The Bookhams Residents' Association

bookhamresidents.org.uk
Tel: 0300 030 9890

June 2026

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Diary date: 100th AGM, Thursday 16th July - Old Barn Hall

Photo - Steve Poole

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Simon Edge
BRA Chairman

Welcome to the BRA's Spring 2026 Newsletter. As ever, there is much to say and little space available, so I will dive straight in.

BRA Centenary

June 2026 marks the BRA's Centenary. As well as the start of the BRA, 1926 also saw the births of Queen Elizabeth II and Sir David Attenborough; the first British Grand Prix (at Brooklands); and the first national General Strike. Public services, and how they are delivered have changed many times over the last 100 years, and will change again soon to a Unitary Authority (UA) format. The BRA will continue, but what of the next 100 years? While my crystal-ball can only see so far, I'm sure the BRA will continue to work for the community for many years to come.

Looking to The Future

In March 2026, Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) concluded its Community Governance Review (CGR) and agreed that Residents were against creating a Bookham Parish Council (PC).

Residents comments echoed the BRA's and other Residents' Associations views of the CGR process being: premature, lacking sufficient information, rushed and

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potentially undemocratic. Many residents praised BRA volunteer's hard work, and we thank them for that. Residents' comments also gave us an opportunity to think about further enhancing how the BRA engages with residents and represents their views.

Whatever the future has in store for the Bookhams, the BRA will remain an apolitical voluntary membership organisation open to all residents of Great and Little Bookham. The BRA will continue to work to:

- Understand local issues, help to inform residents views, and to make those views heard
- Deliver practical work to benefit the community
- Report to residents on its work; and help to improve/hold to account those responsible for the services residents rely on and are affected by.

Areas of focus for 2026 to 2030

We are taking a 'long view' as the next few years will see a wholesale change in how local government services are provided. The UA is unlikely to be either a panacea or a catastrophe. It will have teething issues, and even when working smoothly the wants/views of Bookham residents will not always prevail. We should not be surprised at that. Although capable of good work, MVDC and Surrey County Council (SCC) have both been deficient in their dealings with important local issues. MVDC did not heed residents' opposition to aspects of its Local Plan, or the 250+ objections to the Preston Farm development, then there was the debacle of the interpretation of the consultation on the Bookham Master Plan. SCC has repeatedly struggled to deliver mowing schedules that respect Blue Heart verges, dismissed concerns over potential large rises in peak hour traffic from developments on the Lower Road, and there have been years of delay in delivering the new Youth and Community Centre.

The BRA will focus on:

1. **Local Government Reorganisation**
   Lobby the new UA for the benefit of the Bookhams and hold it to account in delivering services. Work with other Residents Associations (RA) and PCs to become part of the North Mole Valley Neighbourhood Area Committee.
2. **Community Support and Improvement**
   Education & young people, Highways: Infrastructure & Safety, Environment & Amenity, Project work
3. **Communications**
   Newsletters, quarterly business updates, noticeboards, social media, and email campaigns to residents
4. **Planning Strategic:** Consulting with neighbouring RAs and PCs on strategic planning matters. Comment on local and national planning policy
   Planning Operational: Review and comment on planning applications, as needed, to preserve the character of the Bookhams.
5. **Heritage:** Promote awareness/ appreciation and protection of Bookham's heritage both built and natural

For more information please follow the link to the BRA paper: "Looking to The Future – 2026 and beyond"

The Bookhams Residents' Association Newsletter is published twice a year in the June and November and is distributed by a team of volunteers to all Bookham households. You may contact the BRA via our website:
www.bookhamresidents.org.uk
Or call: 0300 030 9890

Our website is updated regularly with BRA news and local authority information. You may also sign up for our occasional e-mail service and pay your annual subscription online.

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www.bookhamresidents.org.uk/looking-to-the-future-2026-and-beyond/

Annual General Meeting and 100th Anniversary

Thursday, 16th July 2026 commencing at 7.30 pm at The Old Barn Hall, Church Road, Great Bookham.

To all members: This is formal notice of the 2026 Annual General Meeting, The Agenda will be published on the BRA website and noticeboards.

If you would like to submit an item for the Agenda, please advise Les Huett, Company Secretary, no later than the 28th June in writing to the Registered Office or by email to:

company.secretary@bookhamresidents.org.uk

100th Anniversary

After the formal business of the meeting we will be celebrating 100 years of the Bookhams Residents' Association.

Light refreshments will be served as part of the celebrations

Coming up

The Newsletter is bursting with information and articles in particular the positive update on building the new Bookham Youth and Community Centre.

