



The Secret Gardens event will be taking place in Weston Green this year on **Sunday 26 June from 1pm – 5pm**. This event is a great community day out as well as an opportunity to gather garden inspiration. If you have a garden you would like to share please contact [gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk](mailto:gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk)

## **Nature and Climate Day**

The Residents' Association is planning a special community day on 25 September, our first ever 'Nature and Climate Day'. This will be an opportunity to have fun and learn about our local environment and what we can do to make a difference, from rewilding to recycling, veganism to volunteering! There will be fun activities, competitions, stalls and talks.

If you are a local business or group that would like to take part in the day, or would like to know more about it, please contact Gill Coates on [gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk](mailto:gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk)

## Planning

The Merrywood developer has applied to the Secretary of State for approval to expand an existing easement across Weston Green Common to facilitate increased vehicular access to its planned development. The RA has written to object as this would erode and damage valuable common land and set a dangerous precedent.



*Common land at Merrywood*

The application for an **Aldi (2021/3857)** on the old Guy Salmon site on Portsmouth Road has received 486 letters of objection and 149 in support. A number of statutory

bodies have yet to comment and no committee date has been set.

**Café Rouge, Esher (2021/2814)**. The outline planning application for development on this site has been withdrawn, we wait to see what follows.

The **outline planning application (2021/3258) submitted** for 30 units on the field on the corner of Summer Road and Hampton Court Way is currently under consideration.

## Sunday parking charges

Please be aware that Sunday parking charges come into effect in Elmbridge from 28 February.

## Play in the Garden



*Play In a Garden 2021*

This years Play in the Garden in support of the theatre at the Fletcher Hall will be **'Three Men In A Garden'** and will be on 10 September. For details email Tricia W. Bland, [tricia@the-blands.co.uk](mailto:tricia@the-blands.co.uk)

## Did you know..?

The Vera Fletcher Hall, in Embercourt Road, is the refurbished Victorian Village Hall which was built in 1887 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

The theatre at the Vera Fletcher Hall is keen to welcome audiences back again, see [www.verafletcherhall.co.uk/theatre](http://www.verafletcherhall.co.uk/theatre)



*The Vera Fletcher Hall built to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee*



*RA Planning Convener Rhodri Richards and family out with the Thames Ditton Litter Pickers*

## Dates for your diary

### Farmers' Market

Mercer Close Car Park (opposite the Library), fourth Saturday of the month

### Weston Green Litter Pickers

Meet at Marneys pub on the first Saturday in the month at 10.30am

### Thames Ditton Litter Pickers

Meet in Thames Ditton Tennis Club car park third Saturday of the month at 10.45am

### All Saints Weston Community Lunch

from 11:30 - 2pm on the last Wednesday of every month. To book in, contact Alison Cruthers on 07957 347170 or [alisoncruthers@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alisoncruthers@yahoo.co.uk)

### TDF Thames Ditton In Bloom planting morning

Thames Ditton Station: Sunday May 15, from 10am. For further details please email [tricia@the-blands.co.uk](mailto:tricia@the-blands.co.uk)

### Mothers Melodies Fundraising concert for the Air Ambulance.

Saturday 26 March 3.00pm, All Saints, Weston Green

### Dittons Fair 8 May

### Paddington Bear's First Concert

Sunday 12 June  
All Saints Weston Green

### Secret Gardens of Weston Green

Sunday 26 June from 1pm – 5pm

### Esher and District Local History Society 2.30pm at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Claygate. [www.edlhs.co.uk](http://www.edlhs.co.uk)

- 19 March: The Origins of Cobham
- 23 April: A talk by Peter Allen, Director of the R C Sherriff Trust
- 21 May: The Folklore of Surrey

### Nature and Climate Day

25 September. Contact [gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk](mailto:gcoates@elmbridge.gov.uk)

## Residents' Association

[www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com) or follow us on Twitter @TDresidents

# Can you keep our Christmas Lights shining?



The Christmas Trees and Lights in Thames Ditton have become a standout feature of the festive season and make the High Street a festive destination.

We are looking for volunteers to take over the role of creating the magical Christmas Spirit that the village is known for.

It involves overseeing the installation of 45 lit Christmas trees in Thames Ditton High Street and the iconic Lime Tree lights.

We would like to give a huge thank you on behalf of us all to Tricia Bland who has been the indefatigable organiser of this sparkling display for a decade and deserves a well-earned rest.

Tricia's wealth of experience is not lost and she has drawn up an easy to follow timetable and tips.

To find out more please contact RA Chairman Graham Cooke at [chairmanRA@residents-association.com](mailto:chairmanRA@residents-association.com) or give him a ring on 020 8398 8509.



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## Christmas Lights Volunteers Needed





# Update from your Residents' Associations'

## Thames Ditton Ward



Karen Randolph  
TDWGRA



Caroline James  
TDWGRA



Alex Batchelor  
TDWGRA

### Local Plan update

The Local Plan is going before Council on 22 March, moving us onto the next stage of the process for adoption. Once Council has agreed the draft, we will start the Regulation 19 stage of the process, which is the final chance for public comment (six weeks), before we submit the plan for Examination by an Inspector (Regulation 22) and, finally, the Inspectors Report and Adoption (Regulation 24). It has taken a long time to get here, but the evidence gathering stage has been hampered by constantly changing planning regulations and the last two years of pandemic.

However, we believe this may have helped us in the longer term. Sustainability issues have moved much further up the agenda in that time and we believe that the Plan going before Council (which we, as RA councillors, have done a lot to influence in the last year) is much stronger than the Plan we might have seen a few years ago, and it will give us a robust, sustainable and inspirational platform for development in Elmbridge for the next 15 years.

### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding round

Applications for the 2022 round for funding from CIL opened on 21 February and stay open until 3 April.

CIL allows EBC to raise funds from development in the borough, which helps pay for the physical infrastructure needed to mitigate the impacts of new development. As part of the process, EBC annually allocates a portion of CIL funds to be spent on local and smaller schemes in the communities where the development took place.

The Local Spending Board is made up of your local Councillors and we decide how the funds are allocated. We want local groups - schools, charities, sports clubs and other non-profit organisations - to review the criteria (available on EBC's CIL web pages) and submit applications for projects that need funding.

Successful projects in the past have included improvements to schools, community facilities, footpath works and countryside access.

# Councillors at Elmbridge Borough Council

## Hinchley Wood and Weston Green Ward



Gill Coates  
TDWGRA



Janet Turner  
HWRA



Nigel Haig Brown  
HWRA

### Garden Waste - some good news!

The garden waste collection service is still affected and continues to be a frustration for residents. However, the Council has been working hard to restore the service and at the time of writing we understand that on 7 March the service is being resumed in part on a four-weekly basis, rather than two-weekly. The intention is to resume the full service as soon as possible, but this is a step in the right direction.

Just as a reminder, this has nothing to do with saving money or 'cuts'. Garden waste collection is paid for separately by subscribing residents and is a revenue-raising service for EBC. The statutory services for general waste, food and recycling are paid for within your Council Tax.

As the waste service is outsourced, it is the the contractor's allocation of teams that has meant we have no (optional) garden waste collection. The Council's first priority is to continue working closely with Amey, the contractor, to restore the full service as soon as possible.

### New candidate for the Hinchley Wood and Weston Green Ward

This May, Nigel Haig Brown will be standing down after eight years as a councillor and we are grateful for his service in representing Weston Green residents. HWRA's Executive has proposed a local resident, James Crawshaw, as the new RA candidate for the ward (subject to formal RA approval). Since the electoral boundary changes in 2016, the new ward straddles TDWGRA and HWRA areas, so both RAs agree on a single candidate, running under the joint banner, Hinchley Wood & Weston Green RAs. James is pictured below planting a tree to mark the Jubilee, in the Memorial Gardens in Hinchley Wood.





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# Update from Nick Darby, Surrey County Councillor



The council tax for Surrey County Council (SCC) is due to be increased by 4.99%. We spend two thirds of the £1bn budget on Adult and Children's Services. With Covid recovery there is continuing pressure on public finances and we need to be acutely aware of spending every penny wisely.

