



*Floreat Etona*

March 2021

Issue 24

# Eton Matters

**Lights, Camera  
Action**

**The Rec.  
Ours in Perpetuity**

**Six Centuries  
Food and Dining**

**Eton Connection  
Portland Spy Ring**



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## Chair's Chat

Ros Rivaz - ECA Chair



I want to say that spring is in the air....at least the light evenings are back! Last year we had the challenge of the Gas Pipe replacement, resulting in our Town being a little more occupied than we would want, but as always happens with Eton, we worked together to make the best of it! Little did we know what would be thrown at us after that.

Thank you to so many people who have helped neighbours, friends, and family through the COVID pandemic. What a challenge. Delivering groceries, medicines and supplying and distributing PPE have all been critical. Supporting the vaccine roll out and indeed having jobs when the opportunity arises are all contributing to keeping Eton as safe as possible. Well done indeed to our local Schools, who have responded within 24 hours in the last few months to revised Government guidelines.

Despite being unable to hold any events, the Committee has continued to plan what we can do and when. The Christmas lights and mini trees were a highlight; thank you to Karen, Stephen and Paul for doing what was possible! Leonie's organisation of Litter Picks will be made easier as the insurance company has agreed that we can organise litter picks with smaller numbers and in a more ad hoc way, as we emerge from strict lockdown, we are hopeful that this will enable some activity together! We are starting to plan for HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, considering holding an Eton Street Party!

And we held the survey – please see pages 16 for the outcome! We are developing working groups and welcome your input and help. Please tell us if you fancy getting involved by emailing [chairman@etoncommunity.co.uk](mailto:chairman@etoncommunity.co.uk). To see more of the survey output go to [www.etoncommunity.co.uk/survey-results](http://www.etoncommunity.co.uk/survey-results).

### Eton Community Association Annual General Meeting

Due to the Covid-19 Crisis there are no Public Meetings Planned.

**I would like to thank** the regular and guest contributors and the sponsors of this issue of Eton Matters, without whose generosity we would be unable to produce this mini-mag. The sponsors are: Kavanagh's Budgens, New & Lingwood, Warren Property, J Manley Gallery, Richer Sounds, Vario Press, Beechwood Interiors, My Handyman, Eton Cycles, Salamandra, Eton College, Maydencroft and Eaten Cafe. **Peter Eaton, Editor**

### Eton Community Association and Eton Matters Information

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## *Naturewatch - Oak Processionary Moth*

*George Fussey - Curator, Eton College Natural History Museum*

OPM sounds like something awarded in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, but in fact it is yet another existential challenge to our already beleaguered native trees. Following Dutch Elm Disease, Chestnut Canker and Ash Dieback, it is now the turn of that most quintessential English tree, the Oak, to be threatened by an alien invader to our shores.



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May, June and July. The caterpillars, which grow up to 25mm or so in length, can be highly irritating to humans and domestic animals and should be avoided at all costs.

OPM gets its name from their distinctive habit of moving about in nose-to-tail processions, often with many rows of caterpillars abreast. They can sometimes be seen moving across the ground between oak trees. They make large nests of white, silken webbing on the trunks and branches of oak trees. The caterpillars tend to feed at night and rest in their nests by day. Eventually, they pupate in their nests before emerging as small and undistinguished brown moths about 3cm across. They live for only a few days before mating and laying eggs, which is how the insect survives the winter.

In the southern countries of Europe OPM is usually controlled by natural predators. As the moth has extended its range to Germany, The Netherlands and UK, encouraged by mild winters and warm springs, their control agents have not followed them northwards. This pest is the subject of a government-led programme of survey and control to minimise its spread and impact. Oak Trees up on Agar's Plough suffered a serious infestation in 2020 and so, as 2021 comes around, we should all be vigilant to yet another new threat to public health from foreign shores.

**The Eton College Natural History Museum** in South Meadow Lane is open to the public every Sunday, from 2.30pm until 5pm. It is Berkshire's only dedicated Natural History Museum and is a family-friendly museum with over 16,000 objects. It has numerous displays featuring the wildlife of the Thames Valley. Contact us: [g.fussey@etoncollege.org.uk](mailto:g.fussey@etoncollege.org.uk) or by phone on 01753 370602 or visit [www.etonnhm.com](http://www.etonnhm.com)

This new, virtual exhibition explores the richness of our local woodland here in the Thames Valley.

Delve into Eton College's natural history collections and archives to learn more about the nature on your doorstep. Discover local flora and fauna, how creatures adapt to their environment and how the impact of climate change can be seen in our woodlands.

There are a variety of activities and learning tools with opportunities to think, make and do. You may be inspired to look, listen and track more of the wildlife around you!

**Online Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

[www.creaturesofthewildwood.com](http://www.creaturesofthewildwood.com)



# Creatures of the Wild Wood

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# The Cork House

Cork House emerges from the undergrowth of its riverside gardens like an ancient Mayan temple, a curious sense of beauty and rigour created by its strong, simple volumes and warm, textured materiality. But Cork House is also a thoroughly contemporary building, the result of a six year project that challenges the complexity of modern house construction and its significant environmental impacts.



