

Environment Report to the November LRA Committee Meeting November 7th 2016

1. Tabitha Whitcombe of the **National Flood Forum** has announced a meeting to discuss how the charity can support people in flood risk areas in Leatherhead and Fetcham by forming a **Flood Action Group**. Interested people are welcome to meet on 10th November at 8:00 at the Leatherhead Methodist Church, Church Road Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 8AY
2. Leatherhead Open Gardens 2017 are in the early stages of planning and invite those who would like to open their gardens on 2nd July to contact Cheryl 01372 370 091
3. **The Environment Agency's Middle Mole Flood Alleviation Programme**

In 2013-14, it was homes in the middle stretch of the River Mole that were badly affected by rising water. Flood alleviation measures were already in place in the Upper and Lower River Mole. It is now realised that those existing schemes need to be replicated in the Middle River Mole.

Background

Because of the winter floods and their consequences, the Environment Agency(EA) received a generous grant to make a model of the Middle Mole drainage system. By December 2014 all the data had been collected and it was thought that the model would be available later in 2015. In November 2015, at the River Mole Catchment Partnership AGM there was no mention of the model, although representatives of the EA attended the meeting. Most recently at the "Love Your River" workshop questions were asked about the availability of the model of the Middle River Mole. Environment Officer, Rod Shaw, informed us that information would be available at the "River Mole Discovery Day".

Sure enough, by September 25th the Environment Agency presented a four page report to update the Flood Alleviation Programme. This report set out a proposed partnership approach and outlined the next steps of a 9 million pound project that is not yet fully funded. The aim is to protect over 300 houses from future flooding.

The report highlights 4 options that it considers viable for further investigation. They are:

- Leatherhead and Fetcham
- Dorking (including North Holmwood)
- Burstow Stream catchment (including East Horley and Smallfield)
- Property level protection measures to isolated communities.

It is estimated that 147 homes in Fetcham and Leatherhead would have reduced risk of flooding if the proposed work was carried out. A cost/benefit analysis assigns the highest score to Leatherhead and Fetcham and thus highest Partnership Funding score making it eligible for the most Grant in Aid. However, this does not guarantee funding.

What is planned for Fetcham and Leatherhead?

The report suggests benefits of a conveyance option in the form of a new channel running from Mole Business Park. This option would cost well over a million pounds. There is also a need to explore options to reduce the surface and foul water flood risk that impacts Fetcham. The Outline Business Case for Leatherhead and Fetcham should be developed during 2016/2017. If any option offers a viable solution, detailed design and planning approvals work will take place in 2017/18 with construction likely to follow over a two year period.

Funding the Project

A Defra Flood Defence Grant and Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy have allocated £2.7million over a 6 year programme. This leaves a considerable shortfall from the £9M of estimated cost. Since this is a partnership project additional funds will, undoubtedly, have to come from some of the partners.