



Leatherhead  
Residents  
Association

## A Bulletin for the end of March 2023

Dear Members,

I had thought that this month would be relatively uneventful, but then, first of all came the disappointingly unenthusiastic reaction of Surrey County Council to our desire to improve the High Street. It seems that the current use infringes some safety standards and needs to be modified before any new Planters can be installed.

1. However, I have recently heard from one of our local Councillors (Bridget Kendrick) that the Planters in the High Street are, in fact, to be replaced with better quality versions before the Coronation! That means in just under six weeks, and I do hope it includes the contents, maybe some of them in bloom! The repair of the clock and the implementation of the mural under Waterway Bridge continue to be acknowledged, but no action seems imminent. There could be some disruption to movement, pedestrian and motorized, in the street while the Planters come and go.

2. But more positive news comes from the Leatherhead Community hub. Huge improvements have been made to this early twentieth century building to adapt it to become a major social centre, particularly for Residents of N. Leatherhead. I quote "The Old Schoolhouse Café has far exceeded expectations and is loved and appreciated by many. It has become an important part of life for many in N. Leatherhead, giving opportunities to volunteer and a safe place to meet up with friends." They now have monthly community events to appeal to people of all ages – family meals, films, afternoon teas and soft play for the under fives. These activities apparently attract at least 2,500 visitors a month. It is particularly gratifying to read that workers from Toyota and Nationwide formed a working party last summer to decorate the main Hall, which is much appreciated by Hirers. New visitors are most welcome, so do call in.

3. Litter continues to blight our town and we fail to understand why people cannot take their packets and cups etc. home with them. However, until they do, we will carry on with our "Litter Picks" and the next one is scheduled for Sunday, April 23rd. The equipment is a large, black plastic bag and a "picker," i.e. a long handled stick to save you bending down each time! I shall be in the "Red House Grounds Car Park" on the Randalls Road side from 2 pm on the day with the equipment, and you can either collect it and return it to me on the day, or you can contact me beforehand for a picker and, possibly, an identifying jacket, then

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simply return the full bag(s) before 4.30 on the 23rd. Most people have their own favourite “messy” spot, but you can choose anywhere that you have noticed and which annoys you. The Council will collect the full bags on Monday 24th April.

4. Water Companies seem to be starting to feel they need to contact their customers in a positive way and to that end SES Water is running a big discussion (probably online) on 23rd April between 6 and 7.30. To join it you need to email [yourwateryoursay@ccwater.org.uk](mailto:yourwateryoursay@ccwater.org.uk)

5. Good news for our High Street is that the vacant premises formerly occupied by “Beluga” are to be occupied by a new Pizza restaurant, called Pizza Loca. Co-owners, Jay Sexton and Rodrigo Araujo are Surrey residents with a wealth of experience in the hospitality sector. Their aim is to create a family-friendly restaurant with modern Italian influenced cuisine of which the local community will be proud. The opening date will be announced in the coming weeks and you can follow Pizza Loca on their social media channels: web-site [www.pizzaloca.com](http://www.pizzaloca.com) and <Instagram@the pizzaloca> and <Facebook@thepizzaloca>

6. The (Government) Dept. for Levelling up Housing and Communities is introducing a Capital Fund to 182 Local Authorities in England to provide accommodation for families arriving via Afghan or Ukrainian resettlement and relocation schemes. Clarion, which has undergone extensive checking and testing for mould and damp in its homes, is believed to be about to offer 4 such units on their site above King George’s Gardens. Mount Green will offer another 6. Councillor Stephen Cooksey, Leader of MVDC is also asking people to open their own homes to our Ukrainian guests for the next six months. There are “Thank you” payments. Please contact [homesforukraine@molevalley.gov.uk](mailto:homesforukraine@molevalley.gov.uk) for full information.

7. And now, a few words about the success of “Pop up Leatherhead” which has helped over 70 Mole Valley Businesses in Retail and Business Support Projects. This was set up by “Pop Up Agents” in March 2022 to help with the post-pandemic local economic recovery. It has provided small businesses and entrepreneurs to try out high street retail and actually achieved over £6,000 on one single day of sales. Although about to close on 31st March, a new team will step forward to prepare the unit (former “Next” premises) for the next phase of pop up retail.

8. I am told by Matt Blake (Senior Communications and Marketing Office for MV) that from 22nd March, MVDC will enter the pre-election period and levels of publicity and promotional output will reduce greatly until after the elections on 5th May.

9. Our Treasurer (Paula Sabine) requests that, if you haven’t renewed your membership for 2003, the LRA would be grateful if you would continue your support by doing so now. Those who need to renew will have received an email reminder from Paula or a membership renewal form attached to the hand delivered January Bulletin for those without email.

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Our next Open Meeting will be on Monday, 22nd May at 7.30 pm in the Leatherhead Methodist Church.

I now wish you all a pleasant and happy Easter.

Caroline (Brown) Chairman.

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