

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Chris Curry

Emsworth Victoria Cottage Hospital Building

It now emerges that the East Hampshire and Gosport PCTs plan to dispose of the old Victoria Cottage Hospital building in 2010. Since the site is an important one in the centre of Emsworth, in addition to the impact on the services that the NHS is running there at present, we would like to have your views on the subject. We shall certainly be raising the issue as opportunity arises with the appropriate authorities both to obtain more information and respond to residents' views.

First Responders

The Emsworth First Responders (see front page) offer a very positive benefit for the community and as a consequence the Emsworth Residents Association Committee agreed to give £500 towards the purchase of the necessary equipment as soon as the group starts up. We do not normally make this type of donation but felt that it was such a worthwhile endeavour that we should give it our full support.

South East Plan

The 23rd of June is the deadline for those who wish to comment on the South East Plan Spatial Strategy. We are formulating the ERA's points at present with two committee members working on them by gathering data, reading the relevant documents and attending a meeting run by the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE). We will give more details of our final comments in the next issue but we expect to make them constructive.

The issues are complex and involve projections of the migration to London from elsewhere in the UK and abroad, resulting in overspill into the SE Region. Since these people are on average better qualified than the indigenous people they will drive the economy. All this will push house prices up, presenting problems for retaining lower paid workers in essential services. The proposed plan resulting from all this encompasses the 28,900 houses a year to be built in the SE region until 2026.

Committee Changes

Ken Gilchrist was officially appointed as my Vice Chairman at the last QGM and I am pleased to have someone with such long experience of the ERA and as a resident of Emsworth for over 30 years, to support me.

I would like to welcome Tony Morgan as a co-opted member of the committee whose function will be to assist Pete Izard by looking for Coordinators and Collectors for the Membership subscription team, where we have shortages. In addition, we are now benefiting from the help of Yvonne Copeland who has taken on the task of reviewing HBC Minutes on a regular basis and distributing them to Committee Members, although at present she is not a Committee Member. This work was formerly done by Denis Howard who helped for 10 years in this capacity and whom we thank for his help over this long period.

Community Board

Following the elections to the Community Board on 13th April, our Vice Chairman Ken Gilchrist was elected as Chairman of the Board. Frances Jannaway, also from our ERA committee, was elected as Vice Chair and as the Board's representative on the Havant Community Partnership. Congratulations to them both. It is good that the two organisations have such a close link which we hope will continue as a means of ensuring that Emsworth's voices run in parallel and are not divided as a result of the new Borough consultation arrangements.

Flying the Flag

It has been proposed that Emsworth should have a flagpole somewhere in the town centre. We would like to know your views on this proposal and would welcome opinions to The EMS letter page, to ERA Committee Members or our Councillors.

Emsworth Residents Association Membership

The ERA's considerable influence on local matters depends on membership. Numbers have fallen recently, partly due to lack of collectors. If this situation continues, it will put at risk our ability to represent Emsworth's interests with any authority.

Return your slip to Peter Izard, 17 Brent Court Emsworth PO10 7JA. Tel 378819. If you can help collecting subscriptions, please phone Tony Morgan 370658 or any committee member.

Membership for 1 year costs just £1 or you can join for 5 years for £4.

I would like to become a member of the EMSWORTH RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Title _____ Surname _____ First name/s _____

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I enclose a Cheque/P.O. for £..... made out to the Emsworth Residents Association

Emsworth Business Association News

Brendan Gibb-Gray

Market Town Initiative update

The work groups are progressing well and completing the various sections of the "Health Check" of the town and environs. As well as the issues mentioned in the last edition of The EMS, the paucity of good affordable housing, problems with public transport and access issues in and around Emsworth train station are emerging from the detailed research and information gathering undertaken by the groups. In addition, a survey carried out among businesses reveals that about 60% of jobs in the local economy depend on tourism. With more than 2,000 people employed in the area, attracting visitors is vital to the commercial vitality of the town.

An interesting submission has also been received about the poor state of our Rights of Ways, particularly along the seashore. It is suggested that if they were maintained to a proper standard, it would substantially increase access for more people, particularly the young, older people and those with disabilities. The proposal gives evidence that since the 630 miles of the South West Coastal Path has been brought up to a proper standard and linked together, it has added 300 million pounds each year to the economy of communities along the path and now supports more than 7,000 jobs. We would still like to hear from you about any aspect of life in Emsworth, and especially the views and suggestions for improvements from younger people.

Early in September, date to be announced, you will be able to drop in to the Community Centre and discuss our findings with members of the MTI team. Later the same day, there will be a formal presentation of the findings and an invitation to residents to comment on them. This is an important meeting and may lead to the creation of a partnership among community organisations following agreement in May that many of our associations and churches will work together to attract funding and support for agreed projects coming out of the MTI process.

The EBA is delighted to join the Hampshire Small Rural Towns and the South East Rural Towns partnership in hosting the *Regional Market Towns Awards* conference in the Brookfield Hotel on Thursday 13th July 2006. This is the first time these prestigious awards have been held in Emsworth and it is an opportunity for us to show delegates from other parts of Hampshire, Surrey and West Sussex what a great place this is to visit. By working together we hope to find ways to encourage residents to visit their local shops as an alternative to shopping malls and supermarkets.

The EBA is also in the process of producing a *Town Map* that we hope to use extensively to help promote Emsworth in the region. This will also contain interesting information about places to visit nearby. The map will be distributed widely in Emsworth and will be available from the middle of July (free of charge) from shops and businesses and the town library.

Emsworth Clean-up Campaign

Brendan Gibb-Gray

A group of six residents representing the ERA, EBA, Havant Rotary and Emsworth Community Board meet regularly to help the local authority identify litter "hot spots" and clean up Emsworth. Many residents and business people have complained in recent months about poor street and pavement cleaning and an increase in graffiti in the public realm. It is particularly important that the town always looks its best, for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

The group meet and audit various parts of the town, roads, verges, nature conservation areas and shoreline in an attempt to identify areas that need particular attention. In carrying out this task we have found bins overflowing with litter and in some cases vandalised. Two of the bins around the Mill Pond were dumped into the water in an act of mindless vandalism. We have also identified streets that are in need of a good sweep and to Havant Borough Council's credit they have reacted positively to the concerns identified. Hopefully you are beginning to notice an improvement in street cleaning and the removal of much of the graffiti on street furniture.

In spite of improvements, dog mess on pavements and around the harbour walk is still a problem and we earnestly ask all dog owners to act responsibly in this regard.

Two members of the Mill Pond anti-litter group spent a couple of hours clearing litter from the southern end of the Mill Pond filling seven plastic bags provided by HBC to the brim! - it is intended to have another work day with a full contingent of helpers during July.

If you know of any part of Emsworth that is becoming a litter hot spot please let John Mant or myself know. (phone numbers on back page of The EMS.)



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