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Arena

Issue 133 • Summer 2026



Stitching the unique story of Rushmoor's military heritage

Honouring our armed forces

Join us for the Armed Forces Day National Event

Summer events

There's so much going on!

Local heroes

Meet the couple with more than 20 years' local service

RUSHMOOR
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Armed Forces Day
National Event 2026

THE
HEAD
QUARTERS

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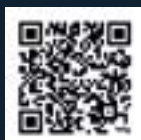


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Keeping you informed about progress in Rushmoor

by Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of Rushmoor Borough Council

Welcome to the summer edition of Arena, with news from your council about local events and the progress we are making in delivering for residents.

We are hoping for good weather because there are some fantastic events lined up over the next few months! We start with Victoria Day, our annual festival in Aldershot for all the family (p4). This year we are celebrating the diverse heritage of our borough, with a focus on folklore and fairy tales.

Hot on the heels comes the Armed Forces Day National Event (p5), with the weekend given over to the celebrations. I'm so pleased that the Home of the British Army and the birthplace of British military aviation is honouring and thanking our serving men and women, their families and our veterans. There will be lots to do over two days and opportunities to find out about how you can play your part in defending your country.

In July, we welcome Farnborough International Airshow, bringing visitors and business from all over the world. If you see your future in aerospace or just want to find out more about the opportunities, you can register for the exciting 'Pioneers of Tomorrow' day,

free to under-21s. For details of this and all events in Rushmoor, look them up on our new online events calendar on our website.

Thank you to everyone who voted in the local elections. You can find who your local councillors are on page 13 and with changes coming to local government, turn to page 6 to see how these will affect you.

If you want to get more involved there are plenty of opportunities. Turn to page 6 for details of our annual residents' survey and on page 7, read about how we are planning the future of Rushmoor, with input from residents. Residents of Cherrywood have an extra opportunity as they are asked to say what they want a new £20m fund to be spent on in their area (p8).

In this issue, we follow a day in the life of our Place Protection Officers (p9), showing you how you can get more active (p11), and there is news about the new leisure centre.

Our borough has always been a place to be proud of, and we are working hard to make sure it continues to be so for future generations. Enjoy the summer!

Arena Issue 133 - Summer 2026

Produced and designed by: Rushmoor Borough Council, Council Offices, Farnborough Road, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7JU (01252 398 399) www.rushmoor.gov.uk
Email: arena@rushmoor.gov.uk
Advertising: Spot on Media Ltd (0845 004 0683) andrew@spotonmedia.co.uk

as an mp3 file and is available free. It is also available in large print. If you have any problems receiving Arena please don't hesitate to call Gill Chisnall on **01252 398 744** or email her at gill.chisnall@rushmoor.gov.uk

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Did you know that Arena is available as a talking newspaper? Each edition is recorded

www.rushmoor.gov.uk



nextdoor



Victoria Day is back for free family fun!

Get ready for folklore, fairy tales and storybook surprises at this year's Victoria Day on Saturday 6 June.



From 10am to 4pm, visitors to Aldershot town centre will be in for a treat with a variety of free family activities, more than 60 craft and community stalls, live music and dance, and street theatre inspired by tales old and new.

The highlight of the day promises to be the fairy-tale parade involving more

than 1,000 local people and featuring Aldershot's very own Queen Victoria, Betty Bryce. Secure yourself a front row view of the carnival parade which leaves Princes Hall at 11am and finishes at the High Street multi-storey car park at midday.

Across the town centre, a lively mix of entertainment is planned. Encounter a fire-breathing dragon and a bubble wizard before listening to some gentle storytelling. Get creative with face painting and some 'make-and-take' crafts or build a scary Lego monster. Budding acrobats, jugglers and fearless adventurers are invited to enter the Steamship Circus zone to try out their circus skills and to have some high-flying fun.

What will you be doing in five years' time? Write a message to your future

self at the Post Office of Possibilities or rest for a while in the enchanting Shed of Stories for interactive tales and music before the space is transformed into a pop-up library.



Visit www.rushmoor.gov.uk/victoriaday to see the full day's programme.

A summer full of fun!

With loads of events lined up for this summer, one of the best places to check out what's going on is our new online calendar.

We wanted to make it easy for you to find out what's happening locally and we hope the new 'what's on' calendar is just the ticket!