The success of the project has been extraordinary – the house was shortlisted for the RIBA Stirling Prize 2019 (annual award for the best building in Britain), and was winner of the RIBA Stephen Lawrence Prize (best project under £1 million) and the Architects' Journal House of the Year - with the RIBA judges calling it "a noble,

momentous model to aspire to". The clarity and strength of the ecological ambition of the project has resulted in international media exposure. The house is due to feature as a case study in a forthcoming architecture guide to the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals and won the Architecture Masterprize 2020: 'Best of Best' in the Green architecture category and 2020 American Institute of Architects UK Design Awards: 'Sustainability-Small project' & 'Professional-Small Project'.

Designed by Matthew Barnett Howland and Dido Milne at CSK Architects (with Oliver Wilton at UCL), the house is the result of thinking about the environmental impact of buildings across their whole lifecycle, from resource and assembly right through to demolition and beyond. This radical approach has resulted in the world's first house made of solid cork. "Expanded cork is a pure plant-based material, manufactured from a waste by-product without any additives at all, and it comes from a unique productive landscape with exceptional biodiversity", says Milne. "The walls and pyramidal roofs are made with prefabricated blocks of cork, which are assembled on site by hand without any mortar or glue – a bit like giant organic Lego® system."

Inside the finished house the cork is completely exposed, capturing light and shadow and creating a rich evocative sensory environment in terms of touch, sound and smell. The whole building is 'designed for disassembly', so that at the end of the building's

## *Matt Barnett Howland*

*CSK Architects*

(very long) life, all 1,268 blocks of pure cork can be recovered for re-use, recycling back into the manufacturing chain, or simply returned to the earth to biodegrade and generate new growth. As noted by the RIBA judges, Cork House encourages us to “aspire to really integrate ourselves with nature”.



CSK Architects are currently working on another unique project that adopts the form follows lifecycle approach - a new load-bearing stone house in Berkshire that will be re-made predominantly from the ruins of previous buildings on the site.

## *In Line of Fire*

*From St. George's 'The Dragon' - Charlotte Manley, Editor*

In December, a regular check of the helms in St George's Chapel and a cannon in the Curfew Tower took place. Simon Metcalf, The Queen's Armourer writes about the cannon as follows: "It is a cast iron demi-culverin on an elm wood carriage. The barrel dates to about 1625- 1650, the carriage about the same date but possibly as early as 1580. The barrel is 10 feet in length with a 4 1/2 inch bore. The cannon is situated on the



highest floor of the Curfew Tower and survives on its original firing platform, aiming at the Thames and bridge to Eton. It is an extremely rare object being still situated in its original location to defend the Castle. The carriage is unique and is the only one of its type to survive on land. All other carriages like this that have been found are from archaeological shipwrecks contexts."

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# Lights, Camera, Action

Jane Speller - Eton Resident

Once more the film industry has beaten a path to our Eton High Street, drawn by the magnet of the Street's old-world charm. Over the years it has been fun spotting our familiar street in various films and miniseries.

At the beginning of November last year, a film crew and cast came to town with all the razzle dazzle and bustle needed to complete a movie.

Mothering Sunday has a first-class cast. Well known, award winning faces of Olivia Colman and Colin Firth will grace our screens, with Odessa Young and Josh O'Connor as juvenile leads.



The film is set in 1924, so expect short hair bobs for the ladies with tidy slicked back hair for the men.

Traditionally, servants could take the fourth Sunday of Lent off as a holiday. As they walked home, they would pick flowers for their mothers and so the day became known as Mothering Sunday.

The film synopsis. A young orphaned girl has nowhere to go on Mothering Sunday and the family she works for kindly ask her to join them, little knowing that having her there as their guest on that particular day is going to open a whole can of worms.

The Antique Book shop, situated towards the bottom of the High Street, was used as a setting for some of the film scenes. Books were removed and then the shelves redressed. Cameras set up with lighting and cables strewn all over the place. Anyone who walked past could see what happened behind the scenes of film making. Outside in the High Street period cars of the era arrived with a perfusion of other suitable historical items to help give the illusion of a world a century ago.

Could this film be a block buster? Well if it is, then our lovely High Street, doubling for London, will have helped to play a part in making that come about.

# *The Rec. - Ours in Perpetuity*

*Peter Eaton - Eton Resident*



Although we are surrounded by accessible open space, Eton's Town Council and the Royal Borough own very little land in and around Eton, the majority being owned by Eton College. Much of this land surrounding us is Common or Lammas (rare in England today, originating in Saxon times, when it allowed grazing on arable land from the 1st Aug. to 31st Oct.) because the townspeople