Locally, work is already under way on Hampton Court Bridge with lane closures. As I write this, the work is likely to take a further three weeks beyond the original projection as the need for extra repair work has been discovered. Looking west to the Moleseys, the replacement of the bridge over the River Mole is due soon but may be delayed as Surrey Highways have recently announced they need planning permission to allow for bridge widening. This bridge is old. The work needs doing so it's the timing and precise details which are the concern. Further along Ember Lane towards Weston Green, I am glad highway safety work is progressing at the S bends.

I am delighted to report that I have been able to use the last of my 'annual allowance' for the current financial year to fund a defibrillator outside the Vera Fletcher Hall, to add to the one recently installed at the Old Cranleighans football pitches near Longmead Road. The more people who are aware of these the better as when they are needed time is of the essence.

Sadly, it looks likely that Surrey County Council will abandon all Local Committees, including the one which serves Elmbridge.

Under new arrangements, any petition from residents for local highway improvements would be dealt with centrally. I fear the loss



*Surrey County Councillor, (The Dittons) Nick Darby*

of valuable input from experienced Highway Officers, Borough Council Officers and local Councillors as well as a weakening of the democratic process as an unintended consequence of any change.

While in theory it sounds good that County Councillors will each have an annual allocation of £50,000 to put towards local highway works. I am very aware of how little that covers, especially as 'my' allocation needs to cover Long Ditton, Weston Green and Thames Ditton.

I have various local roads in mind for work. With separate funding, I have been promised that proper repairs to Grove Way will be carried out in the new financial year. St Leonards Road remains on my list for separate SCC funding.

If anyone wants to discuss anything with me, locally or more Surrey-wide, please do e-mail or call.

**Nick Darby,  
Surrey County Councillor for the Dittons**

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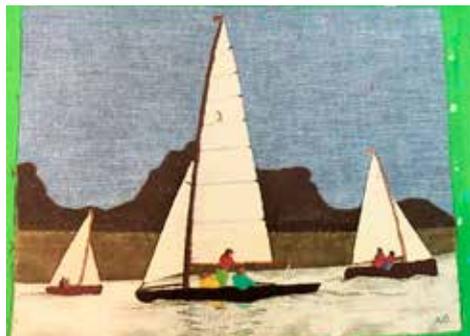


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# See the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Silver Jubilee wall hanging



*Scenes from the Silver Jubilee quilt, A Class Rater boats on the Thames and All Saints Weston*

Adorning the walls of the ‘computer room’ in the Dittons Library is a historically interesting local work of art. On permanent loan to the community, the Thames Ditton and Weston Green wall hanging depicts local scenes as they were in 1977, the Queen’s Silver Jubilee year.

Forty-five years on, as we move towards the Queen’s historic Platinum Jubilee year, the 64 panels of the locally made wall hanging are still there for all to see – retaining their original colour owing to the high-quality light resistant framing. And it’s free!

Jane Formby and Julia Hickman, two of the four original organisers, have been reflecting on this fantastic local achievement which has left us with such a rich historical community resource.

Julia said: *“It started when I saw an American bicentenary quilt worked by local inhabitants of a small New England town, featured in a magazine. I became enthused to do the same to mark the Queen’s Silver Jubilee in our own community, and luckily, Jane and others were similarly inspired”.*

Jane added: *“The response we received*

*from local people was remarkable. Our goal was to produce 25 panels and the enthusiasm was so great that we achieved 64! With an outline plan of the scenes we wanted to cover, we knocked on doors and people young and old got involved.”*

To guarantee a quick turnaround and wide community involvement, Julia’s vision was to keep it simple so that everyone could contribute, whatever their sewing experience.

With just a few rough guidelines, people were left to get on with it. This approach resulted in a great composition in a primitive naïve artistic style ranging from the simplicity of what was Tilleys’ Newsagents in the High Street to the intricate embroidery of the bridge to Thames Ditton Island.

The panels tell the story of local activities of that time, some of which are still here, such as the Ajax Sea Scouts, cricket on the green and the A Class Rater boats sailing on the River Thames (unique to this area). Then there are others which no longer exist, such as the Giggs Hill Green annual flower show.



*The team working on some of the panels – third and fourth from left are Julia Hickman and Jane Formby  
Copyright: John Eagle*

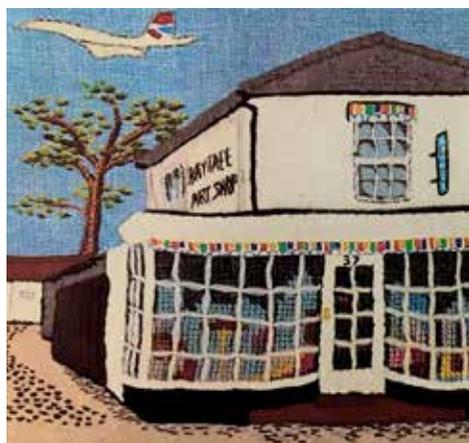
It also depicts local buildings which seem timeless such as St Nicholas church, the fountain and All Saints church in Weston Green. In others they have disappeared, such as the petrol service station in the village, the Harrow in Weston Green Road, and the old Lebanese Cedar tree at the end of Kings Drive.

A great deal of interest and publicity resulted in other communities following suit. Those known to the organisers include Worth Matravers in Dorset and Whiteley Village in Surrey. The wall hanging was featured in Good Housekeeping magazine and there was interest from abroad starting with the magazine *Cent Idees* which marketed the story onwards internationally.

In April 1977 it was presented on the BBC Television programme, *Nationwide*, in their Jubilee feature 'Fit for a Queen'. Jane said: *"It wasn't finished at that point and I remember some frantic last minute pinning together taking place on the studio floor,*

*ten minutes before the recording. The host, Michael Barrett, introduced it by saying, 'And now we have something which we feel deserves a special mention ...'"*

The four organisers also received an invitation to Windsor Castle from the Queen's Deputy Master of the Household.



*The Queen particularly liked the photo of Concorde over the Bay Tree art shop*

Julia described the experience: “We were very excited about the invitation. When we arrived at Windsor Castle, it felt a bit like being invited into the Headmaster’s office when we entered his room. He showed us some interesting Windsor Castle china with frogs on it, and we showed him our designs, leaving him with a poster that he later shared with the Queen”. Jane added: “After our visit we received a letter from him to say that the Queen had ‘commanded’ him to let us know how delighted she was with what we had done, and we also heard that she particularly liked the picture of Concorde, featured flying above the Bay Tree art shop in one of the panels.”

Whether you’re simply curious about your local area, a lover of naïve community art, or interested in local history, your visit to see the wall hanging will be rewarded. The

library opening times are listed at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries/your-library/find-your-nearest/dittons>



The poster of the Silver Jubilee Wall Hanging was shared with the Queen.

**Julie Royce**

## Take home a little slice of history



Wrap your gifts in something special

If you would like to take home a little bit of the local history of Thames Ditton and Weston Green and have fun identifying the scenes in the wall hanging it is now available as wrapping paper. It will also look good framed and hung on the wall.

All funds raised from the sale will go to towards the RA Christmas Lights fund.

Wrapping paper is £2.50 per sheet and is on sale at the **library** (cash only please). You could pick some up when you pop in to look at the original work of art.