Whether it's a community event, one focused on family fun, in our town centres, or aimed at culture, careers, business or education and skills, you'll find it all in one place at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/whatson

If you're organising an activity locally, you can also ask us to add the event to our calendar, to help spread the word.

As a flavour, here are some of the events coming up in our towns:

June

- 6 - Victoria Day** – see above
- 13 - Farnborough craft fayre**
- 27-28 - Armed Forces Day National Event 2026** (page 5)

July

- 4 - Farnborough craft fayre**
- 11 - Eco Explorers Club - Aldershot**
- 12 - Eco Explorers Club - Farnborough**

August

- 1 - Farnborough craft fayre**
- 15 - Aldershot craft fayre and Union Yard summer festival**
- 29 - Playfest! Aldershot**
- 7, 14, 21, 28 - Farnborough Feel Good Fridays**

September

- 5 - Farnborough craft fayre**
- 11 - 20 - Rushmoor Heritage Festival**
- 19 - Rushmoor Pride, Farnborough**

Book your tickets for our Armed Forces Day National Event!



Have you booked your free tickets to our Armed Forces Day National Event weekend on 27 and 28 June?

We would love as many people as possible to join in this prestigious event, celebrating more than 170 years of military heritage through displays, museum activities, and ceremonial traditions that connect visitors with our military past - Aldershot as the traditional home of the British Army

and Farnborough as the birthplace of British military aviation.

The line-up includes a schools day on Friday for invited local school children, before the Armed Forces Day National Event on Saturday, which will feature a military parade of service personnel, veterans and cadets in the morning, a fly-past and a parachute display. There will also be arena displays, military, heritage on display and community villages, and a cadet village with a climbing wall and an inflatable obstacle course. A concert



featuring military bands and more will bring the evening to a close.



The weekend ends with a community day on Sunday where you can join us for a poignant drumhead service, as well as enjoy community activities, sport taster sessions and competitions, plus live music and static displays.

Service personnel from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army, and Royal Air Force will be showcasing the diverse mix of roles in the armed forces, demonstrating equipment, and highlighting their contribution to national security.



National Event 2026
Aldershot & Farnborough

Visitors will be able to meet serving personnel, reservists, veterans, cadets, and military families.

Tickets are essential, and security checks will be carried out.



We are grateful to our sponsors: QinetiQ, BAE Systems, Aspire Defence Limited, Farnborough Airport and our other sponsors, for their support.

For the latest information and tickets, go to www.rushmoor.gov.uk/armedforcesday

Stitching the story of Rushmoor

A unique cross stitch and embroidered landmark map of Aldershot and Farnborough, lovingly created by the talented Rushmoor Yarners, will be unveiled at the National Armed Forces Day Event.

The idea was sparked by Padre Latifa from the Garrison Chaplaincy and Wendy Heal from the Aldershot Garrison people and engagement team had the perfect group in mind: the Yarners, whose Longest Yarn display was such a success during Remembrance 2024.

Since January, the group has been meeting weekly on Thursdays to plan and create the map, supported by local historians Keith Bean and Paul Vickers.



The finished piece will feature key landmarks and monuments, the military units granted the Freedom of Rushmoor, and Victoria Cross recipients with links to Aldershot, making it both a creative and educational display. Funding from our Pride in Place grant programme will provide professional framing and an easel for display.

The map will be on show in the event's Heritage Marquee and will then tour various sites across Rushmoor over 12 months before finding a permanent home.

A new council for our area

Aldershot and Farnborough are to become part of a new North Hampshire unitary council from April 2028, the government has decided.

The new council will cover the areas of Rushmoor, Hart and Basingstoke and Deane, serving a population of around 400,000 residents.

It will provide all the services we currently offer, along with those run locally by Hampshire County Council - so all your services will be provided by one single council, ending the confusion around who does what.

The changes are part of the government's plans to reform local councils, and in Hampshire it means that instead of the current 15 councils, there will be four on the mainland, with the Isle of Wight continuing as it is.

Until 2028, your council services will carry on running as they are now, and we will continue to deliver our priorities for you and our area. As this is the biggest change to local government in Hampshire for more than 50 years, there is a lot to do between now and the start of the new council, but we are working



closely with our colleagues in the other councils to make sure the transition is as smooth as possible for you. In May 2027 there will be elections of councillors to oversee the establishment of the new North Hampshire council.



Your Rushmoor and Hampshire councillors will continue to serve you until 2028, and you can see details of your local councillors on page 13.