The core running through everything the BRA does for the community is volunteering – local people giving their time and knowledge to 'do something' for the community and the place they love to live. BRA volunteers have continued to do so much for the benefit of the Bookhams. I hope you enjoy reading their updates.

Have a great Summer!

Simon

Simon Edge
BRA Chairman

East Surrey Council Elections

In the 7th May East Surrey elections the elected candidates for Bookham & Fetcham West ward are Caroline Joseph and Andrew Matthews. We congratulate both Caroline and Andrew on their success and we look forward to working with them in the new East Surrey Council in 2027.

We shall of course continue to work with all our existing District and County Councillors.

Can you help?

We are in need of a new team member to help with our marketing and communications activities. particularly in social media as we move forward with our Looking to the Future strategy. If you can help, please contact Simon Edge via Contact Us on the BRA website.

Future Surrey

From Future Surrey:

What happens after the May 2026 election?
Councillors elected in May 2026 will initially sit on shadow authorities for their respective new councils. During this period, they will:

- Develop budgets and service plans
- Agree staffing structures and governance arrangements
- Prepare for the transfer of responsibilities from the existing councils
- Engage with residents and local partners to shape priorities

The new unitary councils will formally begin operating on 1 April 2027, when all 12 legacy councils in Surrey will be dissolved.

Bookham Life Art at Lower Shott

Les Huett

You may recall in the November 2025 BRA Newsletter we reported on Bookham Life Art at the Lower Shott bus stop. At the time of publication the installation of the artwork hadn't been completed. However, it has now and on a chilly autumn afternoon we had the big reveal!

The artist is Elise Macfarlane, a Year 8 student at The Howard of Effingham School, who chose to centre her triptych on three famous authors with Bookham connections: Jane Austen, C.S Lewis and Lewis Carroll.

Elise's artworks have made a drab old bus shelter much more colourful and interesting and along with the other improvements initiated by the BRA is making the Lower Shott much more attractive part of the village centre.

Well done Elise – a worthy winner of the BRA Life Art Competition

Elise receives her award and prize from Simon Edge, BRA Chairman.

New Planters at Lower Shott

Frances Fancourt - BRA Tree Warden

In addition to the Life Art installation at Lower Shott the environment team have been busy adding new planters to the amenity block at Lower Shott. With other planting making a real difference!

Christmas Lights in the shopping area

Geoff Tranter - BRA Projects Director

It seems a long way off now as we enjoy the bright spring weather but would like to thank the contributors to the 2025 Christmas lights in the shopping area:

- Mole Valley District Council
- Surrey County Council
- Blakes of Bookham Florist
- Boots
- Brackenburys
- Cachet (Ladies Fashion)
- Diamond Nails
- Good Nail/Day Lights
- Heartwood Inns
- Henshaws
- Huggins and Edwards
- Indigo Stripes
- Leytons Greengrocers
- One Mizuho (Kitchen Furniture)
- Patrick Gardener
- Pip & Gray
- Rohallion Security
- The Bakery Shop
- The Royal Oak
- Thrive Studio
- Woodland Wines

And thanks go to Christian Dowse and his team for erecting the lights. We are also pleased to announce that following the local government changes, we have had commitment from SCC that they will contribute to this year's Christmas lights.

Bookham Commons

Tom Harrison interviews National Trust Ranger, Ella Brasington

Ella and volunteers in action!

Living in Bookham, we are fortunate to have access to an extensive network of countryside, with paths and trails for walking, cycling and riding, or simply places to pause and enjoy the landscape. Bookham Commons is one such place – but it is also much more than that.

The Commons has been cared for by the National Trust since the 1920s, when local residents raised the funds to purchase the land and secure its long-term protection. This early, community-driven act of conservation is something we can all continue to appreciate today.

Since late summer 2024, Bookham Commons has been looked after by National Trust Ranger Ella Brasington. Ella brings a strong scientific background to the role, having studied Tropical Forest Ecology at Master's level at Imperial College London. This combination of academic knowledge and hands-on conservation experience leaves her ideally placed to understand the Commons.

Ella is particularly excited to be working at Bookham Commons because they are not just as a recreational landscape but a site of exceptional scientific importance which is among the most intensively studied and species-rich sites in England. The London Natural History Society (LNHS) has been recording wildlife here for over a century. Generations of natural historians, ecologists and local recorders have built up an extraordinary archive, making the Commons one of the best-documented wildlife sites in the country. These long-term records provide invaluable insight into the recent ecological history of Bookham Commons, helping Ella to make unusually well-informed decisions about land management and conservation.

