

## NOTICE OF MEETING

The 29th Annual General Meeting of Merrow Residents' Association will be held at BUSHY HILL SCHOOL, SHEEPLANDS AVENUE on WEDNESDAY 28th APRIL 1999 at 8.0 p.m.

### AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 26th November 1997  
Matters arising
3. Chairman's Report  
Discussion and Adoption of Report
4. Financial Report  
Treasurer's Report and Adoption of Accounts  
Appointment of Auditor
5. Election of Officers.  
Those now serving are: Chairman Mr P T Robson (Retiring)  
Hon. Treasurer Mr G M Gunson  
Hon. Secretary Mr D I Mabey  
Road Safety Officer Mrs C Smith

Except for Mr Robson who is retiring as Chairman the above Officers are willing to stand for re-election. The offices of Vice-Chairman and Publicity Officer are presently vacant and unless filled will be deemed to have a casual vacancy. Nominations as Officers, together with the names and addresses of the Proposer and Seconder and confirmation that the consent of the nominee has been obtained, must be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Mr D Mabey at Crofters End, 1 Abbots Way, Merrow. GU1 2XP at least seven days before the meeting.

#### 6. Election of Ordinary Members of the Executive Committee.

The Committee may include up to six Ordinary members who may serve for not more than three years. The present serving members are: Mr P Bingley, Mr P Reeve, Mrs C Rymell, Mr A Williams and Mr M Drayson (acting Environment Officer). Having served for three years Mr Bingley, Mr Drayson and Mr Williams now retire and Mr Reeve has been nominated as Chairman. This will leave five vacancies. Three members were co-opted onto the Committee after the last Annual General Meeting and have been nominated for election - namely Mrs P Cousins, Mrs E Williams and Mr M H Hinkly (acting Membership Secretary). Further Nominations are welcome and should be notified to the Hon. Secretary at least seven days before the meeting as above.

#### 7. Any Other Business

Matters for discussion must be received by the Hon. Secretary not later than seven days before the meeting.

A CHEESE AND WINE SOCIAL will follow the meeting at a contribution of £1 per head. This will give Members an opportunity to meet informally.

THE GUILDFORD DRAFT LOCAL PLAN as exhibited recently throughout the Borough will be on display in the Hall (by courtesy of the Guildford Planning Department)

It is proposed to establish a small Fund to enable a gift of items for the comfort of patients in the Merrow Ward at the Royal Surrey County Hospital and contributions are invited from Members

COME AND SUPPORT YOUR ASSOCIATION AND LET THE COMMITTEE HAVE YOUR VIEWS ON WHAT YOU WANT FOR MERROW

If any Member requires assistance to get to the meeting please contact the Hon. Secretary as above

Note: If any aspect of your name or address as shown is incorrect please advise the Hon. Secretary

# MERROW LIFE

The Newsletter of the Merrow Residents' Association  
Spring 1999 Issue No 5

## Chairman's Report

This report covers the period from our last AGM in November 1997 since at that meeting it was agreed to change the date of future AGMs to the Spring. This year the AGM will be held on Wednesday 28th April at Bushy Hill School and we hope that there will be a record turnout.

During the past 17 months the MRA has continued to be very active on behalf of its members and indeed the whole community of Merrow. As you know Merrow is a Ward of the Borough of Guildford and whilst we have three councillors (currently shared with Burpham but hopefully to represent Merrow alone in the future) we have no Parish Council.

A number of people have suggested that the MRA is in effect a form of Parish Council since much of its work would be performed by a Parish Council if one existed. (A Parish Council should not be confused with a Parochial Church Council.)

Over the past 3½ years the membership of the MRA has increased significantly and now stands at 835 members from 509 households. Whilst this increase is very encouraging it still only represents just under 14% of the population of Merrow and the more members we have the stronger our voice will be when representing the community.

Highlights of the past 17 months include a number of planning issues, the most important of which was the failure of the appeal to create a clay target shooting range on the West Clandon chalk pit. For this I am grateful for the support of so many residents - nearly 200 of you wrote to the Borough Council - which undoubtedly carried a great deal of weight with the inspector.

