



# MERROW RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

*your community voice since 1969*

## Dear Fellow Merrow Residents

We hope, by the time you read this, that the seemingly never-ending rain earlier in the year has stopped and Spring is well on its way.

### Your MRA Committee

As always, we have been keeping an active eye on planning applications that affect us both in Merrow and nearby, such as the major development at Gosden Hill and the proposals at St Peter's School to enhance its playing fields, which those living nearby fear will impact them adversely. We are also pushing for investigations into various flooding issues, including the long-standing surface water in Merrow Street.

If you can suggest anyone who would like to become more involved in MRA's activities, please let us know. We are becoming desperately short of new people to join the band of friendly volunteers who form our executive committee. You only need to be interested in the future of Merrow and be prepared to put aside a few hours a month to become involved in issues that affect our community. Our committee meetings are held every couple of months on Zoom. To get an idea of who we are and what we do, we are planning on opening up our Zoom meeting on 20th April to those of you who would like to observe us in operation. Let us know using the email details at the end of this article.

If you can't spare us your time but you're still interested to know what's going on locally, then please sign up and add your name to our list of members by scanning the QR code opposite. You will receive occasional email updates whenever we have news to report or we want your views on a particular consultation exercise. You'll also get an invitation to our two events a year. **The next one is our spring AGM, this year on Monday 23rd March at St John's Centre at 8pm.** There will be a short formal part of the evening when we elect our committee for the next year, but our priority is to update those attending on what is happening both within and outside Merrow that may affect us, and then give everyone the opportunity to enjoy delicious nibbles and a glass of wine while chatting to neighbours or speaking informally to us. Providing that they don't have a conflicting council meeting then our local Councillors usually attend, giving you the chance to ask them questions in person.

### The Future after SCC and GBC

Following the decision by Government to re-organise local government, a new West Surrey Council will be created and both Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council will be abolished in April 2027. We recently responded to a GBC consultation on a proposal to create a new local level council that would cover the 10 wards in Guildford that currently have no parish council representing them, which would bridge the gap between the residents of Guildford and the new West Surrey Council. Merrow is one of the Guildford wards that doesn't have a parish council, and, along with other areas in central Guildford, could have a new town council. Its councillors would be elected and be unpaid. MRA sees benefits in having a council to specifically represent the interests of residents in Guildford, which would have greater influence than we at MRA could have on your behalf in any dealings with the very much larger West Surrey Council. Examples of this level of local government already in existence that represent nearby towns are Godalming, Farnham and Alton Town Councils.

### Traffic and Speed Proposals

SCC asked for views about the introduction of a 20 mile an hour speed limit in a large part of Merrow. If approved, the lower speed limit will cover all the residential roads bounded by Boxgrove Road, Epsom Road and Park Lane (but not these three roads where the speed limit will remain as it is now). The scheme is designed to improve road safety in local roads, many of which are near or on routes to schools and will be mainly self-enforcing.

Another ongoing road safety proposal is for Horseshoe Lane West and its spur roads, White House Drive, Greencroft, Beechway and Holmesdale Close, to become what is called a School Street. At set times in the morning and afternoon, between 8 - 9 am and 2.30pm - 3.45pm on Mondays to Fridays in term time, only vehicles which have been granted an exemption will be allowed to enter Horseshoe Lane West. Signs will be placed at each end of the road to tell drivers of the restrictions, which will be enforced using Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras. SCC plans to make an Experimental Traffic Order and during the first six months of its operation a consultation exercise will be running to take account of any necessary amendments, before taking any decision to make the scheme permanent. You

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can find more details at [st-thomas-of-canterbury.commonplace.is](http://st-thomas-of-canterbury.commonplace.is) along with a survey form asking for comments by 20th March.

### **Grass Verges**

Some of Surrey's network of highway grass verges have been identified as being of significant wildlife importance. The number of grass cuts is reduced on these conservation verges, allowing native plants to thrive. Additional steps, such as preparing the ground and sowing wildflower seeds, are also taken in some places. The Blue Heart Verges scheme offers us the chance to participate and improve the biodiversity of a highway verge. SCC now only accepts applications from community groups, so if you want to suggest a verge which could be included in the scheme, please let us know using our email below.

### **Reminder**

That's our short update for now. We hope to see many of you - existing and new members - in person at our AGM on 23rd March.

## ***The MRA Committee***

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Scan the QR code with your mobile phone or go to [www.merrowresidents.org.uk](http://www.merrowresidents.org.uk) and click on "Join us".

Contact us via email:  
[secretary@merrowresidents.org](mailto:secretary@merrowresidents.org)  
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