

HAMPTON & MOLESEY
RIVERSIDE TRUST



July 2020

Dear HMRT Members,

It has been unfortunate because of the Covid-19 pandemic, that we have not been able to enjoy the social occasion of our usual **May AGM**. This short newsletter is to bring to your attention some of the concerns that HMRT have been trying to tackle during the last year.

The Committee were saddened to hear that Alec McKie, a founder member of the Hampton Riverside Trust, had died in December of last year. We welcomed back a former Committee Member Ted Bates, Secretary of the Molesey Regatta and Molesey Head Races. We also said a goodbye to Cllr. Anthony Popham who has left the Committee due to his Council duties as Deputy Mayor.

We usually meet at Garrick's Temple due to the goodwill of Bill Weisblatt, Chair of Garrick's Temple Trustees. This means we not only enjoy the Temple but we also have a good view of the river at different times of year.

A few of our Committee Members attend the RUG 8 meetings but I have recently made sure we are registered as HMRT.

Due to work by John Inglis the **HMRT web-site** has been resuscitated. It can be found at www.hmrt.org.uk This was not a straight forward task and seems complicated to the uninitiated so we are grateful to John for helping us with this.

Most of the **issues** mentioned below have an 'ongoing' element. The Thames keeps flowing and some of the issues do too!

The public pathway that goes from Thames Close to the Lower Sunbury Road has been kept locked for some time. This pathway is supposed to be kept open following a planning condition. We thank Thames Water for opening it up again.

The path has also been cleared of the mooring rope which was blocking it and so crawling under on all fours is now no longer necessary.

The rubbish has also either been cleared or moved on by the river itself.



(Photograph courtesy of Carole Bevis)

Hampton Riviera. Planning enforcement has taking place here by the Council and the Environment Agency after unauthorised building on land and in the water. The owner is now facing four counts of fraud allegedly committed over a four-year-period in Richmond.

St Alban's Riverside had some rather out of place wooden structures and huge concrete blocks placed on the grass near Tagg's Island bridge in October 2019. Richmond Council went to Court to gain an injunction which prohibited a nearby resident from installing, placing or storing any pontoons on the riverside land, and to remove any pontoons which may have been placed there.

Unfortunately there was also a fire on **Tagg's Island** on the 4th August during which the fire brigade had to pump water from the Esso Garage, 1 km away. Pumps have since been installed on the island. One houseboat was completely destroyed and others damaged. Since then the Fire Brigade have been very helpful installing fire detectors on every boat free of charge.

Accommodation Barges. These boats are in a decrepit state and are moored without authorisation. There appears to be a slow movement to remove them but the E.A. and Elmbridge seem to have their hands tied in doing this. Part of the problem is ownership of the riverbank. A Public Space Protection Order was considered by Elmbridge Council and HMRT submitted comments on this.

In August 2019 Elmbridge's Planning Enforcement Officers issued nine enforcement notices to boats moored to the north of Cherry Orchard Gardens and adjacent to the towpath. The notices were appealed and invalidated by the Planning Inspectorate and a further challenge was made. However the Planning Inspector reconfirmed on the 21st May that these further appeals were invalid and they have been turned away.



(Photograph courtesy of Peter Parker)

The notices required the use of the land for the permanent mooring of boats to stop and any structures, fencing or enclosures erected in association with this to be removed.

The Surrey Fire and Rescue Service have undertaken some inspections and enforcement and prohibition notices have been served. One of the boats along the river has recently moved through Molesey Lock via Platt's Eyot into Kingston.

Jolly Boatman Site

A planning application for this site has not been approved yet. The planning application was due to be heard by Elmbridge (ref: 2018/3810, 19/0047/CON) on the 21/1/2020 but this meeting was cancelled and at the time if writing has not been rescheduled. Richmond Council put in an objection on the 21/3/19.

Also Hampton Court Palace put in an offer to buy the site but this was rejected. There has also been another idea which an architect, Keith Garner, approached me with. Unfortunately Richmond Council don't have any sort of building that could be offered to HCP to store any artefacts in the vicinity which would have helped get this idea 'off the ground'.

Ganesh Celebrations These caused some concern on the Molesey side of the river in September as idols (one particularly large) were thrown into the river. The Hindu Celebrants need to consider where this event takes place (not so close

to people's homes) and making sure only clay idols with water-based non-polluting paints are used. Observation of this ceremony needs some care so strings and ribbons are not included as these may cause problems to wild life.

Litter. Unfortunately this has been an increased problem during the lock-down on both Hurst Park and also Garrick's Lawn. Some helpful residents have dealt with some of the excess.

I would like to end this newsletter with thanks to the HMRT Committee but also to Council Officers from Richmond and Elmbridge who have helped with problems that have arisen on both sides of the river.

Let's hope we can meet again soon.

Cllr. Suzette Nicholson,

Hampton Ward, LBRuT.

Chair of HMRT.