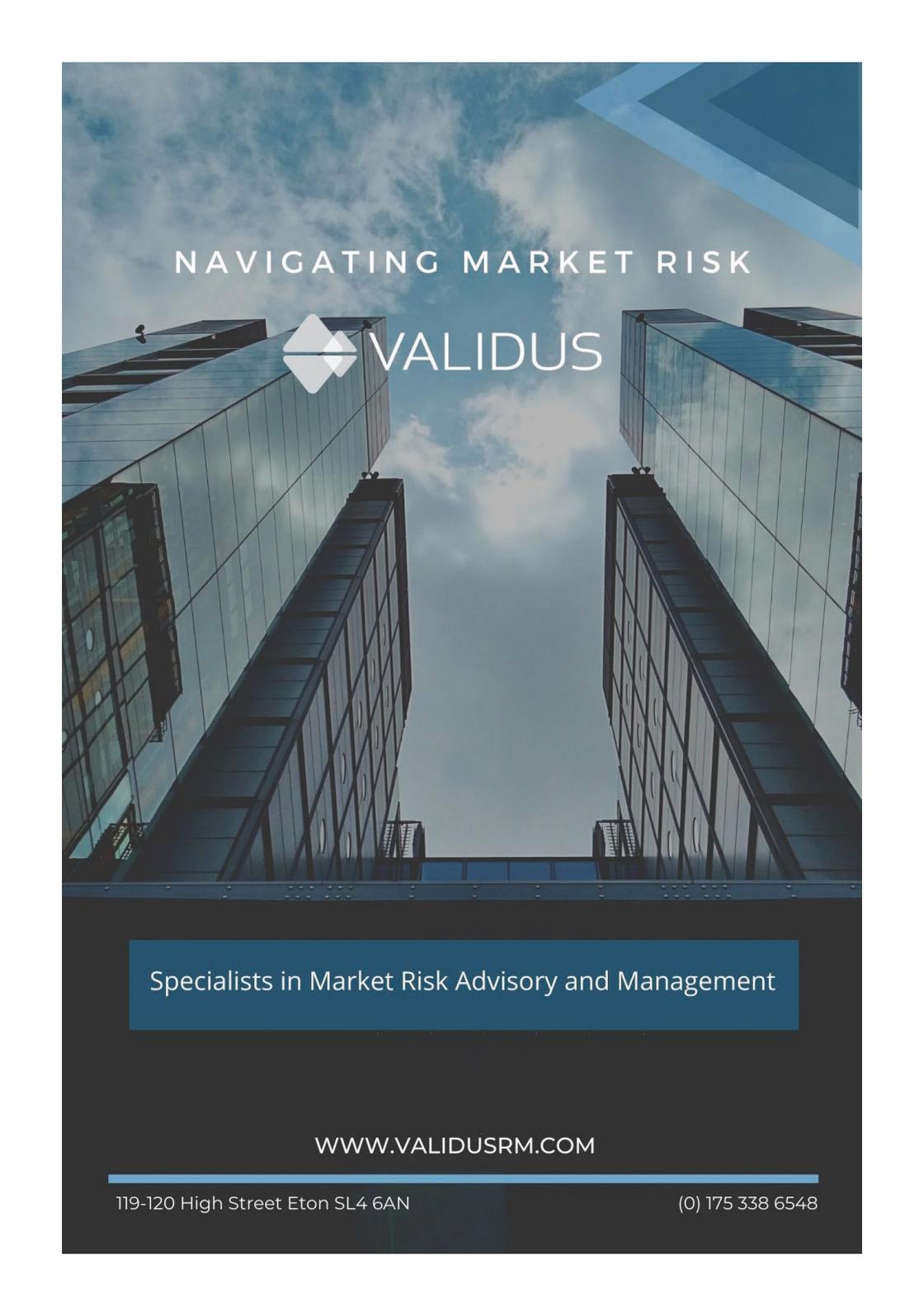
fought against enclosure by the Lord of the Manor, John Penn, defeating the Eton Inclosure Act in Parliament in 1826.

To remove these Common and Lammas Rights on land it needed for the railway, in 1852, the Great Western Railway paid £246 5s 1d (£246.26p) to the Parish Council. This money was invested, being held in the name of three trustees, John Atkins, Thomas Hester and Edwin Aborn. This was added to in 1871 by the Eton Local Board of Health, who paid £105 similarly to extinguish Lammas rights on land for an open bed sewage farm.

It was often discussed how the money should be spent, with no agreement being reached until 1881 when a suggestion was proposed for a recreation ground. However, it wasn't till October 1895 that the Board of Agriculture convened a meeting of interested parties at which it was agreed to use the investment, which had grown to £964. 9s. 8d (£964.48p), to purchase land for recreation grounds in Eton (£650) and Eton Wick (£300).

The land selected for Eton was a close of freehold land called Ten Acre Shot, actually being 8 acres 1 Rood and 21 perches (8.33 acres/3.4 hectares), owned by Mr. James Darville of Windsor. It was purchased in the names of the three trustees under the provisions relating to Recreation Grounds (or Recreational Allotments) of the Inclosure Acts 1845 to 1878 and legally designated to be used in perpetuity as a recreation ground for the people of Eton, to be held and managed by the Eton Urban District Council and its successors.

The Rec. was opened in 1896 and many generations of Eton children have enjoyed playing there since. Hosting many football and cricket matches and Eton Porny School sports days over the years, it is still designated Lammas Land, which means no development can take place without the relevant Government Secretary of State's approval.



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# In His Presence

Fr Francis McAuliffe

Priest, Our Lady of Sorrows



It seems strange that when Christians are looking for miracles to prove God's existence, we always look for what is exceptional in the workings of nature. If only we'd look deeply at what is ordinary in nature, we'd see how truly extraordinary the ordinary really is. Surely, the real miracle is not the occasional event that interrupts the workings of nature. The miracle is in nature's unassuming, everyday functioning, its unflinching fidelity to the marvellous laws given it by its Creator.

