



Leatherhead
Residents Association

Bulletin for April 2024

Dear Members

At last we seem to be enjoying some pleasant Spring weather and I really should be out working in the garden! However, the last few weeks have been surprisingly busy on a number of fronts as follows:

The Local Plan:

Following MVDC's decision to restart the Planning Inspector's consideration of the current Draft Local Plan, the Inspector has sought the views of the established consultees as to the Main Modifications that are thought necessary to make the Plan compliant. The LRA has submitted a Representation, which in brief summary argues as follows:

1. Although zero carbon rating is desirable for new buildings in the future, we feel that this should be achieved by "nationally proven technologies" rather than some of the more radical and unproven methods suggested.
2. We are concerned that the desire to increase the numbers of housing units could be at the cost of preserving our heritage assets. More weight needs to be given to their protection.
3. Similarly, the push for housing units may lead to the construction of excessively tall buildings that will be completely at variance with the existing low-rise townscape. More control over building height is required.
4. We note that, so far, there is no indication of any future plans for either a Health Hub to provide medical services for the new residents that Transform will attract or for a replacement of the Fairfield Centre, should its relocation from the Swan Centre be required. Accessible public transport is essential for both.

Transform Leatherhead:

At the February meeting between Residents and MVDC and their development partner, Kier, it was announced that there would be a series of consultation meetings at which Residents could express their views as to what they hope to see from the Project. I am pleased to say that the LRA has now been invited to those meetings, no doubt with a number of other stakeholders. Dates to suit those involved are in the process of being organised and I will be reporting in future Bulletins on each meeting as they take place.

Planters:

Moving now on to another, long awaited, improvement to our Town, by which I mean the improved landscaping and maintenance of the Plough Roundabout. The daffodils and tulips planted some years ago are much appreciated, but there is a huge gap after they die down! This now appears to be on the point of being solved as the project is on the agenda for CIL grants and various technical and administrative problems appear to have been resolved. Fingers crossed that we will see some action soon!

While on the subject of Planters, it is a relief to see those in the Town have been thinned out and planted up. It is to be hoped that some colourful specimens have been included in the selection.

Mole Valley Safer Neighbourhood Team:

I have recently been informed that the policing of the whole of Mole Valley comes under one Inspector, Inspector **James Green**, whose email is james.green@surrey.police.uk. Leatherhead is dealt with by the "North Team" which comprises one Sergeant, three PCs and three PCSOs. The officer dealing specifically with Leatherhead is PCSO 13930, **Lou Lilly**, whose email address is Lou.Lilly@surrey.police.uk.

Our next meeting:

This will be on **Monday 13th May 2024** in the Leatherhead Methodist Church at 7.30 pm as usual. Our speaker will be David Stoves (whose wife is the secretary there) and he will be talking about his research into "Scams." Unfortunately, these are now part of everyday life, especially on the computer, and many people fall victim to them. In fact, I have heard that more theft takes place nowadays via the internet than do with physical robbery.

From Dorking Climate Emergency:

On **30th April** you are invited to the "Surrey Climate Commission AGM and Gathering" in the Leatherhead Institute at 7.30. Information on the Commission's activities can be found on their website at www.surreyclimate.org.uk This includes a new Surrey Climate e-Forum, an easy-to-use platform full of advice and tips on promoting your work. You can also hear the results of the annual survey of groups working for the environment and the projects the Commission is about to launch. Tickets: (free) available via Eventbrite for Tue 30 Apr 2024 at 19.00.

The Future of The LRA:

Could I ask you to look around your social circles and see if you can identify a future Chairman and a few of his/her friends? Without being specific, many of us here are getting on a bit and it would be good for our Town to have some younger people on our team. They could then see "how the engine works" and a seamless transition could take place in a year or so when some of the incumbents retire.

With all best wishes,

Caroline (Brown)