Both the National Trust and the LNHS are keen for this monitoring to continue, so that changes in species, habitats and populations can be tracked in response to climate change, land use and management. Anyone interested in contributing may do so via **bookhamcommonschair@lnhs.org.uk** or **bookhamcommons@nationaltrust.org.uk.**

In recognition of this remarkable biodiversity, Bookham Commons was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the 1960s. The SSSI citation highlights an astonishing fact: for insects such as bugs, spiders, dragonflies and moths, the Commons supports between a quarter and a third of all British species - an extraordinary total for such a small area. The site is also rich in lichens and fungi, supports bats, reptiles and amphibians, and is home to rare butterflies and a thriving bird population. Recent sightings include nesting grey herons and little egrets, a pair of ravens, greater spotted woodpeckers, garden warblers and the much-loved call of the common cuckoo.

The citation explains that this diversity is due to the wide range of habitats found in close proximity, including woodland, scrub, grassland and open water. Ella also points to another crucial factor: Bookham Commons has never been ploughed. This long continuity of undisturbed ground has preserved ancient soils and seed banks, allowing specialised and rare plants (and the wildlife that depends on them) to survive long after they have disappeared from much of the wider countryside.

As landowner and custodian, the National Trust is legally required to maintain the ecological character

of the Commons and protect the features for which it was designated. This includes safeguarding ancient soils, keeping grasslands open by preventing scrub from taking over, and maintaining ponds and streams. Some management work can appear counter-intuitive at first, but every intervention is carefully planned to protect this special place. This can include closing and repairing damage from informal cycle routes which have damaged precious soils or removing invasive species that threaten native wildlife - which can even include large trees such as Turkey oaks. Ella is keen to help people understand why these actions are necessary, while also working hard to provide ways for everyone to continue enjoying the Commons without harming its sensitive habitats. She is particularly enthusiastic about the use of traditional countryside skills that work with nature to keep habitats healthy.

Wildlife seen on the common this year: Peacock butterfly, cuckoo and lizard images by Colin Kemp, National Trust volunteer.

If you are especially lucky this summer, you may even encounter the magnificent carthorses Frank and Percy, who will be helping Ella restore the village's hay meadows.

This is the first of an occasional article to keep residents up to date with the ongoing management of the Common.

Blue Hearts

The BRA is saddened to report that the Blue Hearts team, Diane and Steve Poole, have decided to cease involvement with the Blue Hearts scheme operated by Surrey County Council's Highways (SCC).

Diane and Steve started the scheme in Bookham in 2020 which was then taken up by SCC. Wildflower Verges are now part of SCC's recently approved Nature Recovery Strategy and in October 2025, Blue Hearts won Mole Valley District Council's Sustainability award for "Nature and Diversity". That all sounds very positive, so what's happened? Well, alongside having great difficulty engaging with SCC's Highways Management to make SCC's system work properly, there are three main problems:

- SCC's unilateral decision that individuals can no longer apply for a Blue Heart Verge, only community groups;
- SCC has stipulated a minimum verge size of 10m x 3m, citing scientific information which was quickly shown and agreed to have been misquoted by SCC. The bogusly stipulated minimum size criteria rules out many verges (and is suspected to be for the convenience of the mowing contractor).
- Confidence has been lost in SCC's ability to mow in accordance with the agreed protocol, and its digital map is unreliable. Registered verges have been mown when they shouldn't have been, yet cutting a 1m strip next to roads or footpaths ('framing'), for the benefit of road and pavement users rarely happens.

After much effort, confidence has been lost that SCC will ever do the job properly. Instead, Diane and Steve will continue to provide residents with advice, and work on areas with permissions that don't involve SCC. We hear that they will be relaunching their Facebook page as **Bookham Blooms and Nature** to highlight other activities including community planting, wildlife gardening, Bookham Open Gardens and their work at The Grange. We congratulate Diane and Steve and thank them for the work they have done over the years. We wish them every success and we support them in their endeavours.

Note
At the time of writing this article, the BRA understands that SCC plans to run a consultation in late May seeking residents views on wildflower verges. Some prefer neat and tidy, others prefer to support verges as biodiversity corridors. We await the outcome of the consultation.

Major milestone for the new Youth & Community Centre.

Press release from Surrey County Council 14th May 2026

Surrey County Council Leader, Tim Oliver, project and community partners gathered this week to mark a significant milestone in the development of a new youth and community centre for Bookham, a project set to become a vibrant hub for young people and residents of all ages.

