

Ickenham Calling

The Newsletter of the

Ickenham Residents' Association Spring 2013

Affiliated to the Hillingdon Alliance of Residents' Associations.
Member of Herts. & Middx. Wildlife Trust, and London Green Belt Council.

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CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Traffic congestion along Long Lane and the High Road is getting worse. Growing occupancy of Ickenham Park triggering the new traffic lights at Aylsham Drive more frequently is at least partially responsible. The new road layout at the Pump *may* have helped traffic flow, but as we warned when the change was proposed, it has been at the expense of road safety (see page 3).

The Council's transport assessment for the planning application for *Glebe School* shows that the Hillingdon Circus junction is already saturated at peak hours. So any new development such as Tesco/Morrison or indeed the Glebe School enlargement itself, is bound to make matters worse. None of these planning applications have taken into account the effect of more people moving into Ickenham Park in the months to come. As far as the planned 50% expansion of Glebe School is concerned, there are ways to mitigate traffic growth. For instance, we have suggested to the Council various improvements to encourage more parents to walk their children to school including a wider (and safer) walkway down from the station. But the traffic generated by one super-market at Hillingdon Circus, let alone two, would turn a bad situation into an awful one. Only low traffic uses (such as housing) of the two sites concerned should be permitted.

Overall we need an integrated transportation plan with improved public transport. In particular, a bus route all the way up Long Lane including the missing link between Hillingdon Station and Ickenham would be high up our wishlist.

While the planning application to adapt *Swakeleys House* for residential use is being considered (see this page) a charity, HACS (Hillingdon Autistic Care and Support), has made a proposal to the owners to use it as a school for autistic children. This would require very little change to the buildings and would create only light traffic since most of the circa 60 pupils would come by coach. It would bring Swakeleys House back into the heart of our community by allowing more use of the building and grounds by villagers, and would save the Bowls Club which would otherwise be lost. Your committee has provisionally endorsed the proposal, subject to the views of you, the members. Please let us know what you think – more details can be found on our website.

Humphrey Tizard

SWAKELEYS HOUSE UP-DATE

Formal planning applications have now been submitted to Hillingdon Planning Department by the owners of Swakeleys House and offered for consultation until 15th March. In summary, the three applications are for :-

- A change of use from Office and Sports use to that of a single residential dwelling.
- Consent to alterations to the Listed Building.
- Consent to changes affecting Ickenham Conservation Area.

The proposals include the retention of public use of the estate perimeter footpath, the continuation of access for Ickenham Festival Gala Day and the one day a year Public Access to part of the House during the London-wide Open House Scheme. They intend to reclaim the Swakeleys House Bowling Club greens. Alterations to listed buildings include demolition of the 1980s entrance foyer, Vyners House with its connecting link to Swakeleys House and the Ice House building together with associated landscaping and servicing works within the grounds. Additional buildings will include the erection of 7 guest houses, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a banqueting suite (aka The Grand Hall) garages and staff accommodation. These buildings will be built on the footprint of the demolished Vyners House and the present car park. There will also be considerable changes to the existing buildings to fit the current rooms to appropriate residential accommodation.

This is a major planning application and the details are being examined by members of the Association's Planning Sub-Committee in order

AGM of the Ickenham Residents' Association

Please make a note in your diary for
Friday, 19th April 2013, at 8pm
Ickenham Village Hall

AGM Agenda plus Minutes of last AGM
in April 2012 (to be approved) are
attached to this newsletter.
Please bring along with you. Thank you.



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GOSPEL OAK

Any questions you may want to raise, or if you have comments on any article in the Newsletter, we would be pleased to hear your views, and you could write to our General Secretary
6 The Chase,
Ickenham, Uxbridge,
UB10 8SR

You can also send your comments to our e-mail address:
ickenhamresidents@hotmail.com

This issue edited by
Hanne Raeder
February 2013



to make a considered response to the Borough's Planning Committee. We have already identified concerns about Green Belt issues, the sprawl and appearance of the proposed additional structures on the overall site. It has always been the view of the Association to seek the safeguarding and long term future and appropriate use of this much valued House and Grounds in the centre of our village, and it is with that aim that we are considering this planning application.

At the time of writing we are aware that a charity has expressed an interest in using the building as a Free School for children with special needs. The Association would welcome this use in principle as it would retain Vyners House, not require extensive additional building and would also allow the Bowls Club Green to continue. At present there has not been a planning application submitted for this latter project.

