



Hershams Wins The Splash Park

■ Hot off the press and excellent news. Following a full consultation last summer, the results have shown a clear preference that Hershams Recreation Ground be chosen for conversion to a Splash Park. Almost 90% of Hershams residents who responded were in favour of this option and the decision to proceed was approved just a few days ago.

Your Conservative Hershams North Borough Councillor Mary Sheldon had encouraged residents to make their views known and is delighted with the outcome. Speaking to In Touch, Mary commented, "I am so pleased with the result. Having the splash park in Hershams will make summer even more fun for the kids of all ages. I will now be following up on queries and in the weeks ahead will provide information on when the park will open, where it will be located in the park and what it will look like!"



'Patriotic' Barley Mow

■ A number of residents have asked about the Union flags that have suddenly appeared on the roundabout. Here's why.

At the time of the 2012 Olympics in the middle of the roundabout there was an outline in white of a large bicycle, enhanced by planting within the wheels and it lay flat so that it could be seen from the air by camera crews filming the cyclists who were racing through Hershams. The intention was to draw attention to this particular landmark and to Hershams.

The cyclist image on the roundabout, a lasting reminder of the Olympics, has had its wheel inserts, representing the Union Flag (made of Astro Turf) installed for the winter period. In the spring the wheels will once again be planted up in red, white and blue. It will be one of several places in Hershams to be enhanced to commemorate the centenary of the start of World War 1.



Christmas Celebrations

■ It seems a long time ago, now that the snowdrops are appearing (with the rain!) but how we enjoyed ourselves on 14th December on Hershams Green.

The Hershams Residents Association organised the event which was attended by dozens of residents, visitors and children. There was a quiz, competition for the best Christmas outfit, a raffle for a hamper generously donated by Waitrose (proceeds going to the local Food Bank) and even Father Christmas, courtesy of Hershams North Councillor Ian Donaldson. By 5 p.m. everyone had assembled around the Christmas Tree on the Green, (adorned by decorations from the pupils at Burhill School and 200 sparkling lights donated by Squires Garden Centre), where the Mayor of Elmbridge said a few words

before switching on the lights. Carols were then sung around the tree after which we adjourned to The Watermans Arms where a feast of mulled wine, juices and snacks had kindly been prepared by landlord Anthony Blenkinsop and his team. Thanks to all the traders and the choir who made this first Christmas event on the Green such a success and may it become a regular in our Hershams calendar.



Voluntary Sector Funding Doubled

■ Elmbridge has a remarkable number of local community groups and volunteers, including in Hershams, and your Conservative Councillors believe strongly in supporting their fantastic work.

So it's a pleasure to announce that the funding for the renamed **Elmbridge Voluntary Community and Faith Sector Grants** has been more than doubled from the previous £20,000 to £45,000 a year. Hershams South Councillor Ruth Mitchell is a member of the allocation Committee. She says, "We recognise the huge contribution that the local voluntary sector makes to the community. In these difficult economic times their services are even more in demand and their funding more stretched".

Over the last year some 18 organisations benefitted with grants ranging from £150 to £3000 including 'The Friends of Hershams Library' who received £400.

WW1 Commemoration

■ The Hershams In Bloom team will be doing some special planting to remember the start of the Great War. Many thanks (again) to Squires of Hershams for their continuing support and being the main sponsor for 2014 and supplying all the plants for the village displays. Volunteers are always most welcome to help – call Mary Sheldon on 01372 467812 if you can spare an hour or two from time to time.

Brief Updates

- **Weylands Planning Application:** After many postponements it now looks as if this will be considered by SCC Planning Committee on Wednesday March 26th. Your Hershams Conservative Borough Councillors are resolutely opposed.
- **Old House at Home site:** We understand that most of the flats have been sold and first occupancy (in the new Greenwood Place) probably around May.
- **Costa IS a-coming:** It's just taking a little longer than we thought! Hang on in there and soon smell the coffee in the Hershams Centre.

RES (Rydens School)

Outline planning application currently being considered by EBC for redevelopment of part of existing site for housing to provide self-funding for new school and college building + sports pitches on own ground behind Bell Farm School. Formal consultation period now ended but your comments will still be considered – look on EBC website Planning Applications / Search for Planning Application and type in 2013/5035.

Hershams Green Christmas Tree....