The first dig, marking the start of the construction phase of the new centre, reflects the dedication and collaboration of many partners, including Surrey County Council's Land & Property team, CampbellReith, Beard Construction, Bookham Youth and Community Association (BYCA), and many more.

While progress has not come without challenges, the commitment to delivering for the community has remained steadfast. Initial plans proposed in 2021 for a new facility on the Lower Road recreation ground had to be revised following changes to planning regulations affecting green belt land, rendering the original scheme unviable. Despite these setbacks and delays, the Council remained determined to find a way forward.

Cllr Clare Curran, Surrey County Council Member for Bookham and Fetcham West said: "*Starting to build our new youth and community centre is bringing* our shared vision *to life. A debt of gratitude is owed to the BYCA, the local community and the Bookhams Residents' Association which have all played a vital role in supporting this project throughout and bringing it forward.*"

Tim Oliver, leader of the Council said: "This new youth and community centre is designed to be far more than just a building. It will be a welcoming and inclusive space that strengthens community connections and supports wellbeing. The centre will provide a safe and inspiring environment for young people, a place for families, clubs and local groups to gather, and a hub where older residents can remain active and socially connected."
With flexible indoor facilities alongside outdoor sports amenities, the centre will be leased to and run by Bookham Youth and Community Association. It will offer a safe space for young people and offer a wide range of opportunities for residents to be active, social, and engaged, all within their local area. Accessibility and inclusivity have been central to the design, ensuring the space is open and welcoming to everyone in the community.

David Cox, Chair of Bookham Youth and Community Association said: "*The original youth club, delivered by the Leatherhead Youth Project with support from Bookhams' Churches Together and BYCA, thrived and the young people of Bookham and surrounding areas felt they had their "own place". Building on this success, the new Youth and Community Centre will provide a safe, inclusive hub for local young people to reach their full potential and will also support Bookham Colts under 9s football teams.*
This milestone reflects strong partnerships with Land and Property and CampbellReith and we would also like to thank Your Fund Surrey, whose small community projects grant will help equip the centre.

David Cox - Chair of BYCA (centre) marks the occasion with the "breaking ground" ceremony.

BYCA extends its thanks to all those who have contributed thus far to delivery of the new building"
Tom Jenkinson, Director at Beard Construction said: "Beard Construction are delighted to be selected as Principal Contractor to deliver the new Bookham Community Centre. This project is an investment in the local community, and we're proud to be part of it.
With features like a Glulam structural frame, green roof, Electric Vehicle charging facilities, and enhanced Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) pitch, the development will become a vibrant hub for Bookham."

Grant Plain, Partner at CampbellReith said: "*As project manager, we have worked closely with Surrey County Council, Bookham Youth and Community Association and Beard Construction, to bring to life long-awaited plans for a new sustainable community centre in Bookham. We are proud to play a part in delivering a thriving community asset for current and future generations to enjoy."*

This development represents Surrey County Council's long-term investment in Bookham's future, fostering stronger relationships with local communities, improving health and wellbeing, and creating opportunities for generations to come. The youth and community centre building is expected to be completed in early 2027.

Lower Road Recreation Ground

Debbie Shand - BRA Project Manager

Update on planned improvements to Lower Road Recreation Ground

Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) has recently approved a major new investment in parks and playgrounds across the district, with nearly £3.9 million allocated through Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) funding. This significant programme will deliver upgrades to a number of sites, including Lower Road Recreation Ground in Bookham, alongside improvements in Ashtead, Dorking and Leatherhead.

The programme will prioritise inclusive, accessible and engaging facilities, with new equipment and multi-use games areas designed to appeal to a wide range of ages and abilities.

For Bookham, this is particularly positive news. The SCIL funding allocated by Mole Valley will now be combined with the £100,000 previously secured by the Bookham Residents Association (BRA) through the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy. The BRA has worked closely with MVDC to reach this point and by bringing together local and strategic funding streams, the scope and ambition of improvements at Lower Road can be significantly increased.

The Council has also approved a procurement strategy to appoint a specialist contractor who will work with our local community to design and deliver the improvements. This means residents will have opportunities to help shape the future of their local park, ensuring the final scheme reflects the needs and priorities of those who use it most.
The BRA looks forward to working closely with Mole Valley and local residents as plans for Lower Road Recreation Ground develop further.

The Remarkable Julia Sweet - Founder of The Grange

An occasional article by Vivien White

Julia Sweet

If you have visited The Grange Centre for People with Disabilities you may be aware that its forerunner, The School of Stitchery and Lace was founded by a woman called Julia Sweet. The Grange knows very little about Julia, probably because she died only four years after The School moved to Great Bookham from Leicester in 1938. But without her The Grange charity would not exist. My research has revealed a remarkable woman who deserves to be remembered. After suffering childhood abuse, she built a fulfilling life helping disabled women by using embroidery and lace making.

