

## NOTICE OF MEETING

The 31st Annual General Meeting of Merrow Residents' Association will be held at BUSHY HILL SCHOOL, SHEEPLANDS AVENUE on WEDNESDAY 25th APRIL 2001 at 8.00 pm

### AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 12th April 2000
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Annual Report  
Discussion and Adoption of Report
5. Financial Report  
Report and Adoption of Accounts  
Appointment of Auditor
6. Election of Officers. Those now serving are:

Chairman	Mr P W Reeve
Hon. Treasurer	Mr G M Gunson
Hon. Secretary	Mr D I Mabey (Retiring)
Road Safety Officer	Mrs C Smith (Retiring)

The Chairman continues in office for his third year and Mr Gunson is willing to stand for re-election as Hon. Treasurer. Mr Mabey is retiring as Hon. Secretary and Mrs Smith is retiring as Road Safety Officer. The offices of Vice-Chairman and Publicity Officer are presently vacant and unless filled these and other vacant posts will be deemed to have a casual vacancy. **Nomination of 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 7 days before the meeting.

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

The Committee may include up to 6 Ordinary members who may serve for not more than three years. The present serving members are: Mrs P Cousins; Mr M Drayson (acting Environment Officer); Mr M Hinkly (acting Membership Secretary); Mr K Martin; and Mrs C Rymell (who is due to retire by rotation this year). Mrs Cousins has agreed to nomination as Hon. Secretary therefore, in addition to three Officer vacancies, there will be three Ordinary Committee member vacancies for which nominations should be notified to the Hon. Secretary at least 7 days before the meeting.

#### 8. Any Other Business

Matters for discussion must be received by the Hon. Secretary not later than 7 days before the meeting.

Following the formal business of the Annual General Meeting there will be a short talk by  
**P C STEVE DYER on his role as the Merrow community police officer**

This will be followed by an **OPEN FORUM** that will enable the Chairman and Committee to take members' preliminary views on the proposed Merrow railway station, and a discussion on the Association's affairs

**WHAT ARE THE NEEDS OF MERROW RESIDENTS?**

**IS THE M R A MEETING THOSE NEEDS?**

**HOW BETTER MAY IT REPRESENT MEMBERS?**

**HOW MAY WE ATTRACT MORE MEMBERS?**

**THE FLOOR IS YOURS**

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

### COME AND SUPPORT YOUR ASSOCIATION

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

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

# MERROW LIFE

The Newsletter of the Merrow Residents' Association  
Spring 2001 Issue No 9

**Don't forget!**

**2001 Annual General Meeting**

**Bushy Hill School Hall**

**Wednesday 25 April**

**8.00 pm**

**We need you there!**

## ANNUAL REPORT 2001

A recurring theme in the MRA annual reports has been the importance of building up membership numbers. With approximately 9,000 residents in Merrow, the Association provides a forum through which local issues can be addressed. Since Merrow does not have a Village or Parish Council, the MRA should be the body that is used to voice the opinions of the local population without the constraints of any political dogma.

To be in a position to do so it must have strength in numbers and if you value your membership please do your best to encourage others to join and make sure that your annual subscription is paid up - either at the AGM or on the form enclosed with this Newsletter.

### THE 2001 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As you will see from the Notice on the back page the AGM will again be held in the Bushy Hill School hall on Wednesday 25 April.

The School is conveniently situated for most of our members and the hall sufficiently spacious to accommodate the anticipated number attending, whilst car parking will be available notwithstanding the current building works.

Our only outside speaker this year will be the local 'bobby on the beat' **PC Steve Dyer** who will give us a 10-minute brief on how he operates in Merrow. The principal part of the evening (after the formal AGM business has been concluded and

before the now regular and popular Cheese & Wine social half hour) will be an Open Forum for members to express their views on any local topic they choose.

We are arranging for a public address system so that everyone will be able to hear the comments from the floor as well as from the 'top table'. Your Committee want to hear your views and we want your guidance on the up-coming important matters such as Park & Ride and the proposed Merrow railway station.

But above all we want to know:

Are we properly serving the community's needs?

*Can we do better?*

## Review

Briefly reviewing the past twelve months.

### Slyfield Incinerator

It is good to know the Slyfield Incinerator question has been unanimously opposed by the Borough Council. It now rests with the Surrey County Council, but with more than 22,000 objections it must be well aware of local opinions!

### Bushy Hill School

Despite one or two minor planning hiccups, the new Bushy Hill School development is well under way and it is still hoped it will be completed and open for the new September term. We are fortunate that we shall now have a state of the art school of very pleasing modern design - a building of which Merrow and Guildford can be justly proud.