**Thame Ditton Gin** will also be selling sheets at their shop on Pip’s Path (from the High Street to the car park).

Or contact Libby on 0208 398 5534

# Thames Ditton, a coastal village, time for action



*Thames Ditton - connected to one global ocean?*

Our beautiful part of the river Thames has always attracted commentary. It is fascinating to dip into the archives and find out what previous residents were thinking about its health and prospects: for example the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* of 1892 worries about invasive species (the tawny Balsam) over-running the riverbanks and remarks on “*the mazy curves of the stream, winding slowly round the green outskirts of Hampton Court Park.*”

What seems incongruous to our ears now is the championing of pollution as ‘*progress*’ as reported in 1892 “*To those who knew Thames Ditton some few years ago the river bank must present a wonderful example of progress....now the bank is lined with tall buildings whose taller chimneys puff out volumes of black smoke, while the snort of steam-engines and the ponderous clanging of steam hammers tell of a busier if less picturesque age.*”

Now that we are less excited by billowing black clouds, we tend to look towards how we can preserve and protect, rather than pollute. All great rivers draw you in. It begins with a desire to be near to the water, then to observe it – particularly its

wildlife - then to be on it, and even in it now that wild swimming has started its own revolution. What swiftly follows is a desire to protect and preserve it. Today there are more organisations and campaign groups dedicated to doing exactly this. From ‘plastic picks’ to wildlife conservation they help to answer the question: what can I do to protect this unique and incredible landscape?

I also suggest you look at becoming involved in the big ocean and marine organisations as well. From rising seas to ocean conservation, to a push for a global treaty to end plastic pollution (more on that shortly), we river dwellers face many of the same threats and opportunities.

Many years ago I joined an organisation called Surfers Against Sewage (SAS) based in Cornwall, even though I couldn’t quite work out why! My surfing skills are appalling and despite West Country heritage I’ve lived in and around London for many years. I didn’t even own a wetsuit, although I have one now. But I felt really strongly that I needed to lend my voice to ocean protection.

These days I am a trustee of SAS, which has become one of the main charities dedicated to campaigning for clean seas and water ways. It has the international clout to campaign on everything from climate change to plastic and of course sewage, which remains a serious problem as discharges into rivers increase.

If you cast your mind back to the G7 talks held in Cornwall last year you might remember an image of hundreds of surfers in a ring, holding placards aloft and telling the gathered world leaders that they must act on the climate crisis. It was an image that dominated the front page of newspapers internationally.

How is that type of protest connected to us here? Well, one thing I have learned from fellow water enthusiasts is that London should be thought of as a coastal city, and that should extend to the outer reaches too.

The city itself is linked to the ocean via the tidal River Thames. The tidal limit might be at our neighbour Teddington, but we are still part of that dynamic body of water. Once you start to think of yourself as a 'coastal' area you find yourself more interested in rising sea levels and how the health of rivers affects the health of oceans. We are all part of one great interconnected system.

Interestingly, many oceanographers talk of one 'Ocean', rather than seven seas, preferring to think of the world as a mass of water interrupted by patches of land. That makes us think in terms of Blue Flag Health standards and also starts to address an inequality. Most environmental focus is on landmasses, but in order to preserve a healthy planet we need to work much harder on restoring waterways, including our own river Thames.

Scientists are only now beginning to understand how important rivers are in the

wider battle to protect and conserve oceans. Recent research from the Ocean Clean Up charity [theoceancleanup.com](http://theoceancleanup.com) showed that more than 1,000 rivers transport Mismanaged Plastic Waste (MPW) as scientists call litter.



*Rubbish stopped from making it to the sea by Surfers Against Sewage*

So, while we have tended to think of this being an issue involving ten rivers in Africa and Asia, new research shows how rivers such as the Rhine in Europe are also vectors for delivering highly polluting plastic to the ocean. Almost all the plastic waste ever created by humanity is still with us. That means the equivalent weight of one billion elephants of plastic waste made from oil and other chemical additives is held as pollution in 'sinks' in the biosphere.

One of the biggest sinks is the ocean. Sadly, it doesn't sit there inertly. In the ocean the sun and waves break down large plastic into smaller and smaller bits of plastic over time. Arguably this is even more dangerous as these are ingested by living organisms and thus enters the food chain. Many experts consider the plastic crisis in the oceans as the straw that broke the camel's back. It joins climate change and overfishing to put the ocean ecosystem under unprecedented threat.

But we can all play our part in demanding that these threats are taken seriously and that solutions are implemented. These sorts of breakthroughs allow us to refocus our efforts as volunteers and campaigners for clean waterways. More than six million tonnes of waste plastic enters the ocean every year. Part of what we do on organised beach and litter cleans is to intercept that from our rivers.

My informal plastic plogging (yes, it's a real word and a real thing – it's a combination of jogging and the phrase 'plocka upp' which is Swedish for 'to pick up') from my kayak might not seem very relevant or effective (last outing's haul: one Christmas bauble, 11 drinks bottles, a deflated balloon) but I am removing a tiny amount of MPW before it reaches the ocean.



*Lucy's kayak is handy for plastic plogging*

Besides, this is not just litter picking, it's citizen science! Every year the Marine Conservation Society [mscuk.org](http://www.mscuk.org) holds nationwide beach cleans. The important thing about this is not only removing the plastic but also collecting data on plastic pollution as a whole to inform and push policy change at government level. This data has been used by campaign groups to drive changes in policy by presenting hard evidence that cannot be denied.



*Wet wipes clogging up the banks of the Thames.*  
Credit [Thames21.org.uk](http://Thames21.org.uk)

Closer to home, in 2021 volunteer litter pickers (sorry citizen scientists!) for [Thames21.org.uk](http://Thames21.org.uk) working at low tide collected 27,000 congealed wet wipes along a 200m stretch of the River Thames. Here and worldwide, congealed wet wipes gathering 'en masse' are changing the shape of the river bed and impacting its ecologies in ways never seen before. To me that's the opposite of progress.

**Lucy Siegle**  
Thames Ditton resident, journalist and  
writer on environmental issues

## Organisations campaigning for water quality in our rivers and seas

Surfers Against Sewage  
[www.sas.org.uk](http://www.sas.org.uk)

Thames 21  
[www.Thames21.org.uk](http://www.Thames21.org.uk)

Marine Conservation Society  
[www.mscuk.org](http://www.mscuk.org)

Ocean Clean Up  
[www.theoceancleanup.com](http://www.theoceancleanup.com)

# Get in harmony this Mother's Day weekend



This Mother's Day weekend on 26 March at 3.30 pm you can enjoy a marvellous family concert at Weston Green Church to raise funds for the wonderful Air Ambulance Charity Kent, Surrey Sussex (KSS).



*The Equinox ensemble from left, Caroline, Sheida and Hannah*

The Equinox ensemble will be playing with local resident Caroline Page at the piano. Caroline was inspired to fundraise for the air ambulance by fellow Esher Church School mum, Jennifer Roome, whose daughter, Madi, is a Young Ambassador for KSS - they came to her rescue after she was kicked in the face by a passing horse on Telegraph Lane, Claygate in May 2020, when she was two-and-a-half.

Caroline says *“As soon as we realised that an air ambulance fundraiser, Miles4Madi, was taking place in Claygate on the same day, we believed we had to make our concert a KSS fundraiser. We are thrilled that Miles4Madi agreed to this and together we are trying to raise £10,000 – the average cost of one emergency air ambulance call out.”*

*“The concert, which will be no more than an hour long and is suitable for all ages*

*(including babes in arms), is a selection of popular classics for piano, violin and cello. It is designed to bring families together on Mothering Sunday weekend. It will be interactive and children are invited to send in drawings/ paintings of their mum/ granny etc. to illustrate the music on the big screen to [mothersmelodies@gmail.com](mailto:mothersmelodies@gmail.com). More information can be found on the website [www.harmonysmusicclub.com/mothersmelodies](http://www.harmonysmusicclub.com/mothersmelodies)”.*

The Miles4Madi fundraising event includes three different bike rides, and a family fundraiser. To find out more or to sponsor or donate, visit the [website www.miles4madi.com](http://www.miles4madi.com).



Equinox will be also performing their interactive Paddington Bear's First Concert by Herbert Chappell on 12 June at All Saints Weston Green.