David Millen / Peter Daymond

HS2



Consultation on the HS2 Phase 1 Compensation Scheme finished on the 31.01.2013. We hope you were able to respond. There was universal condemnation of the Government's proposals for a project of such a major impact where blight caused by construction could last over 15 years and the operational impact is so uncertain,

that the scheme proposed was neither fair nor just. Based on DfT's (Department of Transport) documents 172,000 households could be affected by Phase 1 and their proposals budget compensation allows for only 2,500 households. Phillip Hammond - Secretary of State for Transport in 2011 - when laying the groundwork for HS2 emphasised the need for fair compensation; we believe the Government should keep its promise to compensate significant losses and apply the 'polluter pays' principle. All decisions should be subject to independent appeal not HS2 Ltd. The Association along with other organisations support a Property Bond scheme as being the only fair solution to ensuring a viable property market being maintained during the life of this project – if as the Government says HS2 will cause little blight there is no risk to the Government; if HS2 does cause losses then the scheme will have been appropriate.

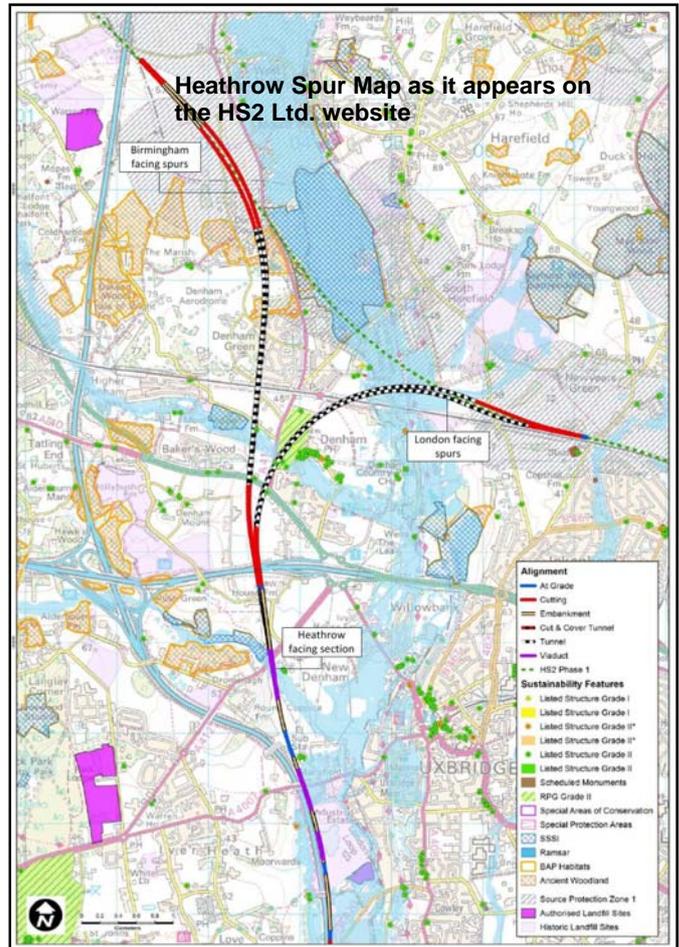
The Association's response – along with those of the Hillingdon Against HS2, our MPs and HS2 Action Alliance – can be seen on our website : www.ickenhamresidents.co.uk.

The Government's 'case' for not offering a Property Bond was one aspect of the legal challenges in the High Court in December 2012. There were 5 legal challenges , in all, lasting over 9 days from the 51M group (15 local authorities including London Borough of Hillingdon), HS2 Action Alliance, Aylesbury Golf Club and Heathrow Hub. At the time of going to press we still await the judicial reviews. There were however some revealing data from the DfT and HS2 Ltd during the hearings. The DfT had consistently refused to provide passenger figures on the West Coast mainline due to 'commercial confidentiality'; during the

