



Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter

Issue 51; August 2011

Welcoming Note

Welcome to the August issue of the Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter.

To unsubscribe to this newsletter, please contact us through the website 'Contact us' page with a subject line of 'unsubscribe'.

Our aim is to provide you with a monthly update on the work of the Conservative Association and your elected representatives. We would value your feedback or comments.

We hope you enjoy reading the August issue.

A word from the Chair



I was pleased to hear that so many people attended our Conservative Future Curry night earlier in August and I asked their chairman Ellen Daniels to write a brief report which she has done along with a photo for our Newsletter.

Julie Iles Deputy Chairman Political and Surrey Deputy Chairman of the Conservative Women's Organisation also held a CWO event and I am grateful to her for report as well.

Following our Executive meeting at the end of July, where the officer team laid out our strategy and campaign plan for the coming year, here in Mole Valley between holidays we have been steadily campaigning in Leatherhead as well as preparing autumn newsletters for around the patch.

We have also been meeting with fellow constituencies to discuss the 2012 campaign, which will include a one third election for Mole Valley DC and a directly elected Police Commissioner for Surrey.

Officers have also been continuing with fund raising activities and the big membership drive we need to undertake to pay for all these elections!

I will be meeting with the Conservative Group on the parliamentary boundary changes again in September; Mole Valley looks likely to be one of two constituencies in Surrey that will be rebalanced electorally.

Whilst it has been slightly quieter than other months, we have enjoyed some lovely events around the patch. Our branches have been busy taking advantage of the good weather and there have been summer lunches and evening suppers to attend all with excellent food and great company. We have lots more events lined up for the autumn and soon will be boasting a new website and on line diary for members to find out what's going on in Mole Valley Conservatives.



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Many of us will be off to Party Conference at the end of September, if you have a question you would like us to ask the top team at the conference, please do let us know! The Lib Dems are raising their 'mansion tax' policy again along with resource relocation, a policy which would see Surrey's taxpayers paying for other parts of the UK's public services. We had all this with the last Labour government and we should be investing in success not draining the economy in Surrey. We must not let the Lib Dems become the new left wing of the country's political system; they have responsibilities they have committed to in the Coalition Government. Miliband's Labour party may still be infighting too much to become much of an opposition and the Lib Dems seem to want to fill the gap.

Councillor Helyn Clack
Chairman, Mole Valley Conservative Association
August 2011

Mole Valley Conservative Future

After several years of several attempts to start Mole Valley CF, summer 2011 saw it recognized officially by the Conservative Future Executive. MVCF started with three young Conservative Party members who wished to encourage others of a similar age to become more involved in politics, along with having the desire to meet other like-minded people. The local association was contacted, and with their help Mole Valley Conservative Future has bloomed. Since May, we have had many events, including a barbecue, a coffee morning, an AGM and a curry with the local MP, Sir Paul Beresford, to name but some of the fantastic opportunities MVCF has had.

The launch event was a barbecue at a member's house, where there were no less than 15 MVCF members, and we have attracted even more members since then. The following event was a coffee morning, which was actually advertised in the Leatherhead and Dorking Advertisers, allowing the word to spread, and local councillor Tim Hall kindly turned up and introduced himself. Our most successful and exciting event, which shows the true demonstration of opportunities having a local CF can give to students and young people, was the curry in East Horsley with Sir Paul Beresford MP. We were joined by the CF National Chairman, Ben Howlett, and because the event was so promising we shall be having a similar meal at Christmas.

These positive few months gave MVCF the confidence to hold an AGM, at which a full committee was elected, and given that we have attracted several members from outside the constituency, we hope to expand into neighbouring areas and gain even more popularity.

Our next event will be at The Old Bear Pub on Wednesday September 7th, at 19:30.

Please contact Ellen Daniels on ellen-daniels@live.co.uk for more information.



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Mole Valley
**Conservative
Future**



**Ellen Daniels,
Mole Valley Conservative Future**

The Conservative Women's Organisation

The Conservative Women's Organisation has been busy in Mole Valley over the last couple of months.

We have held a very successful "Wardrobe Workshop." Our speaker was a member of the Federation of Image Consultants and she covered the topic of illusion dressing – how to get the most out of a capsule wardrobe and why we feel comfortable in some clothes and not others.

