



Admiring the view from Holmbury Hill on the Greensand Way

## Inspiring Views of the Surrey Hills

For many visitors to our county, the stereotypical idea they have of Surrey will be as a less urban extension of London or, according to the Lonely Planet travel guide, just 'plain uninteresting'. The real Surrey, with its inspiring views and wonderful scenery, therefore comes as a great surprise to people visiting for the first time.



Photo courtesy of Surrey History Centre

Those of us living in the Surrey Hills know even better! We know that visitors from overseas love to visit our beautiful landscape and lush green hills and relish that 'get away from it all' feeling. Take Leith Hill Tower for instance – when you've climbed to the top of the tower, you're higher than the new Shard building in London and on a clear day, you can probably see it!

Surrey was incredibly popular with the Victorians who regularly took the trains out of London to enjoy picnicking and to 'take the air' in the Surrey Hills – as written in Jane Austen's "Emma" about the Box Hill picnic. However, many of our beautiful views have become obscured in recent years due to the lack of woodland management since World War II. If you look at old postcards of Box Hill and Leith Hill and places like Hindhead Common, you are struck by the lack of trees..... hence the great views.

Inspiring Views are not necessarily seen from a height, even though they give stunning panoramas of the surrounding area. Just as important can be those viewpoints which provide a framed picture of a particular feature in the distance – or those that look from low ground towards a feature at a higher level. For example, the view of St Martha's church seen from Chilworth or framed by trees from the leafy approach to Blackheath can be just as inspirational as that from the top of the hill looking out from the church – they are just different!

Society members recently enjoyed a visit to Hankley Common MoD land, just outside Elstead. It's a beautiful unspoilt area of heathland that few people are aware of, with wide open spaces and

plenty of paths for all to enjoy, giving open access all year round. The heather was at its best and the views were literally awe-inspiring.

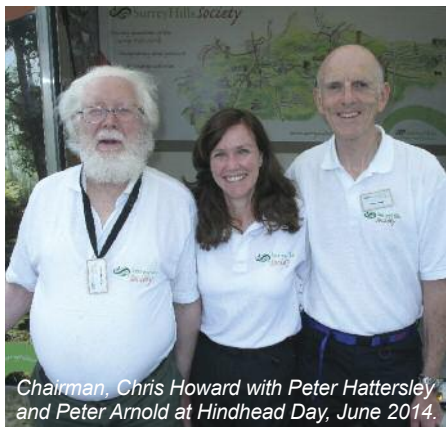


Society members at Hankley Common

The Surrey Hills AONB Board, in its new Management Plan, is committed to maintaining and re-opening views that have become obscured and we need your help to identify and prioritise them, see the report on page 3. In this issue we're focussing on our inspiring views and the centre page spread illustrates some of the highlights across the Surrey Hills. If your favourite view is not mentioned, or you know of a special view that's obscured by trees and bushes, please let us know as it could perhaps be included in a future project.



## Chairman's View



Chairman, Chris Howard with Peter Hattersley and Peter Arnold at Hindhead Day, June 2014.

Welcome to another edition of Surrey Hills Society Views. What a wonderful summer it has been! I have had a fabulous time discovering more about our beautiful AONB. The summer season started with Chairman's Day. The day focussed on local food producers, which was fascinating and also involved eating large amounts of gorgeous locally produced food!

This event was followed by a series of interesting activities including an enjoyable afternoon at Polesden Lacey, former home of society hostess Mrs Margaret Greville DBE – followed by a scrumptious afternoon tea. In July we were privileged to be invited to the Wotton Estate, home of Patrick Evelyn – the direct descendant of John Evelyn, the 16th century diarist and landscape designer. The family have owned the estate since 1579 and it was interesting to listen to all the challenges land owners in the Surrey Hills faced and still face. This day included a superb lunch at the Stephan Langton pub in the picturesque village of Friday Street and afternoon tea at the ancestral home of the Evelyns, Wotton House. This is now an impressively restored hotel and we were privileged to be hosted in the stunning marble chapel.

Luckily I have managed my waist line by fitting in a number of interesting guided walks including Compton, Peaslake and



Presidents Day lunch at the Stephan Langton

Blackheath (where I learnt to map read using a compass).

