

LOWER SUNBURY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

2026 AGM NEWSLETTER



LOSRA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

www.losra.org

The Annual General Meeting of the Lower Sunbury Residents' Association will take place at The Riverside Arts Centre, Thames Street, Sunbury, on Wednesday 17th June 2026 at 8 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting
3. Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Officers and Committee
6. Guest speakers: Terry Collier (Deputy Chief Executive, Spelthorne Council) & Jennifer Medcraft (Head Of Communications, Spelthorne Council)
7. Kempton Park Latest Developments
8. Open Forum
9. Any other business

Please note that we do not circulate the Minutes of the previous AGM or the Association's audited accounts with this notice, because to do so would generate disproportionate printing costs. Copies will be available at the AGM, and will also be posted on our website. If you are unable to visit the website but would like to see the documents in advance of the meeting, please contact Paul Thompson, LOSRA Chairman, whose details are included in this newsletter.

The AGM features Terry Collier (Deputy Chief Executive, Spelthorne Council) & Jennifer Medcraft (Head Of Communications, Spelthorne Council) as Guest Speakers

With so many upheavals in Local Government on the immediate horizon, we were hoping that Gordon Mitchell, Spelthorne's new Interim Chief Executive would be able to come to our AGM as Guest Speaker, but he is unavailable.

However, we have admirable and high profile substitutes in his place, namely Deputy Chief Executive Terry Collier and the Head Of Communications Jennifer Medcraft.

Their brief will be to explain how the transition from Spelthorne Borough Council to the new Unitary Authority of West Surrey will be achieved, and what the implications are in terms of the day-to-day running of the Borough during the transition, particularly how residents can stay in touch with the Council while it's happening.

Hopefully they will also explain where the new authority's offices will be based, how services will be delivered by the new authority, and how many of the people and departments we are used to dealing with might remain in place.

As you will see from an article inside, the threat of a Kempton Park housing development has become a seriously 'live' issue once more, and we have included this on the AGM agenda for discussion.

As always, our Annual General Meeting is an opportunity for residents to come along, join the Association if you are not already a member, pay your subscription for the year if you have not already done so, and have a chance to hear about the activities of LOSRA and to ask questions about local issues.

We usually also have a good turnout of local councillors at the meeting so it is chance to meet them as well and they are usually happy to make themselves available to answer questions directly if they can.

We always pride ourselves on being unusual among organisations like ours in that we are able to attract a good audience for our AGMs, so we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at this year's meeting.

Local Government Reorganisation, Elections and the role of our Residents' Association

Over the next year, local government in Surrey will undergo the biggest change in a generation. From April 2027, Surrey will move from the current two-tier system of county and district councils to two new unitary authorities: East Surrey and West Surrey, bringing most local services together under a single council structure. This process, known as Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), aims to simplify decision-making, reduce duplication and strengthen local engagement.

Alongside LGR, Government guidance and local proposals have emphasised the importance of community-level engagement through Neighbourhood Area Committees (NACs). These are intended to bring together councillors, parish and town councils, Residents Associations, voluntary groups and community organisations to focus on local priorities and influence decision making at a neighbourhood level. Surrey County Council piloted NACs during 2025, which paused during the pre-election period, and are expected to resume following the May 2026 elections.

It is important to note that while the elections on 7 May 2026 established the new East Surrey and West Surrey Councils, these authorities are operating as shadow councils until 1 April 2027. During this period, Surrey County Council and the existing District and Borough Councils continue to hold full statutory powers, and current councillors remain in post until 31 March 2027 dealing with the business-as-usual decisions of the existing District, Borough and County Councils. The shadow year allows the new councils to prepare for the transfer of responsibilities, implementation of the Council structures and political mandates while maintaining continuity of services for residents.

seats; Green Party: 8 seats; Reform UK: 5 seats; Independents / Residents' associations: 9 seats

As with West Surrey, the newly elected councillors will act as a shadow authority throughout 2026–27, focusing on governance, budget setting and the integration of services ahead of vesting day in April 2027.

What This Means for Residents Associations

Regardless of party control, both new councils will need strong, credible links into local communities. Residents Associations have a key opportunity to influence how neighbourhood voices are heard, particularly through the planned rollout of Neighbourhood Area Committees.

For Lower Sunbury, this means:

Strong local representation will matter more, not less, under the new structures; Organised, evidence-based community voices will carry weight in shaping local priorities; Constructive relationships with councillors across parties will be essential

Get Involved with the Lower Sunbury Residents Association

The Lower Sunbury Residents Association exists to represent local interests, share information and provide a constructive voice on local issues. As local government changes, there has never been a better time to get involved – whether by attending meetings, volunteering your skills, or helping to shape how our area is represented in future neighbourhood structures.

