

NOTICE OF MEETING

**** PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE OF MEETING ****

The 30th Annual General Meeting of Merrow Residents' Association will be held at
BUSHY HILL SCHOOL, SHEEPLANDS AVENUE on WEDNESDAY 12th APRIL 2000 at 8.0 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 28th April 1999

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 W Reeve
	Hon. Treasurer	Mr G M Gunson
	Hon. Secretary	Mr D I Mabey
	Road Safety Officer	Mrs C Smith

Except for Mr Mabey who is retiring as Hon. Secretary 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: Mrs P Cousins, Mr M. Hinkly (acting Membership Secretary), Mrs C Rymell and Mrs. E. Williams. None will retire this year therefore two vacancies exist. Mr M Drayson (acting Environment Officer) was co-opted onto the Committee after the last Annual General Meeting and has been nominated for election. Further nominations are welcome and should be notified to the Hon. Secretary at least seven days before the meeting.

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.

Presentation by the **Director, Department of Environmental & Planning Services**, Guildford Borough Council on the proposed **PARK AND RIDE** plans for Merrow

SURREY WASTE MANAGEMENT will be making a presentation of the plans for the new Incinerator plant at Capel and the implications for Merrow

Plans will be on display of the **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF BUSHY HILL SCHOOL**

Plans for **MERROW COMMON PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN & CYCLE FACILITIES** will be displayed

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 2000 Issue No 7

Annual Report

I make no apology for starting my Report by underlining the fact that if Merrow's affairs are to be effectively and democratically directed there has to be a substantial and active MRA membership. Our annual subscription rate is surely a cheap enough price to pay for residents' views to be heard, so please encourage neighbours and friends to join if they are not already members. May I also remind you that a subscription renewal form accompanies this Newsletter.

Issues both old and new have dominated the past twelve months:

Development of the **Bushy Hill School** field was an ongoing saga which appears now to have been resolved and a separate report by Patrick Robson, our immediate past Chairman, will be found elsewhere in this issue. Redevelopment of the School buildings is now on the drawing board and the plans will be available in time for a public open exhibition prior to our AGM and presentation to our members on the evening. Those members who attended the 1999 AGM will recall the School Governors requested that a liaison representative between the MRA and the Governors be appointed whilst the field development plans were under discussion and Patrick agreed to take on that role. We are grateful that he did so and thank him for his endeavours in this, at times difficult and somewhat acrimonious, matter. Although it is not anticipated the School redevelopment will arouse the same passions, Patrick has agreed to the Governors' suggestion that he again acts in a liaison capacity.

Epsom Road cycle lanes and traffic matters were dealt with by our Road Safety Officer Catherine Smith with help from Mike Drayson and George Gunson. Catherine comments elsewhere on the MRA role in this matter - a role which appears to have been somewhat misunderstood and misinterpreted both by the County Highways Dept. and by some local residents, notwithstanding our views were fully reported in the last [Autumn] issue of this newsletter.

The slowing of **traffic through Merrow** by single lane flows due to the cycle lanes is to be welcomed, but it has created frustration for drivers because of the time taken to cross the traffic lights at the Boxgrove Road and Bushy Hill Drive junctions. Unfortunately at the latter we are still seeing dangerous "grand prix starts" on the inside and parking on the lanes. One wonders what the situation will be if the projected heavy waste lorry traffic route through Merrow materialises. So far as can be seen the substantial sum of money spent on providing the cycle lanes does not appear to have increased the numbers using cycles.

Open land off Merrow Street, opposite Merrow House, is still being looked at for possible housing development by the Poyle Charity Trustees. The question of access via Goldfinch Gardens rather than Merrow Street may provide a solution to the previous objections by the Planning/Highways authorities.

Following Tony Neale's eloquent appeal at the last AGM for funds to repair the **Merrow War Memorial** he is now preparing a fully costed business plan for the restoration work. When the plan is complete the MRA will submit an application to the Borough Council Grant Aid scheme.

Today, **Refuse Collection and re-cycling** waste is big business. Surrey Waste Management (SWM) and Thames Waste Management (TWM) are both preparing plans which include the construction of large

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CYCLE LANES ET AL THE MRA ROLE

The provision of cycle lanes along Epsom Road is almost complete and road users and residents alike should have adjusted to them by now. It would be interesting to know to what extent road users have been affected by their introduction and by the other traffic regulating work carried out in Merrow.

The MRA was informed of the proposals in general terms last Spring and a related item appeared in the Spring issue of *Merrow Life*. Philip Herring from the County Highways Dept. was invited to the last AGM when he gave a brief résumé of what was involved in the project. Subsequently the responsibility for scrutinising and commenting on the project was delegated to three members of the MRA Committee who met with Mr Herring for detailed discussion.