Our latest event was a Coffee and Cake Morning. We invited like-minded Conservative women from Guildford, Mole Valley, Epsom & Ewell, Esher & Walton and Elmbridge so that there was the opportunity to network and find out what is on offer from the CWO.



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The CWO has been invaluable over the years as a major contributor to party funds. We hope this will continue to be the case and we also want to attract more women into the party. Without 40% of the female vote no government has gained an outright majority at a General Election since 1945.

As a member of the Association, women are automatically a member of the CWO at no extra cost. This gives access to a range of important benefits including:

Development training programme – designed to help individual members with their personal and political development and to actively encourage more women to stand for public office

AGM & Conference – an event that attracts speakers from both Westminster and the non-political arena. Next Year's conference is on March 7th 2012 has an Olympics "How to Win" theme.

Forums & Summits – an opportunity to discuss particular issues direct with MP's and Ministers. Forums are usually held in the House of Commons and the next is Tuesday 13th Sept 6-8pm "Women in the Frontline" discussing the effect of conflict on women in the armed forces, aid agencies and the media.

The CWO is proud to be one of the oldest women's political organisations in the world. We can continue to build on this heritage with benefits that offer a real incentive for women to join the party and events that are tailored to their particular interests.

Julie Iles,
Conservative Women's Organisation

News from the House of Commons

New Planning System and Housing



Recently many MPs including myself have received emailed letters regarding the Government's new planning system. Some constituents seem to be believe that the quality of both the built environment and our countryside will be sacrificed as the new national planning policy framework will introduce a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Let me reassure those concerned that this is certainly not the case.

The existing planning system, inherited from the previous administration, creates a lack of opportunity for residents to influence the nature of local development. Unfortunately, this has resulted in a genuine sense of disempowerment and a resistance to the notion of development, irrespective of its potential benefits.

The Coalition Government is committed to decentralising power to local people and making the planning process more accessible to them. The Government is abolishing Labour's unpopular



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Regional Strategies via the Localism Bill, protecting the Green Belt from top-down removal in 30 towns and cities across England.

Also in the Bill, Ministers have decided to introduce an entirely new regime of neighbouring planning, which is designed to give people far more influence in the planning system than is currently possible. Once in place, this will help to determine and shape local development, such as the location of new shops, offices and schools or the provision of more open green space.

The next stage of reform is to condense down the 1,000 pages of confusing and contradictory guidance to a succinct 52-page policy document, called the National Planning Policy Framework, a draft of which is out for public consultation. This new document demonstrates the Government's commitment to protecting our natural and historic environment. It safeguards valued national protection such as Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, as well as ensuring measures which protect wildlife, biodiversity, cultural heritage and which tackle light pollution. It also proposes a new designation to protect local green spaces in need of special protection, which I believe will be welcomed in our area.

I do not agree with the suggestion that these reforms will undermine important protection of the countryside, or that it will lead to 'Los Angeles urban sprawl'. Indeed, the Framework explicitly attaches great importance to Green Belts in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. It also directly states that local plans should minimise adverse effects on the local or natural environment.

These practical changes are part of a series of broader reforms to drive sustainable development, to promote local economic growth and protect the environment. Local firms and local communities are currently hindered by a planning system that can be slow, costly and gives them no certainty. Yet development will not be allowed if it is clearly in conflict with the environmental and other safeguards in the Framework.

I can assure you that ultimately, local communities will be the driving seat by being able to influence the shape of their local communities, supported by the innovation of neighbourhood planning – increasing the involvement of local residents across our local areas.

I would encourage you to read the summary to the new Framework available at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/draftframeworksummary and please do use the opportunity to communicate your views directly via the public consultation.

With regards to Housing, a growing and an ageing population necessitates building more homes, including affordable ones, and for, existing homes to be managed more efficiently. In addressing the public deficit the Government is intent on creating the economic conditions necessary to allow more individuals to take responsibility for meeting their own and their families' housing needs whether they wish to buy or rent. Most people aspire to own their own home and the Government wants to support people with that aspiration as long as they can sustain homeownership. Social housing will provide support for families who need it.