HS2 STOP PRESS

At the latest bi-monthly HS2 Community Forum (after 9 months of campaigning) on 25.02.13 the engineering group working for HS2 Ltd presented the results of their study of the options for extending the tunnel towards Harvil Road. They confirmed that it is feasible for the tunnel to be extended beyond Breakspear Road South, whether the spur from Heathrow to Euston is built or not. (As yet no-one has explained the reason for a Heathrow to Euston spur.) For safety reasons an additional ventilation shaft/services centre would be required and this would be sited behind Ruislip Rugby Club. There would be additional construction costs of £130 - £179 million but this did not take into consideration the costs caused by the current proposal (e.g. fair compensation costs, loss of Ruislip Rifle Club, damages to Ruislip Golf Club). The Government measures the benefits of this project over 60 years, so this additional capital cost is negligible spread over this period. However, HS2 Ltd have not given it any further consideration and stated that they will continue with current proposal with the tunnel emerging at West Ruislip. This is deeply disappointing but indicative of HS2 Ltd's attitude throughout these community forums. They have shown no interest in engaging with our community to mitigate the construction and operational damage this project will cause.

hearings they revealed that during the **peak** three hours in the evening, trains heading north out of Euston were only just half full, with an average loading factor of





52.2%. It was also revealed that internally HS2 Ltd had estimated the 'benefit to cost ratio' for the Heathrow spur was 0.3. Analysts translating this into passenger numbers suggest this would mean only an average of 14 passengers in each train wanting to go from the north to Heathrow.

The Government announced the Phase 2 plans in January. These did not include the Heathrow spurs but unfortunately for Ickenham and Harefield the uncertainty remains. The Government requirement to allow for the possible construction of the Heathrow spurs is HS2 Ltd's excuse for not extending the tunnel beyond Ruislip.

As can be seen from above the spur to/from the North is hardly justified on passenger demand and the spur to Euston has never been justified. The plan to link the Western region to HS2 at Old Oak further removes any logic of a Euston spur.

In addition, if it is eventually decided the spurs are not needed, then the whole proposed route would be wrong, as the route through West London is not the shortest or most direct route to Birmingham. The Association will continue to lobby our MP to improve the mitigation for our area.

In January, 34 leading transport economists sent an open letter to the Secretary of State stating that the DfT was making wrong assumptions for their transport strategy, because demand for domestic transport has tailed off and the evidence that infrastructure schemes deliver growth and jobs is no longer there. The feedback from continental Europe continues to demonstrate that this technology costs too much to build, too much to maintain and operate and does not meet its forecasts. The Brussels to Amsterdam High Speed service has stopped due to technical and cost problems; it was running at 15% of forecast. In Spain which has invested billions in high speed services, utilisation is so low that they have slashed prices to stimulate some demand. Unfortunately, the Government and Opposition continue to promote HS2 with reasons that do not stand scrutiny – there is no business case, it is not environmentally friendly, the so called capacity issues have been disproved and as the academics have stated (and as proven in other countries) a London centric solution is not going to bring benefits to the North.

The Phase 2 announcements have increased opposition to this project. It is important that you, your friends and family continue to write to your MPs.

(For more details of any of the above and much more please see the Ickenham Residents Association, Hillingdon Against HS2, HS2 Action Alliance and STOP HS2 websites.)

Brian Adams

JUNCTION ICKENHAM HIGH ROAD AND SWAKELEYS ROAD

Thank you for the responses we received to the article in the last *Ickenham Calling*.....

They all confirmed our concerns and gave further information on accidents that you had observed.

You also provided us with copies of emails you have sent to the Council on the same subject.

Unfortunately there have been more accidents since the article was published.

We have written again to the Council including a summary of the information you have provided. They have responded that they are taking action and in discussion with the Police; when they have formulated some proposals they will make them available for review by the residents.

Brian Adams

LINKS WITH ICKENHAM SCHOOLS INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW HEADTEACHER AT VYNNERS SCHOOL

We would like to welcome Mr James Heale as the new Headteacher of Vynners School into our community. Some of the residents/parents have already met him. So, those who do not know Mr Heale, let me introduce him to you.

Mr Heale is the fifth Headteacher of Vynners School, founded in 1959. He has previously worked in three mixed state comprehensive schools and passionately believes in them as the best places for young people to prepare for the challenges of life. He prefers to work in schools that are embedded in their community. He believes that it is really important that the majority of our students live in or around Ickenham and they and their parents are 'the community'. In a happy community the expectations are mutual, the students have high expectations of the school and the school in turn has high expectations of the students.