In July the statutory Public Notice was published in the local press which set out the final plans and members of the public were invited to comment. The Committee fulfilled this task having regard to the little reaction received from residents, despite a full-length article on the subject in the Summer issue of the *Merrow Matters* magazine, and the MRA's formal response was detailed in the Autumn issue of *Merrow Life*.

There has been much public comment regarding the extent and the cost of this and other associated work, in particular that carried out at the Clandon Park Gates roundabout. Whether this will be considered as having been justified given the extent of the use made by the public of the lanes and other works must be a matter for residents themselves to judge. Much will probably depend upon the degree to which the speed and aggression of many road users passing through Merrow is curtailed as a consequence since it is the safety of residents, both on and off the road, with which the MRA is principally concerned.

Proposals have now been received for "Merrow Common proposed pedestrian and cycle facilities" which appear to

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incineration plants that will affect Merrow and SWM have accepted an invitation to make a presentation at our AGM. As they propose to have large waste lorries passing every day to/from Slyfield-Capel, possibly via Merrow, I am sure everyone will be interested to hear their views. Also TWM have provided a small folder for each member attending the AGM setting out their plans.

The Borough Council has made it known that it intends to establish a **Park and Ride** facility on the east side of Guildford. At the time of writing the plans are shrouded in secrecy and it is rumoured the site of the parking area is to include the Merrow Cricket Club ground. I am therefore very pleased to be able to report that Mr Simon Birch, Director of the Environmental & Planning Services Department has agreed to come along and give a presentation at the AGM.

Members will be aware that a planning application for the shop at **243 Epsom Road** (the former *Capelli* premises) to be changed to a restaurant was refused by the local planning authority. The MRA lodged an objection to the original application on the same grounds as it successfully opposed a similar change at No. 207 (by coincidence now occupied by *Capelli*) in 1997, including the fact there were already sufficient eating facilities in the area. The Applicant appealed against the refusal and the MRA formally supported the Council in its opposition to that appeal. The Government Planning Inspector has now ruled that an additional restaurant would not meet the shopping needs of the area and dismissed the appeal. It

is to be hoped the owners will not now impose onerous letting conditions such as to prevent the premises being quickly taken up as a retail shop unit.

The gift by members of air cushions for the benefit of patients in the **Merrow Ward** at the RSC Hospital has been acknowledged with thanks.

Another highly successful **Autumn Event** evening was held at Jefferies Hall in October when about 100 people enjoyed a very entertaining and interesting illustrated talk by Matthew Alexander - Curator of Guildford Museum - on The History of Guildford. Before the talk I had the pleasure of making a presentation on behalf of members of a stained glass panel to Patrick Robson in recognition of his services to the Association.

It is hoped work on the new **St John's Centre** will start in July and be completed in Spring 2001. The new premises will provide enlarged flexible meeting facilities, a modern kitchen, toilets with disabled access and secure accommodation for children's groups.

In co-operation with the Ground Maintenance Manager of the local Leisure Services Department, members of your Committee were given and planted 1200 narcissi bulbs on the approaches to Merrow last December. This is part of the scheme for **Greening the Borough** and we hope to have a further supply of bulbs this autumn to increase the show next Spring.

There has been a change of personnel in our friendly **local community police**. PC Steve

Dyer is still to be found at the Bushy Hill School Police Office but Sgt. Peter Groves has been moved on to be replaced by Sgt. Kerry Whindle. All three have been invited to attend our AGM so that we can thank them for their services and the support given us in the past, with Peter or Steve sitting in from time to time on our Committee meetings. At the same time we will welcome Sgt. Whindle to our midst.

On the matter of personnel, your **Committee** needs some new blood! We still have a vacancy for a Vice-Chairman and urgently need a Publicity Officer. Also Dennis Mabey who has been our Secretary for the past six years has now said that he would like to hand over to someone else in the immediate future. He richly deserves to be relieved, so offers please!

Finally, as you will see from the financial report the affairs of your Association are very healthy and well in credit. It is also good to see that the *Merrow Matters* magazine has prospered and our best wishes and congratulations go the editorial, advertising and distribution team for its continued success.

Your County and Borough Councillors have said they will be attending the **Annual General Meeting** and in view of the important presentations and displays that have been arranged I trust there will be the usual large attendance and look forward to seeing you on the evening of Wednesday 12th April. Please note this date has been changed from that previously announced.

Peter Reeve *Chairman*

CYCLE LANES (Continued from Page 1)

affect Bushy Hill Drive, Great Goodwin Drive, Hareward Road, Merrow Street, Old Merrow Street, Kingfisher Drive, Merrow Common and Woodruff Avenue. These plans will be displayed at the AGM by which time the MRA will have considered and responded to proposals to open the closed junction of Merrow Street/Kingfisher Drive and to allow shared used to pedestrians and cyclists along the path connecting Bushy Hill Drive and Hareward Road which may be widened.