# Your Residents' Association

Met twice with local MP Dominic Raab to request he pressure the government to protect Conservation Area High Street and Green Belt

Regular Zoom/in person Open Meetings to engage with the community on important topics

Constant vigilance Conservation Area Green

Wrote to Secretary of State for Housing to regarding issues with Permitted Development Rights

Notified Residents of key planning applications

Twitter residents

Web site maintained as resource for all residents

Continued support to Foodbank collection points

Attractive new benches installed at Milbourne Pond

Funding for High Street Christmas trees & lights

Supported residents' objections to inappropriate development

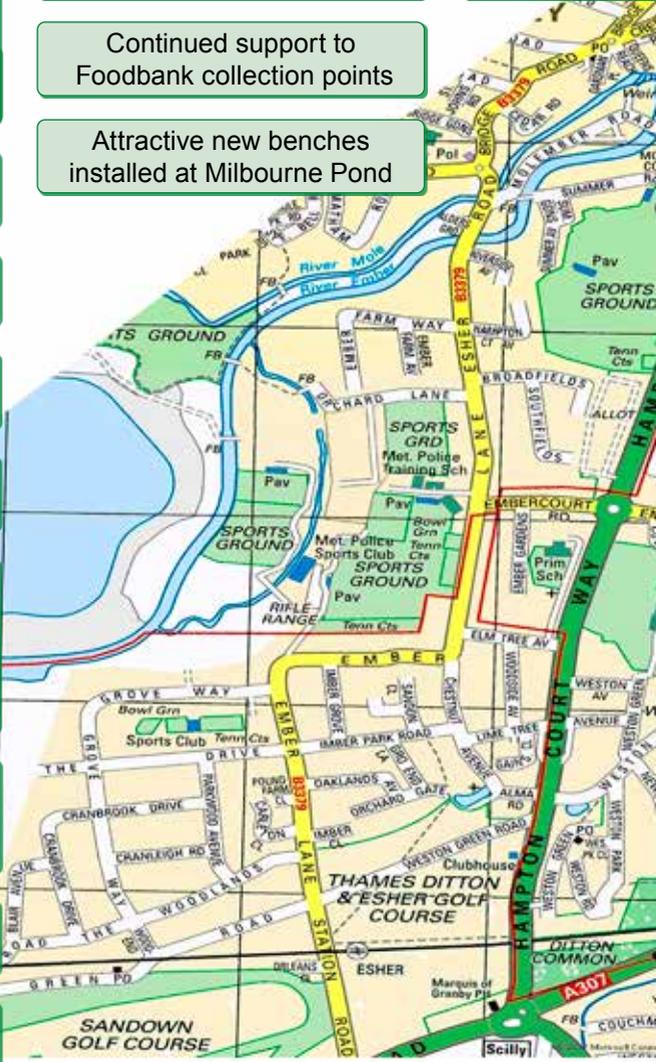
Supported Thames Ditton High Street retailers

Continuing pressure for maintenance to prevent flooding at Esher station, and to resolve other long-standing flooding problems

Supported 'Boomerang Bags' to make Thames Ditton a plastic bag free zone

Vegetation management at Milbourne Pond

Road resurfacing in Thames Ditton and Weston Green



# tion in Action 2021-2022



ance to protect  
n Areas and  
n Belt

to keep  
informed

Detailed response to South  
Western Railway consultation  
encouraging improvement to  
our rail services

Secret Gardens of Thames  
Ditton 2021

5000 copies of Thames Ditton  
Today distributed quarterly in  
Thames Ditton, Weston Green  
and Molesey

Flood Action Committee liaison  
with Enviroment Agency and  
Thames Water

Planted spring bulbs,  
maintained flower beds  
at Fountain roundabout,  
supported Thames Ditton in  
Bloom at the railway station  
and beyond

New Blue Plaque to Herbert  
Alder Tripp

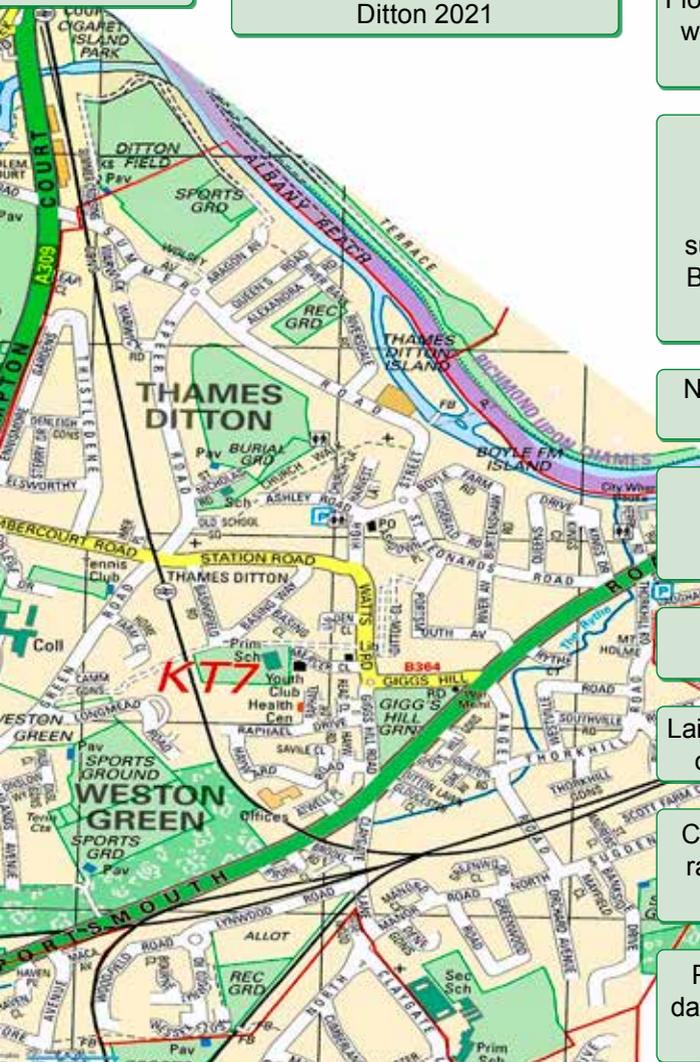
Active Litter Picking  
Groups in Weston Green  
and Thames Ditton

Supports Monthly  
Farmers' Markets

Laid wreaths on War Memorials  
on Remembrance Sunday

Continuing support and fund  
raising for services for NHS  
patients at Emberbrook

Parking restrictions to stop  
dangerous parking in Summer  
Road



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# Surrey Artists' Open Studios (SAOS) 2022



SAOS Hampton Court Trail

From 11-26 June local Surrey artists will be opening their studios to the public.

Surrey Artists Open Studios has been running successfully for 22 years and remains as popular as ever.

The open events allow artists to showcase their work, meet visitors and talk about the inspiration behind their art. There are also demonstrations and taster creative workshops. This year there are 264 artists taking part in 168 studios.

The launch weekend is on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 June with artists offering an array of activities exclusively for first weekend visitors.

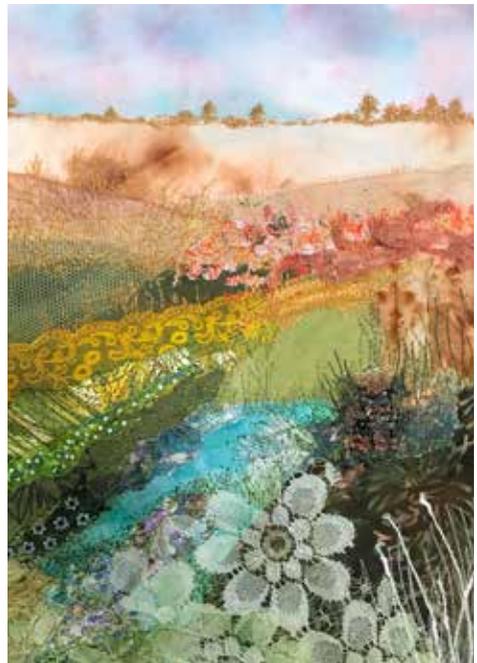
The breadth of art is truly diverse and covers everything from painting with oils, watercolours and charcoal in abstract, traditional and contemporary forms to photography, glass making, metal working, acrylic, textiles, mixed media and so much more. A lot of the art is for sale but there are also smaller items to purchase including homeware, postcards and gifts.

Brochures with details of the events will be available from May from libraries, galleries and at artists' studios. As in previous years the artists will be opening in a safe way, in line with government guidelines at the time.