Another important event in Merrow has been the launch of *Merrow Matters* which celebrated its first birthday in February and now operates quite independently of the MRA, providing regular communication to every household in Merrow. (This is reported on separately.)

We maintain a close interest in traffic matters in Merrow ranging from speed control in Trodds Lane to local parking problems and cycle lanes on the Epsom Road. (See separate article.)

We have an established working link with the police and Sergeant Peter Groves attends our committee meetings as liaison police officer. PC Steve Dyer is our local 'bobby' based at Bushy Hill School.

We have made recommendations regarding proposed changes to the Merrow electoral boundary, which we hope will shortly be implemented. We resisted strongly, but unsuccessfully, recent changes to the mobile library service (also reported separately).

Many of you will have observed the disruption caused by the relining of much of the water supply system in Merrow. We have had discussions with Pipeway, the subcontractor concerned, regarding the standard of the re-statement work being carried out in Merrow including Levylsden and Merrow Downs.

Once again we have supported the *Guildford in Bloom* programme. Guildford remained second to Horsham for 'best large town' in the South East when judging took place last July. Hopefully it will regain the number one spot this year.

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### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday,  
28th April 1999  
8.00 p.m.

BUSHY HILL SCHOOL

## MERROW'S MAGAZINE

In 1997 when the MRA was examining possible millennium projects for Merrow it became clear that communication within the community was poor and that there was no publication which covered all of the residents in Merrow.

As a result the MRA called a meeting to determine whether some sort of community wide magazine could be launched. The membership made it clear that such a publication should not be run by the MRA but accepted that MRA backing and support would be needed in the early years. Sue Stranger and Anne Cooper responded to this challenge and agreed to launch a magazine for the community with financial protection provided by the MRA, so that if the magazine did not become viable the editors would not have to carry any personal financial liability. It was the intention for advertising revenue to cover all the costs associated with the publication.

And so, in February 1998, *Merrow Matters* was launched, to be published three times a year and distributed free to every household in Merrow. The initial take up of advertising space was good and the second and third issues had to be enlarged to carry it all. However, the real test would come after the first year when the advertisers assessed whether their outlay had been worthwhile.

The editors need not have worried since with the fourth issue the demand for space grew even greater and *Merrow Matters* had to be expanded to 56 pages. Thus, in only one year, Sue and her team have produced a viable magazine for the whole of Merrow and now there is a demand for it even outside the Merrow boundaries! From 1st January *Merrow Matters* has become totally independent and is unquestionably a great success.

Well done to all the editorial team and particularly to Sue and Anne for accepting the initial challenge. We wish you and *Merrow Matters* every success in the future.

Patrick Robson ❖



# Chairman's Report

(continued from Page 1)

It is also pleasing to report that the support we have given Bushy Hill School over many years regarding the 'field' adjacent to the school has paid off. It has at long last been confirmed that this field belongs to the school and the Governors plan to develop part of it for housing and maintain the remainder as an open space. This will give the school funding to undertake a number of capital improvements.

Many of you will be aware that Haldeane has recently closed. This is a cause for concern and the MRA is making appropriate enquiries to Surrey Social Services to establish their plans for this home for the elderly.

On the social side we had a most informative and enjoyable illustrated talk given by Eric Morgan on the life of Lewis Carroll which was attended by over 80 members.

As will be seen from the Financial report enclosed the affairs of the MRA remain sound. However, we are not building up our reserves and there will be increased expenditure over the millennium period. Accordingly, the Committee has decided to increase the annual subscription (the first since 1995) to £4 per family or £2.50 per individual member from 1st January this year.

A number of Committee members retire and I should like to thank Peter Bingley, Mike Drayson and Andy Williams for the support they have given over the past three years and Linda Hills for her period of service. However, in view of the increasing amount of activity in environmental matters the Committee has decided that a committee member should act as Environment Officer and I am pleased to report that Mike Drayson has agreed to take on this role.