Local government may be reorganising, but strong communities remain at the heart of local democracy. Lower Sunbury works best when its residents are informed, engaged and involved.



The West Surrey Elections – What Happened?

On 7 May 2026, residents voted in the inaugural elections for the new West Surrey Council, covering Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Runnymede, Waverley, Guildford and Woking, which will operate as a shadow authority until it formally takes on full powers in April 2027.

The elections resulted in overall control by the Liberal Democrat Party. The political make-up of the 90-seat council is: Liberal Democrats: 56 seats; Conservative Party: 20 seats; Reform UK: 9 seats; Farnham Residents: 2 seats; Independent / Residents' groups: 3 seats

This result marks a significant shift in Surrey politics and will shape priorities during the transition period, including how neighbourhood engagement and partnership working are embedded from the outset of the new council.

The East Surrey Elections – What Happened?

Elections for the new East Surrey Council were also held on 7 May 2026, covering the areas of Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley, Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge.

The Liberal Democrats also secured overall control in East Surrey, winning a majority of the 72 seats. The political composition is: Liberal Democrats: 40 seats; Conservative Party: 10

Your chance to get involved as LOSRA helps with Thames Landscape Strategy

The Thames Landscape Strategy (TLS) is a partnership that works to look after and celebrate the beautiful stretch of the River Thames between Weybridge and Kew. It's guided by a long-term vision created in 1994 and updated in 2012, helping shape how this part of the river changes over time.

With growing challenges like climate change, increased flood risk and development pressures, the TLS is being updated as part of the wider Joint Thames Strategy (JTS) Refresh.

The Joint Thames Strategy brings together plans for the Thames, from Surrey through to the sea. The aim is a joined-up approach to managing the riverside, working alongside projects like the Environment Agency's TE2100 Plan, the River Thames Scheme and the West London Communities Project.

This refresh is all about thinking ahead - looking at how we manage the Thames floodplain in the future, while also improving things like access to the river, wildlife habitats, heritage, recreation and the local economy.

Working with LOSRA, the TLS is updating Landscape Character Assessments for our stretch of the river, from Sunbury to Shepperton. These studies look at how the area works in both wet and dry conditions, and help identify challenges and opportunities for the years ahead. Local knowledge is a big part of this, making sure the plans reflect what makes the area special while also being realistic about future change.

From summer 2026, TLS will be reaching out more widely to the community and local groups. There will be events, drop-in sessions and workshops, with opportunities for groups like LOSRA to get more involved and help shape the future of this part of the Thames.

There's more information at www.jtsrefresh.com Details of upcoming events will be shared over the coming months on social media, or you can email alex@habitatsandheritage.org.uk to join the mailing list and stay updated.

URGENT! Application for 2,000 houses on Kempton Park and race-course demolition coming soon

Our MP Lincoln Jopp recently had meetings with the Jockey Club, which owns Kempton Park, and representatives of housebuilders Redrow, who have an option until 2028 to build on the land, and learnt that they will be submitting a planning application for 2,000 houses there before the end of the year. This would involve the demolition of the racecourse and the end of racing there.

This is alarming in the extreme. We had hoped that the fact that Kempton Park, which is high-performing Green Belt, was not included in sites earmarked for housing in the Local Plan, might have afforded a degree of protection.

However, the Government has made changes to planning policy by designating even sites like Kempton Park as “Grey Belt”, usually applied to “unattractive” or “poorly-performing” land, and releasing them for development.

In particular, the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include a “presumption in favour” of plans for housing near a railway station, in this case Kempton Park.

In addition, recent new powers mean that any new application for 150 homes or more that a Council intends to refuse must be referred to the Secretary of State to adjudicate.

In this context, Redrow feels that they have a good chance of getting an

application approved, and we have to take this news at face value.

LOSRA, having taken a lead on this issue last time round, and taken the brunt of the Council’s fury, is planning to put together an umbrella campaign group to oppose the plan.

We are fortunate that we have the full active support of our MP, who has kicked things off with a petition and a leaflet from the local Conservatives.

We would emphasise that this is absolutely NOT a party political issue and we need all shades of opinion on board to help fight this disastrous plan.

We will be discussing the issue at our AGM in June as a starting point for gathering other residents’ associations, interested groups and stakeholders, and individuals as part of a campaign group with our MP.

Spelthorne’s Planning Committee should reject the application based on the Local Plan, but the Local Government Reorganisation rather muddies the waters in this regard and it might be irrelevant with central government taking control of the processes.

