



Onslow Village Residents Association

The Village Voice

Spring/Summer 2026 - Issue no. 81

In this issue: Onslow Open Gardens, Loseley Path,
7th May Elections, and lots more...



A big thank you to Chantries & Pewleys
for kindly sponsoring this issue!



Chantries & Pewleys

Hello everyone,

OVRA is on a mission...

...to get every home in Onslow Village signed up to our emails. It's completely free, you can unsubscribe whenever you like, and it's the best way to stay in the loop with our monthly 'What's On' diary and 'Local Focus' updates. Please take a second to scan the QR code below (or visit ovra.org.uk) and sign up right now.

Why the big push?

As many of you know, I've been Chair for about two and a half years, but lately, the stakes have felt a little higher. In my role as Chair of OVRA, I was recently asked to be one of the negotiators with the Loseley Estate as we try to regain access to our much-loved path.

It really hit home for me during those meetings how important it is that OVRA is representing the whole community. The more households we have behind us, the louder our voice becomes.



Whilst my own heart lies in strengthening relationships and connections within our community, I recognise that OVRA's role is more than that. With Surrey's governance about to go through a major reorganisation, resulting in considerably less local representation, OVRA needs to be ready for action. We want to give our community as loud a voice as possible should it be needed.

So, whether it's making sure you don't miss out on the next village event or helping us stand strong to protect our local amenities, we need you on board. We're already heading towards 50% but we'd really love to reach that 100% mark!

Jo Rew
OVRA Chair



Open your camera, scan the QR code, click on the link when it appears on the screen. Then simply fill in the form with your name, address and email address.

Or Visit ovra.org.uk and click 'sign up'



Many thanks to Linda Falkner for our cover photo. Come and visit this garden on June 28th!

A decorative border surrounds the text, featuring various flowers like yellow hibiscus, pink daisies, and red geraniums, along with several butterflies in shades of red, orange, and yellow.

Onslow Open Gardens

Sunday 28th June 2-5pm

Joint event with Onslow Village Gardening Club

Join us for a wonderful afternoon with friends and neighbours as we visit gardens in the Manor Way area

Tickets available from the OVRA website from 1st June

Rain or shine – we go ahead whatever the weather!

Tickets £5 per adult Kids go free!

Refreshments & plants on sale

All proceeds will be split between OVRA and the Gardening Club.

Watch out for the Summer Holiday Treasure Trail 2026



Available to download from ovra.org.uk from the beginning of the summer holidays

Heartbreak as a favourite path is closed

By Jo Rew

The closure of the path on the south side of the Mount in February came as a huge shock to us all. Many of us who loved the path, for its magnificent views as well as its sense of openness and peace, were left feeling utterly bereft.

St. Catherine's Village Association, OVRA and Angela Goodwin our local councillor, immediately came together to try to regain access to the path.

Initially, we hoped we could persuade Loseley Estate to make use of funding available for permissive paths. This is given by the government to encourage landowners to open their land up for public enjoyment and amply compensates farmers for loss of earnings.

Meanwhile The South Field Steering Group was formed. Their aim is to get a permanent Public Right Of Way (PROW) across the top of the fields. The quickest and easiest way for this to happen is if Loseley voluntarily give one – called a Section 25 Creation Agreement. But the group's back up plan is to apply for a PROW based on 20+ years of continuous use. They are currently collecting evidence

forms for this and would particularly like to hear from anyone who has been using the path for over 20 years. The forms to fill in can be downloaded from the OVRA website (ovra.org.uk) or you can contact them on southfieldwalkers@gmail.com

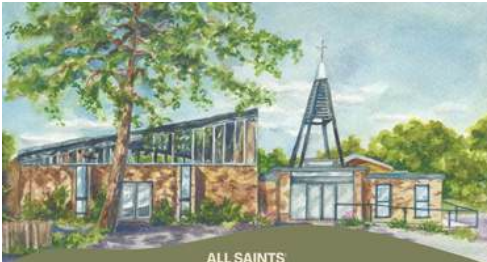
However, the situation became considerably more complicated when the farmer proceeded to remove over 650m of ancient hedgerow from the edge of the field. He is now cultivating the field right up to the newly revealed bank. This is a very serious breach of the government's Hedgerow Regulations and it has been reported to the relevant authorities by environmental groups in the area.

It is quite likely that the outcome for the path will rest heavily on the result of any investigations carried out into the unlawful removal of the hedge.

Our aim is still to find a solution which would be a win for the community, a win for Loseley and a win for nature, but the farmer's actions have made this considerably harder on all counts.

For more information and the latest developments visit the OVRA website.





ALL SAINTS
CHURCH

Building a Space for Everyone

We're making great progress with our building project. Join us for a Q&A, a tour of our buildings and a chance to learn more about our vision for All Saints.

Thursday 30th April at 6pm



All Saints' Church
Vicarage Gate
GU2 7QJ

Find out about ...

- Our community audit
- What our new space will look like
- What a better designed venue could do for you
- Project timelines
- Where we are with fundraising
- Impact of building works

Event timings ...