I am not a cyclist, but on Sunday 10 August I followed the Ride London-Surrey Cycle Race with interest as Darren and Phil Cooper were riding for the Surrey Hills Society. Thank you to all those members who supported us (and them), including FlippinImage in Chilworth, who provided their logoed shirts and The Long Distance Walkers Association for their generous donation of £250, which has already helped us raise nearly £1,000 for the drinking water fountain and landscaping project at the National Trust's Leith Hill tower. A huge thank you must go to Darren and Phil for their enormous effort and congratulations on completing the race in good time, in hugely challenging weather conditions.

We now have an action packed autumn to look forward to, starting with the Surrey Hills Wood Fair on 4 and 5 October, where our volunteers are out in force, marshalling the event and manning our stand. This is our showcase family event which celebrates everything good about wood, with a strong Surrey Hills flavour. Talking of flavour, there is lots of local produce to sample there too, including the Tillingbourne Brewery who are running a beer tent, where you will be entertained by local musicians.

Continuing the food theme, don't forget also to book our very popular Christmas walk, followed by mulled wine and mince pies at Belmont School, in Holmbury St Mary.

Do check our website for other more impromptu events and if you do not have access to the internet then please ask us to send you hard copies of all the event booking forms.

Finally, I think it is important to thank all our volunteers and supporters who have assisted us in producing our varied range of events, helped at shows, given talks or assisted in the production of our newsletter. I would especially like to thank our President, Neil Maltby, and daughter Deborah, Patrick Evelyn and his Agent Philip Trower for organising such a special day out at Wotton Estate. I would also like to thank Phil May and Tim McEntire from Dorking Food Float for creating such an informative and enjoyable Chairman's Day and to Jon and Paula Briscoe for our delicious lunch at the Jolly Farmers in Buckland.

In this edition we are featuring special views of the Surrey Hills. This is partly because



Darren and Phil Cooper

we are looking to identify some special views that are becoming obscured by tree growth. We would like to do some practical volunteering to open up these views again. We also want you to send us your special photos of views of the Surrey Hills for our new notelets competition, see page 7. I hope you have an enjoyable autumn and winter in the Surrey Hills and hope to see you at some of our events.

Chris Howard, Chairman



Chairman's Day - Phil May and Debbie Nicholas with Chris at the Jolly Farmers pub.

## 2014 AGM

The formal notice of the Society's Annual General Meeting on Saturday 22 November at the Leatherhead Institute is enclosed with this newsletter. Please show your support for the Society and come along.



This summer, Chris Howard received a surprise phone call from David Cameron's researchers to tell her she'd been chosen to receive a Points of Light Award for her charitable work in setting up the Surrey Hills Society. The Award recognises outstanding individual volunteers, people who are making a change in their community and inspiring others. Each day, someone, somewhere in the country is selected to receive the award to celebrate their remarkable achievements. Anyone who has any involvement with the Surrey Hills Society will know that there is absolutely no doubt that Chris deserves this award and we send congratulations and thanks to her from all members for her tireless contribution and work for the Society.

Views editor



The Trustees of Surrey Hills Society are delighted to announce the appointment of our new Co-ordinator, Marika

Elzinga. She was born in Finland but married a French winemaker and they have chosen to make a new life for themselves and their family in the Surrey Hills. Marika was already an active volunteer in the Society and her extensive background in Marketing and Event Management made her perfect for the job. She has served on several charitable organisations so we look forward to working with her on developing the Society.

## Surrey Hills Inspiring Views Project



*Before and after – views at Gatton Park*

The Surrey Hills Inspiring Views Project was established in 2003 with funding initially from the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) and the National Trust.

The primary focus of the project was viewpoint creation, access improvements, restoration of historic landscape features and interpretation at key gateway sites owned by the National Trust and other landowners along the North Downs and Greensand Hills across the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The projects proved to be a fantastic opportunity to involve young people, including groups with special needs, who were invited to visit the sites where they learnt from site managers about the practical work taking place and why that is so important,

and interpreted what they learnt in creative workshops led by professional artists.

After 4 years the successful Inspiring Views Project came to an end. Thanks to partnership working between the Surrey Hills AONB Board and the Surrey Hills Society it looks likely that the Inspiring Views Project will be reborn! The aim is to support a range of initiatives and traditional countryside management projects that benefit the landscape, wildlife, cultural and recreational aspects of the Surrey Hills. Funding will come in grant format from the Society and AONB Board for projects that demonstrate a tangible benefit for communities and visitors alike. Further information will be available on the new Inspiring Views project in the coming months.

