



Leatherhead  
Residents Association

## Bulletin for November 2024

Dear Members

Well, what a change! At the time of writing this Bulletin the ice outside in the bucket was so hard I could not break it with my hand – I needed a stone! I wonder if this is a foretaste of things to come in our Town! Let's hope not!

As I imagine you are aware, your LRA is in urgent need of new Directors/Officers to help in its running! Some of us are unable to continue in our present roles (you will know that I will resign as chairman this coming April) and there are some areas where we are not as "on the ball" as we would like to be. One such area is our use of social media, which has become such an important communication tool in the modern world. Another is the organising of social events, such as the "Open Gardens Days" and "Race Nights" that used to be such a feature of our calendar. There are others.

So, with this as a starting point, we are looking for more people who really care about Leatherhead to step up to the "plate" (or the screen!) and help to run our Residents' Association. We are an official consultee of our Council and never has there been a more important time for us to be able to take advantage of this status by presenting the views of our members on the important issues currently facing our Town. If you feel you can make a contribution, please do contact me and we can discuss what roles we would like help with and which might best suit your skills and preferences.

Of course one of the biggest current issues is "Transform's" proposals for Bull Hill. Since the public consultation closed and the petition against the current proposals was delivered to the Council at their meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024, there has been little if any further comment from the Council. Let us hope that this means that they and their development partners are having to do some fundamental re-appraising of whether, and if so what, should be developed on this site. Recent planning decisions in nearby Redhill and Hersham show that we are not alone in rejecting the urbanisation of our Town by the construction of multi-storey tower blocks.

Also, at the 15th October Council meeting it was announced that under the new Governments revised planning regulations, the housing allocation set by the new Local Plan might have to be doubled in relatively short order. Quite how this can be achieved when it was such a struggle to achieve the current target remains to be seen. Perhaps instead of

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doubling the present allocation for the Districts existing settlements, could the answer be found in what the LRA and others suggested when the current plan was being formulated i.e. the construction of an entirely new settlement in the relatively undeveloped southern part of the District?

In spite of all that, we do have some things to be thankful for:

### **A Georgian Christmas in Leatherhead**

On 6th December (3.00pm to 6.30pm) and on 7th December (11.00am to 3.00pm) there will be a Jane Austen inspired Georgian Christmas in the Swan Centre complete with artisan market stalls, costumed characters and other traditional Christmas activities, like readings from "Emma," Carols and a charity toy sale. This is a "Carnival" plus, and not to be missed !

### **Update on Waste and Recycling Collections**

I hear that the Council's waste contractor, Amey, has promised an improvement in their waste and recycling collections with another collection crew having been introduced and further training for staff. Our Council apparently welcomes this but is to continue to stress the importance of greater performance in their further meetings with Amey.

### **Business Improvement District**

On Wednesday 13th November businesses in Leatherhead were invited to have their say on the idea of a proposed Business Improvement District (BID) for Leatherhead. The event was hosted by the newly formed "Leatherhead BID Steering Group" and funded by the Council. Online responses will be accepted until 27th November. For all enquiries, please email the Leatherhead BID Steering Group at [leatherheadbid@gmail.com](mailto:leatherheadbid@gmail.com)

### **Community Safety Priorities**

Mole Valley's Community Safety Partnership is made up of much larger groups like the Surrey Police, Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner, Surrey Council, Surrey and Sussex Probation Service, Surrey Fire Authority, Surrey Heartlands Clinical Commissioning Group and Local Housing Associations.

They all collaborate to reduce crime and disorder and can prioritize local actions where it adds value. Have you been a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour? Are there places in Mole Valley where you don't feel safe? Are you confident that crime is being tackled? Visit <https://www.molevalley.gov.uk/mvcsp/> until Wed. 18 Dec 2024 to fill in a helpful form.

### **Rethink Waste Initiative**

The aims of this scheme are to raise awareness among all sections of society, not just the very young. Led by the Surrey Environment Partnership, a series of online quizzes, pledges and videos are offered to those signing up and the prizes are Points which can be used to donate to Charities or to support local schools. Schools with the most points win a share of

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the Prize Money. Since its launch Rethink Waste has awarded over £17,000 to Surrey primary schools. Just google and lots of ideas will appear.

### **Local Government Finance**

A newly published Local Government Association (LGA) Finance Peer Challenge report acknowledges Mole Valley as a well-managed and proactive council which nonetheless faces significant financial pressures. The extent of these pressures was made clear at a recent Council meeting where it was revealed that despite having made savings of approaching £0.5m, another £1.2m are required .

With all best festive wishes for a happy run-up to Christmas,

Caroline (Brown)

Chairman

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