I asked Mr Heale about his vision for the school. His response was "our aim is simple". We want to be an outstanding school in every sense of the word and we want to be confident that 'hand on heart' 100% of our students get a better deal here than they would in any other school. At Vynners we recognise that there is a difference between 'schooling' and 'education'; schooling is a focus on assessment and exam performance; education is a more holistic approach to a young person's time at school that takes into account their moral and social development and provides them with memorable experiences through extracurricular opportunities".

It is important that our youngsters are instilled with a positive attitude and become effective members of society. With this in mind I asked Mr Heale to tell us about his strategies. He explained "We have spent a lot of time this year instilling a sense of pride in their uniform and their environment. By the very nature of attending a school, students are part of a wider community and interact with hundreds of other young people and adults on a day-to-day basis. We put a great deal of emphasis on developing student's moral values at Vynners School. We expect students to be role models for younger students, ambassadors for the school in the local community and to actively contribute to their communities. Students are given the opportunity to lead younger students, become mentors and undertake voluntary work. It is easy for young people to feel detached from the communities that they live in, yet they have such a valuable contribution to make if they are engaged. For this reason, at Vynners, Student Voice is given emphasis through School Council, older students participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Vynners Swing Band



play at numerous community events throughout the year, raising lots of money for charity. In addition, the termly *Charity Days* raise thousands of pounds every year for local and national charities”.

Regarding acts of vandalism in the park, Mr Heale said “The school takes its role in the community very seriously and we teach students to play an active role in the community. We spend a lot of time talking in assemblies and tutorials about ‘The Vyners Brand’ and their responsibility to make sure that it is a positive brand in the community.

We ensure that they understand the impact that any anti-social behaviour can have on the image of the school and the damage it does to the brand. My experience over the past six months is that the students at Vyners are wonderful young people, however, if one or two do let the side down on their journey to or from school, then we would always encourage people to contact the school and we will work with them to reach a resolution”.

Parking is a problem for the residents. Mr Heale’s views on this are “Parking can often be a problem around most schools given the fact they are in residential areas.

In January I hosted a residents meeting which was well attended and overwhelmingly positive about the relationship between the residents and the school. It is clear that there are a few ‘pinch points’ in the year when we have an increase in road traffic to the school. The most notable of these is our annual open evening in October when we can have over 800 families visiting the school. This invariably causes problems in the adjacent roads.

Due to cuts in Police budgets their presence is reduced, however, we notify the residents of the likely disruption and request Year 6 Parents to walk to the school. I have agreed with local residents that we will publish a calendar at the start of the academic year so that they have plenty of notice of these types of events”.

Lastly, I enquired what contributions could the Association make to support the school. Mr Heale said “It would be great for us to tap into the resources and skills in the local community. Residents can become mentors, volunteer for paired reading, help in the library. Others could help with careers talks, mock interviews and work experience or in supporting teachers with the curriculum through their knowledge of local history and geography. If local residents do wish to get involved with the school please do not hesitate to contact the school by getting in touch with the school office Tel: 01895 200842”

Mr Heale genuinely wants to involve the community in making Vyners an outstanding school. We wish him luck in realising his vision.

Neena Bedi



Ickenham Marsh Pond

patchwork of around 40 fields in public and private ownership. The area hosts a variety of habitats, including broadleaf woodland, ponds, rivers, grassland, wildflower meadows, hedgerows and marshes.

The area’s access points are via the *Hillindgon Trail* at Windsor Avenue or Austin’s Lane, and the *Willow Wander* along the Yeading Brook opposite Ruislip Gardens tube station.

This is the first six-monthly update from the Ickenham Marshes Partnership.

An Ickenham Marshes Partnership (IMP) implementation document was circulated by the Ickenham Residents’ Association during summer 2012 to a variety of interested parties, summarising the objectives of the IMP (listed below) and was supported by enough groups to give a realistic chance of achieving some of the objectives, so the Partnership was formed.

The following organisations have given their support for either a particular project or objective, or the overall objectives of the IMP:

- Ickenham Residents’ Association
- Ickenham Safer Neighbourhood Team
- Daltons Farm
- Ruislip Gardens Primary School
- London Borough of Hillingdon (LBH)
- London Wildlife Trust (LWT)
- London Underground
- London Cycling Campaign
- Hillingdon Friends of the Earth
- Legal & General (through agents Smith Gore)
- RAF Northolt
- Sustrans
- Yeading Valley Working Party.