If you are concerned, and want to get involved, please let us know and come to the AGM. This looks like a crucial denouement for this long-running saga.

You can sign Lincoln Jopp’s petition via a QR code on the LOSRA website.

Spelthorne’s Local Plan finally approved

The Spelthorne Local Plan 2024-2039/40 was unanimously adopted at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council on 17th March.

The plan is a statutory document that sets out the Council’s strategy to deliver sustainable development, tackle climate change and deliver new homes, jobs and infrastructure for Spelthorne residents

As is clear from the Kempton Park article adjacent to this, the Local Plan provisions about sites available for housing sit within the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework, so are subject to wider political and policy considerations.

As you know if you have read previous newsletters, this Plan has taken many years of drafting, consultation and scrutiny, having eventually been submitted for examination in November 2022, and has toed and fro-ed with the Planning Inspector since then.

As result, the Plan is already due for its first 5-year progress review, measuring whether housing need is being met etc.. While Spelthorne continues as an ‘independent’ Borough, this will be the responsibility of their Strategic Planning Department, but once the new West Surrey Unitary Authority comes into being in 2027 this, and all the other Borough Local Plans, will become their responsibility.

This article is a summary of a much longer and fuller article which has been posted on LOSRA’s website, so if you wish to know more you can find it there.

Sunbury BESS planning appeal: apology received from the Planning Inspectorate

On 5 May the Chairs of the Charlton Village, Lower Sunbury and Shepperton Residents’ Associations received an email from the government Planning Inspectorate. It was in response to their letter of 31 January 2026 pointing out a number of errors, inconsistencies and omissions in the Inspectorate’s Appeal Decision dated 16 January; this overturned the Spelthorne Borough Council Planning Committee’s decision to refuse planning permission for the proposed Battery Energy Storage System development on Green Belt land adjacent to the Eco Park in Charlton Lane.

The Inspectorate’s email acknowledged that errors had occurred in its handling of the case, and offered ‘sincere apologies that this appeal was not handled to the standards to which we aspire’. Rather extraordinarily, the appellant, Sunbury BESS Limited, appears to have been allowed to revise the scheme that was submitted to Appeal from that which was refused planning by Spelthorne BC on 17 September 2025.

By way of response to our querying

the quoted number of battery containers included in the stated Appeal scheme, as well as their electrical output, the Inspectorate writes: ‘*The Inspector sought clarification from the appellant regarding the nature of the development, including a redesign to 25 containers. While the council were made aware of this correspondence, interested parties were not consulted on the revised scheme and relevant plans.*’ If true, the implications of this statement are indeed extraordinary. It is in effect saying that the appellant has been allowed to double the output of the scheme, from the 100MW of the application that was refused planning permission to the 200MW that has seemingly been accepted and allowed by the Inspectorate.

The email went on to cover a number of the other points raised in the Chairs’ five-page letter, including aspects of security, fire safety, drainage, the acceptability of submitted drawings and the weightings which

the Inspector allocated to various aspects of the Appeal. It also declared that ‘*the decision letter is a legal document. Once issued, the Planning Inspectorate cannot re-open the appeal, consider further evidence or otherwise add to or amend the decision.*’.

We are far from satisfied with these responses but are way beyond the six-week limit for lodging a legal challenge in the High Court, which could anyway have involved very significant cost. **Nonetheless, we believe it is totally unacceptable for a government body to be able to unilaterally overturn a democratically decided planning refusal on the basis of its admitted sub-standard case-handling, involving errors and the tacit acceptance of a fundamental increase in the size of the scheme from that which was originally refused.**

The RA Chairs, in addition to replying to the Inspectorate’s email, are considering what further action to take. We will report further at the LOSRA AGM.

Friends of Sunbury Park

Spring update, with cows back soon

Spring is always a wonderful time of year in Sunbury Park. New signs of growth across the grassland and woodland is an indication of what is to come. A walk across the park will highlight Buttercups, Lesser Stitchwort, and Cow Parsley as well as Cornflower and Daisy in and around the exclosures.

A walk along the edge of the wildflower and pollinator area adjacent to Thames Street is also worthwhile. A recent walk showed that Poppy, Ox-Eye Daisy, and White Campion is currently in bloom. Corncockle is just starting to flower, and the entire area should be a mass of colour in the next few weeks.

On a less pleasant note, May- July is the time when Oak Processionary Moth might be observed on Oak trees in the park. If you do see a web like nest on an oak tree, do not touch it but report it to Spelthorne Council on 01784 451499 or email environment@spelthorne.gov.uk. More info is available on Spelthorne Council website.