We have some nominations for the 1999 committee but five are needed in total so please submit any further nominations to our secretary, Dennis Mabey, at least seven days before the AGM. We are also looking to appoint a Vice Chairman and a Publicity Officer; if you know anyone who would be suitable and prepared to take on either of these roles please submit nominations as above. (See separate notice of meeting.)

My period as chairman must end in six months and due to other commitments I have decided to step down at this AGM. However, I am delighted that Peter Reeve, one of our committee members, has agreed to take over this role.

Peter has been a Merrow resident for many years but has only recently become actively involved in public life in the community. If elected I am confident he will prove to be an excellent Chairman and I wish him every success.

I should also like to pay tribute and give my thanks to all the Committee for their support and hard work but in particular to Dennis Mabey as Secretary and George Gunson as Treasurer. Their assistance to me has been invaluable.

As you will see from this review the MRA represents the Community of Merrow in a wide variety of different ways. We are the only non-political voice that speaks for the whole community but the strength of that voice depends on our membership level and the support we get from the residents of Merrow.

We, the officers and committee of the MRA, give our time to help make Merrow a better place to live in - will you give your time to recommend that your friends and neighbours also become members and ensure Merrow has a truly representative voice on community matters in the future.

Please come along to the AGM at Bushy Hill School at 8 p.m. on Wednesday 28th April and make your views known. There will be a display relating to the Guildford Borough 10 year Local Plan and after the meeting a Wine and Cheese social to which all members are invited. I hope to see you there.

Patrick Robson Chairman. ❖

## Merrow Downs

The Downs are a vital and beautiful part of Merrow and it is in all our interests to see these are properly utilised. A detailed article on the Downs was included in Issue No 3 of *Merrow Life* (copies of which are still available) but members are reminded that the whole of the Downs are designated for use by the public as well as golfers in their specific area. Guildford Golf Club leases part of the Downs and has a duty to maintain that area as a golf course. It will be self evident that recently much time and effort has gone into making improvements to the golf course and it is deplorable that examples of

## Merrow Traffic

The MRA maintains contact with the local police and the Surrey County Council Environment team at West House, Merrow Lane. Topics covered have included speed restrictions by road calming measures, radar traps, additional signing, road resurfacing, improvements to footpaths, left turn lanes, cycle lanes and parking problems.

Much time has been spent on Trodds Lane and the authorities have made it quite clear that they no longer perceive any problems as there have been no accidents since resurfacing on the derestricted stretch up from the golf course and there have been no injury accidents at all in the built up area. However, the police will continue to use radar guns to monitor and control speed in Trodds Lane when resources allow.

We view with some concern the recent extensive proposals for cycle lanes along Epsom Road out to Clandon cross roads and have formed a sub-committee to deal with all aspects of traffic flow along Epsom Road and particularly in the area of the shopping parade. We are making proposals to reduce traffic flow to a single lane in each direction, to make the Eastbound inner lane at Bushy Hill traffic lights a left turn only lane, to significantly increase the areas for roadside parking and introduce speed calming measures. It should be noted that the proposed cycle lanes would not restrict existing roadside parking outside the parade shops in either direction.

We will report further progress through *Merrow Matters*. ❖

vandalism such as driving vehicles or cross country bicycles over fairways and even greens still occur. There are also designated Bridle Paths which are the only places on the Downs where horse riding is lawfully permitted.

As members of the public we have a duty to report any misuse of the Downs and anyone who observes any acts of vandalism or improper use as described above is urged to report it immediately to Mike Beckwith of the Parks and Open Spaces Department of Guildford Borough Council. ❖

## THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES IN SURREY

Members may have read in the local press details of the public consultation process recently conducted by Surrey County Council concerning the future of libraries, adult education and the youth service in the county. The MRA responded to the consultation document on behalf of residents and the following is a summary of that response:

**Libraries:** Merrow residents would express extreme scepticism at the statement in the document that "no decisions have yet been taken about any service" since they have already suffered decimation of a highly efficient and well-supported mobile library service. This now fails to properly serve local children and a further submission will be made to the Council. The MRA was not in a position to participate in a home delivery service but would put the matter to the membership.

