



The Hersham News

Edited by John O'Reilly | www.eshersham.com | Local issues, local action, local Conservatives



Elections set for May '21

EARLIER this year, Paul Wood was selected the Conservative candidate for the Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) elections that should have been held in May but were postponed because of COVID. They are re-scheduled for May 2021 and Paul remains our candidate.

The delay means that there will also be Surrey County Council (SCC) elections in May. The Conservative candidate will be John O'Reilly, who has represented Hersham on SCC since 2017.

John and Paul will be working closely together, along with Cllrs Mary Sheldon and Ruth Mitchell as a united team for Hersham.

Before the lockdown Paul had been active knocking on doors, meeting many residents to understand their views. In addition, 130 residents completed a survey form on their priorities.

One concern that has now been addressed is the refurbishment of the Village Hall, which is well underway thanks to the support of our local Councillors. However, the condition of roads, the need to protect our green spaces and control of development remain key issues.



Talking to *The Hersham News* Paul says "My objective is quite simply to do as much as I can to ensure that local services are responsive to Hersham's needs and my doorstep conversations and the results of my survey are invaluable in understanding this."

"Since retiring from full-time work three years ago I have been active in supporting our excellent local councillors, Mary and Ruth at EBC and John at SCC."

"My experience as a senior human resources executive in complex international business has enabled me to develop the skills to manage difficult situations and to

work effectively with people to find solutions"

John O'Reilly added, "The last three years have seen real improvements in Hersham. Eleven roads have been resurfaced (probably the most in all Surrey) including Queens Road and the top end of Hersham Road, our Library protected, two positive parking reviews, more Vehicle Activated Signs, the potential for huge community investment in Hersham under the new Your Surrey Fund, and financial contributions to local groups. Yes, there's more to do but as a united Hersham team the future is bright".

Let's support our Hersham shops!

DOMINIC Raab, joined by John O'Reilly and Paul Wood, recently visited Hersham to find out how a cross-section of local businesses are managing in these difficult times.

He met the owners and staff in a pharmacist, beauty salon, gift shop, school outfitters, dry cleaner, post office and a pub.

All are experiencing significant challenges but appreciated the Government support, particularly those who had to close during lockdown.

The speed at which payments were made was impressive, in one case just four days after the claim was filed.

In most cases business activity is still well below previous levels while costs have increased. Dom took away positive suggestions for discussion with his fellow Ministers, on issues such as VAT, rents and business rates. We can all help too by supporting our local Hersham businesses whenever possible.

■ It's been a tough year for Hersham's retailers and small businesses and they need our support now more than ever.

The Longmore Stores, run by the Patel family for many years at the junction of Longmore and Mead Road, is at the heart of its community and stocks a huge variety of goods, including fresh vegetables and fruit, frozen foods and much more. And there's plenty of free parking outside the shop too!

Another call is for the Post Office in the middle of Hersham run with dedication by Sri and his team. After a recent break-in, they picked up the pieces and re-opened within hours, making sure that their customers were not inconvenienced.

And thanks too to ex-postmaster Yogesh Jadav who joined in to help, sorting and selling the newspapers to regular customers. And don't forget, there is an ATM inside the shop and cheques can be paid into the main banks there.

And you won't be short of choice in Hersham for a coffee or snack either. Apart from Costas, there is the Burhills Cafe Bar opposite the Green run by Simon, and the Hersham Diner run by Cinar and team.



Litter Busters!

LITTER blights our otherwise pleasant village. Earlier this year a Keep Britain Tidy Spring Clean campaign had to be cancelled. When it was re-scheduled for September your

local Conservative team did their bit. Armed with bin bags and litter-pickers they collected a large amount of rubbish from the village green, Memorial Gardens and car park area.

Paul Wood and John O'Reilly commented, "Local residents and community groups have done a fantastic job with previous litter-picks and we hope this can resume soon".



Hersham Hall 'nearly ready'

THE long wait for our smart refurbished Hersham Village Hall is very nearly over!

Our much-loved hall was closed in June 2017 after the dreadful Grenfell Tower incident by the then Elmbridge coalition of RAs/ LibDems.

When the Conservatives gained control of the Council in 2018 we approved £650,000 to undertake a full refurbishment.

The current administration has continued the work. Asbestos has been removed, washrooms stripped out, the first fix of new mechanical and electrical services is nearing completion and preparation of

surfaces ready for extensive redecoration is being done.

Outstanding work as at mid-October is installation of new kitchen cabinets and equipment, finalisation of new sanitaryware installations, new floor coverings, installation of fire breaks and fire doors and finally redecoration.

A happy Cllr Ruth Mitchell spoke to *The Hersham News*, "Finally, THREE YEARS after its closure, completion of our Hall is due in November although because of the COVID-19 pandemic, actual re-opening for users will have to wait for a while longer".



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Never forget, your Hersham Conservative Team of Ruth, Mary, Paul and John is always here for you. Please contact us if you have any problems or concerns relating to Hersham, particularly regarding Elmbridge Borough and Surrey County Councils - we'll do our best to help.



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News in Brief

HOW frustrating! The much-needed resurfacing of Felcott Road, due for 30 October, has had to be postponed because the contractor has had to self-isolate.