## Launch of new fund for the Surrey Hills

The Surrey Hills Trust Fund was successfully launched at Birtley House, Bramley at the end of May. In attendance was local resident and supporter of the Surrey Hills AONB, Virginia McKenna OBE.

Over 150 guests attended the evening which started with a glass of local vineyard, High Clandon's best sparkling wine. Guests were then treated to a wonderful three course meal consisting primarily of local Surrey produce.

The aim of the evening was to launch the Surrey Hills Trust Fund, established to conserve and protect the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, leaving a legacy for generations to come. The new fund will help support local community projects and enterprise schemes that benefit and enhance the Surrey Hills.

Chairman of the Surrey Hills Trust Fund, Neil Maltby comments;

"The Surrey Hills AONB is under threat not only environmentally but also through development pressure. If you believe passionately in this special landscape we need to act now to protect it. The Surrey Hills Trust will do just that. By offering your support and giving a donation we can put money back into the Surrey Hills to safeguard it for future generations".

The Surrey Hills Trust has been established in partnership with the Community Foundation for Surrey, an independent charitable trust which inspires local giving for local need and builds permanent community resources to improve the lives of people in Surrey. This is a permanent fund which means there will always be an ongoing source of funding to support the needs of the Surrey Hills. By pooling donations together from local companies, individuals, families, Trusts and from legacies, the fund will create more of an impact.

For further information on the Surrey Hills Trust Fund visit the website on <http://www.surreyhills.org/surrey-hills-trust/>.



*L to R: Will Travers OBE, actress Virginia McKenna OBE, Neil Maltby and Simon Whalley.*



## Some inspiring views to discover over the winter months



**Newlands Corner**, that iconic viewpoint which forms part of the Duke of Northumberland's estate on Albury Down, is known to many people. It was also a key location in the crime writer Agatha Christie's disappearance in December 1926. Her car was found in a bush overhanging a chalk pit at Newlands Corner, at the bottom of the south side of the hill. **1**

**Box Hill** is probably the best known viewpoint in the Surrey Hills. 2014 marks the centenary of it becoming part of the National Trust estate. This view, towards Denbies, shows relatively tree free slopes – as they would have been at the time of Emma's famous picnic described by Jane Austen. **3**



**Hascombe Hill** is the site of another Iron Age fort within the Surrey Hills. More recently, in the early 19th century, it became an important naval telegraph station, using a mechanical form of semaphore to communicate with Netley Heath in Surrey on one side and Blackdown in Sussex on the other as part of a chain linking Portsmouth and London. **4**



**Hindhead and the Devils Punchbowl** have long been regarded as amongst the most famous viewpoints in Surrey. With the A3 having been re-routed through a tunnel, the old route is being returned to heathland and the views opened up. The memorial stone in the foreground commemorates the unidentified sailor who was murdered on the hill in 1786 – a story which has become part of Surrey folklore. **2**



**Wotton House** nestles in the Tillingbourne Valley to the north of Leith Hill. Home of the Evelyn family for many centuries, the house and grounds are now a hotel and an excellent example of the beauty and serenity to be found in the Surrey Hills. **5**

Walkers along the **North Downs Way** above Reigate will have seen this structure which was donated to the borough by Lieutenant Colonel Inglis in 1909. It was built as a drinking fountain for horses on the original main route over Reigate Hill but now houses a direction indicator. **6**



**Botley Hill**, near Woldingham, is the highest point of the North Downs with a height of 269.6 metres (885 ft). This view looks down from the hill onto Titsey Place which has a history dating back to the 16th century. **7**

**Holmbury Hill** is one of a number of Iron Age forts known to have been constructed in the area. Being the 4th highest point in Surrey, it would have been a natural place to select. Recent survey work has shown the complexity of the fort and emphasised the skill with which the original builders utilised the existing topography. It also highlighted their concern that the monument should be visible from, and overlook, the expanse of the Weald to the south – a feature which modern visitors can now benefit from. **8**



**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)**

**Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)**



This view across **Gatton Park** shows clearly that vistas and views don't necessarily have to be from the tops of hills. Capability Brown is recorded as having been responsible for many landscape gardens. One of the richest designs is that at Gatton. **9**