The nature of ‘membership’ of the IMP has been further considered. It is important to have a core membership of groups to maintain momentum across the objectives, but equally, it has been acknowledged that for some organisations, the concept of being a ‘member’ of the IMP isn’t as straight forward as for others. So the IMP will proceed with a membership core likely to consist of local voluntary groups, and will aim to work towards achieving its objectives with the support of other organisations where appropriate.

More organisations will be contacted about the IMP this winter; mainly local schools, residents associations and environmental groups.

Over the next few months, the Partnership will seek local volunteers to take responsibility for managing the

Ickenham Marshes
Partnership 

THE ICKENHAM MARSHES PARTNERSHIP

is a voluntary group established in 2012 by the Ickenham Residents’ Association to improve the Ickenham Marshes. The Marshes are located between Ruislip and Ickenham in the London Borough of Hillingdon and are made up of a



Ickenham Marsh Mature Trees

delivery of particular objectives and projects. There has been a good level of interest locally, so hopefully willing people can be found.

The objectives have been slightly revised to reflect comments on the initiation document.

Objective 1 : Re-introduction of cattle grazing to restore scrub areas to wildflower meadow.

About a third of total area of the Marshes has been taken over by scrub in the last ten years. London Wildlife Trust have advised that re-introducing cattle grazing to the scrub areas would be the best way to bring back biodiversity-rich wildflower meadows.

Update

- Negotiations over grazing on two sites are ongoing.
- Target of introduction of grazing during summer 2013.

Next steps

- Landowner to be approached about the possible introduction of grazing on scrub-dominated fields next to Ruislip Gardens.
- Landowners to be approached about possible protection and/or relocation of young oak trees before grazing is introduced.

Objective 2 : Maintenance and enhancement of footpaths.

Local trails the *Willow Wander* and the *Hillingdon Trail* run through the Marshes and have been significantly damaged in recent years by the illegal riding of off-road motorbikes. As a result, the paths are impassable for many months each year, breaking the only direct connection between the communities of Ickenham and South Ruislip. The Partnership aims to improve the state of the paths and restore and/or install appropriate barriers to prevent motorbikes accessing the Marshes. The possibility of enhancing the trails to enable the establishment of cycle routes will also be explored.

Update

- LBH have given advice and guidance on the existing Marshes footpaths.
- A bid was made to LBH for funding to upgrade Willow Wander to Hill Farm Road, creating a walking/cycle route across the Marshes. The bid was supported by L&G/Smith Gore, LWT, several Hillingdon membership groups and the London Cycling Campaign. The bid was one of six short-listed from 24 applications and eventually came third in a local ballot, securing 254 votes but narrowly missing out on being taken forward by the Council.
- Landowners are currently considering a request to create new paths on the northern section of the Marshes.

Next Steps

- Consideration of future bids for path improvements.
- Discuss path options with Sustrans- the sustainable transport charity.
- LBH and SNT to be approached about the A40 underpass access point, to discuss the restriction of motorbike access.
- Working party to carry out basic weeding on Hill Farm Road.

Objective 3: Engagement of local schools and communities.

Three schools border the Marshes and many more can reach the area easily by public transport. The involvement of local schools could range from educational observation to hands-on management. Despite the beauty and variety of the area, the Marshes are not widely visited by neighbouring communities. The Partnership will seek opportunities to engage local people and groups to help implement projects and increase awareness of the area.

Update

- Several local groups were approached as part of the IMP initiation process.
- Very positive responses from Ruislip Gardens Primary School, Hillingdon Friends of the Earth and the Yeading Valley Working Party.
- Offer from LWT to look into the possibility of some training for local volunteers to enable them to lead educational expeditions on the Marshes.
- Contact has been made with Ruislip Gardens volunteers who currently maintain the 'Coronation Walk' footpath along the Yeading Brook.

Next Steps

- Further discussions over educational opportunities and engagement with local school.
- Other local schools to be approached about IMP.
- Secondary schools to be asked to consider carrying out annual 'State of the Marshes' reports to measure success against the objectives.
- Monthly Family Nature walks and volunteering days on the Marshes from May 2013 to be scoped.

Objective 4: Effective woodland, pond and river management.