There are 11 open studios within easy walking distance of Thames Ditton and Molesey and a handy Hampton Court Trail map on the SAOS website. Details of the times and dates can be found at <https://surreyopenstudios.org.uk/open-studios-map/>

The following are all participating:

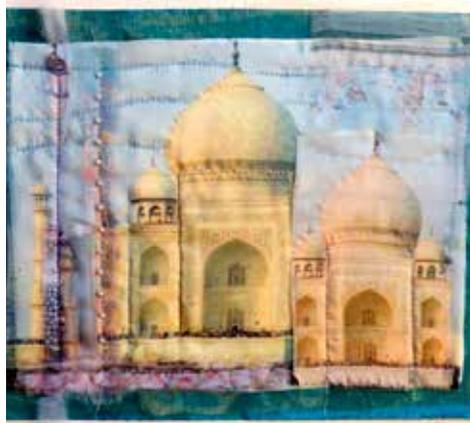
## Vicky O'Leary Textiles



"Lace Flower" by Vicky O'Leary

Vicky is in Southville Road Thames Ditton and takes her inspiration from the beauty of nature, demonstrating this through layers of textiles and stitching. She is passionate about re-using everyday materials, transforming her work into pictures, greetings cards and wall hangings. *“My art gives me the chance to slow down the pace of life, to be present, to observe, and to connect with the cloth that I am stitching in to. This helps to create a stitched journey for everyone to enjoy.”*

**Linda and Terri Textiles and Ceramics** are in Harvest Lane Thames Ditton. Linda Walsh makes richly coloured textile-based mixed media framed pieces inspired by her wide-ranging travels and unique, fabric-based accessories – scarves, brooches, rings, necklaces.



Linda Walsh *“Impression of the daytime Taj*

Terri Smart is a highly accomplished ceramic sculptor offering a range of unusual, easy-to-love sculptures, mostly derived from nature, such as small birds, scaled-up seeds, and fruits. *“I like to emphasise the contrasts between nature and man, for example in my boat pieces where the size of the boat indicates just how puny we are compared to the vastness of the sea.”*

**Sarah Simonds-Gooding** is in Speer Road Thames Ditton and works with small pieces of handmade paper. *“I try and create something to portray my mood, thought or an observation and put the series of these little ‘pictorial moments’ together to create a journey.”*



*“Little studies in Pink” Sarah Simonds-Gooding*

**Keya D’Sa** is in Broadfields off Ember Lane. Keya is a potter and a painter. *“I enjoy creating distinctive pieces; both wheel-thrown and hand-built. Each piece is unique, and a lot of time and thought has gone into it. The decorating process is the bit I enjoy most, and I love experimenting with various techniques.”* Her elephants and birds feature on the front cover.

**Margie Haslewood** is a painter in Molemer Road, East Molesey, who offers workshops and classes (see her website) [www.art4myhome.com](http://www.art4myhome.com)

*“My preferred media are oil painting and clay sculpture. I especially love painting still life scenes. Having my own studio allows me to play with different media and do what I love.”*

**Lisa Howard** is in Bell Road East Molesey and uses printmaking and drawing techniques that emphasise the materiality of making. Exploring cast shadow and surface

impressions as a starting point for reducing natural forms to monochromatic compositions of line and pattern. *“During Open Studios I will be displaying original works including ink and charcoal drawings, cyanotype prints and monoprints. All works are for sale.”*

**Liz Bernard** is in Palace Road East Molesey and is a painter and a potter. *“My paintings cover a variety of styles, media and subject and are usually rich in colour and texture inspired by nature and the landscape.”* Her painting of houseboats features on the front cover.

**Susan Holton** knitwear is in Kent Road East Molesey. Susan designs, knits and dyes her unique and beautiful contemporary women’s knitwear in her studio. Surrey Open Studios visitors will be able to browse, try on, and buy her knitwear and accessories and see sketchbooks, knitted and dyed swatches, and work in progress. Sue’s timeless knits are original and wearable; finely crafted and meticulously finished.



*Susan Holton knitwear*

**Francesca Learmount** at Cicca-Art Kent Road East Molesey draws and paints using a variety of media – primarily oils, water-colours, etchings, mixed media collage and hand-painted designs on furniture. *“My subject matter is broad – I have also produced a selection of local scenes from where I live*

*around Hampton Court and East Molesey.”*

**Armi Maddison** in Pemberton Road East Molesey combines working as an artist with teaching. She specialises in mixed media and textile processes working primarily with textiles, print and stitch. Armi runs year-round workshops offering private tuition for portfolio building and college/university see her website [www.no5workshops.com](http://www.no5workshops.com) *“At Open Studio this year I will be running the popular mini print/stitch workshops again, when not too busy – come and have a go!”*

**The Garden studio** Chalford Close West Molesey finds Hilary and Tricia. Hilary’s paintings include differing subjects such as sea and landscapes, abstracts, animals and pet portraits in watercolours, oils, acrylic, pastel and resin. Blank greetings cards are produced from these original paintings.

Tricia’s statement jewellery is made from semi-precious stones set in silver. There are earrings, bracelets and necklaces to choose from in a bright array of colours. She will also be showing a small number of paintings and cards.

There are many more Open Studios throughout Surrey. Find details of participating artists and Open Studios including bookings for workshops and dates and times of the events at [www.surreyopenstudios.org.uk](http://www.surreyopenstudios.org.uk)

There is also a useful map to locate open studios near you.

**Twitter:** @SurreyArtists  
#surreyopenstudios2022

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/Surrey-Artists-Open-Studios-48374786872/](http://www.facebook.com/Surrey-Artists-Open-Studios-48374786872/)

**Instagram:** @surreyartistopenstudios  
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**Sandra Dennis**



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# Oak Processionary Moth on the march



*OPM processing on a tree*

Finding Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) in our oak trees is not pleasant, however, it has increased significantly and we cannot ignore it.

The Forestry Commission guidance for Elmbridge on how to manage OPM spread has recently changed, placing a greater onus on the public for vigilance, reporting sightings and managing the problem when it affects trees on our property.

OPM is native to Europe and was accidentally introduced into the UK in 2005 from Europe for a landscaping scheme in London. Initially it was limited to the London area, but it has spread swiftly. It may no longer be possible to eradicate OPM from the UK and the Forestry Commission

and its partners and the public need to work together to minimise its population and spread.

## What is the problem?

So, why is OPM a problem? Well, it isn't the moth itself but its caterpillars and their nests. The caterpillars have tiny hairs that contain a substance called thaumetopoein which can cause extreme irritation to human skin. A fully grown caterpillar may have thousands of barbed hairs.

Contact with the hairs can cause skin irritation, rashes and serious allergic reactions. However, you don't even have to touch the caterpillars to be affected as their hairs can be blown in the wind and inhaling them may cause sore throats and breathing difficulty. This isn't just confined to humans, animals are just as susceptible. And we can't rely on the caterpillars to remain in oak trees as the nests can be blown to the ground.



*OPM nest on the ground. Credit: Ishpi Blatchley*

The greatest risk period is May-July, but hairs can remain in old nests which can cause problems at any time of the year.

The advice from the Forestry Commission is clear. If you believe you have been in contact with OPM and show signs of a rash or illness call NHS 111 or see a pharmacist or doctor. If you have a dog, cat, horse, or other animal that you believe may have been in contact with OPM you should contact a vet.

Do not go near the nest or caterpillars, don't let children or animals go near them and don't try to remove the nest or caterpillars yourself.

## Impact on our oak trees

The Forestry Commission is very concerned that OPM will become a very serious pest in the countryside if it isn't controlled. The caterpillars feed on healthy oak trees and large populations can strip trees bare of leaves, leaving them vulnerable to other pests and diseases.