Our limited intelligence can give us an elementary knowledge of these laws, but what could we do towards inventing them? And what could we do towards adjusting them, should they cease to function normally? How, for instance, could we adjust the oxygen-level if something went wrong with Nature's law that regulates the exact amount (20.9%) we need to breathe normally? And if a damaging element disrupts the God-made pact between the air and our respiratory system, as it has with Covid, we see how our world is thrown into chaos.

I sometimes wonder why many people say that this kind of thinking is just for 'religious' people who are out of touch with the 'real world'. I believe it has partly to do with an unwillingness to acknowledge our dependence on a Power and Intelligence that is infinitely greater than ours. But perhaps a more cogent reason is an almost-total absence of the philosophical spirit in contemporary society. The secularist world of today takes notice only of what is visible, novel, sensational. But the laws of the universe don't follow the fashion of this so-called 'real world'. These laws are humble and unseen; they function in a silent and predictable way. Their very ordinariness deadens our ability to wonder; it allows monotony to prevent us from seeing the magnificent harmony, precision and beauty of our Universe. These latter qualities are visible only to those who have moved beyond a pragmatic vision of the world, and have learned to listen, to admire, to be awe-struck. There's much wisdom in Chesterton's words: 'what the world lacks is not wonders, but wonderment'. And I love his further observation:

*Perhaps God is strong enough to exult in monotony [whereas we are not]. It is possible that God says every morning, "Do it again" to the sun; and every evening "Do it again" to the moon. It may not be automatic necessity that makes all daisies alike; it may be that God makes every daisy separately and has never grown tired of making them. It may be that he has the eternal appetite of infancy; for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we. (Orthodoxy, 60)*

At the time of going to press there are no services being held at either churches. Online services are being held. See websites for details. Our Lady of Sorrows [www.staugustines.org.uk/mass-times.html](http://www.staugustines.org.uk/mass-times.html) - St. John's : [www.stjohnstjamesed.org.uk](http://www.stjohnstjamesed.org.uk)

## *Bookworm from Eton Library*

*Mary Skelly and Anna Fallgren  
Supervisors*



The first part of the year has not exactly gone according to plan; at the time of writing this we once again find ourselves in a national lockdown. While we are missing seeing our customers in the Library, please remember that you can still access books, magazines, newspapers and so much more online, using your RBWM Library card. Please visit: <https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/leisure-and-culture/libraries>. You can browse the catalogue and reserve books. Windsor and Maidenhead Libraries are currently operating a Click and Collect Service. Please visit our website for up to date information on our services. If you are not comfortable browsing online, you can telephone Windsor library 01753 743940, where staff will be happy to help you with your book reservation.

If you find yourself at home during the Pandemic, why not visit our website where you will find a wealth of fantastic Online Resources. You can now access the family history resource Ancestry, available free of charge from home until 31st March 2021.

According to a study quoted by BBC, research suggests that reading for 30 minutes a week increases health and wellbeing. Reading for pleasure has been found to improve our confidence and self-esteem, providing the grounding we need to pursue our goals and make life decisions. It can also aid our sleep and reduce feelings of loneliness. As we all know, looking after our mental health has never been more important. The Library Service has something for anyone who wants to look after their own physical and mental health and wellbeing. Reading Well is a collection of books which helps you to understand and manage your health and wellbeing using helpful reading. The books are all chosen and recommended by health experts, as well as people with living with the conditions covered and their relatives and carers. You can be recommended a title by a health professional, or you can choose a title by yourself. There are five book lists available:

- Reading Well for mental health
- Reading Well for young people
- Reading Well for children
- Reading Well for long term conditions
- Reading Well for dementia

Reading Well Mood-boosting Books is a national promotion of uplifting titles, including novels, poetry and non-fiction. The books are all recommended by readers and reading groups.

Please visit our website [www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/leisure-and-culture/libraries](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/leisure-and-culture/libraries) or telephone 01753 743940 for details of the current situation. Browse and reserve books online or use our Click & Collect service.



## *Eton Porny School*

*Katherine Russell  
Head Teacher*

The past year has certainly challenged each and every one of us in all sorts of ways that we had never imagined. Although it will be March time before you read this piece in the ECA magazine, we want to start by wishing the community great hope for a brighter, happier and healthier year ahead of us.

At the time of writing, we find ourselves once again in a lockdown situation with on-site school provision limited to our critical worker and vulnerable families. However, with every experience that we go through, it is always important to look for the positives and lessons that we can learn or be reminded of again. One of the key things that we've truly been reminded of during this time has been the value of community; providing support and care for each other in the best way that we can along with the recognition that we're not alone if we reach out. All of our school staff, as you would expect, have been absolutely amazing and risen to the challenge of providing the best quality on-site and remote education that they can. Our families too, have been very supportive and are also doing an amazing job of turning their homes into 'classrooms'.

In keeping with the theme of community, we couldn't write this article without heartfelt thanks to The Baldwin's Bridge Trust for their hugely generous and fantastic support in funding an entire outdoor classroom, which will create further capacity and space for our children to safely learn outside. In support of this venture, the Eton Community Association have made additional funds available to the school for the purpose of resourcing this outdoor classroom space once built.

