



The Hersham News

Edited by Ruth Mitchell | www.esherwalton.com | Local issues, local action, local Conservatives



Ruth will do Hersham proud

Hersham Conservatives are delighted to announce that Ruth Mitchell will be the party's candidate for the Hersham Village Ward at the Elmbridge Borough Council elections in May 2018.

Many residents already know Ruth as she served as a Hersham councillor for six years until the boundary changes last year.

Speaking to *The Hersham News* about her selection, Ruth said: "I am honoured to have the opportunity to stand for election in Hersham again. As a long-term

resident here, I feel that I really understand the issues facing our community and my continuing and consistent pledges are to always make residents' priorities my priorities, to fight to keep Hersham's unique identity, to ensure our council provides value for money and to support and encourage local charities and businesses."

Hersham Village Ward Councillor Mary Sheldon commented: "Hersham needs Ruth back on the Council. She cares passionately about helping residents and our community as a whole. She never

takes no for an answer: remember how, almost single-handedly, she persuaded Waitrose to install a free cash machine. She gets things done!"

Hersham's Surrey County Councillor John O'Reilly agreed, telling *The Hersham News*, "Ruth is a true team-player, she focuses on the issues and achieves positive results. She is a great listener, has a natural empathy and will be a councillor who does Hersham proud."

■ Pictured: Cllr John O'Reilly, Ruth Mitchell and Cllr Mary Sheldon.

Thanks for parking views



COUNCILLORS Mary Sheldon and John O'Reilly would like to thank the many residents who contacted them about the Hersham Parking review.

The recommendations were agreed at the Elmbridge Local Committee meeting on 14 September, and can be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/y8vv88oy>

The proposals will now be advertised over the next few months before final decisions are taken, so please do call us with your views: there is still time.

Mary and John told the *Hersham News*: "The feedback we've received has been invaluable and we hope that the recommendations cover the various requests for parking controls.

"We are also pleased that the residents of Felcott Road/Close, Belgrave Close and Faulkners/Mills Roads will shortly be consulted on whether they wish to have Residents' Parking schemes."

■ THE proposed and highly controversial Drake Park Garden Village scheme comprising 1,024 new residential units, a school, medical centre, park, dentist, pharmacy, supermarket, offices and water features on land east of Weylands House on Molesey Road was refused by Elmbridge Council's Planning Committee last November.

A public inquiry on the scheme will take place beginning on 31 October 2017 at the Civic Centre in Esher.

For more info go to: <https://tinyurl.com/y8wz8dt3>

'Council takes too long to deal with travellers'

MANY residents have been extremely concerned by the numerous incursions of travellers' caravans and associated vehicles in the borough this summer.

In Hersham they took up residence in the Hersham Centre car park for over four weeks before the required court orders were obtained and eviction notices given.

There were also incursions on Coronation Recreation Ground and, at the time of writing a group is present in Old Esher Road.

Other parts of Elmbridge have had as many as 50 vehicles parked on community land, causing major

damage and eventual clear up costs of many thousands of pounds.

Ruth Mitchell has raised the matter directly with our Member of Parliament, Dominic Raab, and asked him to comment on this totally unacceptable and seemingly never-ending scandal.

He replied: "We've seen these incursions across the Borough, and I know first-hand the frustration and concern it has caused. The local enforcement officers and Elmbridge Borough Council need to learn lessons from other Local Authorities that have been quicker off the mark in dealing with such incidents. As the local MP, I am liaising with other Surrey MPs to see whether the law needs tightening, and how it could be done."

Together with Councillors Mary Sheldon and John O'Reilly, Ruth will be following up on the points he raised and will report back in the next edition of the *Hersham News*.



Your views sought on Village Hall

THE sudden closure of the Hersham Village Hall at the end of June caused stress, anxiety and concern throughout Hersham.

Fortunately, almost every user of the hall has now found an alternative venue for their activities. The question is what happens for the future, and the Hersham councillors have begun that discussion with Council officers.