- 6pm** Join other stakeholders and members of the community for a tour of the site
- 6.30pm** Drinks and nibbles
- 6.45pm** Presentation of our plans
- 7pm** Q&A with the Big Build Team

Please RSVP by booking your free place:
<https://allsaints.short.gy/newspace>



HUSTINGS - FOR 7TH MAY ELECTIONS

Tuesday 28th April | 7:30pm | Onslow Village Hall

With the new West Surrey Authority elections approaching, come and hear from the candidates who want to represent us in the Guildford South West ward.

Organised by OVRA and open to all

- **The Line-up:** Lib Dem, Labour, Conservative, Green, Reform, and Independent candidates.
- **The Format:** Short introductions followed by a Q&A session.

HAVE YOUR SAY: Please email your questions to info@ovra.org.uk or bring them with you on the night.

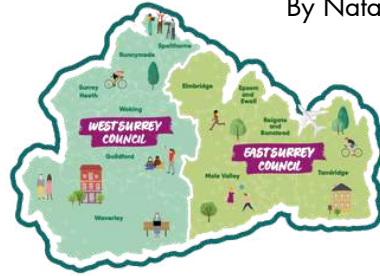
(Not sure what these elections are all about?
Read the simple guide on the next page)



A Simple Guide to the 7th May Elections

By Natalie Fudge

If talk of Unitary Authorities, Local Governance Reviews and Parish Councils has left your head in a spin we're here to help. Here's an easy to understand guide to what's going on and what we're voting for on 7th May.



Key changes

From April 2027, Surrey County Council and 11 district and borough councils, including Guildford Borough Council, will be replaced by two new unitary councils – West Surrey Council and East Surrey Council.

West Surrey Council will cover Guildford, Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Waverley and Woking and will have 2 councillors representing each of the 45 wards who will serve for 5 years until May 2031.

This is a very big change!

What will the new councils do?

The two councils will deliver local services for their areas which will include education, waste collection, roads, housing, play areas, children's service, adult social care and more. In other words, they'll do everything previously done by Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council.

Why is this happening?

Local Government Reorganisation is part of government's wider ambition for kickstarting economic growth at a regional level. The Government has said that they aim to simplify local governments and put stronger local councils in charge of all services. For Surrey, government has stated that residents will benefit from quicker decisions, improved and joined-up public services and more accountability as Surrey councils transition to a simpler and more transparent local government system, cutting duplication, building financial stability and unlocking economic growth.

What about Woking's debt?

The government committed to repayment in-principle of £500m of Woking Borough Council's debt in 2026-27 and this is the first phase of support. They will continue to explore what further debt support is required at a later point.

What is happening on May 7th 2026?

On 7th May we will be voting for the two councillors who will be representing our area on the new West Surrey Council. The wards across Guildford have been enlarged as part of the reorganisation and Onslow Village is now part of the Guildford South West ward. The councillors elected on 7th May will form the *shadow authority* and guide preparations for the new council.

However in the Onslow ward we will also be voting for a new Guildford Borough councillor. This is to replace James Jones who resigned in March. Whoever is elected to this role will only be in post until next March.

20th April is the deadline for registering to vote, 21st April is the deadline for applying for a postal vote and 28th April for proxy voting registration. Postal votes should be received by May 7th.

What happens after the election?

There will be a transition period from May 2026 until April 2027 when the *shadow authority* will set budgets, agree priorities and prepare systems so the new council can take on all services smoothly. All current borough and district councils will continue to operate as normal. Our existing GBC will continue to represent us until

31st March 2027 with no changes to the way we receive services.

What happens on 1st April 2027?

Surrey County Council and the district and borough councils will be dissolved and in our area the new West Surrey Council will take over the running of our services. Onslow will be represented solely by the 2 councillors elected on 7th May 2026.

And what are Parish Councils all about?

With the move to a much larger Unitary Authority, Guildford Borough councillors were concerned that central residents would lose their local voice and Guildford's specific interests might get overlooked. A new Parish (or Town) Council would, at a cost, provide a limited but dedicated tier of elected representation. GBC asked the residents of Guildford if they wanted a Parish Council. However the consultation carried out in February 2026 proved inconclusive. Of the small percentage of people who responded the vote was split equally. Meanwhile the government took away the power of councils to create new Parish Councils, so the decision was taken out of their hands. Guildford Borough Council recently voted to 'recommend' the creation of a Parish/Town Council for Guildford to the new West Surrey Council.

Guildford Swift Project are working to install swift boxes that offer these summer visitors new nesting sites. Each box costs £45 but the Swift Project team will come and install it for free. If anyone would like to order one email: Swift2saveswifts@gmail.com



We're hoping to plan an afternoon event with a talk from the Guildford Swift Project and an update on the Hedgehog Highways Project. We'll email out details once we have them. Don't forget to sign up to OVRA so you don't miss out!

Cycling Without Age

by Caroline Michell

'Can we go round again?!'

'I'd forgotten what the outside world is like'

'I've got something to talk about now'

'Loved it!'

These are quotes received by Cycling Without Age – Guildford, a registered charity based in Onslow Village who take elderly people out for short rides on a trishaw to get some fresh air, have a conversation and see what's going on in the local community.

