



## Bulletin for the end of September 2022

Dear Member,

I am pleased to be able to report that our Council has been listening to our complaints about the general state of Leatherhead Town. I recently had a long conversation with Councillor Keira Vyvyan-Robinson and it seems that the High Street with its current sad planters and lack of general seating is being taken seriously and they are hoping to use money from one of the Funds currently being set aside for that sort of thing to bring about improvements. However, as I said last month, if the planters are improved we will almost certainly need another volunteer to help with the watering.

There are several funds available for improvements in our town: 1. UK Shared Prosperity Fund, 2. Neighbourhood Funds (formerly CIL), 3. "Your Fund Surrey" 4. The Thomas Flack Fund, and probably some others. I am going to suggest to our Councillors (we have five) that each one of them tries to champion one of our concerns and so, in that way, several of them may come into being. Our concerns include-

1. Provision of good quality planters and bedding plants and pleasant wooden seating. (I understand that there is a special team experienced in how to lay out towns with these items).
2. The jet-washing of the High Street etc. (not forgetting the alleyways) and the replacement of broken pavement slabs.
3. The provision and planting of bulbs both Spring ones and Autumn ones. This, I am advised, is both easier to do and to maintain than the wild flowers I showed at the last LRA meeting.
4. KFC needs to be offered a permanent area in the car park at the back of their shop for the parking of their delivery bikes. This would cause less friction and free up parking in front, even more essential now that the plug-in electric points for cars have been installed in front of Prezzo's, thereby reducing the parking spaces available. Financially speaking, in with this measure, a balustrade could be put next to some of the steps in Mansion House Gardens.
5. The underside of the bridges along the footpath next to the Mole need cleaning up with the incomprehensible graffiti removed. One part of the bank near the gate into Common Meadow also needs shoring up as it is disappearing into the river. There is also a lot of weed in the river, but perhaps that is to be expected.

I have been invited to send these concerns to the Neighbourhood Fund (no. 2 above) but I am hoping that the other funds may be called in to help if that one is not large enough.

On another matter, I have had notification about an Open Day: Milner House is a care home particularly aimed at people with dementia but others needing care are also welcomed. They are having two open afternoons: Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> from 2 till 4 pm. It is situated at the end of Ermyn Way, on the left.

One of our members wrote to me about an online site called "Wheelmap." Its aim is to warn/help wheelchair users select accessible places when in an unfamiliar town or even their own town. It is the initiative of the non-profit organisation called "Socialhelden." You allow the program to start with your location and you need to note (or just remember) the various signs for "accessible" or "partially accessible" and so on. In Leatherhead there are at least a couple of hairdressers marked with red scissors showing that they are not accessible at all. The website address is <wheelmap.org>

I have also been asked (very firmly!) to advise residents to report to the Council any large items, apparently dumped, like the mattress and the sofa I showed you all photos of at our last meeting. This is a criminal activity and will be pursued by the relevant authorities.

Chris Grayling had been hoping to hold a "Volunteer Fair" but in light of recent events he had to postpone it. He is going to try and re-schedule it. It seems many small, charitable, groups need more personnel to run efficiently.

I have noticed that the development of the social housing estate at the top of Upper Fairfield Road appears to have started. Some metal fencing has been installed and the front hedges have been cut down. Planning permission was obtained some time ago.

You will be pleased to hear that the new owner of the former Santander building in the High Street has now submitted a Planning Application that appears to be more acceptable. The historic chimneys will be retained and the tiles will be replaced by replicas of those torn down. There will be three flats upstairs and retail premises downstairs.

The latest news about the Poores Allotments is good in that all parties have withdrawn their arguments for development there. We just have to hope that the Planning Inspector reviewing the draft Local Plan will not decide that they should be re-considered !

Regarding the Boundary Commission, as I had thought, the chief change occurs in St. John's Avenue where now both sides will fall within South Leatherhead.

I will finish now, but, should you be interested, two of our members will be speaking at hearings convened by the Planning Inspector into the draft local Plan on two different days, 30<sup>th</sup> September and 26<sup>th</sup> October, both starting at 9.30 and finishing around lunchtime. The meetings will be at Pippbrook and I imagine they will be in the main chamber because members of the public are being permitted to watch (and listen!) from the public gallery.

Our next meeting will be on 17th October, 7.30, at the Leatherhead Methodist Church, as usual. Simon Ritchie will be giving us a talk on the evolution on Ordnance Survey maps, an example of which I am sure everyone has. The title is "A Brief History of the Ordnance Survey."

Caroline (Brown) Chairman.