■ Sadly the Christmas tree on Hershams Village Green has not stood the test of even 2 years: it's been looking rather poorly and will be replaced.

Hershams North Councillor Ian Donaldson remarks, "We have identified a bushier variety already which will be nurtured until planted by the Council in the autumn. It is a conifer with a proper Christmas shape of a variety similar to the one at the Barley Mow roundabout (although not as large)".

So by next Christmas we can once again enjoy the festivities with carols being sung around the tree and activities in and around the Centre to involve all our residents and local businesses.

...And In Memorial Gardens: As a result of the storms, one of the trees in the Hershams Memorial Gardens has been damaged, and then found to be badly diseased so must be replaced. But this will not happen until the autumn, so we would like residents' views on

what type the new tree should be. It must be small but cannot be of the Rosaceae family – ie not cherry, plum, apple or pear. If you have any ideas do please let us have them.

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Hershams Library

■ All your local Hershams Councillors are firm supporters of the excellent work done by the Friends of Hershams Library. At their recent AGM, it was reported that there is a need for more volunteers to help with some of the activities arranged for young children; these have been so successful.

Library Manager Sue Budgen has recently retired after 33 years working at the Library, and she will be much missed. Liz Lister is the Assistant Manager in charge, so if you can help, please contact Liz at the Library either in person, or call her on 0300 200 1001 or email Sophie Roger (Friends of Hershams Library) at ajr@cix.co.uk

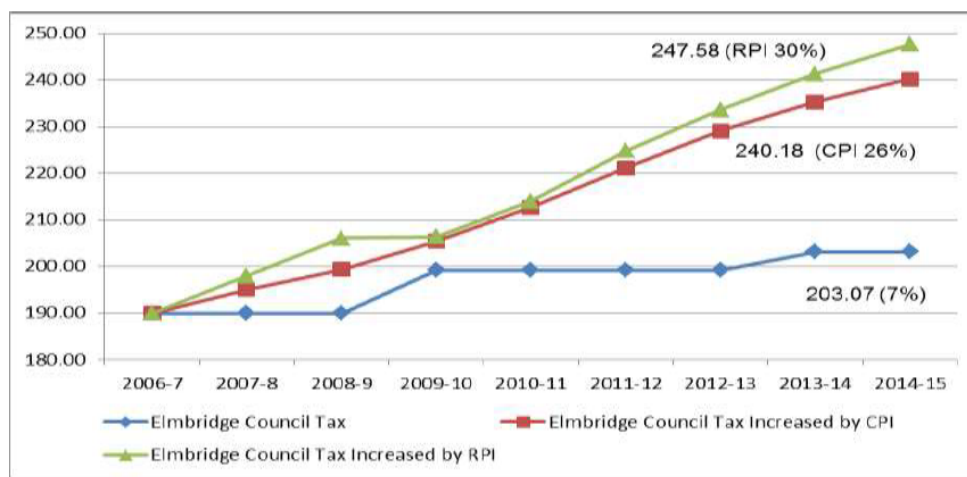


Elmbridge Freezes Council Tax Again

■ Herham residents will be pleased to learn that Elmbridge will freeze its component of the Council Tax next year, and will do so again for 2015-16 if the Conservatives are re-elected in May.

Since taking control in 2006, we have frozen the Council Tax for six out of eight years. As the graph shows that means an increase of only 7% compared to retail price inflation of 30%. Herham South Councillor and Elmbridge Council Leader, John O'Reilly, told In Touch, "In the last 8 years, we have made savings over £8million and faced a huge reduction in central government grant but we have still protected all our much valued services, such as those for the community, leisure and the environment while maintaining our financial support to our thriving voluntary sector".

Elmbridge Council Tax Compared to Inflation Increases



Herham South Councillor, Ruth Mitchell, who chairs the Council's Audit and Standards Committee, added, "this continuing record of achievement is the

result of our determination to maximize efficiencies, and always secure value for money for our residents. Elmbridge is an excellently managed Council".

Margaret's County Column:

Herham's Surrey County Councillor, Margaret Hicks, presents her regular update on County issues:

■ **564 Bus Service:** For some time, users have complained about the lateness of the 564 bus services which is a cause of much frustration. This has been largely due to the numerous road works along the route. It is now being proposed that from 5th April the 564 will run at intervals of 40 minutes Monday to Friday and 1.10 hourly intervals on Saturdays. The operators recognise that the greatest use of the service is at 9.30 am and 10.00 a.m. from Whiteley Village and these times will remain with the new schedules commencing and accumulating after 10.00 a.m. Monday to Fridays. Hopefully, the buses will now actually run on time and we shall have a reliable service!