We'll continue to update you as things develop but you can find the latest at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/localgovernmentreorganisation



We want your views!

We provide more than 100 local services to you, and we'd like to know what you think of them.

Whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with what we do, we'd like to hear your views so we know how we're doing and where we may need to improve.

You can give us your thoughts by taking part in our residents' survey, which covers areas including our town centres, affordable housing, parks and open spaces, leisure facilities, bins and

recycling, community safety, street cleaning and local events.

The survey is available on our website, www.rushmoor.gov.uk/currentconsultations until Sunday 19 July. You will also find us at this weekend's Victoria Day event or give us a call on **01252 398 399** and we can pop a paper survey in the post.

This is your chance to tell us what you think, and we hope you'll take a few minutes to help us make sure our services are right for you.



Work set to start on our new leisure centre

We are delighted to tell you that work will start on our new leisure centre in Farnborough this month, after we secured planning consent for its go-ahead.

Since our last edition, we have entered into a development management agreement with Alliance Leisure Services to build the centre.



Alliance will oversee the project and Pellikaan Construction will carry out the build with completion scheduled for the end of next year.



We will be building the centre on the current Queensmead car park in heart of the town centre. As well as the swimming pools, there will be a gym, two studio spaces, a spin studio, soft play area and a café. The outside space will include a new play area for families and landscaping, as well as bicycle and mobility parking.

You can expect to see the Queensmead car park close at the end of June and for our development hoardings to go up. During the build, The Meads multi-storey car park will be the main town centre

car park, with other surface car parking available at the Kings Moat car park behind Iceland.

For anyone visiting the council offices during the work, there will be some new pedestrian routes through from the town centre which will go by the library.

You can keep up to date with our latest news by signing up to our email newsletter at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/councilnews



For further information about the project, go to www.rushmoor.gov.uk/farnboroughleisurecentre

Help shape the future of Aldershot and Farnbor

We've started preparing for a new local plan which will set out the long-term vision for Aldershot and Farnborough and how the towns and surrounding areas will grow and change.

The new local plan will be an important document, which will shape issues that affect daily life such as the future of our town centres, demand for different types of employment spaces, and the

infrastructure that services our communities. It will also cover the allocation of housing sites which includes identifying new sites for care homes, affordable housing, student accommodation and pitches and plots for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.

Community input into preparing the plan is essential for making sure it reflects local needs and priorities, so

we will be carrying out the first public consultation later this summer. This will give you the chance to share your views, raise concerns, and suggest what matters most for the future of your community.

If you would like to be notified when the consultation starts, you can sign up via our website at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/newlocalplan or call our planning team on **01252 398 788**.

Checking you're registered to vote

Every July, we check who is registered to vote in Aldershot and Farnborough.

If we have your email, we will email you asking you to confirm the details of who's

registered to vote at your address. This is the easiest way to respond and saves council taxpayers' money too.

If we don't hear from you, or we don't have your email

address, we'll hand deliver a letter to your home from mid-August. That's followed by a personal visit in October/November to homes where we haven't had a reply.

We publish a new register every year on 1 December although you can register to vote at any time.

Find out more at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/registerstovote

Award for Aldershot couple for serving their community for more than 20 years

Community heroes and Aldershot volunteers Caroline and Mick Mills have been honoured with a mayor's award, recognising more than 20 years of outstanding service - particularly for the wider armed forces community.

Through their leadership in the Aldershot Royal British Legion, Caroline and Mick organise regular coffee mornings, major seasonal events, branch meetings and trips - creating vital opportunities for connection, support and companionship.

They are also instrumental in Aldershot's annual poppy appeal, coordinating volunteers, managing collections and making sure the campaign runs smoothly. Alongside this, they organise and support key events, including the Remembrance Sunday service at Municipal Gardens and the military cemetery lighting of the graves ceremony.

As well as holding key roles in the Royal British Legion and the Royal Naval Association, Caroline and Mick also support and inspire young people as Cub Leaders with the 2nd Aldershot Scouts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they



Caroline and Mick receive The Mayor's Award from previous mayor, Cllr Calum Stewart

volunteered at the vaccination centre and helped those in need.

Mick said: "To be presented with The Mayor's Award was a fantastic surprise.

"We thoroughly enjoy all the work we do as volunteers within the community, and it was lovely to be recognised in this way and to be nominated by people who we work with. Volunteering is really important to us as we feel you can support all age groups, giving them

a place to socialise and bringing them together. It is really humbling when you realise a few hours of volunteering can make such a huge difference in people's lives."

