



Leatherhead  
Residents Association

## Bulletin for March 2025

Dear Members

I had thought that March would be a quiet month, but, how wrong I was! What with no Elections in May, but with the prospect of Unitary Authorities hanging over us, the general rise in the cost of living, Transform Leatherhead wanting us (yet again) to spell out what we do and what we do not like, the implications of a third Heathrow runway, a Litter Pick in April and, finally, last but certainly not least, the search for a new Chairman to take over from me, it has been anything but!

I will start with the Litter Pick which is scheduled for **6th April**. This will follow the usual pattern, in that some of us will be in the Randalls Road Car Park from 2.00pm to greet the volunteers and after all the planned litter picking is finished, please could you leave the bags in the same car park, at the back, near the hedge. Very often, members have done their stint earlier, and will call for a cup of tea, a biscuit and a chat. If you personally know of a “good” area (i.e. bestrewn with litter!), you could put that on FB, or tell me and I will “advertise” it. We aim to finish around 4.00pm.

Our next Open Meeting will be in the Leatherhead Methodist Church on **Monday, 28th April at 7.30pm**. We have been lucky enough to persuade Mr. Nigel Bond to come and explain why the River Mole is so polluted, what can be done about it and how long is likely to take.

An issue I have been discussing recently with local people active in the education/training field is the number of young people who leave school with little prospect of training or employment. It seems to me that somehow children need to be made even more aware that they need education if they are to obtain training or employment later on in life and the better their education is, the better the opportunities that will be open to them. Locally, I understand that it is hoped that Transform will present opportunities for youth employment, but that is not a solution to the root cause of the problem. I wonder whether modest financial prizes might encourage greater application at school and certainly the scourge of truancy needs to be eradicated.

I am very pleased to say that, probably as a result of my pleas via this Bulletin, but also through word of mouth, two very focussed gentlemen have agreed to join the Board of the L.R.A. They will be working with the other Board members over the coming months and

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once they have settled in, we will decide who wants to take on what roles, one of which is likely to be my replacement as Chairman. The two volunteers are: **Steve Preston** (who was instrumental in organising the Petition against the development of the Park) and **Tim Caffell**, currently a Director of the Leatherhead Theatre.

And now a reminder from our Treasurer:

“If you need to renew your LRA membership for 2025, you will have received an email, or, if not an email, a hardcopy of the membership renewal form. If you haven’t renewed yet, we would be grateful if you would renew and continue supporting the LRA.”

I now move to our biggest concern and that is **Transform Leatherhead**. Many of you will have written to the Leret Partnership as part of the recent consultation exercise in respect of their latest plans and it will be interesting to see what the consensus views are.

For my part, I think the Swan Centre proposals fit reasonably well into the Town, but there does seem to be doubt as to whether a new cinema will be viable, whether it will have an adverse impact on the Theatre and concern that new restaurants are to be created at the expense of existing shops. It is also an enormously expensive construction exercise, which must be heavily subsidised by the increased development on Bull Hill.

As regards Bull Hill, certainly the latest plans are an improvement on the previous ones, but there is still too much development for the realistic capacity of the site, given that 450 housing units, a multi-storey car park and a reasonably sized replacement park are necessities. The only way the extra building can be accommodated is by building excessively tall buildings of 8, 10, and even 12 storeys. Whatever the Leret Partnership’s “experts” may say, I certainly do not believe that buildings of this size sit well in our north Surrey market town.

With very best wishes,

Caroline Brown (Chairman)

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