Ruth Mitchell, Mary Sheldon and John O'Reilly are 100% committed to retaining our

Village Hall and we believe extensive consultation with Hersham residents and users is vital for a successful outcome.

We should be ambitious in our thinking, ideas and expectations, with the aim of a replacement designed for 21st Century needs, rather than simply recreating a structure built in the mid-1980s.

Even at this very preliminary stage, we would greatly value your input so please email us your views. Big challenges lie ahead but it is also a huge opportunity for us all.



Take responsibility for fiasco!

AFTER months of overflowing bins, missed collections and fury from residents in Hersham and right across the Borough, the new refuse contractor (Amey) finally appears to be providing a reasonable service. About time too.

Yet, astonishingly, the coalition of eight political residents associations and the Liberal Democrats that runs Elmbridge Council and includes the two Hersham Village Society Councillors, has refused to accept political responsibility for this fiasco.

At the full Council meeting in July, blame was cast elsewhere but none accepted by the politicians whose job was to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements.

They have seriously let our residents down.

Ruth Mitchell, the Conservative candidate for Hersham Village Ward in next May's elections commented: "I believe in accountability and that when mistakes are made, the administration should be open and apologise for its failures. The buck stops at the top and it is shocking that no responsibility for the (literal!) mess has been accepted when Hersham residents have been so badly affected."

The Hersham News notes that the RA/Lib Dem decision to hike councillors' allowances by a whopping 12.4% last year becomes even more indefensible after this shambles.

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Never forget, your Hersham Conservative Team is always here for you. Please contact us if you have any problems or concerns about local Hersham issues. We hold monthly advice surgeries on the first Saturday of each month, and the next two will be held on November 4th and December 2nd from 10.00am until 12 noon at the Hersham Centre for the Community in Queens Road. Please do raise issues relating to Elmbridge Borough Council and Surrey County Council. Or if you just want to pop in for a chat on any subject – we'd be delighted to see you.



CONTACT US: John O'Reilly, 01932 253090; Mary Sheldon, 01372 467812; Ruth Mitchell, 01932 220557
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John hits ground running after election

ON 4 MAY John O'Reilly's election as Hersham's new Surrey County Councillor gave him a majority of over 1,100 votes. He has also been appointed Chairman of the Elmbridge Local Committee.

Speaking to the *Hersham News*, John said: "Having served for many years representing Hersham on Elmbridge Borough Council, it is a huge privilege to now be elected as its county councillor and to follow Margaret Hicks. It's already been a hectic few months working with residents on the parking review, lobbying for more safety measures on the Burwood Road, campaigning for increases in next year's local highways budget. And lots more too!"



It's a pleasure to work closely with Cllr Mary Sheldon in promoting Hersham, helping local residents and with all the Borough Councillors and local groups who serve our community. I'll do my very best on your behalf and will report regularly in the *Hersham News* and on the three Hersham Facebook Groups (and Twitter!)"



■ COUNCILLORS Mary Sheldon and John O'Reilly joined residents on 2 September to welcome the first 555 bus service that has now been extended to Whiteley Village. This improvement is entirely the result of the tireless campaign organized by Villager Linda Roth. It shows the people-power can really work.

Overall Hersham has done well from the changes, with the 515 bus route now including Queens Road in the village, and the 564 extended to the Excel Leisure Centre and Sports Hub. The new services have had some 'teething troubles', which is annoying and inconvenient, but hopefully very soon these will all be resolved.

COMMUNITY NEWS



MANY congratulations to Hersham's Ken Bowman for his success at this year's PA Housing in Bloom competition, which was open to all tenants in an area which stretches from Richmond to Cobham and over 10,000 homes. Against such stiff opposition Ken won both his classes, Best Community Garden and Best Hanging Baskets. Ken also scooped the Overall Winner Cup. A great reflection on the care and commitment he shows to his little patch of Hersham. Well done Ken!

RESIDENTS may have spotted several areas in Hersham where wild flowers have been planted by Elmbridge Borough Council. We give the top marks for the ones close to Pratts Lane and West Grove roundabouts. What about you?