It is unfortunate, given its outstanding success and boon to the children in the wettest year on record, that the School's new all-weather pitch had to become a political football. The Government Planning Inspectorate's Inquiry on an appeal against the Planning Committee's enforcement notice to remove it will have been held by the time you read this and the Decision is awaited.

### Merrow Place

The former "horse" field adjacent to the School is now almost fully developed as *Merrow Place* housing estate comprising 18 houses, and five 'affordable dwellings' under shared ownership. Members will be aware of the Association's endeavours over a number of years to secure some form of community beneficial use of part of this site and a full report appeared in the Spring issue of *Merrow Life* last year.

As many of you will have doubtless seen, the housing development incorporates a central green space (with a "village pond") and we have confirmed with the Guildford Planning Officer that this area has been designated by them as a privately owned public open space, maintained by the developer's contractor. This means it is an area that may be enjoyed by any member of the public and is not restricted to owners of the estate houses.

### Park & Ride and Pay & Play Golf Course and Cricket Ground

Although these facilities are always linked when future use of the land in question is raised, there is still no formal planning application lodged in respect of a Park & Ride. Members who attended

*(Continued on Page 2)*



# Annual Report 2001 (Continued)

last year's AGM will recall Mr Simon Birch (Guildford Borough Director of Environmental & Planning Services) referring to this in his talk with an ensuing discussion from the floor. Subsequently two planning applications were lodged for a re-designed Golf Course but with no reference to a Park & Ride or Cricket Ground. However in view of intense opposition (including the MRA) to, inter alia, a proposal to fell a section of the woodland on the eastern boundary (through to Shere Road), these applications appear to have been put on the 'back burner' for the time being whilst further thought is given to the plans.

## Epsom Road shops

Unfortunately the former *Spar* shop is still empty but members will have noted the previous *Capelli* shop has now been let as a home interior furnishing business. This is particularly pleasing since the MRA, in its efforts to retain retail trade in the parade, had objected to two planning applications for change of use firstly to a restaurant and then an estate agents office, both of which were turned down on appeal.

A further office development at the rear on land of the old Dairy site is now proposed providing new accommodation for *Designer Electrical*. This is to be abutting the *BP/Safeway* rear parking area and therefore on the opposite boundary of the site from that for which a similar proposed development received planning consent some three years ago. The MRA is not objecting to the building but it is insisting on the 16 associated car parking spaces required by the earlier approval rather than the 13 spaces now proposed.

## Merrow House kitchen garden site

Once again there are plans to develop the old kitchen garden which lies between Goldfinch Gardens and Merrow Street. The builder *Martin Grant* has applied to build eight houses, access for seven of

which will be via Goldfinch Gardens and one onto Merrow Street.

## Merrow railway station

The viability of this has once again been raised. Rumours are rife and correspondence has appeared in the local press. Please see the short article on page 3.

## St John's Church Centre

Having raised £330,000 locally and received £200,000 from the *Lottery Commission*, building of this new facility for the Church and the Merrow community is now in hand and it will be complete and open for use this autumn (DV).

## Merrow Matters

The transition from the original Editorial team to the new organisation has been safely achieved. Having been associated with its birth, we are delighted to see this publication continuing to prosper.

## Autumn Event 2000

This annual meeting was held at Jefferies Hall in October and took the form of an illustrated talk on the *Public gardens and parks of Guildford* given by Mike Beckwith of the Guildford Parks & Countryside Department. The attendance was down on previous years which was disappointing in view of what in the event was a very interesting talk by an excellent speaker. Members will be able to comment at the AGM on whether or not they wish to have an autumn meeting of this nature.

## 'Guildford in Bloom'

The Association is represented on the working group and your attention is drawn to the closing date for entries this year: schools 15th June and individuals 6th July. Cash prizes for Educational entries are up to £125, whilst Residential entries can win £50 garden vouchers per category.

Members of your Committee again planted more bulbs at the approaches to Merrow thanks to the stock supplied by the Parks Department.

## Merrow War Memorial

Your committee voted to officially support the work done by Tony Neale to raise funds for the restoration of the Village War Memorial. Three stonemasons have provided advice and quotations, and £16,500 is needed to fully restore and rectify the present problems. To date we have £3,500 from local donations and the Guildford Council Community & Youth Projects has promised £4,000. Applications have been made to several other bodies for further funding.

Please remember our promise to all who gave their lives in two world wars: "*We will remember them*" and the War Memorial is part of that reminder. Local school children are taken there as part of their outdoor education and if they see a dilapidated memorial what impression does that leave on them? Donations can be paid into Lloyds Bank, Merrow, or given to the MRA Hon. Treasurer George Gunson.