There are two areas of mature oak woodland on the Marshes, along with several tree-lined roads. The Partnership will seek to ensure that trees are effectively managed. There are at least five established ponds on the Marshes. The partnership will regularly monitor the ponds and if necessary seek to improve them. The Yeading Brook and Ickenham Stream run through the Marshes and are important to the character of the area. The Partnership will work with interested organisations to monitor and improve the quality of the river habitats.

Update

- Tipperhill Covert woodland rubbish clearance carried out by volunteers.
- Expansion of the IMP objectives to cover river management following discussions with Yeading Valley Working Party, and the discovery of significant Himalayan Balsam colony.



- Significant scrub clearances carried out on the river banks by LWT corporate volunteers (see photo below).
- Marshes pond survey from the 1990s shared by LWT.

Next steps

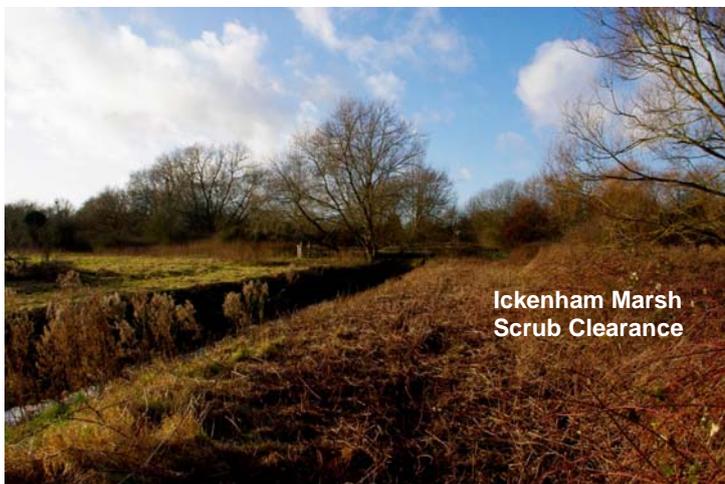
- Further liaison with Yeading Valley Working Party and LWT to discuss river priorities.
- LWT to confirm details of recent biodiversity survey carried out for HS2 by Arup.
- Woodland management assessments to be carried out.
- Pond management assessments to be carried out.
- Possible Balsam Bashing in May 2013.

Objective 5: Restoration of hedgerows

The Marshes have around ten miles of established hedgerows, in various states of repair. The Partnership aims to maintain and restore the hedges where possible.

Update

- Initial hedgerow assessments carried out by Ickenham Residents' Association and LWT. Most degraded hedges identified.



Ickenham Marsh
Scrub Clearance

- Inspections of ash trees in Marshes hedgerows have not identified ash die-back.

Next Steps

- Seek guidance from Natural England or other experts on appropriate actions.
- Monthly ash die-back inspections.

Chris Mountain

FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT

At a *Residents' Planning Forum* which we attended at the Civic Centre in January 2013, Ian Thynne/LBH Sustainability Officer gave details of latest reviews concerning the above topic.

Under the Flood and Water Management Act of 2010, the Borough has been designated as a Lead Local Flood Authority and as such has full responsibility for managing flood risk from surface and ground water and ordinary water courses. The Environment Agency still manages Rivers, Coasts and Tidal waters.

- Hillingdon has a duty to :
 - investigate significant flood incidents
 - establish and maintain a register of structures that affect flood risk
 - designate third party assets that affect flood risk
 - set up a sustainable drainage approval body

- prepare a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS)
- lead on the management of surface water flood risk

Ickenham Residents can play their part in effective reduction of risk for flooding.

• Suggested Action for Residents:

- Review Surface Water Management Plan on website.
The document and any other comments received will help form an action plan.
- Comment on maps.
- Provide your own experiences – information about roads, photographs to evidence flooding and dates.
- If you see a problem, report it.
- If you see a blockage, report it.
- Install a water butt.
- Install permeable driveways, using gravel or grassed area, or use permeable paving, or direct water from paving or tarmac to a soak-away.

Further advice and information is available from Victoria Boorman, who is the main contact and would welcome your input: vboorman@hillingdon.gov.uk - Tel. 01895 277920, or go to

<http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/24117/Flood-risk-management>

David Millen

ROYAL AIR FORCE NORTHOLT

PRESS RELEASE
18 February 2013

LONDON'S AIR AMBULANCE MOVES TO RAF NORTHOLT

London's Air Ambulance, the Charity that delivers an advanced trauma

team to critically injured people in London, has moved its overnight airbase from Denham to RAF Northolt. The relocation of its MD902 Explorer helicopter (the quietest in its class) to the Royal Air Force base in South Ruislip will reduce flight time to and from the helipad at The Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, thereby saving on fuel costs.

