



Leatherhead
Residents Association

Bulletin for May 2025

Dear Members

I never thought that I would get tired of continuously dry, sunny weather! After all, ordinarily we need to flock to the coasts of Spain, Greece and France in our thousands to enjoy such weather! But for such conditions to come to our own backyards recently is somewhat unnerving! Our plants were not bought with weather like this in mind!

I have had an unprecedented number of communications on the subject of the amalgamation of District Councils into our County Council and its subsequent sub-division. Nine of Surrey's District and Borough Councils are in favour of a tripartite division, whereas Elmbridge, Mole Valley and Surrey itself would prefer two. New elections in whatever format the Government decides will take place next May 2026.

On the same subject, Mole Valley Council Leader, Councillor Stephen Cooksey, has announced his retirement from this role so that he can concentrate on the process of Council re-organisation. The new Executive Leader is Cllr. Bridget Kendrick and her deputy is Cllr. Claire Malcomson. Councillor Roger Adams will take over as Chairman, whilst Councillor Simon Budd becomes Vice-chairman. In addition, Tim Hall has taken the ceremonial role of SCC Chairman.

Perhaps in light of the tremendous amount of development that is anticipated over coming years, our Council is currently consulting on new "Design Codes" for our District. These 'codes' attempt to provide guidance as to what the Planning Department will regard as acceptable in design terms for various forms of development throughout the various parts of the District. The draft "Codes" are currently **available for inspection and comment in all our public libraries and** there will also be several drop-in events where residents can also make comments. For further information, visit: www.molevalley.gov.uk/planning-building/consultations/. Any questions? **The Kirby Room** in the Institute will be open on **9 June** from 4pm to 8pm.

Over the past nine months, MVDC reports that it has allocated more than £149,000 of Business Support Grant Funding to local Businesses from UK Government Funds. This was formerly called the "Shared Prosperity Fund" (UKSPF). A family mediation organisation, a child cancer support organisation, a Fetcham-based day trip and short break holiday specialist, and the Riverbridge House Business Centre have all been recipients of funds.

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Another Fund, known as the “Neighbourhood Fund Agreement” has helped with the upkeep and maintenance of various facilities in our area of Surrey. In Leatherhead, the North Leatherhead Community Hub café and Well Being Garden have been recipients of grants, which consist of money collected from developers when new homes or commercial premises are built in the District. Anyone can make an application to the Neighbourhood Fund at any time of the year to help deliver new infrastructure or maintain what already exists. The next deadline for applications is **2 June 2025**.

Blue Heart Verges: I have seen a very interesting document on Surrey Council’s management of our road verges. It explains that Conservation verges fall into two categories: Amphibian verges and Botanical verges, the first being popular with toads and frogs and the second with various types of orchid. It is explained that the standard for grass cutting across Surrey is 6 urban cuts, 2/3 rural cuts and 2 high-speed road cuts per year. Although the reasons and benefits of removing grass cuttings are understood, it is simply too expensive for it to be raked up, transported and disposed of, so it is left in situ.

And now for two issues raised by one of our Directors - do you have an opinion?

1. **The Bollards on Cleeve Road:** they narrow the road so that it is safer for the pupils to cross the road while going to or coming from Therfield School. My co-director points out that some drivers simply pull them out so as to facilitate access for their lorry or van! There is no development currently going on along Cleeve Road, so presumably these large/wide vehicles travel along Cleeve Road, using it as a short cut, when they should be using Kingston Road plus Randalls Road.

2. There is talk about the **access road to the Tip** being improved. With all this dry weather, the deep potholes are, thankfully, visible. There was an attempt to warn drivers with some yellow road markings, but these have now faded. Why cannot repairs be made during this dry summer weather, before winter comes and we are all confronted with having to drive through ponds of dirty water in order to use our re-cycling facility? It may be that the road is simply inadequate and needs re-building??

On a more up-beat note I can report that we had a very successful VE Day on May 5th. A collection of memorabilia from the war years had been organised and also on show there was a vintage lorry, a huge Leatherhead Urban District Rescue car and a very long, American jeep. Inside the Parish Hall, there were ration books, savings books, bomb casings, flags galore, music and, at intervals, dancing and a film. Representatives of various charities had gathered together to hold raffles in aid of their particular Cause. Your Chairman even won a mug and socks with prints of a very modern character, The Mandalorian, so she now feels very up to date! For many, the day finished with a trip on the vintage red bus (sponsored by the LRA) all the way to the top of the town, B&Q, and back again. It did this circle six times and was virtually full each time!

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The next Open LRA meeting will either be on **14 July or 4 August**. More details later.

With all best wishes for a warm and restful summer holiday.

Caroline (Brown)

Chairman

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