The Forestry Commission has produced some simple safety guidelines which can be found on their website

- Don't touch OPM nests or caterpillars
- Keep children away from OPM nests and caterpillars and teach them not to go near them
- Keep pets and other animals away from caterpillars and nests and take the animal to the vet if you believe they have been affected by OPM
- See a pharmacist if you have skin or eye irritation and mention OPM
- Call NHS 111 and go to accident and emergency or your GP if you have a more serious reaction or allergic reaction and suspect OPM
- Don't try to remove nests or caterpillars. This must be done by a professional arborist or pest control

- If you own oak trees inspect them regularly for signs of OPM (see below)
- Tell your neighbours if you suspect your trees are affected by OPM
- Be aware of who is responsible for an infected tree, EBC, Surrey County Council or a private resident, and report the OPM to the relevant body.
- Report an infestation on the Forestry Commission website which enables the spread of OPM to be monitored

## Responsibility to take action

Due to the harm to humans, animals, oak trees and the countryside the main focus is to limit the spread of OPM and minimize its population and impact.

To do this, action is required by anyone who owns or manages oak trees. Residents now have an obligation to inspect oak trees on their land and take the appropriate action.

The public also need to be vigilant and report sightings of OPM in public places. In the first instance if you spot OPM when you are out locally try to establish who is the landowner and report the sighting to them and the Forestry Commission:

## OPM on Elmbridge Borough Council land

If you see OPM in a tree on land owned by Elmbridge Borough Council, please report it at [opm@elmbridge.gov.uk](mailto:opm@elmbridge.gov.uk) or on 01372 474825 or 01372 474579. EBC are following a risk-assessment approach to each site.

## OPM on Surrey County Council trees

If the tree is on a highway it's likely to be the responsibility of Surrey County Council Highways section who can be contacted at: [highways@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:highways@surreycc.gov.uk)

## OPM on private land

It's the responsibility of the landowner to do regular surveys looking at individual trees and decide the appropriate management needed. Elmbridge Borough Council don't have the resources to visit privately owned areas due to the scale and scope of the problem across the borough.

Before doing a survey it's sensible to familiarise yourself with what each of the stages of OPM lifecycle looks like. You can do this on the Forestry Commission website: [www.forestryresearch.gov.uk](http://www.forestryresearch.gov.uk) This site also has a useful manual for owners of oak trees.

Surveys for OPM can be done throughout the year. Spring and winter are particularly useful times. Where there are only one or two oak trees on a site, such as a garden, it's worth checking for symptoms fairly frequently, from the ground, from several angles, and from upstairs windows. Binoculars are a useful aid. OPM caterpillars, or larvae, can be present in all parts of the tree – on the trunk, branches, and leaves, and on the ground.

## Removal of OPM



*OPM nest in Elmbridge*



*OPM on a tree trunk at ground level*

There are a variety of treatments for OPM which range from chemical treatment, to vacuum removal and pheromone trapping. This will depend on which stage of the OPM lifecycle is to be treated. All these techniques should only be carried out by professionally trained and equipped professional operators. They can be found on the Arboricultural Association website [www.trees.org.uk/Find-a-professional](http://www.trees.org.uk/Find-a-professional)

## Reporting OPM

If you find OPM or their nests anywhere, you must report it to the Forestry Commission at the Forest Tree alert website [www.treelert.forestryresearch.gov.uk](http://www.treelert.forestryresearch.gov.uk) where you will need to upload a clear, well lit photograph, but please keep your distance so as not to come into contact with the hairs.

# Roll-up for Bowls ... have a go



*Happy winners at 2021 Finals Day*

Last year the easing of lockdown restrictions enabled the resumption of bowls and the positive prospect of a new season provided a great opportunity to try something new, or to pick up from where we were before the pandemic interfered with our lives!

Ember Bowling Club in Grove Way Esher recorded its most successful Open Day for new bowlers, which attracted 30 newcomers to “have a go” at bowls. For many years the club has offered free coaching to beginners, but had not previously had such a huge response!

Was this an antidote to lock-down? Here was a chance to try, at no cost, a new outdoor activity in peaceful surroundings while meeting other people

from the local community.

At the start of the 2022 season Ember bowlers will be welcoming back many of their newcomers from last year and hopefully some potential new players who want to try their hand at bowls. It is a game for all ages and abilities, is easy to learn and is very sociable!

Gill Ovington, one of last year’s beginners, said: *“The free coaching course was excellent and the bowls members were very welcoming. I am looking forward to the start of the new season in April when I can meet up with my new friends and get back to bowling”.*

For more information please see the website: [\*\*bowls@embersportsclub.org.uk\*\*](mailto:bowls@embersportsclub.org.uk)

# Meet your distributors – Judith and Andrew Irvine



Your copy of Thames Ditton Today was put through your letterbox by one of our volunteer distributors.

Who are they and what are they up to when they are not pounding the streets delivering magazines?

Although, Judith and Andrew consider themselves to have an Esher address, they are represented on Elmbridge Council by Gill Coates of the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents Association and residents in their area receive Thames Ditton Today.

**They deliver to Parkwood Avenue and Cranleigh Road.**

## How and when did you move here?

We moved here 36 years ago, just two days before the birth of our second daughter. The area was ideal for Andrew's daily commute. We love the ease of access to London, where our son and one of our daughters now live, but also the accessibility of the Surrey countryside.

## How did you become distributors?

Our pre-teen daughters had agreed to take over delivery from our neighbour, Betty Wake, and even received Easter Eggs from the RA because they were too young to attend the distributors' party, but in reality, it was us that did most of the delivering over the years.

## 'Potted biographies?'

We were both brought up on the South



coast. Andrew in Hastings and Judith in Pevensey and met while students at home for Christmas. In those pre-Tinder times, we were introduced in a pub by a friend.

Andrew was studying law in London and Judith was training to be a teacher in Essex where we had our first home. We married in Pevensey in 1979. We have two daughters and a son.

*Andrew:* - I have practised as a litigation and insolvency solicitor for my whole career. For many years I commuted from Esher station and have been grateful for the work done to alleviate flooding under the bridge and to install a footpath along the common - both of which were due to the efforts of Tannia Shipley. In 2017 I switched jobs and now work largely from home."

*Judith:* - I taught at various large secondary schools but took a break after having our second child and enjoyed several happy years bringing up my family.

I then worked at Stepping Stones Nursery School in The Drive until becoming Head of Early Years at St Teresa's School in Effingham for 15 years. My latest job is caring for our second grandchild while our eldest daughter works.

## What hobbies and activities do you enjoy?

*Judith:* - I go Nordic walking with friends but do not have a particular fitness regime – gardening (with a focus on wildlife habitat) and childcare keep me fit these days! Over the years I have learnt furniture restoration, chalk painting, upholstery and picture framing. I am the DIY person in our household! I enjoy baking - from cakes to sourdough bread.

*Andrew:* - I am lucky to be married to a great cook and try to work off those benefits on the golf course. I am a member at Surbiton.

We both like walking, art and theatre. We go to the English National Opera now and again. A magical venue is Grange Park in West Horsley, where a large opera house has been built in the grounds of an Elizabethan manor house.

## Is there one thing that perhaps people don't know about you?

*Andrew:* - I have long been fascinated by the story of my ancestor, Andrew (Sandy) Irvine, who died with George Mallory in 1924 near the summit of Mount Everest. They may have been the first climbers to make a successful ascent and died on the way down. It is believed that Sandy was carrying a camera which, if found, could prove whether they did reach the top 29 years before Hillary and Tenzing. Although Mallory's body was found in 1999, Sandy has not yet been located.



*Sandy Irvine at Everest base camp*

## QUICK FIRE QUESTIONS

### Favourite pub?

The Wheatsheaf in Esher – the staff are charming.

### Favourite drink?

*Andrew:* - I appreciate good wine, although I sometimes see Judith frowning when I pour a glass - she says she is just as happy with a ginger beer.

### Favourite music?

*Judith:* - The Merry Widow has wonderful music and is very amusing. Motown goes on when Andrew is playing golf!

### Favourite holiday?

We've had some exciting holidays including sailing from Seattle to Vancouver Island and a fantastic visit to South Africa, with knowledgeable friends, whale watching and visiting vineyards in the Cape.

