

# FOCUS

Local news and action around and about Weybridge

Liberal  
Democrats

AUTUMN 2021



## Your new councillor

New Liberal Democrat councillor for Weybridge Riverside, Judy Sarsby, has made a great start in the role. Judy has joined a number of EBC committees dealing with countryside and leisure matters - reflecting one of her pre-election commitments "making green spaces more vibrant amenities for our community".

Judy is also working with the Elmbridge Green Spaces team on river safety, on keeping Desborough Island clean and safe, and planting trees. She has organised, together with community fundraisers, Desborough Litterpickers, Elmbridge Canoe Club and EBC, to plant trees near the canoe club in memory of those lost to Covid. Partnership working will ensure that the trees are watered and maintained in their vulnerable early years.

Additionally, Judy has been actively supporting the Mayor's charity, The Grace Dear Trust, a local youth mental health charity, by arranging talks about the issue to junior members of local sports clubs and organising a sponsored row, paddle and run in October to raise funds.

## Our new Council

Liberal Democrats and Residents Associations (RAs) are continuing to work together in a joint administration for 2021-22.

After the July by-election success in Cobham and Downside, there are now nine Lib Dem councillors. They will work together with the 19 RA councillors. Lib Dem councillors have portfolio responsibilities for Resources, Environment and Community & Corporate Development and are looking forward to making an impact on how the council works. Weybridge Riverside councillor Ashley Tilling (Environment) will be leading the council's activity on carbon reduction as well as having oversight of waste collection in the borough.



## Election success in Cobham

In July the Lib Dem candidate, Robin Stephens, took the Cobham and Downside seat from the Conservatives. Robin's victory was the first Lib Dems win in Cobham in forty years.

## Progress in Oatlands

In Oatlands & Burwood Park, Oatlands resident Helgi Joensen, Lib Dem candidate in the May elections, ran a strong campaign and increased the Lib Dem vote in this traditionally Conservative ward.



## Your local Lib Dem councillors



Cllr Vicki Macleod



Cllr Ashley Tilling



Cllr Judy Sarsby



# Energising Elmbridge - caring for Weybridge

We believe in responsive and accountable local government. This can only be achieved when councillors work hand-in-hand with the people they represent. We value citizen participation. Our goal is a more open, personal and service-minded form of local government. We believe this is the key to enhancing the quality of life of all in Elmbridge.

## Garden waste collections

Who would have thought that a national shortage of HGV drivers would impact council services? However, it has, as qualified HGV drivers are essential to the running of our waste removal services. Despite the local impact of this national shortage, the council is committed to maintaining the collection of food waste, general waste (refuse) and recyclables. The one service which has been affected is the subscription garden waste collection service. Collections across Elmbridge were suspended in early August and were suspended again as we go to press. All affected subscribers have had their contracts extended to make up for this loss of service.



The reasons for the national shortages include the large number of EU drivers returning to their country of origin during the pandemic and many not returning. Additionally there are the effects of Brexit on EU drivers, uncertain about their rights to live and work in the UK, who have returned to the EU. And there is the lack of training and testing facilities for new drivers during lockdowns.

## Green Spaces

Your councillors have undertaken this year to do all they can to improve those green spaces in town which are currently not properly tended. The first step is to find out who owns them - Elmbridge, Surrey or if they are not assigned. See the side panel for how to contact us.

## Get the ezine!

Focus gives a bi-monthly digest of local matters. We provide more immediate news in our regular electronic newsletter. The ezine also gives links to in-depth articles on issues, for those who like to get beneath the surface. To subscribe, see the side panel.

## Town paths

You may have noticed that the work to upgrade the paths around Churchfields was completed in May. As well as widening these busy paths to 3m wherever possible, to make them safer for all users, the improvements put forward by Cllr Ashley Tilling were all agreed and implemented. These were to install lighting on the path between the playground and the allotments, to move the fences bordering Churchfield Allotments, providing a much safer s-bend next to the skate park, and to make good the route into town through the car park.

However, following objections from a small number of local residents, a Local Inquiry Hearing has been scheduled to determine whether the paths should be shared for both cyclists and pedestrians. Representations from supporters and objectors will be heard by a Public Inquiry Inspector. Surrey County Council will lead on defending the initiative. Reasons for doing the improvement works include: how the paths fit into their Brooklands Accessibility project and the SCC Active Travel scheme designed to encourage more people to cycle to and from the town centre in a safe, traffic-free environment. The Weybridge Society has also prepared a submission which stresses the 'bigger picture' of promoting cycling and walking around the town as healthy alternatives to driving.

## Keeping you informed

Email us at [weybridge@elmbridgelibdems.org.uk](mailto:weybridge@elmbridgelibdems.org.uk) to subscribe to our regular e-newsletters which give more frequent updates on developments in Weybridge and Elmbridge.

## Meet us at Cafe One

Come and talk with your Lib Dem councillors and the Focus team. We meet from October on the first Sunday of the month at Cafe One, Baker Street, 11am to 12 noon.

## Get in touch

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