On the general matter of libraries in the county,

the MRA supported market research, which showed that people preferred the option of fewer outlets with better services and longer hours, to the alternative of reducing staff hours and facilities at existing outlets.

We accepted the possible need to increase some library charges, e.g. requests for adult books, but complained at the cost of photocopying (10p) which was double the cost at local shops.

**Adult education:** MRA felt that within the Merrow population there was probably a substantial take-up of non-vocational education facilities in Guildford and the average person is probably not greatly concerned who actually provides the facility so long as it is readily accessible, adequate for the purpose required and within their financial means. However, most users would never be able to fund the whole cost of the service.

**Youth service:** This is a matter on which the MRA has been lobbying for years for some provision to be made for the youth in the area. The County Council's assessment of Surrey's needs has failed to identify the total lack of youth facilities in the area. There is no place where they may meet and there is no professional youth worker serving Merrow. The Churches have attempted to provide some

youth service from time to time but nothing in the way of formal assistance has been provided by the Council, and this is a deficiency which should be remedied.

**General:** MRA was concerned at the lack of adequate local marketing of many of the Community services available and questioned whether such services were being utilised to the maximum possible extent. Residents need to know where and what is available and the cost. Merrow now has a thrice-yearly magazine (*Merrow Matters*) which would be an ideal vehicle to publicise the community services.

MRA felt that the criteria for the reduction of any community service should not be what it is costing to provide, but is the provision adequate to meet the requirements of those who need the service and, more importantly, are people using the service to the best advantage. If not, it is necessary to look at how the service is being promoted and operated.

**Comment to Members.** The Committee would emphasise the need for residents to use the mobile library - even if it is not what it was! It is there for your benefit. If patronage falls away the County Council will undoubtedly take the opportunity to withdraw the service completely.

**REMEMBER** - Merrow Street lay-by on Tuesdays 9.30 - 1.0 and 4.15 - 6.0. ❖

## Planning Matters

Many planning applications have been commented on and where appropriate, objections have been raised. Undoubtedly the most important of these was the appeal over the proposed clay target shooting range in the West Clandon chalk pit.

We objected to the planned petrol station at Sainsbury's in Burpham particularly since there is a perfectly adequate BP service station only 100 yards away, and gave support to the Burpham Community Association.

Amongst others we have made representations about the proposed signing programme for the Horse and Groom, the two storey office redevelopment of the old Unigate milk depot behind the Epsom Road shops, now owned by

Designer Electrical, and the combined BP/Safeway redevelopment of Merrow Service Station covering lighting, signage and traffic control.

We also raised the problem of cladding colour on the new Sports Hall at St. Peters School. However, since the Planning Committee had already approved this and the cladding material is self-coloured in manufacture nothing can now be done to alleviate the situation.

The MRA Committee only normally considers planning matters which affect Merrow residents generally, but from time to time we get requests to make representations on behalf of individual owners concerning adjacent or nearby residential properties. *It should be made clear that such matters are for individual owners to deal with and not the MRA.* ❖

## MERROW WARD

For many years the MRA has maintained a link with Merrow Ward of the Royal Surrey County Hospital. In 1988 we commissioned six paintings by local artists and other items were donated in 1991 and 1993.

There is a current need for inflatable chair

cushions to relieve patients' pressure sores and also for a number of cork faced notice boards to take posters related to health improvement programmes being promoted by the NHS.

The MRA will be donating these items in the near future and invite contributions from members at the AGM. There will be a separate box for this purpose. ❖

## Guildford Local Plan Review

Over the past 18 months a great deal of work has gone into creating the Guildford Local Plan for the next decade and the MRA have commented on this at the various stages.

The consultation period based on the 'deposit draft' version of the plan ended on 15th March and final consideration will be given at the forthcoming Local Plan Inquiry, after which the Plan will be formally adopted.

This plan is a thorough document and has been prepared in a highly professional way aiming to cover all aspects of the development of Guildford over the next ten years. We are fortunate in obtaining use of the Council's Local Plan Display at the AGM on 28th April and hopefully someone who can answer your questions.

We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity and look at the display in some detail. ❖