**Pat Cooke**

# Planning: where are we now?



Since 2010, we have had 11 Ministers of State for Housing, including our local MP, Dominic Raab for a few months in 2018. There have been fewer Secretaries of State, we are now on number six.

Michael Gove is the new Secretary of State and his first task was to rename the department to Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. We are yet to see if he is going to move away from the extremely controversial proposals in the White Paper in 2020. The introduction to the paper stated that *“Britain’s planning system is ‘outdated and ineffective... a relic from the middle of the 20th century that is artificially constraining the country’s potential, preventing homes from being built, businesses from expanding and people moving to where they could get jobs”* Personally I disagree with this statement and believe it is the housing building industry who know exactly how to play the system. They are a powerful lobby in this country.

I wrote an article highlighting my concerns in the Summer 2020 edition of Thames Ditton Today (**see residents-association.com**) I was particularly worried by the requirement for each LPA (Local Planning Authority) to create zones (for growth, for renewal and protected) and design codes.

Once these design codes and zones had been agreed there would be no further involvement from the local community or council and developers would be given the green light to develop what they felt fit.

Many of us responded to the consultation and Graham Cooke (Chairman of

TDWGRA along with other residents’ associations in the borough) lobbied our local MP, Dominic Raab. They have had several meetings with him and he has been left in no doubt about the concerns many residents have.

Rumour has it - there is no actual evidence yet - that the government is preparing a U-turn and the proposed reforms will be significantly watered down. Planning journalists have suggested that the controversial zonal system will be dropped. They have also suggested that the housing targets set nationally for each Local Planning Authority will also be scrapped/reduced. To remind you, we have been set a target of 643 new units per annum for Elmbridge. Given 60% of our borough is Green Belt that is a huge number. It is why we are seeing many applications for high density housing (Merrywood, Hampton Court Trading Estate to name but a few).

We are following developments closely. Whilst the pandemic has understandably diverted attention away from planning reforms we are expecting to hear from the Secretary of State this year so watch this space.

One thing that has caused a great deal of concern in our community is the ‘Prior Approval’ changes that were slipped in as secondary legislation in the summer of 2020 under the noses of many MPs. We have seen this at first hand in Thames Ditton; the owners of A C Court sought Prior Approval for 51 units in the centre of the village and there was nothing as a community we could do to stop it.

An applicant applies for a Prior Approval certificate from the Local Authority which is obligated to grant it unless it fails to meet certain minimum standards relating to issues such as flooding, transport or living standards. I am sure A C Court could be a wonderful asset to the village with well planned residential units, shops, offices, cafés etc. and outside areas for residents to use. However the scheme for 51 flats which was proposed included overly small, cramped flats with little natural light, inadequate air flow and poor design. In this case it was the failure of some of the flats to meet the minimum space standards and inadequate natural light which meant it was refused Prior Approval.

A later Prior Approval application for part of the site (Unit 2) has met the necessary standards so has been given Prior Approval. This is not a planning judgement, simply a tick box exercise. I understand the owners have sold the site on so we will be keeping a very close eye on it.

I have met a number of residents over the years who have got in touch with me when a local application causes concerns. To be honest, 99.9% of the residents I have met in such circumstances have had reasonable concerns, they have not been 'NIMBY,' rather they want to make sure what is built in our area is the best it can be, and who can



*Caroline returning from a site visit*

argue against that? However, too often, the bar for what is deemed acceptable (e.g. in terms of impact on neighbours, acceptable densities, etc.) is lower in planning terms than it is for those who will be most affected, which is hugely frustrating.

2022 is going to be an 'interesting' year!

**Caroline James, Cllr Thames Ditton Ward, Chairman of East Area Planning committee, Vice Chairman Planning committee**  
*[cjames@elmbridge.gov.uk](mailto:cjames@elmbridge.gov.uk)*

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# Come along to Claremont Probus Club



Claremont Probus Club is a focal point where older or retired local professionals and businessmen can socialise and enjoy a variety of talks, trips and short breaks in the company of similarly-situated people.

We are a club run by its members, for its members and we are based in Esher, Surrey. The club has been in existence since 1974 and has now reactivated its normal activities after having to suspend these due to Covid-19.

We are friendly folk and our meetings are characterised by a degree of good natured banter. Our website, [www.claremontprobus.org.uk](http://www.claremontprobus.org.uk) provides information to our members on our events calendar, forthcoming outings and other club business. These have included a tour round Twickenham Stadium, a visit to Brick Lane Music Hall and, most recently, a visit to the historic St Mary's Church in Stoke D'Abernon. For the future, there are planned visits to the Bluebell Railway and a short break to Torquay.

We meet on the third Tuesday of the month, in the morning at the Ember Sports Club clubhouse, when we are updated on events followed by a speaker. Politics and religion are avoided, and we do not engage in fund raising. Recent subjects have included such diverse topics as the Real Dad's Army, Beethoven (with a live rendition of Ode to Joy) and the Cheapside Hoard. We have been addressed by a broad range of speakers from very different backgrounds including a number who regularly appear on television and are acknowledged experts in their field.



*A Claremont Probus Club trip to Brick Lane Music Hall*

Should you wish to sample a club meeting please contact our Secretary at [secretary@claremontprobus.org.uk](mailto:secretary@claremontprobus.org.uk) or just turn up at the clubhouse at 10.00a.m. on the third Tuesday in any month. We will be happy to give you a coffee and biscuits and invite you to be a guest at the meeting.

**George Cameron**  
**Hon. Secretary.**  
**Claremont Probus Club**

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- Mr Robinson

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# A new season for the Speer Road Church



*King's Church on Speer Road*

By the time you read this, if all goes according to plan, the Thames Ditton United Reformed Church will have been given a new lease of life, having been purchased by King's Church.

As a church, we've been using the building for our services since September 2020, but we are thrilled that we will have a permanent presence in the village. Our congregation is made up of different people living across the Borough of Elmbridge (in Thames Ditton, Molesey, Esher and Long Ditton).

The Thames Ditton building will be a hub for the church, which will include our offices, one of our Sunday congregations (the other is in New Malden) as well as a hall for childrens work and other community activities.

I invite you to come along to one of our Sunday services, which are at 10.30am

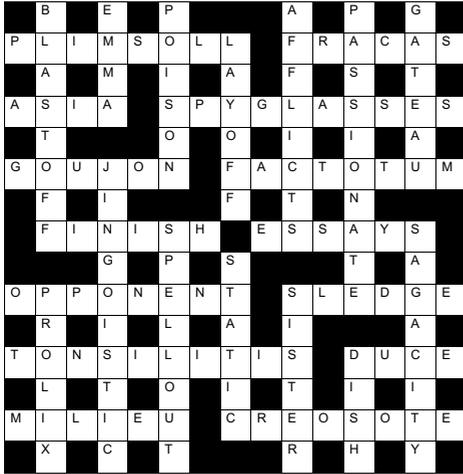
and include our 'King's Kids' age relevant activities in the adjoining hall. Everyone is warmly welcomed.

Apart from our Sunday services, we want to serve the local community. We are planning to start Thames Tots (a weekly Friday morning baby and toddlers group), Saturdads (a monthly Saturday morning group for dads and kids) and Alpha (for those who want to explore the Christian faith and ask big questions of life). To find out more details go to [www.kingschurch.com](http://www.kingschurch.com) .

We are really looking forward to being part of this community. If you see the church door open, do pop in for a chat, we'd love to meet you. For more details email me [john@kingschurch.com](mailto:john@kingschurch.com) or call me on 07873 721 620.