Julia appeared to come from a traditional and stable background. She was born in Ontario in Canada in 1881, the first of eight children of the Reverend Algernon Sweet (a Church of England Minister) and his wife, Alice, whilst her father was serving as a missionary. The family returned to England in 1886 and in 1891 he became vicar of Cowlinge in Suffolk. But her father was physically and emotionally abusive, particularly towards her mother who her father believed was unfaithful to him against all evidence to the contrary. After leaving home by the age of 19 to work as a governess, Julia returned briefly in 1902 to support her mother in a Separation Order Case she brought and won against her husband on the grounds of his abuse.

Julia took up a position as a governess in Madeira in August 1914 and was then effectively trapped there for the duration of the First World War, which was to change her life. In 1915 Julia's brother was killed in a naval explosion. Whilst women back home were supporting the War effort, with many serving as nurses, Julia found something useful to do on what was then a poor island helping the poor women there sell their embroidery. She was a skilled embroideress herself, having learned from her mother.

After the War Julia returned home and decided to make her livelihood from using embroidery and lacemaking to help the poor and disabled, including nurses disabled in the War. She became the partner of Catherine Channer by 1921, running a lace business and tea room in Northampton. Her spare time was spent teaching disabled women lace making and embroidery skills. In 1926 the partnership was dissolved to let Julia achieve her ambition to set up a school specifically to teach disabled people stitchery and lace skills that they could use to give them an income.

The School was in Leicester, but

she held and attended exhibitions around the country showing and selling the work of the women attached to her School. Influential and wealthy women visited the exhibitions and a group of these came to support her vision and acted as her advisers. One showed her work to Queen Mary, wife of King George V who became a customer and supporter, with other members of the Royal Family following. By 1937 there were 60 disabled workers dependent on the School for their income.

The School moved to The Grange on 1st February 1938 in order to fulfil Julia's ambition to have a larger property in which to train disabled as teachers and accommodate trainees.
A group of her supporters formed an informal committee in June 1937 to help achieve her ambition as her business was solvent but had no capital. Supposedly, Julia found The Grange whilst attending a wedding nearby. The £5,000 purchase price was funded by loans from her supporters with one, Miss Jean Alexander loaning £4,000 - £3,500 of which she gave as a gift in 1942. The School moved to The Grange on 1st February 1938 and was incorporated as a registered company on 11th January 1939, shortly before War was declared on 3rd September 1939. Despite the War the School became quickly established and by the beginning of 1940 housed a full complement of 29 trainees with service buildings being added and repairs made to the main house.

By 1942 the School was debt free largely as a result of Miss Alexander's gift. Queen Mary also donated £250. But Julia was not to see the fruits of the School's success.
She was admitted to The Hostel of St Luke, St Pancras in late 1942 after being diagnosed with severe heart disease, where she died on 10th November, leaving her small personal estate to the School. She was 61 years old.
The School she founded has flourished. It became a registered charity on 22 September 1962, started to take men as well as women in 1989 and its name changed to The Grange Training Centre and Workshop for the Handicapped to reflect its wider range of activities on 2nd December 1971. It became The Grange Centre for People with Disabilities in 1995.

It still follows Julia Sweet's original vision of giving adults with disabilities vocational training to enable them to be as independent as possible and live fulfilled lives.

Find more about The Grange at:
www.grangecentre.org.uk

There will be an exhibition on Little Bookham's history at Manor Farm Tithe Barn in Little Bookham for Heritage Open Day on Saturday 12th September to which everyone is welcome. Vivien White can be contacted at:
littlebookhamhistory@btinternet.com

Interested in local history? This talk in aid of The Grange on 25th June at Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall at 7.30 will be of interest. Tickets from:
www.eventbrite.co.uk

Great British Spring Clean

Margaret Lawson - Litter Pick co-ordinator

The litter picking group participated in the Great British Spring Clean on 22nd March, with our group collecting several large pieces of metal but only eight bags of litter. Obviously the Great British Spring Clean had been effective! Usually on our monthly picks we collect between 15 and 20 bags of litter and lots of different types of unwanted things. On average we have about 20 pickers helping, including Guides and Beavers. We also have our Wombles who adopt and litter pick their local 'patch'. These Our wonderful Bookham residents are not deterred by bad weather. They turn up whether it's cold, windy or wet, and I'm very grateful to them all.