The close proximity of RAF Northolt to Whitechapel and the direct helicopter route between the two destinations will save three minutes in flying time at the beginning and end of each day. As well as reducing overall fuel consumption, the Charity has also secured a favourable fuel rate with Air BP.

The airbase's position closer to sea level will potentially reduce the impact of adverse weather conditions, such as low cloud, for the life-saving service. As a military station, RAF Northolt guarantees a high level of security to its occupants and has superb facilities. Commenting, Graham Hodgkin, Chief Executive Officer of London's Air Ambulance, said: "We are extremely thankful to Denham airfield for their support and hard work over the years. The expiry of that contract however created an opportunity to review our



With kind permission by Royal Air Force Northolt

airbase facilities and RAF Northolt offers excellent benefits to our service, both operationally and in cost savings for the Charity”.

Wing Commander Dan Storr, Officer Commanding Operations Wing at RAF Northolt, said: *“We are delighted to be able to host London’s Air Ambulance at RAF Northolt. That this move also provides significant benefits to the Charity, and therefore to its users, is a welcome bonus. We look forward to working closely with the London’s Air Ambulance team in support of the vital work they undertake.”*

BATTLE OF BRITAIN BUNKER, RAF UXBRIDGE

From the Easter weekend we plan to open the Battle of Britain Bunker at RAF Uxbridge at weekends for the first time. Following the successful Heritage Open Days weekend last September visitors will be able to turn up without an appointment and have an unescorted visit to the plotting room and museum areas. Admissions will be between 10am and 4pm and there will be a suggested minimum donation of £3. This will be for a trial period of three months from the weekend of 23-24 March. Weekday guided tours can be booked as normal by contacting the Curator on 01895 251303. Access to the Bunker is via Vine Lane and St Andrew’s Road.

Squadron Leader R J Willis MCMI BA (Hons) RAuxAF / Media and Communications Officer

HEALTH MATTERS

CLINICAL commissioning groups (CCGs) are groups of GPs that will, from April 2013, be responsible for designing local health services in England. They will do this by commissioning or buying health services, including:

- Elective hospital care
 - Rehabilitation care
 - Urgent and emergency care
 - Most community health care services
 - Mental health and learning and disability services.
- Clinical commissioning groups will work with patients and health care professionals, and in partnership with local

communities and local authorities. On their governing body, groups will have in addition to GPs at least one registered nurse, and a doctor who is a secondary care specialist (hospital consultant). Clinical commissioning groups will be responsible for arranging emergency and urgent care services within their boundaries, and for commissioning services for any unregistered patients who live in their area.

All GP practices will have to belong to a clinical commissioning group. The governing body of Hillingdon CCG’s meetings are open to the public. These will take place at the Civic Centre, generally on the third Friday of each month, at 12.30pm until 3.30pm. For more information contact www.hillingdonccg.nhs.uk or phone the Hillingdon Link office on 01895 272997.

The announcement that GPs will take over this commissioning role was made in the 2010 White Paper "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS". This White Paper became law under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The NHS Commissioning Board is the body which will oversee the day-to-day operation of the NHS from April 2013. In conjunction with this, there will be a new consumer body called Health Watch England.

Local Health Watch bodies will replace the current Local Involvement Networks (LINKS). This will promote public engagement in the NHS, comment on changes to local services, as advocates for complaints, and deliver advice across health and social care.

There are 48 GP practices in Hillingdon. The vision of the Hillingdon NHS Clinical Commission Group is to ensure that the residents of Hillingdon can access high quality evidence-based care, in a setting appropriate to their needs, by transforming the way care is delivered. In conclusion, NHS Hillingdon’s financial problems of a projected deficit to the year end March 31st 2013, is likely to be in the order of £21.1 million. This is due to the high volumes of activity with the main local hospital trusts (providers of health care). Hillingdon CCG is in the process of taking over responsibilities from NHS Hillingdon, which will be abolished on April 1st 2013. The CCG will inherit repayment of a loan borrowed from NHS Brent to help balance NHS Hillingdon’s books 2012-13. Repayment of this loan will be a burden for the "new regime" and could have some effect, although small, on the budget for our local services in the following years.