**John Ford**

# Solution to the Winter Crossword



Congratulations to the senders of the first three correct entries opened in the shuffle. Each wins a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

Priscilla Austin  
18 Imber Park Road  
KT10 8JB

Tom Eddy  
46 Grove Way  
KT10 8HL

Ashley Tilling  
32 Holme Chase  
KT13 0BZ



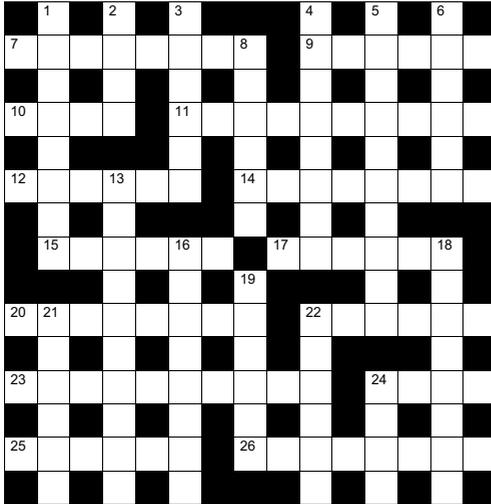
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# Spring Crossword



by **Howard and Bob Cruthers**

The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of May 5 will win a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

Please send the completed puzzle (or photocopy) enclosing your name and address, with the envelope clearly marked 'Crossword Competition' to:

Thames Ditton Today  
Crossword Competition  
24 High Street  
Thames Ditton  
KT7 0RY

## ACROSS CLUES

- 7 Sponge (8)
- 9 Of the stars (6)
- 10 Changes (4)
- 11 Poultry back down? (7, 3)
- 12 County abbreviation (6)
- 14 Over confident fowl? (8)
- 15 Wine, originally from Persia (6)
- 17 Spanish sheep (6)
- 20 Prince Harry's cautious manner? (8)
- 22 Passes on the baton? (6)
- 23 Forte, at cards? (6, 4)
- 24 Untidy military dining room? (4)
- 25 Small finch (6)
- 26 Convincing at first, but flawed (8)

## DOWN CLUES

- 1 Followers (8)
- 2 Butter & flour mixture (4)
- 3 Can be hard, at school (6)
- 4 Lumbago (8)
- 5 No movement (10)
- 6 Muslim ascetic (6)
- 8 Demonstrate (6)
- 13 Adoring fur (anag) – candy floss source? (10)
- 16 Repeal (8)
- 18 Ancient Greek hero (8)
- 19 Viscous liquids (6)
- 21 Deduce (6)
- 22 Fairly (6)
- 24 Mutilate (4)

# SERVICES, CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND GROUPS

## SERVICES

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Manager	01372 879321
Dittons & Weston Green NeighbourCare	Frankie Bell	07790 472993
<b>Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services</b>		
Thames Ditton Centre for the community	Mon & Thurs	0208 3985921
Thames Ditton Dementia Centre	Nikki Harding	01372 474526
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride, Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers	ask for service at central switchboard	01372 474552
Homesupport Elmbridge	Thomasina Breslin	01932 267128
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	0208398 6132
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Sally Dubery	01372 463587
Surrey Youth and Adult Education Service	Elmbridge Area	020 8979 8334

## GROUPS

1st Thames Ditton Brownies	Bronach Hughes	bronachhughes@hotmail.com
3rd Thames Ditton Brownies	Bronach Hughes	bronachhughes@hotmail.com
2nd Thames Ditton Rainbows	Heather Crowe	heathercrowe@hotmail.com
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Carole Needham	gsl@westongreenscouts.org.uk
1st Weston Green Guides	Sumathi Jeevaratnam	sumathi.jeevaratnam@gmail.com
2nd Weston Green Guides		2wgguides@gmail.com
2nd Thames Ditton Guides	Bronach Hughes	bronachhughes@hotmail.com
1st Weston Green Brownies (All Saints)		1wgbrownies@gmail.com
3rd Weston Green Brownies		3wgbrownies@gmail.com
1st Weston Green Rainbows	Lizzie Owen	westongreenrainbows@gmail.com
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Alison Derrick	020 8398 0041
Dittons Scout Group	Stuart Jack	07971 479740
Emberbrook Trefoil Guild	Mary Bowen	020 8398 6857
Friends of Bushey and Home Parks	Jean Smith	020 8977 9391
Girlguiding in Thames Ditton and Weston Green		dittonsdistrict.hjh@gmail.com
Friends of Walsingham Care	Miss Valerie Chicken	0208 398 2932
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: John Haberfield	020 8398 5256
Parents and Toddlers(St Nicholas church)	Information	020 8398 7211
Ripieno Choir	Nick Harris	020 8399 7231
Surrey Bell-ringers	Giles Andre	020 8979 1994

## CLUBS

Albany Motor Yacht Club	Secretary	01784466651
All Saints Weston Lunch Club	Val Atkinson	020 8398 1117
Arts and Heritage Club	Carol Butcher	01932 867511
Cercle Francais d'Esher	Brigitte Tiller	01932 860842 brigitte@ptiller.com
Claygate Bridge Club	Hon. Secretary	020 8398 1710
Colets Health & Fitness	Giordano Orsini	020 8398 7108
Ditton Bridge Club	John Dagnall	02083984463
Dittons Skiff and Punting Club	Hon Secretary	07710 139417
Dittons & Hinchley Wood Royal British Legion	Hon Secretary	020 8398 6263
Ember Players (Drama) Ember Sports Club	Elaine Sesemann	07801 943392

Ember Sports Club	Zenda Hedges	07717 304146
Ember Sports Club: Bowls	Sylvia Jones	01932 788701
Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Dr. David Cooke	01932 862841
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Annabel Duncan	0208 786 6318
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
Esher 41 and Ex-Round Tablers' Club	Dr. R. Tudor-Williams	020 8398 0108
Folk Dance Club (St Nicholas)	David Ford	020 8715 2148
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Nigel Hardy	020 8398 8361
Long Ditton Garden Club	Heather Harvey	020 8398 2642
Model Railway Society (Hampton Court)	Secretary	01932 241224
Old Cranleigh Rugby Club	Piers Cushing	07790 003731
Old Cranleigh Hockey Club	Simon Marshall (Men)	07801 737695
	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
Probus club, Hinchley Wood & the Dittons	Edmund Woolley	020 8398 3581
Probus Club, Sandown	Julian Rye	01932 976994
Probus Club of Molesey	Roger Marlow	0208 398 5460
Probus Club of Claremont	George Cameron	020 8224 1392
River Club (BMYC)	David Walker	0870 460 3586
Surbiton Croquet Club	Alec Thomas	020 8398 2391
Surbiton Golf Club	Secretary	0208 398 3101
Surbiton Hockey Club	Secretary	020 8398 2401
Thames Ditton Lawn Tennis Club	Rich Simkins	rpsimkins@gmail.com
Thames Ditton & Esher Golf Club	Mark Rodbard	020 8398 1551
Thames Ditton Squash Club (Colets)	Dave Peck	020 8398 7108
Thames Ditton Cricket Club	Geoff Dryden	07813 805 645
		Geoff.Dryden@hotmail.com

## SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance	Mrs Brenda Denby	0208 398 6054
Ember Choral	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Jean Billett	01372 465961
Esher and District Amnesty International	Cherry Eddy (Campaigns)	0208 398 4377
Hampton Court Way Allotment Association	Lettings: Piotr Hennig	020 8398 5358
Long Ditton Youth Club	Toni Izard	07749 633973
Lynwood Allotment Society	Gill Vickers	020 8398 4870
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
Oxshott & Cobham Music Society	Cherry Eddy (Membership)	0208 398 4377
		cherryeddy102@gmail.com
Thames Ditton Women's Institute (W.I.)	Secretary	020 8398 8615

## OTHER

Cancer Research UK	Mrs. Vivienne Harris	020 8398 6787
University of the Third Age (U3A)	Hon Sec Anne Brown	01932 881633
Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Amelia Crafts	08456 528 529
	Membership: Sue Morris	020 8224 0980
Weston Green Conservation Area Advisory Committee		wgcaac@outlook.com

**Please contact the Editor to amend these listings**

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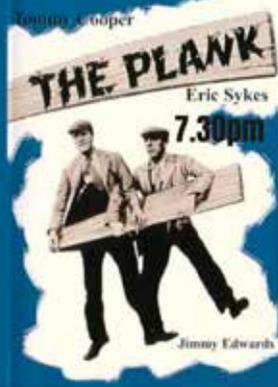
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