The Bookhams Residents' Association (BRA)
Working for the Community

The BRA is a non-political voluntary membership organisation open to all residents of Great and Little Bookham. It informs and voices residents' views on local issues and helps maintain and improve life in the Bookhams. The BRA will therefore continue to work to:

- Understand local issues and help inform residents' views

- Help residents' views to be heard, and deliver work to benefit the community

- Report Back to residents on actions taken, and

- Help to improve/hold to account those responsible for the services residents rely on and are affected by

Planned activities for 2025

1. Community Support and Improvement

- Education and young people: schools liaison, youth work and the new Youth Centre

- Highways: raise issues of capacity, parking, flooding, speeding, repair/improvements

- Infrastructure & Safety: lobby for public service and safety improvements generally

- Environment & Amenity: provide Tree Warden services, Blue Hearts, Litter Picking, environment protection, improvement to cycling and walking networks

- Project work: maintain/provide Christmas Lights, benches, notice boards, and other local features. BRA Centenary activities. Withdrawing from providing winter and summer hanging baskets

2. Communications and Campaigns

- Use Newsletters, noticeboards, social media, and email to engage with residents

- Collaborate with other Bookham community organisations, and neighbouring residents associations

- Campaign on issues as they arise

3. Planning

- Strategic: Consider the issues associated with the proposed local government reorganisation; the new NPPF; the application of the Local Plan and its supporting documents; endeavour to contribute to the Bookham Master Plan; review the Bookham Neighbourhood Development Plan. Lobby for improvements in Planning's response to:

environmental protection, Green Belt protection, flooding and surface water management, requisite infrastructure improvements.

- Operational: Review and comment on planning applications, as needed, to preserve the character of the Bookhams

4. Heritage

- Promote awareness/appreciation and protection of Bookham's history and heritage.

The Bookhams' History and Heritage

Something to cherish and worth protecting

Great and Little Bookham can trace their origins back to the Saxon era: mentioned in a Charter of C675, and in the 'much later' Domesday Book of C1086. They were small rural settlements – wealthy landowners, their servants and farmers. The railway arrived in 1885 and new property developments, types of employment, and commuting all followed. The Bookhams' population in 1871 was around 1,286; today it is ten times that number. The Bookhams have evolved over the centuries, but they have retained their village character and sense of community.

Today's inappropriate and over-development, population growth, and inadequate public services and infrastructure mean that the Bookhams' village heritage and culture has never been under greater stress.

By helping to raise awareness of the Bookhams' history and heritage (H&H) we hope to encourage it being seen as something to cherish and worth protecting.

BRA Heritage project plan

Purpose: To promote Awareness, Appreciation, and Protection of the Bookhams' H&H

Approach:

1. primarily, to inform and promote
2. start small and grow organically
3. to signpost and highlight H&H points of interest and 'issues' for residents

Method:

1. Create a H&H page on the BRA website (incl the current 'Heritage walks and history' page)
2. Create a H&H page signposting facility, like the current "Quick Links for Services" page
3. Have a H&H article in each edition of the Newsletter – created or commissioned/guest spot from one/two of the bodies identified at point 3
4. Link H&H with other activities of the BRA – planning applications, B Master Plan, Neighbourhood Plan etc; environmental, buildings etc
5. Commission a Heritage Board for the Village
6. Campaign as necessary on H&H issues

End.