See page 12 for details of our regular litter pick.

Love where you live
KEEP BRITAIN TIDY

BRA services for the community

The BRA has a number of activities and free services and to make day-to-day community life in Bookham just that little bit easier and to enjoy living in Bookham. To find out more visit the BRA website and use the Quick Links for the BRA, Community and Council & Utilities.

bookhamresidents.org.uk

Village Noticeboards

We have five noticeboards around the village. We accept A4 and A5 posters. For more details on how to submit and what we accept are available on the BRA website.

Litter Pick

We meet on the first Sunday of the month at Lower Shot at 11.00 am. If it's a Bank Holiday weekend then we meet the following weekend. Kit is provided. Please note participants must be aged 16 or over or if under 16 assisting as part of a recognised organisation or with an adult.

Community Events Calendar

Advertise your your one off or regularly occurring events on the Community Events Calendar.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Not sure if you have something that is recyclable but isn't accepted by MVDC ? With our simple tool you can enter the item and it will show if the item can be recycled locally by other recycling groups.

Note: There have been a number of recycling changes recently and we will be updating tool shortly to reflect these.

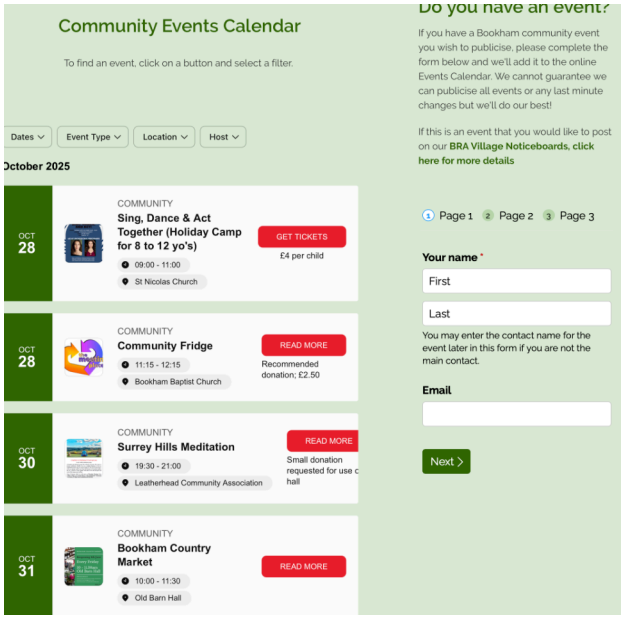
Service Requests & Reporting Portal

Not sure who to report a street cleaning request or overhanging branches or a pothole to, or seen something suspicious on your video doorbell? Our Service Report portal has all the links to the relevant authorities.

Bench refurbishment programme

Did you know that there are over 50 benches around Bookham. We run a programme in conjunction with funding from MVDC and employing local trades people to maintain the benches. We check the benches on a regular basis to check safety and condition and arrange reconditioning or replacement as necessary.

A new bench installed by the bus stop on Little Bookham Street which is much used and appreciated by waiting passengers.



Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan

John Downman

Over the last year, the BRA has participated with Fetcham and Leatherhead RAs in looking at options to improve the local cycling and walking infrastructure.

This comes under a wider government initiative, the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, through which applications for funding can be made. The major challenge is to create a cycling route from the centre of Leatherhead to the Howard of Effingham School. The study is being carried out by Atkins, under the auspices of Surrey County Council (SCC), with inputs from relevant local groups and Mole Valley councillors.

The meetings to date have focussed on developing a proposed route through Fetcham but leaving greater challenges at each end. In Leatherhead, the river creates constraints from the width of the crossings and the extent to which pedestrians/cyclists and traffic can be separated. The Transform Leatherhead project is not expected to resolve those issues. The Bookhams section presents a number of further challenges, which have not yet been discussed in sufficient detail to find a resolution:

- Sections of the Lower Road through the Bookhams lack a pavement on both sides, so the option for creating a dedicated cycling lane is restricted.
- The Lower Road is already only just wide enough for buses and larger vehicles to pass in each direction.
- A route along the Lower Road utilising the pavements or wider off-road sections would result in multiple crossing points, with cyclists zig-zagging from one side of the road to the other.
- Whilst diversionary routes may exist, these add distance to journeys and converge at choke points like the Squareabout; one being considered is along Keswick Road and then cutting through to East Street. These have their challenges respectively, from poor road surface to narrowness.
- Will cyclists follow a longer diversionary route, albeit with less traffic?
- The schools are not just at the ends of the Lower Road, so north-south movements need to be considered.
- Would a more extensive 20mph limit on the Lower Road help?
- Even though there is already a cycle path nearer the Howard of Effingham, this is prone to flooding, as are sections near the Lower Road Recreation Ground where there would be room to create one.
- Another choke point is at Preston Cross, which will inevitably become busier with the planned development of up to 600 houses to the west and feeding onto the Lower Road. If vehicle traffic is encouraged to use Rectory Lane and then the Guildford Road, instead of the Lower Road, how will this interact with cyclists attempting to cross?