We feel enormous gratitude for the continued prevalence of the positive Eton community spirit and the generosity of our lovely town.

## *Eton Pre-School*

*Sue Clifford - Manager*



The Pre-school children have missed a bit of Pre-School this year, but they have been making the most of being at home. The snow in January was a welcome distraction for them and they made the most of what we had. Zayden made a fabulous snowman complete with a natty shirt! For some of our children this will be the first time they have seen snow and few of them will have had the chance to play in it. Making snowballs and snowmen and just feeling what it's like. It's important to

remember this is real lifelong learning, I certainly remember snowy days from when I was young. They will discover what it feels like, what happens when you hold it, or push it, or throw it and what happens when it rains, or the weather gets warmer too. What an amazing science lesson. Home learning at its best!



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# *Eton Community Association Survey*

## *Result*

ECA is 10 years old this year. Combining this milestone with a desire to know if we are doing what residents and businesses want, we asked you! Thank you for telling us online and by posting completed cards into the Eton Information Centre.

You have told us that, in addition to continuing to do what we do, you want:

1. Better broadband and WIFI, {high speed broadband, mobile signal, public WIFI}
2. Reduce anti-social behaviour, {on the Brocas, all drink/ drug misuse, beggars, rough sleepers}

These 2 “asks” are head and shoulders above other issues and opportunities:

3. Planning {Crown Farm, Cockpit, Age Concern, Reduction in Retail}
4. Cycling and e-scooter violations {wrong way down the street, on pavements}
5. High Street viability {loss of retail, wider shop range, opening hours}

Surveys typically achieve a turnout between 10 and 30% which is considered a good and representative response. 168 households responded, which is 22%. (The Eton election in 2019 achieved 33%.)

In addition, to the 5 priority areas, there were some location specific inputs eg those who live in Somerville Road, Broken Furlong and Stonebridge Field are anxious about the clogged condition of Colenorton Brook, which may contribute to flooding.

So, what are we doing?

- A. Presenting this to Eton Town Council, RBWM and Thames Valley Police – we pay our taxes for services that include many of these topics; are we expressing what we want and need? Are we gaining the priority and support that we should?
- B. Developing working groups. If you want to help us, please email [secretary@etoncommunity.co.uk](mailto:secretary@etoncommunity.co.uk). Many hands make light work! To see more of the survey output go to [www.etoncommunity.co.uk/survey-results](http://www.etoncommunity.co.uk/survey-results).

## *Diary*

**For Church services please see page 12**

**Town Council Meetings are being held on Zoom on the first Thursday of the month**

**Details of how to join the meeting are on the Eton Town Council web site**

**No public Community Association meetings are planned at present**

**Our Diary will return in full when we have more certain times**

## Useful Numbers

<b>Charteris Club</b>	Julie or Jackie	07598 565091
<b>Churches</b>	St John the Evangelist (Vicar)	01753 852268
	Our Lady of Sorrows, Eton Court	01753 542862
<b>Community Warden</b>	Jake Hynard	01628 685636
<b>Council Offices, Eton</b>	Bob Austen, Town Clerk	01753 860377
<b>Councillor (RBWM)</b>	Samantha Rayner	07811 974442
<b>Emergency</b>	Fire/Ambulance/Police	999
<b>Eton College</b>		01753 370100
<b>Eton Community Association</b>	Chair	07734 073117
<b>Library</b>	Eton	01753 860506
	24 hr renewal line	0303 123 0035
<b>Eton Porny School</b>		01753 861995
<b>Eton Pre-School</b>		01753 850842
<b>Healthcare</b>	Fast Medical Help, Non-Emergency (NHS)	111
	Doctors	South Meadow Surgery (24 hr line)
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		(Appointments)
		01753 832332
	Eton Pharmacy	01753 863819
	Hospitals	King Edward VII Outpatients, Windsor
		01753 860441
		Prince Charles Eye Unit, KE VII Casualty
		01753 636359
		Wexham Park Hospital
		01753 633000
		Wexham Park A& E
		01753 634017
		Upton Hospital, nr Slough – Walk-in unit
		01753 821441
		Heatherwood & St. Marks Minor Injuries units
		01753 877805
		Heatherwood Hospital
		01344 623333
		St. Marks Outpatients
		01628 632012
<b>Natural History Museum</b>	Eton (curator)	01753 370602
<b>Police</b>	Crime in Progress	999
	Non-Emergency	101
<b>River Authority</b>	Environment Agency (gen. enquiries)	03708 506 506
	Floodline	0345 988 1188
<b>Royal Borough Of Windsor And Maidenhead (customer care)</b>		01628 683800
	24 hour line for key services – report illicit actions, late night noise, dangerous structures, etc.	01753 853517
<b>Swan Support</b>		07968 868172



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# Taking Council

Bob Austen, Town Clerk, Eton Town Council

Tel: 01753 860377

email: [clerk@etontc.uk](mailto:clerk@etontc.uk)



Even though I prefer working in the centre of town meeting Councillors and residents, as I write this towards the end of January the Council Offices have to remain closed and I continue to work from home due to current Covid restrictions.

At January's Council meeting Members received Duncan Reed's resignation with the Mayor expressing his thanks to Duncan for his services over the last 5 years. There are now two vacancies in the Eton ward which will be filled by an election on Thursday 6th May. If you are interested in standing for Councillor please visit the RBWM website.

