

## Chairman's Report for Jan 2018

First of all, welcome, and I hope 2018 will be a happy new year for all of you. Quite contrary to expectation for January, we have an awful lot to talk about.

Firstly, I must signal our brand new website put together by our good friend in Ashted, John Bleackley. We started in June 2016 and have been at it on and off ever since. The web address is the same as before, but now opens with a picture of the Town Bridge. For information about the date and agenda of the next meeting, go to Notices in the heading. The Blog will not be used any more. For any sort of Report, from Minutes to Planning or Forward Planning or Chairman's, go to Association and then in the bottom right choose Document Archive. Choose the type and then choose the year.

Unfortunately, our Treasurer, Paula Sabine, cannot be here tonight as she is covering for a colleague over six weeks. But, she tells me that a good number of dormant members have renewed this year and we also have had a noteworthy number of new members. Another pleasant surprise was a totally unexpected letter of appreciation for our work. plus a handsome donation to our funds.

On a somewhat less joyful note, just before Christmas, I received a phone call from a member telling me about a robbery in the town centre and saying that he felt we should have more policemen on the beat so as to be ready for other, similar events. I wrote to the Advertiser in this vein, a letter they published. but they made no report at all on the theft which I felt to be very remiss.

My next comments refer to the furore around the demolition of the Royal Oak and the cynical disregard for due process that it implies. Although it is true that MV should have been more aware of the legal situation for the demolition of pubs, nothing can explain why an Enforcement Officer was completely ignored when he arrived. However, indignation throughout the town has ensured that a Public Meeting has now been organised by the CEO of MV and it will take place on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> January at 7 pm in the North Leatherhead Community centre.

Before turning to other contributors, I would just like to inform members that the condition of our roads is (at last!) causing widespread concern. Pot holes are rife as are unkempt verges and crumbling surfaces. Leaf and litter clearing and drain cleaning are only seen to as a last resort. As a step in the right direction, Mole Valley has invited Surrey officers with these responsibilities to come and speak to R.A. representatives early next month. I will be there! While on the subject of Transport, there is to be an in depth discussion on Buses in a fortnight. Randalls Road's needs and the 489 will feature prominently and, again, I will be there

Regarding decisions about the direction of the Local Plan, I can say that the idea of creating a completely new town or village has been discarded. To do that satisfactorily, would need a larger increase in population than is currently envisaged, and I will now turn to Martyn Williams to give the picture in more detail and who will also bring us up to date with the discussions about Kingston House Gardens.

And now for a sample of the latest planning applications from Fran Smith. Both Martyn's and Fran's reports are online on our website.

Cheryl Allen will now mention a few dates for people interested in maintaining our countryside.

We now move on to the Elmer Water Treatment works. Most of you will know that S.E.S. (which is owned by a Japanese firm called Sumitomo), wants to enlarge their current site off Hawks Hill. An unprecedented number of letters was sent to MV Planning Dept, because of the enormous size and scale of the proposed buildings. Efforts were made, successfully, to contact the MD of this company so that he knew it was not just one or two habitual moaners who were objecting. And now, here is Roy Allen (who first spotted this latest problem) to bring you all up to date.

AOB? Just to recommend to you February's edition of the A&LL which contains a list of things Leatherhead can justly be proud of.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> February at 7.15 for 7.30 in G6