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In order to achieve this, the Government is increasing the number of houses available to buy and rent including affordable homes. As I have mentioned before the Government will return decision-making powers on housing and planning to local communities, and in its drive for localism it will allow them to protect the character of their neighbourhoods. Local people will determine where best to build the new homes and the local facilities they know are necessary to make their communities successful. Powerful financial incentives will mean that local people will see the benefit in building new homes and we will continue to invest in affordable homes. DCLG recognises that the private rented sector meets a wide range of housing needs, contributes to greater labour market mobility and is increasingly the tenure of choice for the young. The private rented sector is already governed by a well established legal framework and we will not introduce any further regulation. We will also address the problem of homes lying empty while people have nowhere to live.

The Government is also improving the flexibility of social housing (increasing mobility and choice) and promoting homeownership by making sure that public investment in social housing is properly targeted at the most in need. Building more affordable housing is necessary but we will also make it easier for social tenants to move for work or if their needs change, their family grows or their children leave home. The aim of policy will be to increase the efficiency and flexibility of the social housing sector, while giving more power to tenants. Decentralising power in this way is essential to the creation of the Big Society. We have removed Home Information Packs that made it more expensive to put homes on the market and will continue to support schemes like the right to buy and low cost home ownership.

It is also our aim to protect the vulnerable and disadvantaged who are tackling homelessness and support people to stay in their homes. The Government is committed to protecting the most vulnerable and will work in partnership with local authorities, charities and other organisations, to tackle homelessness and end rough sleeping. We will make sure that the Supporting People programme gives local authorities the flexibility to best help vulnerable people to live independently. We are also helping people who are in danger of repossession because they cannot meet their mortgage repayments.

And lastly we will make sure that homes are of high quality and are sustainable by supporting communities in their desire to take the lead in shaping new developments in their area and their wish to see higher standards of design and sustainability. We will make sure that homes meet the standards necessary to support commitments to cut carbon emissions and that people can reduce their impact on the environment. We will reform council housing financing so that local authorities have control over how they improve the quality of the homes they own and the service they offer their tenants.

Sir Paul Beresford
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley



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Report from Surrey County Council



August is usually a quieter month for the County Council, as it rises for the summer recess. My Mole Valley County Colleagues and I though, have been out and about meeting with residents, attending village fetes and shows, visiting local charities, watching the National sheep dog trials at Dorking and of course attending the test Olympic cycle ride through Mole Valley. Next week we head back to County Hall for a round of challenging budget debates and to set out priorities for the coming year up to the County Elections in 2013.

Picture below showing Sir Paul Beresford, Neil Maltby (Surrey Hills Society) and Helyn Clack at the National Sheep Dog Trials where Sir Paul gave out the prizes to the winners.

The electoral commission has decided that some of the county divisions in Mole Valley are too large and are setting about changing the boundaries, this has been going on for the last year, but they have now sent out their recommendations for discussions. Their aim is to ensure a fair electorate number in each division so that each councillor gets a balance of population voting for them. The changes will affect at least three of the county divisions in Mole Valley and the public are encouraged to comment on these proposals.



**County Councillor Helyn Clack
Member for Dorking Rural**

Report from Guildford Borough Council



Public consultation on the long-term future of a large area of land to the north-east of Guildford town centre by the River Wey has been temporarily put on hold until a further study by one of the partners has been carried out.



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The Slyfield Area Regeneration Project is part of Guildford Borough Council's long-term planning for the future of the borough. Thames Water and Surrey County Council are working with Guildford Borough Council on the project which, although in its early stages, could be one of the biggest developments of this type Guildford has seen for many years.

Affordable housing, community facilities, improvements to the local environment and new facilities for sewage and waste treatment are some of the options to be considered for the land which is next to Slyfield Industrial Estate.

Two options for a master plan for the area have already been developed, which include houses, facilities for the community and green spaces. Further work needs to take place by Thames Water before a third option, with more family housing, can be developed. This will not take place until 2012.

Although we are disappointed that there is going to be some delay in the project, in the medium term, it could provide Guildford with a significant boost in housing numbers in an area of brownfield land, thus helping to ensure that the Borough can preserve its Green Belt.

