

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/business-and-consumers/superfast-broadband-in-surrey>

Chairman's Report for 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020

The first part of my report comes from one of the regular meetings held between MV and the various local Residents' Associations. Here, many Cabinet meeting discussions are talked about and, if necessary, explained before they join the Agenda for the Local Committee, in this case on 22 January. Some of the items to be included this time are as follows:

- 1) A parking review (as I understand it, not just Leatherhead)
- 2) The Highways Schemes Forward Programme
- 3) Leatherhead High Street
- 4) A Rights of Ways item concerning Green Lane I Ashtead.

So, you can see Leatherhead is going to absorb half if not more of their time at this important meeting.

I think we have all heard by now that our Re-cycling Centre is to remain open on Fridays and Parking Charges are to be removed from all Countryside Estate Car Parks. The Cabinet also decided that no libraries would be closed but that some would be relocated.

At this same meeting we were also treated to a very comprehensive description of how Broadband speed could be increased using Gigabit vouchers. The goal is for everyone to reach at least 24 Mbps. In Surrey overall, 98% of homes reach that, but in Mole Valley it is slightly lower, 96.9%. There is a

Gigabit Voucher scheme for businesses and nearby residents and one for community groups in designated rural areas, but in both cases a contribution would have to be made. I have put the appropriate link address on to the Mail Chimp I sent to all the email addresses I have.

Turning now to our High Street, and led by Susan Leveritt, we have been doing our utmost to secure just a small amount of free parking from 4.30 to 6 Monday to Saturday. Letters have been written to the Leader of the Council, Cllr. Stephen Cooksey, Leader of the Chamber of Commerce, Jeremy Webb, one of the N. Leatherhead Councillors, Keira Vyvyan-Robinson, and a S. Leatherhead Councillor, Rosemary Dickson. In spite of the fact that this parking arrangement worked perfectly well until a few years ago, the first three wrote back saying it was impossible. The fourth person, Rosemary Dickson, backed us and the suggestion. I have now just heard that the following 3 proposals are to be put in the Parking Review mentioned above:

- 1) The extension of the existing pedestrian zone to include Sunday 10am to 4.30 pm,
- 2) The removal of parking on the High Street at all times to reduce vehicle movements and
- 3) to allow loading and unloading in designated bays between 4.30pm and 10am Mon-Sunday

Naturally, we are continuing to write to these people and others like our CEO, Karen Brimacombe, to try to convince them of the

justice and sense of our petition. These will all come before the Local Committee on 22 January.

While on the subject of High Street shopping, I am sure you will be interested to know that next month's speaker is a Leatherhead person who has managed to open up a successful business in Carnaby Street and is still there! The layout in Alice Mayor's shop was voted the third best in London by Time Out magazine. (The winner was Liberty's!)

On a rather more optimistic note, we have been successful in getting a promise from Jason Hughes of MV Highways Dept., that the potholes in the road leading to the tip, will be filled in and that the road will now be monitored indefinitely.

Another piece of good news is that two of our members, Caroline Cardew-Smith and Alan Thornhill, have been awarded the Bengier Shield by the Leatherhead and Countryside District Protection Society for their unstinting work relating to the Organic Control of Himalayan Balsam, the removal of litter and debris from our local river channel, the monitoring of flora and fauna species and, finally, organising kick sampling and water testing as part of the River Search project.

This news has to be balanced by some really disappointing news: the 5 year battle to retain Leach Grove Wood as a public open space, like a village green, has been lost. Our Minuting Secretary, Tim Jones, has attended meetings of various courts, finishing with the Supreme Court, but to no avail. It was decided that

ownership definitely rests with the National Health Service for them to use as they see fit.

One of our regular slots is the Litter Pick and Cheryl will be organising another one around Easter time; I will, of course, let you all know.

Mole Valley is also setting up its own website but had some trouble in the week it started (16 Dec) and so it was a bit difficult to view at that time. I think it is aimed at telling people what is on, where and when so eventually it should be quite useful. What I did see were some very nice pictures taken at the whole town festivals and celebrations.

At this point I usually hand over to one of our Planning team, either Fran Smith for local Planning Applications or to Martyn Williams for bigger as yet undetailed schemes. No doubt things will be different next month, but just now only Fran has a couple of items to inform you about. Also, Susan Leveritt, who normally sticks to Publicity, has some more to say about the parking issue. Unfortunately, this matter reminds me horribly of Brexit and I am sure some of you will not agree with our stance. Our reasons for taking it arise from our desire to see Leatherhead thrive again, albeit modestly. Otherwise, we fear the current empty shops will not find tenants and the lifetime of those still here will dwindle away. So, first, here is Fran Smith: (see report), ..... and now Susan will delineate some of the outstanding problems with eliminating parking.