We have sought via SCC a further meeting to focus on the Bookhams sections, working with Atkins in the hope that suitable resolutions/ options for Bookhams' section could be developed prior to the wider proposal coming out to public consultation, most likely from late summer or the autumn. Unfortunately, SCC has rejected such discussions taking place citing a lack of budget for the "extra work this will involve" and "programme time constraints". Unless such a meeting takes place, we fear that the proposals for the Bookhams in the public consultation will remain under-researched and insufficiently considered.

If local support is to be obtained through the public consultation before options are taken further this seems an unsatisfactory way of going about things. It is also inconsistent with the approach used to develop a proposed route through Fetcham. We believe that the Bookhams sections needs to be developed to a similar level of detail as the Fetcham section prior to public consultation.

If this is constrained now financially, the budget for progressing research needs to be allocated more carefully between the sections.

We stand ready to work with SCC and Atkins, if SCC affords the opportunity. Either way, watch this space.

Update - Church Road Traffic Calming and Keswick Care Home

As we go to press, work has started on the Church Road safety scheme. About 200 people replied to SCC's consultation - 81 strongly supporting the proposals; and over 100 people commenting in detail including concerns about 20mph zones generally, the need for change, and the impact on buses and emergency vehicles.

The work is now happening. Road closures will be problematic, so let's hope the decision on 20 mph delivers.

Church Road
Cllr Clare Curran

While speed surveys do show median speeds exceeding 30mph, residents are also feeling intimidated by the speed and volume of traffic, especially on narrow pavements. There's no history of serious accidents due to speeding vehicles but there have been a series of incidents involving pedestrians and cars in Church Road and Lower Road. The Council aims to promote safe and accessible walking and cycling and to encourage residents to use local amenities. The notice of the intention to install the traffic measures and 20mph speed limit will be advertised shortly, with construction work programmed to start on 11th May 2026, though this may possibly be subject to change".

Keswick Care Home
Fran Magnavacca
SCC Senior Communications Manager

Last summer, the next stage in the Keswick site development was reached when the SCC cabinet decided to tender for development agreements for four council-owned sites, including the former Keswick care home, for general housing with a number of the homes ring-fenced to accommodate people with mental health needs.

The development will provide much-needed accommodation for local people, including those with an eligible mental health need. This will be a small number of homes intended for individuals with mental health needs who can live independently and who may need support with daily living activities such as managing their tenancy, managing their finances, meal planning, shopping, accessing health care and accessing the local community, promoting autonomy and wellbeing.

SCC will carry out a procurement process to appoint a development partner or partners. Subject to a successful outcome from the tender and contract award, which is likely to be in spring 2027, the contracted partner/s will take forward the planning and delivery of the new development.

BRA

Community Safety
Neil Clarke

I have continued my regular contact with our local Police, raising issues of 'Antisocial Behaviour' (ASB), and following a number of attempted/actual break-ins.

Starting with ASB. This is a broad term which includes behaviour which has caused or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to a member or members of the public. Issues such as littering, vandalism, public drunkenness, aggressive dogs or noise nuisance may also be considered as antisocial behaviour.

The above is a definition, as set out on the Gov.UK website but it can also be applied or linked to other behaviours that come under different legislation. Shoplifting, trespassing onto private property, parking across people's driveways, driving aggressively/speeding, and smoking drugs so that the smell affects others are also offences – both criminal and/or civil – that can be linked to ASB in general.

The main advice police will always give is to report every single incident, either by calling 101, or online at:

www.surrey.police.uk

which is often quicker and is reviewed by the same people who handle emergency calls. The information to report is: dates, times, descriptions of people involved and what was actually observed/ experienced; AND did it cause harassment, alarm or distress? If there is sufficient evidence provided to the police, this can impact where resources are allocated to address the situation.