At the same meeting, councillors approved the previously circulated budget for 2021/22 which had been carefully prepared by the Council's Standing Committee. The budget shows a 20% increase over the 2020/21 from £97,490 to £118,820, a difference of £21,330. This is due mainly to the following:

1. Trees Maintenance & Sustainability: +£11,600 – for work emanating from the recently commissioned tree survey that highlights actual and potential problems. The Eton Recreation Ground contains the greatest number of trees in the ETC estate.
2. Election Costs: £2,000 – to fill two vacancies in the Eton ward as requested by 10 local electors in each case.
3. Playground Maintenance: +£2,400 – to ensure that the 3 play areas under ETC control are properly maintained.
4. Eton Greenery: +£840 – to cover additional costs of seasonal flower planting at Jubilee Square, Watermans Arms and Baldwins Bridge.
5. Eton Wick Fireworks Association: £1,000 – a separate grant to support this community event.
6. Eton Wick Youth Club: £2,500 – a provisional grant if there is a shortfall of funding from RBWM.

Proposals have been reported of our desire to redevelop the dilapidated pavilion at Eton's Recreation Ground. Having been an eyesore for a long time, when elected in May 2021 the Mayor vowed to resolve the problem. It has been established the Rec. is designated Lammas land which restricts the development possible and the Council is committed to work within these regulations, with a meeting of the Pavilion Task & Finish Group due shortly.

New governance issues are being discussed not just for Council meetings but also the recently formed committee structure to make the information open to the public, with appropriate agendas and minutes/notes published on the website. The Council is committed to transparency in all of its operations and I am always available to answer any questions you may have.

# Town & Gown

## Six Centuries of Food and Dining

*Shauna shares her insights and discoveries gained from her research for the forthcoming exhibition Six Centuries of Food and Dining at Eton College, coming soon to the Verey Gallery at Eton.*



Silver epergne: London, Robert Hennell, 1791

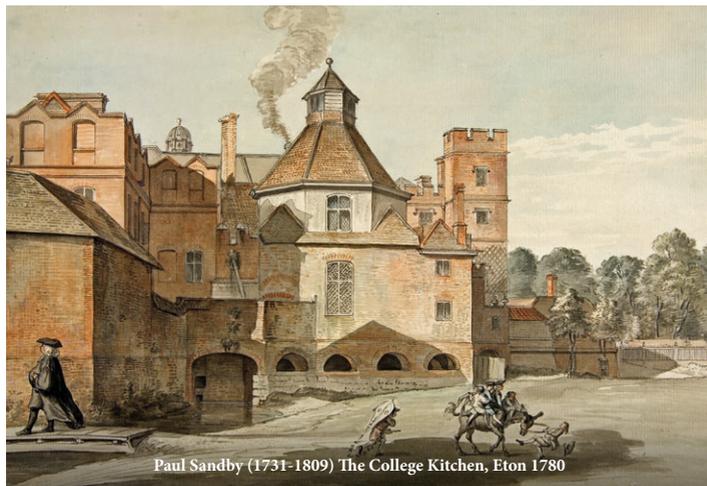
The upcoming exhibition began in idle speculation. An unloved, silver epergne had been resting in a corner of the vault, out of date and overlooked except for an occasional polish. I wondered whose dining table it had decorated and what its baskets had held. The epergne, it turned out, had been donated by Jonathan Davies, Head Master of Eton and later Provost, and it is date marked 1791, the year he became Provost. This piece of silver would have been a swaggering centrepiece for the Provost and Fellows' high table with its baskets filled with fruit and sweetmeats.

I then wondered how the rest of the school was dining and what the boy's diet was like in the same years. In search of

answers, the College Archivist, Eleanor Hoare, introduced me to the audit books, cook's books, buttery books and lists of food provided for feasts. Eton, it turned out, has food-related records going back to 1442. Everything was listed from wages to the supply of candles, fuel and raw materials. For example, in 1601, we know that a Mr Randall was paid for buying and driving sheep and cattle from as far away as Northampton to supply the college tables!

The records illustrate a world that in the medieval era was, to an extent, self-sufficient. Without access to supermarkets, freezers or electricity, the supply of food in College for at least 70 people required careful planning. When your mutton was being delivered live from Thame or Reading, it was not going to appear on the dining table without first being processed in the slaughterhouse and cooked in College kitchens.

## Shauna Gailey - Keeper of Silver, Eton College



Paul Sandby (1731-1809) The College Kitchen, Eton 1780

College kitchens, the brewhouse and the bakehouse were the powerhouses where raw materials such as meat, wheat, hops, and wood were delivered. For much of the College's history, the end result was a meal of bread, beer and beef (or mutton) served to the boys and staff in

College Hall twice a day. Eton may have had a Provost and Head Master since its foundation, but it has also had a cook and butler for the same length of time. Staff have been preparing and serving meals to the boys for over 500 years, from what is today the second-oldest working kitchen in England.

The upcoming exhibition will shed light on how raw materials were supplied, what people ate and the long line of staff who have kept the boys fed. It will bring together



The same scene today

documents including the College audit books, cooks' records and menus, alongside pieces from the silver collection, centred around a central dining table laid à la française as for a Georgian dinner party.