**An outpost of University College, London** is not something which one would expect to find in the heart of the AONB. However, the Mullard Space Science Laboratory (MSSL) has been based in a mid-19th century mansion on the hillside above Holmbury St Mary since the 1960s. The mansion had several previous owners including the head of the Guinness family and then the Maharajah of Baroda. With stunning views all the way to the south coast, the attractions of the location are obvious. **10**



**Reigate Heath Windmill** was built c.1765 and was last worked by wind in April 1862. In 1880, the roundhouse was converted into a chapel of ease to St Mary's Parish Church. It is believed to be the only consecrated windmill in the country. The view takes in Brockham chalk cliff in the distance. **11**

**Surrey Hills Society**

Registered Charity number 1125532  
www.surreyhillssociety.org





# News from Surrey Hills Enterprises

Surrey Hills Enterprises Community Interest Company exists to support the project work of the AONB Board to conserve, enhance and promote the exceptional Surrey Hills landscape. At the same time it works to support and promote rural enterprises who display a passion for their countryside. These business members share their appreciation of the landscape through their products and services and support rural business by buying locally.

## Mercure Burford Bridge Hotel

The hotel is set within three acres of landscaped gardens at the foot of Box Hill within the Surrey Hills AONB and reopened to guests on 1 September after an extensive transformation. This was just in time for the National Trust Box Hill centenary celebrations.

The hotel started life as the Fox and Hounds Inn around 1254 but the date of the first structure of the current building has never been fully established. Contemporary accounts reference a tenement called Cockcrofte in 1672 and it is thought that the first house was built between 1629 and 1672. James Charman was the landlord in 1792 when Admiral Lord Nelson stayed with his great love, Lady Emma Hamilton just before his departure to the Battle of Trafalgar. A room at the hotel is named in her honour.

The refurbishment has been in the safe hands of interior design company,

Trevillion Interiors who have provided a fresh contemporary and uncluttered country-house ambiance which General Manager Paul Morgan feels pays homage to the historic heritage of the hotel whilst providing a welcome, modern bolthole for the local Box Hill community.

The hotel has always been at the heart of the community and a popular meeting place for drinks, afternoon tea and dinner with friends and family.



## MEMBER OFFER

**The Mercure Burford Bridge Hotel** is pleased to offer members of the Surrey Hills Society a 10% discount off afternoon tea, excluding additional drinks, on presentation of their membership card. For bookings and reservations, please call 01306 884561.

Terms and conditions:

- Subject to Availability
- Offer can be withdrawn at anytime
- No cash alternative and non-transferable

This offer is also available to those who walk **the Mole Gap Trail**, on presentation of the walks leaflet. This is a 6 mile walk between Leatherhead and Dorking stations, taking in some of the most stunning Surrey Hills countryside, including two historic market towns and England's largest vineyard. The Mole Gap Trail walk leaflet is available from [www.surreyhill.org](http://www.surreyhill.org)

## Tillings at The Cornerhouse, Newlands Corner

For an inspiring view, you need look no further than out of the window of the newly re-opened "Tillings at The Cornerhouse", Newlands Corner. One of Surrey Hills Enterprises' founder members, Tillings Tea Room in Gomshall, has gone from strength to strength in their original



location. So much so that they have embarked on a new venture taking over what was The Barn at Newlands Corner and transforming it with their charming, wholesome décor and family friendly ethos. A huge supporter of the Surrey Hills, Jane Radford was excited to open the fully licensed premises at the beginning of August.

Development Manager of Surrey Hills Enterprises Carrie White is delighted that this entrepreneurial business model is

having such success in the heart of the Surrey Hills. "Jane and her team have worked tirelessly in Gomshall to provide a fabulous eatery for locals and visitors alike, the focus on local produce where available and home cooked food is very appealing. I have no doubt that this second venue will be just as good. Newlands Corner is such an iconic site in the AONB and it's wonderful that someone like Jane will be providing refreshment for the many visitors."

## MEMBER OFFER

Surrey Hills members are encouraged to visit the café before or after exploring the many walks, cycle routes and viewpoints in the area. For the month of October, on production of your membership card, you can enjoy a 'two for one' offer on a delicious hot breakfast sandwich and hot drink. This will be valid Monday to Friday 8am to 12 noon. Offer expires 31 October.