## Foot & Mouth Disease.

Fortunately this part of the country seems to have escaped the epidemic so far and as a responsible organisation we would strongly urge everyone to respect the Council's notices erected around the area not to enter fields or woodlands or walk or ride on footpaths or those parts of the Downs excluded.



Once again I would like to express our thanks to Tony Hills for his efforts in composing the layout of this Newsletter and setting it up for printing.

Finally, I look forward to welcoming you at the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 25 April at 8 pm, and to hearing your views on Merrow affairs - - It is your home and your Association!

Peter Reeve

Chairman.



# PROPOSED MERROW RAILWAY STATION

Doubtless many Members will have read in the local press that the idea of a railway station at what is presently the Merrow depot, has again been resurrected - this time by South West Trains in its bid to renew the franchise. Letters from Merrow residents have also appeared in the Advertiser which show that it is not such an open and shut case as the politicians and interested commercial bodies would have the public believe.

Clearly this will be a matter of considerable debate in the coming year and it is a matter in which the MRA must have an input on behalf of all Merrow residents. Therefore, the Committee intends that the membership should be fully consulted as and when the matter progresses to a more definite proposal, possibly jointly with the

Boxgrove Park and Burpham Associations whose members will be likewise affected. Councils need to be reminded that it is the residents and businesses in the area who should have the final word on whether they want another station from which to journey to London and/or, more importantly, would use such a station to travel into Guildford, or indeed is there a better alternative.

There will be an opportunity in the Open Forum at the AGM for members to express their preliminary views, but a more detailed debate on IF and WHERE must await publication of formal proposals in due course.

In the meantime, however, reprinted below are two items on the subject that have appeared in previous MRA Newsletters.

## MRA Newsletter May 1995

For some years various organisations have promoted the idea of a railway station for Merrow, situated between Guildford London Road and Clandon.

A detailed study was carried out but, in reality, it seemed that the potential passengers using the station would be commuters to London rather than Guildford and these were, in the main, people who already used the train, but from another station. When it became clear no finance from the

Government or railway company was forthcoming, the study was abandoned and the whole project postponed indefinitely.

In the views of many the proposed station was wrongly sited, had inadequate parking facilities and would create major traffic congestion in Park Lane. With the added doubts of any real increase in passenger traffic it seems we have reached the end of the line for Merrow Station.

## MRA Newsletter Autumn 1996

Our response to this proposal was guarded. We have considerable doubts about the proposed location (Merrow Common on the eastern edge of Merrow) and the forecast usage of the station by residents which is claimed to justify going ahead with the project. To get Merrow car users to change to rail travel into Guildford and for many of them to change from use of the main line station to London rather than go via the Effingham line will need much greater convenience than the present proposal offers, whatever the various surveys of local people showed. Nevertheless, we do recognize that measures have to be taken to curb rises in traffic volumes in the

Guildford area during the next few years. We believe that much more frequent and accessible bus services, including park and ride facilities, offer a better and cheaper solution and that this option has not been given the attention that it deserves. Although, as we now understand it, Government funding for a station will not be forthcoming for the next year or more we shall be keeping a very watchful eye on the situation and shall strive to ensure that alternative solutions, including the use of buses with park and ride, are not set aside without much fuller consideration being given them than has been to date.

# Annual Subscriptions

As is usual for members attending the AGM, annual subscriptions may be paid at the door on the evening and it would be helpful if you could at the same time present the subscription renewal form enclosed with this Newsletter. For those who will not be attending, the form should be returned to the Hon. Treasurer as indicated together with the appropriate remittance please.

Even allowing for the substantial mobile population of Merrow and of course those who have passed away, it has been somewhat disappointing to the Committee to find that a sizeable number of members have not renewed their subscriptions over the last and/or previous year. For these a separate green renewal form in lieu is enclosed and you are earnestly urged to renew your membership in this important year for the MRA.

For those who unfortunately choose not to do so, the Committee has decided that in fairness to others, the name of anyone who does not renew his/her membership this year will be deleted from the List. PLEASE DO NOT LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU either by intent or default. The Association needs all possible support.

The Hon. Treasurer is asked from time to time about Bank Standing Orders. This has been investigated but unfortunately it has been found not to be practicable to implement, apart from the nasty matter of additional bank charges!



Structural damage to the War Memorial

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Hon. Treasurer would welcome payment of your 2001 subscription if it is still outstanding. Please send your cheque (Household Membership £4, Single Membership £2.50) to: Mr G Gunson, I

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Any enquiries should be addressed to the Secretary.