■ **Highways Improvements:** I have arranged for signs depicting older residents to be erected outside the Herham Day Centre on Queen's Road to warn motorists of their presence. In addition work is beginning on the series of improvements to improve safety on the Burwood Road which is a key priority for residents. Shortly new signs will be in place showing that the area is used by pedestrians, particularly young children. Work is well underway to repair the structural faults on the Albany Bridge (close to Princess Alice Hospice) and this should be completed in May. We have waited a long time, but at last it's happening! Finally, the gullies in Herham will be cleansed by the contractors, Conways, during February and motorists are requested not to park over the ironwork.

■ **Speed Limits:** A new policy is being discussed could be adopted in April/May. If implemented, it will give local committees more flexibility to reduce speed limits without having to build in safety measures on certain category of roads. If a road were to be deemed 30 mph rather than the existing 40 mph a six month trial would take place and if at the end of the period drivers did drive within that limit, then the road would remain at 30 mph or if not would revert back to 40 mph.

Finally I would like to thank the SCC Emergency Service, Police, mutual aid and volunteers for their support since Christmas during the recent flooding in Elmbridge.

Whiteley Village

Your Herham Councillors join residents in warmly welcoming Chandra McGowan as the new Chief Executive of Whiteley Village. We are planning to meet Chandra soon so that we can work together for the benefit of Herham's most unique and treasured community.

Flooding

2014 has started with some of the wettest weather recorded with widespread storm damage and flooding. Elmbridge has had several severe weather warnings and both the River Thames and River Mole have burst their banks. Whilst the Environment Agency is responsible for co-ordinating action they rely on the Borough Council and other agencies to provide front line support.

Elmbridge has played a full part by:

- Setting up an Emergency Room at the Civic Centre with staff providing cover 24 hours a day including weekends.
- The delivery of several thousand sandbags to vulnerable areas, with information leaflets delivered to all those at risk.
- Allowing free parking in some council car parks for roads affected by flooding.
- Stockpiling additional sandbags in central locations for residents to collect when necessary; to cater for the daily changes in 'at-risk' locations caused by weather, river and tidal surges.
- Putting the Community Centres on stand-by to shelter any residents who may have had to leave their homes at short notice.
- Maintaining a register of residents who were most in need of help and they were visited and supported in person or by daily telephone calls throughout the risky periods.
- Reviewing local hotel accommodation availability daily and making arrangements for their emergency use if required.



Fortunately, Herham itself has so far escaped serious impact; but it is good to know that our council has contingency plans and has been able to rise to the challenge.

In Praise of Our Herham Centre

Herham South Councillor John Sheldon tells In Touch, "Ever since my election in 1995 I have championed the Community Support Services for which our Borough is renowned.

Herham Centre, one of seven covering the whole Borough, served more than 7,000 meals during nine months in 2013/14 and delivered over 3,500 Meals on Wheels during the same period. It also supplied over 3,000 care support places, and contributed to more than 35,000 Community Transport passenger journeys.

How can Elmbridge do all this when other boroughs can't afford to?

First class financial direction by our Conservative Administration in collab-



oration with skilled council officers is essential but the other factor making it possible is volunteering. At the last count, 658 kind people gave their time to keep the services running. All deserve our gratitude, those in Herham having a special place in my heart. If you could offer even a little time for such a good cause, just speak to Lesley Felgate, Manager at Herham Centre, tel 01932 246267.

Police News:

Herham North Councillor Ian Donaldson who is Chairman of the Council's Licensing Committee recently met Sarah Milligan, our new Elmbridge Neighbourhood Inspector who has 16 years' experience in the service. Ian said afterwards, "We had an excellent discussion and I am confident that Sarah and her team will continue the really effective partnership working we had with David Hollingsworth, who retired recently".



While the latest overall Elmbridge crime figures are encouraging, unfortunately in Herham there have been a spate of thefts from unlocked motor vehicles. Our local PC, Neil Bourn, emphasises the importance of taking security of property seriously.

At Your Service: Never forget, your Herham Conservative Councillors are always here for you. Please contact us if you have any problem that we may be able to help solve.










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