



Bulletin for the end of December 2022.

Dear Members,

Welcome to the last Bulletin of 2022. I hope you have found these summaries of local news items of interest over the last 12 months.

1- The Riverside Park : our Council have announced that the landscape designers, Allen Scott Ltd., will be commencing the consultation stage of the project in January, starting with a workshop for key stakeholders before opening up the conversation to the wider public later in the Spring.

2- Bull Hill and The Swan Centre : By the end of this year our Council expect to have agreed financial and legal terms in respect of the re-development of the Bull Hill and Swan Centre sites with their proposed development partner, Kier Property. The next stage will be to seek final approval from the Council Cabinet to formally enter into the partnership.

3- The Draft Local Plan : You may have seen the statement from our Council that in light of the recent announcements by the relevant Minister that the Government is proposing changes to the calculation of housing targets and to the production of Local Plans. The Council has asked the Inspector to pause her consideration of the current Draft, until the effect of the proposals on the Draft is clearer. Hopefully this might lead to a reduction in the number of dwellings that the District is currently being asked to provide. Our M.P., Sir Paul Beresford, has apparently called on the Council to actually withdraw the current plan from the Inspector, to amend it by removing all remaining Green Belt sites and to maximise the numbers on the Brown Field sites.

4. The Rye "BESS": This is a proposed battery "farm" that will store electrical energy during periods of generating excess, which can then be fed back into the National Grid during periods of generating shortfall (notably when solar and wind generation is poor) .The developers are Bluestone Energy Ltd. backed by Macquarie Asset Management. They are proposing to use a Green Belt field that lies between the M25 and Ashted Wood. It is easy to access on foot: go to the top of the road to the right of B&Q and take the footpath that crosses over the M25 and then under two A roads. At the point where there are a number of direction signs the field is to your right. More detailed information on the proposal and how you can comment on it can be found at www.ryebess.com

5. Electric Vehicle Charging Points: As part of the Council's programme to install 90 electric vehicle charging points across the District, work will begin in the New Year to install points in the following car parks:

Swan Centre: 8 during Jan and Feb

Randalls Road: 10 during Feb

Station Road: 8 during March.

6. Help for Ukraine: Many of you will have seen the former Clinton Cards shop in the Swan Centre being transformed into a collection centre for warm bedding and clothing for the unfortunate people of Ukraine. This was organized by the Leatherhead Rotary Club, and they are delighted with the result of almost 600 large bags. These will be on their way as soon as possible during Christmas week.

7. Beluga Bar in High Street: The leasehold owners of this recently opened bar and "night-spot" are seeking purchasers for the business. More information can be obtained from the selling agents, Nationwide Businesses.

8. Former Santander building in High Street: A Planning Application was submitted for this site, but it is situated in a Conservation Area and certain of the proposed architectural details were judged to be unsatisfactory. As a result the application has been refused.

9. The Leatherhead Community Association coffee mornings: the first one for 2023 will be in the library of the Institute on Saturday, 7th January from around 10.00 to 11.30. L.R.A. members are also welcome.

10. The next LRA meeting will be on Monday, 6th February at 7.30 in the Leatherhead Methodist Church in Church Road. We will undoubtedly talk about the Draft Local Plan but what its status will be at that time remains to be seen!

With very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year,

Caroline (Brown) Chairman.