For further details about the exhibition, please see <https://collections.etoncollege.com>.

Both Shauna Gailey and her husband, Vice Provost Andrew Gailey, will be standing down later this year after 40 years of outstanding service to Eton College. We wish them a long and happy retirement.

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## *Eton within the Borough*

*Samantha Rayner*

*RBWM Councillor for Eton and Castle*

As we enter the New Year and reflect on the effects of the pandemic we are very mindful of those who have been directly affected by the virus and its consequences. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Eton celebrated Christmas in a really splendid way and was able to put out their decorations and many businesses did some fabulous displays. One of the highlights was the Christmas plate decoration competition by talented pupils from Eton Porny School. The plates were stunning art. Thank you to the Eton Information Centre for running it.

The Royal Borough Council has focused all its departments on supporting residents and businesses through COVID while maintaining critical services. This has been achieved by most of the staff continuing to work from home.

In Eton the footfall in the town has reflected how much residents locally value the beautiful and historic town. It's been a popular destination throughout the various Government Tiers and Lockdowns. This has caused some positive effects as some of the businesses who remain open have benefited. It has also been a challenge. We have worked with the police and community wardens continually to monitor and improve where possible.

Thank you to the community and community groups for the extraordinary amount of work they do to make Eton a wonderful place to live and work and looking after each other during this difficult time.

We hope as the spring comes and the vaccine is given that Eton and its residents will be able to live in a safer way.

We wish everyone to keep safe and well.

Please do get in touch if we can help you.

### Contact your Councillors

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Cllr. Shamsul Shelim	email: <a href="mailto:cllr.shelim@rbwm.gov.uk">cllr.shelim@rbwm.gov.uk</a>	phone: 07958 412650

# A Postman's Lot

David Tredor - Eton Resident



Think you know Eton? OK, could you deliver a letter to the last property on the High St or to No. 73 High St? You'll find it surprisingly difficult to oblige!

Eton's evolving High Street has played havoc with what was once a simple but unusual numbering; starting at No. 1, Tom

Brown's Tailors, just south of Baldwin's Bridge and continuing down the same side to Windsor Bridge and then back up the other side to the last property.

From the signage, you'd think the last property was at no. 138, Baldwin's Bridge Trust House - also just south of the bridge and opposite the Tailors. However, over Baldwin's bridge to the north, you'll find Old Rowlands numbered 139 and Rhubarb & Custard at numbered 140 and then there are those who remember the High Street becoming Slough Rd at its junction with Keate's Lane. Indeed, a 1901 directory has an entry for 'High St. College' along with Rowlands and lots of other un-numbered properties including College Lodge. So where is the last property for that delivery?



At the Windsor Bridge end, Côte's address is given as 71- 72 High St but strangely no. 72 was once on the opposite side of the road! Côte is probably numbered thus because the previous owners owned The House on the Bridge restaurant at 71 as well as another, Montgomery's, directly opposite at 72.

Windsor Bridge Court is listed at 74 High St with the Flaming Cow at 75 and The George at 77 but 73 and 76 have long since disappeared, who knows where? There was a house at 78 which the George has engulfed with a further pub at 79, The King's Arms.

To the right hand of the Crown and Cushion at 84 was another small fronted property, 85, which some remember as a newsagent.

There are also missing properties at the entrance to Tangier Lane, which was a lot narrower originally, and Eton Court, again was narrower, but wasn't even a road until 1911.

Let's hope Eton's High Street continues to thrive and evolve – even though it may make it even more of a puzzle for delivery drivers!



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# The Eton Connection

## Portland Spy Ring



On 7th January 1961, in London, MI5 arrested 5 people, including Peter and Helen Kruger, on charges of espionage principally connected with top secret information on the UK's first nuclear submarine. The subsequent trial revealed the unlikely link between the arcane world of antiquarian books and Soviet spies. The Eton Antiquarian Bookshop was then at 87 High Street and proprietor Bernard Simpson and his family were among the unknowing entirely innocent bookdealers used by Peter and

Helen Kruger. Ostensibly a New Zealand antiquarian book dealer operating from 1954 at a Shop on The Strand, then their home in Ruislip, Peter gradually established himself as a highly regarded dealer in Americana and Victoriana, including bibles and attended the major auctions at Sotheby's and Christie's as well as travelling abroad. Over the next several years he was unreservedly accepted by the trade both professionally and socially. Bernard, to his lifelong regret, was Peter Kroger's proposer for membership of the ABA (Antiquarian Booksellers Association) and, especially, to their cricket team!

Whilst Peter was deemed a genuinely bookish man his wife Helen by contrast was highly sociable and something of an extrovert given amongst other things to wearing trousers, quite unusual for the times. She made friends easily and accompanied Peter on his combined business and social trips, including to Eton, where Peter usually bought several books, including bibles, a staple of dealers.



## Brian Hoare - Former Eton Resident

At their trial the Kruger's vociferously declared their innocence, backed by their joint colleague Gordon Lonsdale. They refused to give evidence but submitted written statements saying they were what they had long established themselves as, namely a respected book dealer and his housewife who occasionally had business man Lonsdale as house guest.