At all times the Committee judges proposals to the best of its knowledge and ability and where it is felt that safety is being compromised, will relay caution or alternative suggestions to the highways authority.

Catherine Smith *Road Safety Officer*

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF BUSHY HILL SCHOOL

OPEN EXHIBITION OF THE PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL

Tuesday 4th April 3.30 - 7.30 p.m.

Members of 'Project Bushy Hill' team will be available for consultation at the School

Merrow Residents' Association had long sought the opportunity to provide an open space, with possibly a small hall, near to the centre of Merrow which could be used as a facility for the youth who had no open area for organised recreation and nowhere to congregate without disturbing local residents.

For the past nine or ten years the MRA had maintained a particular interest in the three acre field adjacent to Bushy Hill School which had the potential to meet this need. Merrow Youth Forum approached Surrey County Council to discuss their co-operation in a suitable project but was unable to interest them as they stated the land was allocated for Bushy Hill School. However, when the School became grant maintained the ownership of this field was unclear and no proposals for its future could be considered until this issue was resolved. In the meantime the field had been designated in the Guildford Local Area Development Plan as suitable for mixed use.

Early in 1999 the ownership issue was settled in favour of Bushy Hill School, but whilst the school already had sufficient land for playing fields it was desperately short of funds to maintain and develop its buildings infrastructure. In recognising the value of this land in securing the future of the school, the Governors were also keen to support the aim of the MRA in providing facilities not only for

BUSHY HILL SCHOOL LAND

the youth of Merrow but also for other sporting organisations in the area. They accordingly instructed their planning consultants to draw up a development scheme to meet these objectives.

After consulting with parents and representatives of local community organisations details were submitted to the GBC Planning Department and then shown to local residents at a public meeting. The scheme provided for 23 high quality houses on the whole field, supplemented by an all-weather pitch and community use building for young and old on part of the school grounds. Whilst the parents supported this proposal, many residents in the immediate vicinity did not and the Planning Officers were not prepared to approve such a scheme.

I had been asked by the Governors to record the views expressed by the local residents, both for and against the proposals, and to

ensure these views were conveyed to them and to the MRA Executive Committee. It rapidly became clear that the scheme could not be progressed and taking account of the views expressed, both by residents and planners, a revised scheme was drawn up. This dispensed with the all-weather pitch and community use building but left an undeveloped area of the field (approximately 40%) and reduced the number of houses to 20 which included four *affordable* houses at the requirement of the Council.

A further open consultation meeting with local residents was held, the outcome of which was support by the great majority but opposition, understandably, from a few who were directly affected. This scheme was then submitted for outline planning approval and this was granted on 4th January.

It is accepted by the MRA Committee that the opportunity of providing open space and sporting facilities specifically for the youth of Merrow here has now been lost, but that the first priority must be the future welfare of the children of Bushy Hill School. The sale of the field for partial development for residential purposes will enable the Governors to carry out much needed redevelopment and provide additional facilities in the school, to the greater benefit of all its pupils in the 21st century.

P T Robson

SAFWAYS/BP FILLING STATION



The Police have received complaints that, after refuelling, some customers leave their cars at the pumps whilst proceeding to do their shopping in the supermarket (and elsewhere!). This is not only discourteous to other customers wishing to use the pumps but can create an obstruction.

Residents are reminded there are parking facilities at the rear of the Store. Also that it is illegal to park on the cycle lane in front of this section of the parade.



HELP !

Are you able to spare 2-3 hours once a fortnight to help serve teas, coffees and snacks? If so the WRVS at the Royal Surrey

County Hospital would be pleased to hear from you. Please ring Barbara on Guildford 825441 or Marilyn on Guildford 531482 for more details.

Thank you.



POSTAL COLLECTIONS

The MRA has learnt (via a complaint made to the Royal Mail by a member) that the No. 1 collection (the early morning collection) has been removed from some post boxes in the area. The reason given is the need for restructuring to make changes to improve the delivery service. So far as is known no public notice of this had been given, therefore, members are warned to check the post box plate details if an early collection of post is required. The Royal Mail states "this change should not have any implications on delivery times".

TELECOMMUNICATION MASTS

The Association has lodged an Objection to an application for planning approval for a Pole with tri-sector antenna and an equipment cabinet to be erected at the Clandon Park gates roundabout.

Whilst recognising that mobile telephones are a fact of life in today's society (and that some have the need to conduct their business in the comfort of a railway carriage or on the top deck of the Clapham omnibus), operating companies must learn to have some respect for the local community.

This is neither an environmentally suitable nor desirable location for such a mast from the point of view of local residents and, notwithstanding this is just one more pole amongst the proliferation of poles appearing here, a more appropriate *industrial* site should be found.

Merrow Life is published by Merrow Residents' Association for circulation to its members. Unless stated, the views expressed may not always represent the views of the Committee of the Association or those of individual members of the Committee.

Any enquiries should be addressed to the Secretary.