## Sponsor's View

Since our firm, Stan Baring Solicitors, has been sponsoring the newsletter for the Surrey Hills Society, I have been getting actively involved in it, and so far I have enjoyed meeting many new people and learning so much about the county that I have lived in for 32 years. I really had no idea how many interesting places and people there are in this beautiful county!

Stan and I were walking our two dogs, who share 7 legs between them, up to the North Downs walk by the Silent Pool during the summer when the weather was extremely hot. We met a chap there who was walking the North Downs Way and we started chatting about the Society and extolling the virtues and events that take place. I have become a complete convert, even though as you may notice, we don't like having our picture taken!

I had my first experience of Chairman's Day in May. The focus was on food which

is something dear to my heart. We started at The Jolly Farmers in Buckland, where we heard about the new social enterprise, Dorking Food Float - a group trying to support local producers through a selling co-operative. We also heard from Debbie Nicholas about how she started producing her home preserves. The group then went on to visit Surrey's only cheese producer at Norbury Park Farm.

We had an absolutely lovely buffet lunch with Jon Bricoe, the pub owner, giving us a talk on his philosophy of only using local ingredients and by doing so, promoting local businesses and improving the local economy.

More visits after lunch included R Coe & Sons watercress growers in Abinger Hammer for delicious watercress scones and then on to a beautiful Tudor manor house where the owner gave us an insight into the world of bees and introduced us to his rare breed hens

including the Dorking five toed variety. It was then back to Gomshall Mill for a delicious afternoon tea. Hurray!

I really cannot speak highly enough of the day. The company was good, the food was fantastic and it was very informative. I suggest you book early next year to avoid disappointment.

Sall Baring



## 20s to 30s Group



Views from Pewley Down

I recently went walking for the first time in Guildford. I am new in the country (I come from Brazil), in the city and also to walking. My expectations were basically based on the walks of Jane Austen's characters and their long journeys through England's hills. I had a really good experience with the 20s to 30s group that I want to tell you about.

It was a misty morning in the beginning of September and honestly I was not expecting to have so much fun, but the people from the Surrey Hills Society made my day. We were a group of six people and all of them taught me

valuable lessons about the nice green area of Guildford that we explored, to ways of having fun with nature, with a British touch.

The route included very beautiful places such as Shalford Park, a walk along the River Wey, many landscape views which I can't remember the names of, and Pewley Down, which is a treasure of Guildford. I plotted the route on my smartphone and hope to be able to take my beloved family and friends when they visit. Thank you, Surrey Hills Society for a great time!

Gisele Braun

## Photo Competition

We would like to use your photos for a new set of Surrey Hills notelets and for general publicity. Over the years we have seen many amazing pictures from our members and would now like to invite you to enter our photo competition.

### *The theme is Inspiring Views and Impressive Structures*

We are looking for high resolution images of identifiable locations or structures within the Surrey Hills that would work well as the front of a notelet. The pictures may be in either portrait or landscape format. The names of the photographers will be included on the notelets.

By entering the competition, you are agreeing to unrestricted use of the photos by the Society. Each entrant may submit a maximum of five images.

The top three pictures selected by an independent judge will be awarded a bottle of high quality Surrey wine supplied by Litmus Wines.

Please send your photos to [photos4surreyhills@gmail.com](mailto:photos4surreyhills@gmail.com) along with your name, contact details and the location of the structure or view.

**Closing date: 31 December 2014**







## Events programme *October 2014 to February 2015*

Visit our website for more information and additional events. Bookings generally open 6 to 8 weeks before each event and must be booked in advance – even free ones. Non-email users can get more information by sending an SAE to the address above.

### **Weekend 4/5 October** **Surrey Hills Wood Fair, Birtley Estate, Bramley**

"All that's good about wood".  
Society member offer £5 entry on the gate with your membership card, or buy online and present card with your e-ticket.  
[www.surreyhillswoodfair.co.uk](http://www.surreyhillswoodfair.co.uk)

### **Monday 20 October** **Mane Chance Horse Sanctuary**

A guided visit around Jenny Seagrove's horse sanctuary at Compton with an opportunity to meet the horses. *Includes a light lunch.*

### **Thursday 23 October** **Capability Brown's Vision for Gatton**

A tour of the whole of Gatton Park to learn about Brown's vision for Gatton and how this landscape is managed today. *Includes lunch.*

### **Monday 27 October** **Fungi Fun Day** **Signposting Family event**

Join in with the craft and nature activities at Leith Hill Place, a National Trust property and former home of Ralph Vaughan Williams and the Wedgewood family.