David John

POLICE MATTERS

On the 16th of January, one of the one-day ‘operation Cubos’ took place in Hillingdon, targeting cars being driven without tax and/or insurance. A total of 11 cars were seized for various offences.

During the two month period from 1st November to 31st December, there was a fall of 14.4% in total notifiable crime compared with the same period last year. This equates to 570 fewer offences. Residential burglary fell by 17.9% and the clear up rate increased from 3.1% to an incredible 14.5%! This resulted from catching a very prolific offender, who, faced with the evidence of the loot found at his home, confessed to a large number of burglaries. Thefts of and from motor vehicles are sharply down by around 25%, but the detection rate is only about 5%.



Ruislip Police Station is being used for rapid response vehicles, covering the north of the Borough for the foreseeable future; so there is little chance of a closure there.

Scam Alerts:

- by telephone: beware of investment offers in *carbon credits* or *rare metals*.
- *Express Couriers* establishing by phone, whether you are at home so that a 'package' can be delivered to your address. It turns out to be a gift of flowers and wine from an unknown sender – 'card may be sent separately', but because the gift contains alcohol, a **delivery charge of £ 3.00 is required** as proof that the package had been delivered to an adult. No cash will be accepted, only payment by credit or debit card, which should set alarm bells ringing. Report incident using tel. no. 101. (ex Hillingdon Neighbourhood Watch)
- If you are driving in an isolated area and spot something unusual by the roadside, do not stop to investigate but drive to a safe location and report to the Police. The idea is for you to stop and get out of the car, when you are most vulnerable and may be facing unknown attackers. Another way to make you stop is for instance an egg being thrown at your windscreen. Again drive on to a safe location to clean it up and then report the incident. (ex Hillingdon Neighbourhood Watch).
- Calls from an *Action Fraud* impersonator suggesting that you are entitled to compensation from a recent incident. The moment they suggest an up-front payment of a substantial sum in order to process the claim, you know, it is time to terminate the call. (ex Hillingdon Neighbourhood Watch).

Vic Silk

FESTIVE COMMUNITY NIGHT

Despite the recession there was no shortage in attendance in the village on the night of 7th December 2012, when the local traders and voluntary organisations gathered for the annual Christmas get-together.

Our Association, as usual, was represented with a stall inside the Village Hall, and we have always found this a useful exercise, as people can chat to us and ask questions or raise concerns about local problems. We usually manage to gain a few new members, but this time we recruited a record number of six. We asked those who visited our stall, whether they were members, and found the vast majority were, so the gain of six newcomers was welcome. Most of the enquiries were about the HS2 project and the possible sale of Swakeleys House.

Many people passed complimentary remarks about the work the Association does, so we felt our presence was worthwhile.

John Squiers

GOSPEL OAK

In the Winter edition of *Ickenham Calling* we notified our members that the Council was going to officially dedicate a new oak sapling in November 2012, replacing the previous young oak tree, which had died due to a range of pathogenic fungi. *The Editor*

Council Leader Ray Puddifoot and Cllr. John Hensley

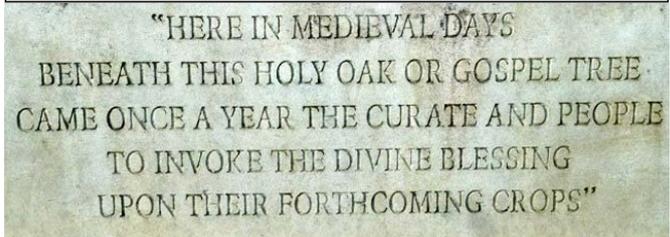


Photo of Dedication Ceremony at Gospel Oak site in November 2012 (with kind permission of Ickenham Church News)



New Oak Tree Sapling growing in its newly turfed and well maintained space opposite the D-shaped Green (Top of Woodstock Drive) in Swakeleys Road

... and Memorial Plaque commemorating the origin of the Gospel Oak site



"HERE IN MEDIEVAL DAYS BENEATH THIS HOLY OAK OR GOSPEL TREE CAME ONCE A YEAR THE CURATE AND PEOPLE TO INVOKE THE DIVINE BLESSING UPON THEIR FORTHCOMING CROPS"