HAVE you noticed the recent improvements made to some of the Hersham Riverside footpaths? A couple of weeks ago Cllr Mary Sheldon popped along to see The Lower Mole Partnership, together with a number of volunteers, complete the resurfacing of the bankside path and fix the fence/bridge at Hersham Riverside. The work, including hire of machine and materials, was funded by the Borough's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

ST PETER'S Church in Hersham hosts "Music to Calm the Soul" at 7pm on the last Sunday of each month, for approximately an hour. So, if you feel the need to relax and listen to soothing sounds and relaxing classical music, then do go along to the Church in Burwood Road.

The Hersham Centre for the Community in Queens Road has now reopened having had an upgrade to some of the facilities – it's looking in fantastic shape and well worth a visit to see what's on offer. You won't be disappointed.

The famous and highly popular Hersham Village Market will hold its Christmas market on Saturday 25 November from 10am – 12 noon at All Saints Church Hall, Queens Road, Hersham. It's a must visit.

Latest on Lidl

THE good news has reached us that Crest Nicholson are now contracted to develop the scheme on Molesey Road in partnership with Lidl. We have waited a long time for this since planning permission was given back in 2014 (with slight amendments in 2015) and now it looks as if things are finally moving. Crest Nicholson said it is delighted to be working with Lidl adding: "development has commenced and we anticipate this exciting project will be complete in approximately 18

months". So, during 2019. Cllr Mary Sheldon said: "I'm so glad it's now all systems go after the various delays and of course I'll keep residents informed as details are known." To recap, the scheme comprises a four-storey building with a food store of 2,540sqm on the ground floor and 38 residential units over three floors above with associated parking. Access to Lidl will be from Molesey Road, and for the flats from Mole Road. Some highway improvements will be made as required by the planning permission.

Three Rivers on track for Spring

THE construction of the Three Rivers Academy (formerly RES) continues to go well and the school will move into their brand new building with its outstanding facilities in early 2018. The Bewley Homes housing development, now known as Jubilee Meadows, is also well under way and will include 128 affordable homes, 65 of which will be for renting, as well as a further 168 units comprising two, three and four bedroom homes. You may have seen from the train the apartment blocks being constructed at the end of Felcott Road. The work on the highway in Hersham Road is gathering pace, and while Bewley Homes say they are working as quickly and efficiently as they can, there are problems with the footway around the work across the new main access to the housing development. Cllr Mary Sheldon has been monitoring this work and is in regular



contact with Bewley Homes, who confirm that they are aiming to complete this particular highway work by December 2017. For the long-suffering residents of Felcott Road and Felcott Close, it is reassuring to know that once Jubilee Meadows has been completed, only 12 of the new houses will be accessed via Felcott Road. Furthermore, Mary Sheldon will also be pressing that money from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should be used to completely resurface both roads.

Murray's mum blasts 'tennis tax'

ELMBRIDGE Council's decision to charge residents to use public tennis courts has been criticised by the mum of two-times Wimbledon champion Sir Andy Murray. Judy Murray tweeted her support for a petition which called for the charges to be scrapped. She wrote: "Public tennis courts should be free to access. We don't pay to use swings or feed ducks or picnic on the grass. Don't tax tennis." Earlier in the summer a dozen courts, including at Coronation Rec, were fitted with a keypad entry system. Players must now register online and pay £5 per hour (£36 for a season ticket) to get on the courts. Mary Sheldon said: "It's been awful to see the tennis courts empty

even during Wimbledon fortnight. It doesn't look like anyone is using them apart from tennis coaches." Elmbridge Council received £25k from the Lawn Tennis Association to help pay for the keypad system. The RA/LibDem administration defend the scheme on the basis that they expect it to generate £26k per year for the upkeep of the courts. However the Councillors could have saved the taxpayer close to £30k by not putting up their allowances a year ago. The Council went ahead despite a survey in which 68% said they would not play tennis if the courts were not free. This is yet another policy disaster from this bungling administration.



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