



MERROW RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

your community voice for over 40 years

Local Issues for Merrow

Dear Fellow Merrow Residents

MRA's Autumn Meeting, which was both for MRA members and any other Merrow residents, was held on Monday 23rd October at St John's Centre. We again saw a fantastic turnout of just over 100 residents.

There was a varied offering this time with Allison Grub from Victim Support speaking about their work, an update from Keith Meldrum on the Local Plan and then Ian Anderson and Phillip Wilkinson from the Merrow History Group speaking on "Merrow's Lost Houses".

Victim Support – Allison Grub

www.victimsupport.org.uk Tel: 0808 1689 111

Allison gave us a compelling overview of the work of Victim Support. They are a charity that has been in existence for 44 years and they support victims of crime via their network of 3,000 volunteers in England and Wales. They are involved with all types of victim support including homicide, domestic violence, antisocial behaviour and fraud, to name but a few. The work they do is independent from the police, however, referrals generally come via the police or victims self-refer. They will phone victims of crime and ask if they need support, which might be just the one phone call or an appointment to help with advice or security. Volunteers are trained in the latest types of crime, e.g. fraud, so that they can support and empower victims of crime to regain control of their lives.

Local Plan - Keith Meldrum, Chair MRA

Keith explained that the Local Plan is important as it will affect us all over the next 15 years; housing, road infrastructure, transport, commercial and retail are all affected.

This is the third iteration of the plan and MRA have commented on each version. The housing need assessment is now shown at 654 new houses per year for the next 20 years, which is a slight reduction on the figure in the previous draft. The Clandon golf site, is not in the plan. Gosden Hill farm, a new railway station in Merrow, Blackwell Farm and Wisley airfield are all included. The plan will now go forward for detailed examination by a planning inspector where MRA hope to be able to make representations. This will take place in April or May 2018.

Philip Brooker, one of our three Ward Councillors, then

commented on some points made by Keith Meldrum. He made clear that this was feedback from the Council planning officers. There are various different opinions on the housing need but GBC are sticking with their figure. It is believed that some development on the Green Belt is necessary. It appears that we might also be asked to accept some of Woking's unmet housing need. This will be fought, vigorously, by Councillors and Officers. The Highways Agency does not believe that a four-way junction with the A3 is required. He stated that he was hopeful for a link road to the A247 where there will be a 4-way junction (this would be near Send). The planning application for Gosden Hill Farm would be strongly resisted by our local Councillors unless there was a four way junction with the A3.

The Merrow History Group - Ian Anderson and Philip Wilkinson

Ian and Philip gave a fascinating talk about the 20 "lost houses of Merrow". They have been gathering information about Merrow and are putting this into electronic archives, which will be available on a new website in the future. They showed pictures and talked about the race course on Merrow Downs in the 1830's. The horses used to be stabled and their grooms stayed with them at what is now the Horse and Groom pub. We then heard about the various "lost houses" along with tales of some of the characters of Merrow and the famous people who used to live or go to school in our area. These included Sir Malcom Campbell, AA Milne and Sir Clive Sinclair.

The History group meets on the first Wednesday in February, March, May, July, August, October and December at St Johns Centre. They would like to build up their archive of pictures and knowledge of local people so everyone is welcome to their meetings and please bring along any documents of interest.

Finally the Clandon Garden Centre was thanked for again replanting the tubs in front of the Horse and Groom, which produced a great show. Throughout the summer a group of MRA volunteers have been watering the tubs and thanks also go to them.

Finally the MRA Committee would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

www.merrowresidents.org