### **Week 27 to 30 October** **Signposting Family event**

October Activity Week at Box Hill. Children's activities from the National Trust during half term week.

Our **20s to 30s events** are organised on our behalf by Pete Lambert who likes walking, loves the Surrey Hills and has been known to check out the food and drink offerings of local pubs after walks. If you are interested in joining any of the events for this younger age-group, please keep an eye on Pete's Facebook page – Discover Guildford

Tel: 07749 344616

Email: [pete@discoverguildford.co.uk](mailto:pete@discoverguildford.co.uk)



@DiscoverGfrd

@SurreyHillsAONB

### **Friday 7 November** **Arts & Crafts Movement in Surrey**

An all-day sequence of talks and visits around the community of Blackheath with the rare opportunity to visit some of the private dwellings in addition to public buildings. Limited numbers due to access to private homes.

### **Saturday 22 November** **Surrey Hills Society AGM at Leatherhead Institute**

Followed by a quiz and afternoon tea. Come along and show your support for the Society.

### **Saturday 6 December** **Pre-Christmas walk around the Belmont School area**

An annual favourite, this walk will take in a circular route from the school, returning for mulled wine and mince pies inside this wonderful building originally built for the Waterhouse family. Well behaved dogs welcome on walk.

### **Saturday 13 December** **Christmas Wreaths and Crafts**

A Family event organised and run by the Surrey Hills Society in the Wonersh area. Gather the materials and then make your own Christmas decorations, wreaths and craft items.

### **Sunday 12 October, 11am** **Newlands Corner inc. Silent Pool**

### **Sunday 2 November, 11am** **Box Hill ramble**

### **Saturday 27 December, 11am** **Post Christmas walk**

Walk through the Chantries up to St Martha's from the Percy Arms. Get outside and work off some of the Christmas over-indulgence.

### **Saturday 20 December** **Harvest your own Christmas Tree** **Signposting Family event**

Join this National Trust event on Hindhead Common.

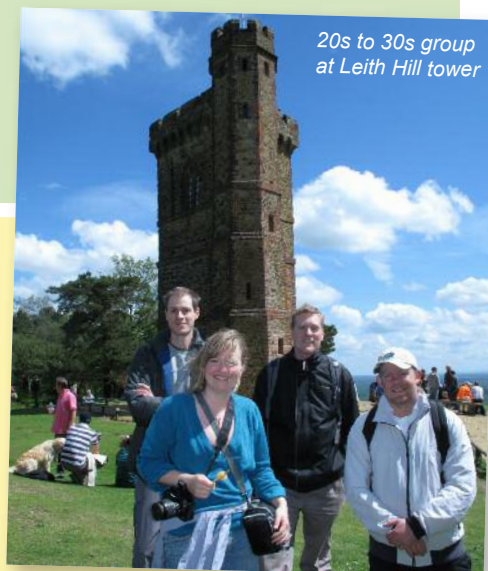
### **Saturday 24 January 2015** **Identifying Trees in Winter**

A guided walk in the Shamley Green area.

### **January / February 2015**

Events are still being finalised but are expected to include:

- **A talk on the work at Leith Hill Tower** – including the new water trough and fountain supported by SHS donations – in preparation for the Tower's 250th Birthday celebrations
- **A light-hearted fun evening with food**
- **Learning Map Reading**  
An additional session of the popular course established in 2014. Ideal for those who would like to get out in the Surrey Hills but want to learn more about basic map reading and compass use. Indoor morning session followed by afternoon practical experience



Our Family events section has been established to provide events which are suitable for all the family – but especially children. Many of these are collaborative events with organisations such as the National Trust. Events during the remainder of 2014 are listed here and above. The 2015 programme is still under development

by our partners so please watch our events page for further details.

### **Weekend 4/5 October** **Surrey Hills Wood Fair**

### **Monday 27 October** **Fungi Fun Day at Leith Hill Place**

### **Week 27 – 30 October** **October Activity Week at Box Hill**

### **Saturday 13 December** **Christmas Wreaths and Crafts**

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