



Leatherhead
Residents Association

Bulletin for December 2024

Dear Members

I feel as if I have been buffeted by a high wind for very nearly the whole of this year. Early on, our Council was in close contact with their chosen developers and trying to find a cure for some (if not all!) of Leatherhead's problems. When their plans were finally revealed they seemed to follow the blueprint that our government is seeking for the whole country, namely unchecked 1950's style development which has little regard for existing landscapes and townscapes. However, there is, perhaps, a small beacon of hope to be taken from the last announcement coming from The Leret Partnership. In it they acknowledge that their public consultation revealed (1) a desire for an improved range of shops, (2) strong concern as to the height of any new buildings, (3) a wish for the retention of a much larger park on the Bull Hill site and (4) the necessity for a full transport assessment of the one-way system. This is a tall order, but one I believe is capable of being fulfilled.

I recently attended a meeting between Mole Valley, Surrey Council and the various Residents' Associations in our area to discuss one problem in particular, and that is the very narrow footpath on Waterway Road. One suggestion was that there should be two new bridges over the Mole, not for cars but for bikes and pedestrians. One would be near Thorncroft Drive and the other much nearer the town. These would help people keen on sport, but I am not sure how they would improve the journey on foot or bike from Fetcham to Therfield School.

At long last there does seem to be a breakthrough on the subject of local banking services. It seems that Dorking is likely to have a "Banking Hub" but thus far Leatherhead has only been granted an "automated deposit service (notes)." Apparently the former should be available within a few months, but an appeal process is sought to push for a similar service in Leatherhead.

Several members of the Leatherhead Residents' Association attended a Surrey Police meeting at the end of last month where the Police revealed their plans for their new district H.Q on the site of the old ERA building on Cleeve Road. It seems that this could create significant short and long term job opportunities as well as a boost to local retail and other trade.

Email via www.leatherheadresidents.org.uk/contact

Registered Office: Fewston, St. Nicholas Hill, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 8NE

The LRA is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales, No. 10248803

And now for a few words on what is happening on the Drama front in Leatherhead this Christmas season. I think our festivities should be mentioned and applauded where possible. On Saturday, 13th December, there were two events. One was supported by our Council in the Abraham Dixon Hall and enabled the free filming of "A Christmas Carol." Whilst written by Charles Dickens, it was performed by those much more up-to-date characters, "The Muppets." Free tea and mince pies were included.

The other event is the pantomime, Dick Whittington, which is performed in the Thorndike Theatre and will continue throughout the month of December. It is in the true, traditional style of Pantos, containing amusing jokes, implausible action and some fantastic costumes. The audience is regularly encouraged to either ask questions or to repeat phrases. The actors, all with superb voice and well-trained speech, push the rather lightweight story clearly on. Dick's cat, a major character, moves effortlessly from short feline ripostes to extremely comprehensible, plain English and takes the audience with him. The traditional Dame has a variety of amazing, uncoordinated outfits and slips in numerous comments on the action to the audience alone, thus occasioning much laughter. Dick himself is a delightful, friendly character.

Regarding our Association, as you probably know, we have been trying very hard to find a new Chairman to take over from me in April. Our search goes on, so I would be very pleased to hear from anyone who thinks the role may be of interest. We have had some offers in respect of smaller roles, and I am hoping to see them in early January. We in Mole Valley and others in other communities and Councils are going to have their work cut out trying to deflect or, at the very least, modify Government development plans and in my view, it is important that the LRA is fully resourced and able to help local residents in this regard.

Our next meeting will be in the Leatherhead Methodist Church as usual, at 7.30 pm on Monday, 20th January 2025. We decided at the last Board meeting to make it into a "Social," with a short formal meeting followed by an opportunity for us all to chat and socialise with each other, accompanied by finger food, soft drinks and tea/coffee.

I must now get this Bulletin sent on its way before some of the content becomes irrelevant!

With best seasonal wishes from me and the rest of the Board,

Caroline (Brown)

Chairman

Email via www.leatherheadresidents.org.uk/contact

Registered Office: Fewston, St. Nicholas Hill, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 8NE

The LRA is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales, No. 10248803