

L.R.A. Bulletin for the end of April 2022

Dear Members,

It is quite amazing how many items of local interest appear on my computer from our Council even when it is in “Purdah” during the run-up to local elections !

The first one is about the wonderful Fairfield Centre. Located above the Swan Centre, it was designed to act as a social centre for the lonely and the more inactive. In this it has been spectacularly successful, helping its members to exercise regularly, to compete in word games and puzzles, to enjoy musical sessions and art classes, and to enjoy very reasonably priced meals which make a welcome change from daily home cooking. The Fairfield Centre is 40 years old this April and is still fulfilling its aims.

The next item is causing some anxiety to certain members of our community. It concerns the application for a “Temporary Pavement Licence” by Taco Bell for a maximum of 28 seats on the pavement outside nos. 40 and 48 Church Street. The numbering was confusing because not all street maps show the same, the name was also confusing because the request does actually cover the pavement in front of both Taco Bell and KFC. Temporary Pavement Licences were apparently introduced about two years ago to help stimulate trade for restaurants that had been badly affected by the Pandemic. In the event it seems likely that a Licence will be granted for only 16 seats with restrictions on the hours of use and conditions as to the avoidance of litter and anti-social behaviour.

As some of you will know, Julia Jarrett organised a very successful Litter Pick on Sunday, 10th April. A number of people did their “Picking” on the Saturday, but the end result was some 19 bags full of rubbish that had been lying on our verges etc. and for which our Council made a small contribution to our funds. We are all very grateful to those who gave up their time and energy to send these unsightly objects to their rightful “home!” We are hoping to run another Litter Pick in October.

Leach Grove Wood: Many of you will recall the campaign some years ago to have this wood designated as a “Village Green” to protect it from development. Unfortunately, the campaign was unsuccessful. However, the CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) has been lobbying to have the Wood designated as a “Local Green Space”. This is the name given to the relatively modest areas of open space/parks/gardens in our towns, which provide local residents with access to the countryside, but within an urban setting. Once designated, “Local Green Spaces” are given the same level of protection as the Green Belt and some of you may remember the survey conducted by our Council last Spring as to the merits of the existing designated “Local Green Spaces” in Leatherhead. As a result of the CPRE’s lobbying, the draft Local Plan includes a proposal to afford the Wood “Local Green Space” status and it is to be hoped that the proposal makes it through the review of the Plan and becomes part of the final adopted version.

(My thanks to CPRE and to Kristina Kenworthy for her article in the latest edition of "Countryside Voices" which brought me up to date on this local landmark)

The entry into the Ashted and Leatherhead Local by Tecres concerning scamming and compromised email accounts caught my eye. By entering the "address" <'--haveibeenpwned?> you can find out the answer! I had been, four times, but they also tell you when and who by AND not to worry but also to check your various passwords and not to use the same one each time. Of course, Tecres would be happy to help you sort out any password problems!

I have been given several small boxes of mostly new goods and, both as part of the Jubilee Celebrations and to help the people of Ukraine, I am proposing to man a "barrow" from the Swan Centre on Thursday, 2nd June and Friday, 3rd June from 10.30 to 3.30 pm. (sessions 10.30 to 1pm and then to 3.30). I would be grateful for some help/company, so do let me know.

As I announced at our April Meeting, there is no LRA meeting for May. I am planning to have one on Monday 6th June and will confirm this in the bulletin to be issued toward the end of May.

Meanwhile, my best wishes to all of you and let's hope for some warm weather!!

Caroline Brown (Chairman)