On a separate note, residents and visitors will be able to explore the architectural and cultural heritage of Guildford Borough at the annual Heritage Open Days weekend, which takes place from Thursday 8 to Sunday 11 September.

There are always lots of interesting buildings opening during Heritage weekend, but G-Live, the new entertainment venue, is also opening its doors for the first time this year. Come and visit before its opening season kicks off the following weekend!

Cllr Andrew French
Deputy Leader, Guildford Borough Council

Report from Mole Valley District Council

New Housing Scheme a Success

MVDC have successfully launched the new Homechoice Plus Scheme on Wednesday 27th July, which welcomed around 50 attendees interested in learning more about what the scheme could mean for them and their tenants. The Homechoice Plus Scheme will offer a new three tiered service at no additional cost, in addition to a number of other incentives designed to encourage private landlords to sign up and help provide accommodation for households in need. Incentives include the possibility of longer bonds; cash incentive payments, as well as a standard inventory service provided free of charge; officers keeping in regular contact with landlords and tenants for the first year of the tenancy and offering free advice and guidance on landlord and tenant issues.

Over the past six years, MVDC has built a successful partnership with over 100 private landlords to secure homes for around 350 households threatened with homelessness. It is hoped with the launch



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of the new Homechoice Plus Scheme that the numbers of both landlords and homes available to households will grow.

Councillor Vivienne Michael, Portfolio Holder for Wellbeing & Customer Service, said "It was great to not only see our existing landlords attend the event but also the encouraging number of individuals interested in becoming landlords. It is our hope that this scheme will help improve the relationship we have with existing landlords whilst also trying to persuade those that do not currently work with us that we can offer them a strong professional service that will help them successfully let their properties. This scheme is incredibly worthwhile and will help prevent households from becoming homeless in the future."

For additional information about how to join the scheme, please visit www.molevalley.gov.uk or email keith.cook@molevalley.gov.uk.

Feature Article

The UK Economy



As the worlds markets keep their eyes firmly on America and the Euro Zone I thought it would be beneficial to look at the UK's current financial situation and how the Government is handling the economy.

The Government's economic policy objective is to achieve strong, sustainable and balanced growth. In order to achieve this, the Government is creating a new model of economic growth, driven by investment and exports, and more evenly balanced across the UK and sectors. Although this is a time of real international uncertainty and instability, which no country can hide from, Britain's economy has been reasonably stable in recent weeks. It is essential that the UK adheres to its current strategy that has brought stability and confidence to the economy and held down the costs of borrowing for businesses and homeowners. In spite of all the testing international circumstances, the UK economy is growing, rebalancing and creating jobs. Our market interest rates have fallen, while other countries' have soared; UK gilt yields have come down to below 2.5% which is the lowest interest rates in over 100 years.

There are many positive facts to take away from the year so far. In the first six months of this year, the UK economy has grown faster than the US economy – despite the latter's massive fiscal stimulus. If we look at the private sector we can see that over half a million extra jobs have been created and businesses have invested £91.4billion across the economy, up 9% on the year before. Our borrowing costs have fallen to record lows, showing that UK government debt is seen as a safe haven in the global debt storm and saving money for taxpayers, businesses and families. Britain's credit rating, which was put on negative outlook under Labour, has been restored to its previous highest possible level.

You may be interested in some key facts about our economy:



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GDP growth – published 26 July 2011 by ONS

- 0.2 per cent in 2011 Q2 (down from 0.5 per cent growth in 2011 Q1)
- 6.4 per cent decline during the recession (i.e. Q2 2008 to Q3 2009 inclusive)
- The UK had six consecutive quarters of negative growth, the longest on record
- Next release: 26 August 2011

The positive news is that the British economy is continuing to grow and is creating jobs; and that at a time of real international instability we are a place of safety in the storm. Our economy is stable at this time because this Government has taken the difficult decisions to get to grips with Britain's debts. Abandoning that now, as some argue we should, would only risk British jobs and growth.

The unemployment levels are expected to fluctuate both up and down as the deficit reduction action bites. The latest figures show a negative slide which follows improvements in the last quarter. However very recent figures have shown that the numbers of families with no one working has dropped.