'Audrey' as the trishaw is affectionately known, is comfortable and travels slowly so it is easy to take a closer look at something or have a chat with a passer by. She also has lap belts to help people feel safe and a warm blanket should the need arise.

Rides usually take around 30 minutes and have taken place around Onslow Village, including the arboretum, up and around the Cathedral, around Stoke Park and at the Devils Punch Bowl.

You can come on your own and a friendly volunteer can sit with you, or you can bring a friend, relative or carer to share the ride. We can arrange transport to and from the ride location if necessary.

Rides are **FREE**, so if you fancy a little adventure, or love the idea of getting outdoors, email cwaguildford@yahoo.com or call 01483 457645 to book a ride. You can also search on Facebook 'Cycling Without Age Guildford' to find out more.

Registered charity 1183163.



The Arboretum board is being updated.....

Tell us what you'd like included!



Onslow Arboretum is getting a new information board! After 30 years the old board has become out of date and whilst the 'Around the World in 80 Trees' was a nice idea when it was first planned, the Guildford Borough Tree Officer is now finding the theme too limiting. Some of the trees from around the world didn't take to their new environment and he would like to be able to replace these trees with equally interesting ones that will be better suited to the soil conditions and the changing climate.

Following our request for volunteers in the last issue of The Village Voice a small team of us met with the Tree Officer and the Nature & Countryside warden in March and started discussing ideas. The main board will focus less on the individual trees and more on the arboretum; what it is, why we have one, and why it's so special. But we're also considering having smaller boards around the arboretum that draw people's attention to particular trees or areas or views.

We were all surprised to hear that Onslow Arboretum is the only arboretum GBC care for which is why they value it so highly. They are delighted to see that it's equally valued by the local community and are very keen to have lots of community involvement in deciding the content of the new boards. We would love to know your ideas.

Please email us on arboretumboard@ovra.org.uk to tell us about your favourite trees, places and memories of the arboretum, and any other suggestions for what should be included on the new boards.



WHERE'S YOUR HEDGE AT?



A HUGE thank you to everyone who had their hedges cut back this winter. Please remember to keep your hedge trimmed this summer so that there is always at least 1m of unobstructed pavement for pedestrians. If you find a hedge is causing an obstruction please report it at tellus.surreycc.gov.uk

Books, Lights, Camera, Action!

By Martyn Parker



For fuller reviews of the books Martyn talks about below (and all his previous reviews) visit the Book Groups page under the Local Initiatives tab on the OVRA website.

Having just seen *Hamnet*, I thought about some of the books I've read that have been adapted for the screen. Of course, O'Farrell's book might be a topical choice for a really intriguing discussion especially as the film has received mixed reviews, but I've mentioned that one in a previous set.

My book group's first go at comparing a book and a film was in our youthful late 20th century period when we had the energy to read *House of Sand and Fog* by Andre Dubus III and watch the film adaptation starring Ben Kingsley and Jennifer Connelly.

It is a powerful drama where a specific struggle between two under pressure characters provides the reader with a perspective on the state of America in the 1980s. It was a great book and the film was just as strong. The classics such as Austen and Dickens provide ample material for this type of exercise and streaming

makes this more manageable.

For variety, I will also suggest *Death on the Nile* by Agatha Christie. It provides some fertile ideas for discussion whether you watch Ustinov's, Suchet's or Branagh's version of Poirot.

Scrublands by Chris Hammer and *Daisy Jones and the Six* by Taylor Jenkins Reid, have both been made into very enjoyable TV adaptations.

Scrublands is a well-crafted thriller set in Riversend, an isolated, drought-ridden Australian town. A year on from a tragic shooting Martin Scarsden, arrives to report on how the town is recovering. But before long another tragic event plunges Riversend into more national notoriety.

Daisy Jones and the Six is set in the heady days of the early 1970s amongst the pop and rock giants of America's west coast. It charts the history of a legendary band who made one great album, headlined a giant tour and then disappeared from public view. The story is told as a series of current day interviews where all the band members and their entourage give their take on the story. A lazy analogy might be to think Fleetwood Mac but this story has artistic spats, sexual tension and musical highs that turn things up to eleven.

Why Sign Up to OVRA?



Your voice makes us stronger.

Onslow Village Residents Association (OVRA) is your direct line to everything happening on your doorstep. But when it comes to speaking up for Onslow we are only as strong as our membership. We currently represent over 400 homes in the area.

We want to represent YOU.

Help us reach 100% of the homes so we can truly represent the voice of Onslow.

Sign up in seconds for:

- What's On in Onslow: Your monthly local events guide.
- Local Focus: Essential updates on your local area
- Community Voice: Have your say when it matters most.

It's **FREE**, It's For Everyone And you can unsubscribe whenever you want!



Website: ovra.org.uk

Facebook: @OVRA

Instagram: @onslowvillageresidents



Chantries & Pewleys

ESTATE AGENTS

Meet the Guildford team...



**"I honestly
couldn't endorse
them any higher!"**

Mr A Jakeway - 5* Google Review

Guildford Sales - 01483 405222 (option 1)

Lettings - 01483 405222 (option 2)