No new date has been given but of course we will be urging this to take place soon. Residents have suffered too long with the road's appalling state.

Better news is that the extensive re-patching in Queensway North and parts of Brampton Gardens is scheduled for mid-December.

Hersham's County Councillor, John O'Reilly remarks, "Great strides have been made in improving our local roads in the last three years but there's still much more to do and improving pavements too. We will keep up the pressure for action and funding".



■ **NEXT year will be a bumper year for voting. Not only the county and borough elections scheduled but also for a new Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner.**

The Conservative candidate is Charlie Chirico (pictured). She qualified as a Criminal Solicitor and has spent much of her legal career with the Crown Prosecution Service. If elected she would be the youngest and one of the few female Police and Crime Commissioners.

She has boundless energy and will be visiting us over the next few months to hear our views. Amongst her plans are more visible policing, tackling unauthorised encampments and zero tolerance on organised gangs.

All these resonate powerfully here in Hersham!

Scheme offers safer way to cross

FOLLOWING the tragic death of a pedestrian who was killed crossing the Esher Road in 2017, a 2,892 signature petition as submitted to the Elmbridge Local Committee calling for safer means of crossing this busy and often dangerous road.

County and Borough councillors tasked highways officers to look into the options for this road, where the 40mph speed limit is routinely and excessively breached. The options were:

1) A light controlled crossing across all four lanes would cost £250,000 and would need to stop traffic in both directions.

It would require lengthy stops of all four lanes.

2) A staggered light-controlled crossing stopping each side at a time. This would require a central island to be constructed, thereby reducing the road to single lane on each side of the carriageway option for one crossing.

3) The scheme now being piloted, which the engineers favoured. The scheme provides improved cycle lanes, reduces the number of cars breaking the speed limit, and most importantly, allows for three uncontrolled pedestrian crossings near each of the three bus stops.

The £70k cost is entirely funded by the Government as part of its Active Travel scheme and not Surrey taxpayers. The road reverts to two lanes well before

the roundabouts at each end to maintain traffic flow capacity as before.

Some have voiced concerns about congestion. We too would find that unacceptable and should it happen, the scheme would be abandoned.

Three councillors have been monitoring the road two times every day during peak periods and it is also now being assessed by highways experts.

A decision to extend the trial and complete the three crossings or abandon it altogether will be taken in early November.

And we will consult residents should any recommendation be to make the changes permanent.



Refurbished youth club re-opens



AFTER a long lockdown closure, Hersham's Youth Club has reopened as a drop-in centre for its open access youth work, on Monday to Friday evenings, as well as Saturday afternoons.

Administered by the Hersham Youth Trust, this full programme is being maintained despite a reduction in SCC financial support, through self-funding, supplemented by external donations, and above all, through the dedication of the unpaid volunteers.

Happily, the period of closure

brought significant benefits, first from Morrisons supermarket's generous programme of youth support, and then from extensive re-painting of outdoor fencing, tables and chairs, carried out under a mutual agreement with the Community Payback scheme, run by the Surrey Probation Service.

This protective work should give the facilities another 20 years of life, and the Service supervisor Peter Nicholes was delighted with the success of a worthwhile project, that had made a real contribution to the community.

Community Fund

NEXT month will see the launch of the new massive £20 million a year 'Your Fund Surrey' initiative. It will be community-led and used for capital projects, such as buildings, equipment, vehicles etc.

The application process will be designed to be straightforward and the first funding of projects planned for spring next year.

Hersham's County Councillor, John O'Reilly chaired a group which helped create the fund and is determined that Hersham should be among the first to benefit. John told the Hersham News, "The full details will be released soon in a blaze of publicity. But residents and our many community groups should begin to generate ideas now. How can this Fund make a big difference to Hersham? And the more ambitious the plans, the better!"

Please get in touch with John with suggestions for initiatives and projects in Hersham.

Hersham Centre to the rescue



QUIETLY but so effectively, our Centres for the Community have been working tirelessly during the pandemic to support our residents.

The Hersham Centre team have been cooking and delivering over 7,000 meals for our more vulnerable residents since March. All meals and other emergency food parcels are delivered by volunteers in accordance with Government guidelines with PPE and maintaining social distancing.

Staff have also been making regular phone calls to lonely and isolated residents who value friendly contact, as well as offering guidance and support.

Lesley Felgate, Manager of the Hersham Centre, said: "We are continuing to work to ensure the full re-opening of our Centre and are so looking forward to seeing everyone again, but only when it is safe to do so."

The Hairdressing salon has re-opened Tuesday-Fridays and the Chiropody service also recently became available with pre-booked appointments. Lesley also hopes that the Beautician service will be available soon, while an Indoor Café for six vulnerable adults, is being considered.

Cllr Mary Sheldon told *The Hersham News*, "So the news is looking positive and our thanks go to all the magnificent and devoted staff and volunteers for helping to support residents during these particularly challenging times."

Lose weight and get healthy with Michelle

Hi, I'm Michelle. Since age 14 I have yo-yo'd with my weight, till seven years ago I reached my heaviest of 21stone 7lbs.

I was disgusted with myself, especially after battling and surviving cancer four times! I lost 9.5 stone and discovered a new passion in life - helping others to lose weight and lead healthier lives.

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