The cows will soon be returning. They may possibly be introduced slightly later and will stay for longer. The idea is that by a later introduction, the flora will have had a chance to bloom and set seed before being eaten. By staying later, and with any autumn rain, they will churn up the sward creating new open areas for plants to colonise.

Another suggestion is that, following the 2020 report stating that the south facing slope by the haha is the most floristically diverse part of Sunbury Park, it might be temporarily fenced off, again to allow the flowers to bloom and set seed.

As part of the general improvement programme, we understand that finance has been made available to update and improve the children's play area in Orchard Meadow.

This is a summary of a longer article by John Maxen of FoSP, which can be found on the LOSRA website.

Lower Sunbury Car Park charges: Common sense prevails after consultation

In January we urged residents to respond to Sunbury BC's consultation on its proposed changes to car parking charges and rules in Lower Sunbury. These involved reducing the initial free period from one hour to 30 minutes, and also making the Old Bathing Station and Green Street car parks completely free – but only for a maximum stay of 30 minutes!

The Council received 180 responses to the consultation, all objecting to the proposals, with many pointing out how unrealistic a 30-minute parking limit was for those who wished to shop, visit the Walled Garden café, take their dog for a walk in Sunbury Park, or to park in the Green Street car park for the Sunday service at St. Mary's Church.

Fortunately, common sense prevailed. The Council's Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 20 April 2026 amended a number of the proposals. The one-hour initial free period is to be retained in the car parks that charge. The Old Bathing Station and Green Street car parks will become completely free, but for a maximum period of 11 hours, rather than 30 minutes. These changes should be confirmed by the Council meeting on 16 July, with implementation 4-6 weeks later.

THE LOSRA COMMITTEE

Clare Amin	82 The Avenue	07971 173572
Jyoti Banerjee	8 Harfield Road	07973 323440
Tamali Basak	38 Sutherland Avenue	07459 693876
Colleen Cuthbert (Secretary & Membership Secretary)	8 Maryland Way, TW16 6HR	01932 783606
Iain Findlay (Treasurer)	58 Thames Street	01932 783739
John Hirsh	21 School Walk	07515 637474
Neil Huntingford	Summer House, Wheatleys Ait	01932 783761
Chris Hyde	29 Queensway	07854 147935
Svatopluk Ludvik	64 Thames Street	07548 896139
Oliver Parr	Orchard House, Thames Street	07799 411902
Stacey Pinto (Vice Chair)	37 Sutherland Avenue	07894 834277
Tim Rosser	22 Harfield Road	07768 141178
Nigel Spooner	36 Kingsmead Avenue	07887 898874
Paul Thompson (Chair)	12 Brackenwood	07788 107500
Paul Watts (President)	87 The Avenue	07976 334482



Please pay your 2026 LOSRA subscription

If you have not already done so, could you please pay your annual LOSRA subscription, which became due on 1st January. Instructions as to how to do this are on the form below. There is also the option to become a Life Member. With a potential battle on our hands once again over a Kempton Park planning application and appeal, there might well be calls on our funds to fight a legal campaign.

LOSRA MEMBERSHIP FOR 2026 PAYMENT OPTIONS

By Standing Order

You may pay by setting up a standing order with your bank. Please make payments to Lower Sunbury Residents Association at Barclays Bank, Account number: 90581194 Sort Code: 20 46 73. Subsequent payments to be made on 1st January each year. Please use LOSRA with your house number and post code as a reference.

By cheque or cash

The annual subscription is still just £5 per household and voluntary donations are always welcome. For payment by cheque or cash, please use the form below and deliver to Colleen Cuthbert, Membership Secretary, 8 Maryland Way TW16 6HR or any other committee member as listed. Alternatively drop your payment into Skinners Newsagents/Post Office in Avenue Parade, or The Good Estate Agent in Green Street. Please make cheques payable to Lower Sunbury Residents Association.

Via PayPal

This can be done on the website at www.LOSRA.org

Life Membership

There is also the option of Life Membership of £100 with a one-off payment.

If you are not sure that you are up to date with your payments or you need more information about membership, please contact Colleen Cuthbert, Membership Secretary, on 01932 783606 or by email colleen.cuthbert@btinternet.com

Thank you very much for your continued support.

Membership payment slip 2026 for CHEQUES OR CASH

I wish to pay the annual subscription to LOSRA for £5.00 per household and a donation for £..... (please enter amount, if you would like to make a voluntary donation)

Name/s.

Address

Post Code.....

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