Now, some suggestions on deterring burglars. Things that can deter burglars include:

- Lower fences at the front of a property (around one-metre high) are preferable to high fences as they allow for a clear view over the top and don't provide cover for anyone wishing to hide.
- At the rear and sides, taller fencing is recommended to prevent easy access.
- Trellis, thorny plants, or a suitable anti-climb topping such as plastic spikes make it difficult for anyone climbing over a fence or gate.
- Planting prickly or barbed shrubbery along boundaries and fence lines acts as an effective natural barrier.
- Gravel driveways and paths will make sure you hear anyone approach.

More information from Surrey Police:

www.surrey.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/protect-home-crime/keep-burglars-out-property/

Hedges bordering footpaths

Chris Cunningham - BRA Tree Warden

A reminder to all Residents that have hedges, that border on footpaths and other public rights of way, to keep them well trimmed in order not to cause any obstructions.

This is particularly important for those who use mobility scooters or other walking aids and parents with young children in prams or pushchairs. Special attention should be paid to hedges that contain spiky trees such as Hawthorn or Blackthorn and shrubs such as Pyracantha (Firethorn) and of course the ubiquitous brambles.

Deciduous hedges (lose leaves in winter) should be trimmed during their growing season (April to September) period but do check for birds nesting during February to August. Usually two trims will be required - early and late Summer.

If a hedge is overgrown and causing problems we recommend, in the first instance, having a polite word with the owners. If this fails then, in the case of adopted roads, you can report the matter to SCC. (See page 12 for reporting to local authorities.)

For unadopted roads "Private Roads" we suggest you speak with the Road Steward / Residents Association for that road.

KGV Effingham

Sarah Montgomery - KGV Manager

Please help us to raise £750k

Thousands of local families use the Effingham's King George V (KGV) Playing Fields site every year. For the first time in decades, it is about to be transformed.

We are delighted to share that over £500,000 has already been secured to deliver the first stages of the KGV Masterplan of improvements. This funding, awarded through Surrey County Council's YourFund programme, represents a major vote of confidence in the importance of the site.

The Masterplan is being delivered in three phases where we still need to raise £750,000, covering a multitude of improvements including a brand-new Playzone with MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) designed for children and young people. These improvements have been shaped through extensive community engagement,
We are now working hard to raise the final amount needed to complete the project. If you would like to help bring the Masterplan to life, you can simple scan the QR code below or donate by visiting KGV's JustGiving page: **www.justgiving.com** and search for KGV Effingham.

SCAN ME

The Bookhams Residents' Association

bookhamresidents.org.uk
Tel: 0300 030 9890

Please support the BRA by paying your subscription by using one of the options below.

Thank you to those Residents who have already paid their subscription this year.

We that hope you have enjoyed reading the articles throughout the Newsletter. We can however only continue this important work with the help of those who support us whether that is through volunteering or by payment of subscriptions.

We are now collecting subscriptions for our financial year from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026. We have been able to hold the annual subscription at £5.00 per household. We would be grateful if you are able to also make an additional donation, however small, to help us continue to support our community

Ways to Pay

Many of you will be familiar with our Road Stewards who call once a year to collect the annual subscription along with delivering the Newsletters. We have a diminishing number of Road Stewards so here are the other ways you can pay. Even if you do have a Road Steward why not try one of these other ways to pay – it will save them from having to call.

Use the QR Code

Scan with your smart phone and be taken to the BRA website and click on "Join the BRA and pay 2026 annual subscription" button.

Pay online

Visit the BRA website and head to the Subscriptions page. You can use a credit or debit card to pay through our secure payment system.
You can select subscription only, subscription and donation, or donation only by clicking on the relevant button.

bookhamresidents.org.uk

Pay by telephone using a credit or debit card.

Call the BRA helpline on 0300 030 9890 and leave your name, telephone number and a "code word" of your choosing (something simple like a pet's name is ideal).

A volunteer will ring you back and identify themselves with your code word and will input your payment card details into our secure payment system during the telephone call. Your payment details are not retained

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If you would like further details to pay by standing order or bank transfer please email us at: **membership@bookhamresidents.org.uk**
or call our helpline on 0300 030 9890 and we will get back to you.
If you pay by these methods please put as your reference your surname and the LAST 3 digits of your postcode e.g. Brown3NL. This helps us to record your membership against your address.

Pay by cheque

If you prefer to pay by cheque, please send your cheque to our Registered Office. Your cheque should be made payable to: The Bookhams Residents' Association.

Important: Please write your address on the back of the. cheque and send or drop in to our Registered Office, 11 Church Road, Great Bookham, KT23 3PB. (Situated behind Thrive Studio and Rawlings opticians).

Not sure if you have already paid your membership this year? Email **membership@bookhamresidents.org.uk** and our Membership Secretary will be able to advise you.

Pay your subscription online at:

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