Unemployment – published 17 August 2011 by ONS

- ILO unemployment = 2.49 million (April 2011 – June 2011), up by 25,000 on the previous three months
- Unemployment rate = 7.9 per cent
- Claimant count (July 2011) = 1.56 million, up by 37,100 on a month earlier
- Next release: 14 September 2011

Our welfare reforms are helping the unemployed moved into employment by ensuring work always pays. For those who have lost their jobs, our new Work Programme is now up and running and will offer jobseekers flexible support tailored to their needs to help them into employment. Labour left one million women unemployed after their 13 years in power – 200,000 more women than when they came into power. The further rise in female unemployment is disappointing but a part of this increase will be artificial due to a policy change whereby people are being switched from one benefit (Income Support) to another (Jobseeker's Allowance).

Government debt – published 19 August 2011 by ONS

- Government debt excluding financial interventions = 61.4 per cent of GDP
- Government debt including financial interventions = 148 per cent of GDP
- At the end of February 2011, public sector net debt excluding financial interventions was £940.1 billion (£2,266.3 billion including financial interventions).
- Next release: 21 September 2011



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Inflation

Increases in prices around the world have had a significant effect on inflation. We are very clear that the pressure on working families of rising prices is a huge concern for everyone and a huge concern for the Government. Interest rates are a matter for the independent Bank of England. At the Budget we did what we could to help families struggling with the cost of living by cutting income tax for millions of people; cutting fuel duty immediately; postponing Labour's planned increase this April; and taxing oil companies more to stop future above inflation rises in duty.

Reflecting on recent events, on the 24th August, the Treasury announced an agreement with Switzerland to tackle offshore tax evasion. Tax evasion is wrong at the best of times, but in economic circumstances like this it means that hard-pressed law-abiding taxpayers are forced to pay even more. That is why this Coalition Government made it a priority to go after those who do not pay their fair share. We will be as tough on the richest who evade tax as on those who cheat on benefits. The agreement will resolve the long-standing abuse of Swiss banking secrecy by those who seek to conceal the proceeds of tax evasion and is expected to secure billions of pounds of unpaid tax for the UK exchequer from 2013.

The Government also announced on the 17th August, the location of 11 new Enterprise Zones, designed to boost local growth and create over 30,000 new jobs by 2015. We are determined to do everything we can to make Britain the best place in the world to start and grow a business. It is essential that we generate balanced economic growth across the country. It is time for us to help every party of the country to grow and realise its potential. Enterprise Zones are a critical part of our *Plan for Growth* and the zones will benefit from over £150 million in tax breaks over four years, new superfast broadband, lower levels of planning control and the potential to use enhanced capital allowances. These new Enterprise Zones will be trailblazers for growth, jobs and prosperity throughout the country.

Regarding growth, there are some points that should be highlighted. The ONS says that special factors like the royal wedding and the Japanese tsunami may have reduced the figure by about 0.5%, so underlying growth would have been about 0.7% in the absence of these factors. This is an increase in the underlying rate of growth compared to the last 6 months (ONS, *Gross domestic product preliminary estimate*, 26 July 2011, [link](#)). While market interest rates for countries like Spain and Italy have been rising on fears about debt, UK market interest rates have been falling, even though we have a larger budget deficit. Recovering from the deepest recession in living memory was always going to be difficult, and like all countries around the world our economy has been hit by rising oil and commodity prices. There is no evidence that Government spending cuts are responsible for lower growth forecasts.

Sir Paul Beresford
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley



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National news in brief

Over half a million new companies created

New statistics from Companies House show that 506,000 new companies were incorporated between 16th May 2010 and 31st July 2011. The figures also show that 416,000 new companies have been incorporated over the year to July 2011, which is an 11% increase on the year before.

Business Minister Mark Prisk said: "Helping the private sector create jobs and economic growth is the top priority of this Government – that's why we're cutting business taxes, supporting start-ups and tackling red tape."

New Enterprise Zone locations announced

Eleven new Enterprise Zones, designed to boost local growth and create over 30,000 new jobs by 2015, have been announced by the Prime Minister.

