

Environment Report to LRA meeting 3 October 2016

Litter Pick In light of comments made at the September meeting, an impromptu Litter Pick has been arranged on the 8 October 10am-noon. Stephen Walters, who is filling in for MV's Jackie Lees-Howes, has arranged for equipment to be supplied and rubbish to be collected. Meeting place room G3at the Letherhead Institute.

Rye Brook "Love Your River" Event September 12th. Surrey Wildlife Trust continue to keep us informed of the excellent work they are carrying out on the Rye Brook. Work has centred on three locations (Ashtead Meadow, The Fetcham Splash and along the boundary of Teasle Wood). Of course, it is hoped that eventually the three areas will join up and the Rye Brook will be a totally healthy and clean river system. Volunteers are of utmost importance to this project.

As a result of this meeting, I was able to ask The Environment Agency(EA) questions about their plans to mitigate potential flooding in Leatherhead and Fetcham. A subsequent letter from the EA Flood Risk Management Advisor and the literature from the 25 September event has shed light on what is planned for 2018/19/20. This will be explained more fully in the Autumn LRA Newsletter. Some information is given below.

Resilience Workshop SCC's seven hour workshop was informative and inspirational. We have come a long way since the subject was first broached about 8 years ago. Flooding and heavy snowfalls have concentrated the attention of local authorities and service providers. Volunteer organisations in communities and schools have been established and were on hand to tell their stories.

When resilience was discussed at our committee meeting, we highlighted that we would like salt and sand available in case of flooding or icy conditions. Sand is available at the Red House Grounds and we were told that salt could also be left there. It is worth following up on this and designating volunteers in case of need.

River Mole Discovery Day September 25th various agencies, organisations, and volunteer groups, who are working to improve the River Mole, gathered to make the public aware of their work. Although it was not a well publicised event, there was a steady flow of visitors. Two guided tours of the river bank provided interesting information. Promoted as a family event, participants were encouraged to bring a picnic and free face painting and ice cream was available.

This was the first information about flood alleviation since the government gave the EA £500 000 to create a model of the River Mole Catchment area in 2013. The Report suggested the benefits of a conveyance option--a new channel running from Mole Business Park that would cost potentially £1.3. Interesting, the Middle Mole contains 300 homes that are at risk of flooding. Almost half of those homes are in Fetcham and Leatherhead. The proposed scheme for Fetcham and Leatherhead is much less expensive than the proposals for the other parts of the Middle Mole Area. For this reason £700,000 is available for grant in aid. Therefore, the project is not fully funded.

Volunteer, Alan Thornhill (AT) regularly monitors the area between Thorncroft Drive and the Town Bridge. In this invaluable work, he has developed a very good working relationship between MV staff members, Tony Wynn, Rod Shaw, and himself. Consequently, debris in the River Mole, vandalism, graffiti, and overflowing bins are brought to the attention of MV staff and dealt with immediately. AT was able to meet with MV staff to advise of places where vegetation should and should not be cut back in preparation for the Mole River Discovery Day (see above). We appreciate AT keeping us informed of all his activities.

Two upcoming meetings: 5 October The Leatherhead and District Countryside Protection Society AGM
17 October The Norbury Park Liaison Group