But the prosecution's evidence was devastating. Fingerprints revealed that the Kruger's were in fact Americans named Morris and Lona Cohen, wanted by the FBI for espionage in connection with Los Alamos nuclear bomb research and its transmission to the Soviet Union. The real Kruger's were the names of a dead New

Zealand couple whose identities were transferred to the Cohens by a Soviet agent placed in the NZ embassy in Paris. Prior to moving to England in 1954 the Cohens had received training in communication and cypher skills in Moscow. Lona (Helen) assumed the persona of a middle aged childless, sociable WI housewife but in reality was the

technical hub, expert in radio transmission, cyber and book codes and an expert in micro photography. It was she who made the micro dots, the miniaturised films used by Peter (Morris) as the means of transferring the secret documents from Admiralty Naval Research in Portland. Reduced to the size of a full stop, the micro dots were placed amidst the text on designated pages of a book, usually a bible, then posted to a pre agreed destination. Helen would have already transmitted to Moscow, in secret code, the postal delivery details.

The Kruger's were found guilty and sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment, but were released in a spy exchange in 1969. Peter was celebrated with a postage stamp in Russia.



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# *Jubilee River - Deliverance or Disaster*

*Derek Ledger - Eton Resident*

The first proposal of a flood channel was in the 1840s when Eton's first drainage system was installed.

Despite disastrous floods in 1894 and 1947 it took until the late 20th century to try and ameliorate the threat of the river Thames bursting its banks during heavy winter rains.

It was not until the 1980s that a feasible plan was prepared to build a channel to divert the river away from the flood plains of

Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton and it was not until 1995 that government approval was granted. Known initially as the Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme, this somewhat bureaucratic name and was changed to the Jubilee River by popular vote of the local residents as it coincided with the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2002. It consists of a channel 12km long and averaging 50m wide taking water from the river to the east of Maidenhead and returning it just below Romney lock. It was designed to have natural features like the main river and this has been successfully achieved in many places. To cater for the drop in river levels of almost eight metres over its course the main river has four navigable locks whereas the Jubilee has five weirs.

It has been stated that the only beneficiaries of the scheme are the residents of Windsor and Eton as it has been claimed that the Jubilee River has increased the risk of flooding downstream. These claims appeared to be confirmed in early 2014 when the height of the main river reached levels not seen since the floods of 1947 resulting in many residents of Old Windsor, Ham Island, Datchet and Wraysbury being flooded. But without the Jubilee River, the increased flows would undoubtedly have resulted in quite serious flooding of the low lying areas from Maidenhead to below Windsor.

It became clear that the Jubilee River did not live up to the expectations of the original promoters and design engineers. Efforts have been made by the Environment Agency to mitigate flooding downstream but with little effect. There are now proposals for a new flood relief channel downstream. The Jubilee River has been dogged from the start by bank erosion, with the latest being at the Black Potts Weir. This necessitated the urgent comprehensive remedial work recently completed.

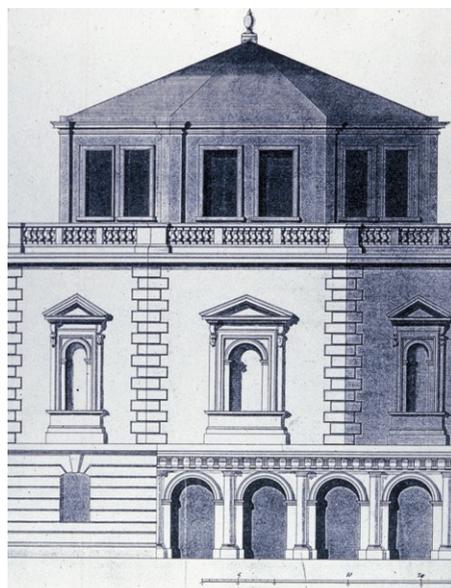


## College Library - A Landmark

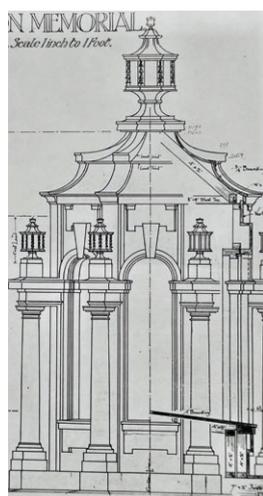
Tim Connor - Former Head of History, Eton College

It is always the building you see first when coming into Eton. Through the dark canyon made by the back of Weston's Yard and the cliff face of the Timbralls and New Schools, you see in front of you the bright octagon with its great windows and dome, marking arrival. And the shape matters. Because it is octagonal, the eye can go off down Common Lane, or up the High Street, or across the road: the place is opened up. Had it been a square building, as was once intended, this opening up would not have been achieved.

The Library was built as part of the grand memorial to Etonians who had died in the Boer Wars, and was opened after the completion of School Hall, in 1910. Its shape recalls the Radcliffe Camera library in Oxford, and both of them have a forgotten precedent in the remarkable design for College



John James, Elevation of Library c.1720



L.K.Hall, Design for Cupola c. 1908

Library made for Provost Godolphin in about 1720. Its designer was L.K.Hall, chosen from a competition restricted to Etonian architects and, with its characteristic 'Wrenaissance' detailing is typical of the rich lavishness of Edwardian baroque architecture.



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