This brings the total to 22 Enterprise Zones across the county. The Zones will attract hundreds of new start up firms, with simplified planning rules, super-fast broadband and over £150 million tax breaks for new businesses over the next 4 years.

They are: Newquay in Cornwall; Gosport; Rotherwas in Hereford; Discovery Park in Sandwich, Kent and Harlow; Science Vale UK in Oxfordshire; Alconbury Airfield, near Huntingdon; Great Yarmouth in Norfolk, and Lowestoft in Suffolk; Northampton Waterside; Hinckley Leicestershire, Humber Estuary; and Daresbury Science Campus in Warrington.

Plan to fight back after riots

David Cameron has announced a review of Government policies following the UK riots, which will seek to ensure that they are bold enough to fix a "broken society".

Cameron promised to take action to "turn around the lives" of the 120,000 most troubled families in the country by the next general election. He also pledged to turn around the 200 weakest secondaries and primaries in the next year. The Government will also be extending its programme of National Citizen Service, working with businesses, charities, schools and social enterprises, so that it is available to all 16 year olds.

[Click here to read the speech in full.](#)

Eric Pickles announces riot support package

Eric Pickles has announced that residents and local firms affected by the riots are in line for financial support, as part of a package of measures from the Government to help communities get back on their feet.

The package of support includes:

- **£10m recovery fund** to help councils
- **A £20m High Street Support Scheme**
- Seriously damaged homes and business properties will be taken off the respective valuation lists. This **removes any liability for council tax or business rates.**
- Councils have the power to offer **rate relief for local firms**, but must pay a quarter of the cost; central government automatically pays for three quarters of the cost.
- **Re-housing funding** to meet the immediate costs of emergency accommodation for families who have been made homeless by the disturbances.



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Local news in brief

Request to remove age bar by MVHA

Currently, Mole Valley Housing Association has an age restriction of 60 and over for houses on Highland Road, however they have submitted an application to MVDC to revoke this. This is because not enough people in that age bracket have shown an interest in living there.

Glynis Gatenby, the association's head, said: "We have recently carried out a detailed consultation with local residents on housing need so that we can provide the right mix of affordable homes in the area which will meet the needs of different age groups." The removal of the age bar "would make the homes available to a wider age groups, reflecting the demand in this particular area".

Playground reopened early

The play area at Chart Downs Recreation Ground in Dorking, which was renovated by Playdale Playgrounds, has reopened ahead of schedule on Friday 29th August.

Councillor Chris Reynolds said: "This is another in a long line of excellent play facilities now available to young people in the district, following a substantial amount of work by the council's parks team and partner organisations. I'm delighted that we could deliver this project ahead of schedule allowing use of the facility over the holiday."

SCC vote to keep grit bins

SCC's Cabinet have decided to remove the recommendations to bin grit silos currently used on the main trunk roads such as the A3. The move comes as part of a new deal struck with contractor May Gurney which SCC

hopes will allow for greater investment brought about through savings elsewhere.

As a result of the new winter strategy, around 110 extra miles of road will be regularly gritted in severe weather, including greater coverage for Surrey's hills. This comes on top of the 21 miles to the main gritting routes last year. Other measures include increasing the amount of salt ordered to 16,800 tonnes, up from last winter's 13,000, which itself was 50% more than 2009; the use of quad bikes to treat rural roads and areas larger lorries cannot reach; 15 extra farmers have been enlisted to clear snow bringing the total to 50 and 40 tonnes of grit will be given to borough and district councils. All Surrey's 1,743 grit bins will be refilled before winter, with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, providing an extra 51 bins near its stations.

Cut to Catholic School Bus Service

Due to a lack of council-funds, St Peter's School in Merrow are asking parents to help with the costs of running the school's bus service. In a letter to parents, Robert Guinea, Headmaster, asked for a contribution from parents entitled to free transport to help counter the service cost between September and July next year, and for others to consider alternative travel arrangements for the following school year.

A spokesman for SCC said that every child who was entitled to free transport would continue to receive it, but that the council could not afford to continue its own bus routes. "It costs nearly £2m a year and we can't provide this travel benefit now for such a small number of children. We will do everything possible to help faith schools run their own transport".