The award was presented at the 100 day countdown event to this year's Armed Forces Day National Event (page 5).

Volunteer Valerie Jenner, who has served as a Brown Owl in Girlguiding in Farnborough for 37 years, was a previous recipient.

£20 million investment in local community

People who live in Farnborough's Cherrywood ward have a once in a lifetime opportunity to influence the improvements they would like to see made to their community.

Over the next ten years, the area will receive funding of £20 million from the government's Pride in Place programme. Local people will be asked to identify the problems that need fixing and their ideas for solutions.

Projects could include improving vital local services, repairing roads and pavements or easing traffic congestion or making the area safer - all things that Cherrywood residents told us need improving during the 2025 residents' survey.

To get the project under way, a neighbourhood board will be established which will bring together residents, community representatives and councillors.

They will create a clear plan for the investment so it brings lasting change and transforms the area into a place that local people feel proud to call home.

Anybody who is interested in getting involved in shaping the future of Cherrywood should email communitydevelopment@rushmoor.gov.uk or go to www.rushmoor.gov.uk/prideinplaceprogramme

Keeping our towns safe and clean

Our Place Protection Officers' day begins in the office, checking overnight reports before heading straight out to patrol Aldershot and Farnborough.

First stop: Napier Gardens car park in North Camp to check the ticket machine for faults and to make sure all the cars have valid tickets. It's a routine the team repeats throughout the day at every council-owned car park.



The pair moves on to Peabody Road car park where they find a heap of waterlogged waste beside the recycling bins. It may seem harmless but small-scale fly-tipping such as this carries a hefty consequence. If caught, the culprit faces a fine of up to £1,000 but more often, it's the taxpayer that foots the clear-up bill.



By mid-morning, the Place Protection Officers are on patrol in Aldershot town centre and checking in on known antisocial behaviour hotspots. The duo knows the regulars especially the 'street attached' individuals who gather to socialise. The job is as much about relationship building as it is about enforcement.

Back to Farnborough and a reportedly abandoned car. There are no plates, the doors are unlocked, and the contents suspicious. There is enough evidence to confirm the car is abandoned so an official notice is served warning the car will be removed in 15 days.

For our experienced officers, the job is as much instinct as it is

procedure. They spot problems before they're reported, deter wrongdoing simply by being seen, and quietly influence behaviour so our neighbourhoods feel cleaner, safer and more welcoming.



You can report problems like littering, fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour on our website at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/keepingrushmoorclean and www.rushmoor.gov.uk/antisocialbehaviour

Volunteers needed for new mediation service

A free community mediation service is set to launch locally this summer, helping residents sort out everyday disagreements before they escalate.

The new service will be run by Citizens Advice Rushmoor and financed by our community recovery fund.

Community mediation aims to offer a safe, structured space where volunteer mediators can help people talk through issues and agree a way forward.

No experience is needed to become a community mediator - full training is provided, as well as ongoing professional support from the Citizens Advice team, plus you will be eligible for a qualification recognised by the Civil Mediation Council.

To find out more about the service and becoming a volunteer, contact volunteering@citizensadvicerrushmoor.org.uk

Launching careers at Farnborough International Airshow

Tickets are on sale for the public day at this year's Farnborough International Airshow.

Pioneers of Tomorrow is on Friday 24 July and aims to bring the aerospace industry to students, families, career-minded young adults and aviation enthusiasts.

Attractions include:

- Aircraft and flying displays
- Simulators, virtual and augmented reality, reaction competitions and strategy games
- Hands-on STEM activities and interactive exhibits
- A dedicated careers hub

- Talks by aerospace pioneers
- Meet and greet opportunities with international pilots

Tickets are free for under 21s, full-time students and apprentices, offering those at the beginning of their career journey an inspirational glimpse into the aerospace industry.

This year's show runs from Monday 20 July to Friday 24 July.

Find out more, including booking tickets for the Friday, at www.farnboroughairshow.com/pioneers-of-tomorrow



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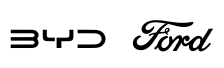
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*^Advanced tickets available until 16 August 2026.
*One child 5-17 years attends free with a paying adult. All under 5s attend free.
Limited availability.*



Helping you get active!

Want to be more active, but not sure where to start? Our Active in Rushmoor campaign makes it easy to find local activities across Aldershot and Farnborough.

From walking football, yoga and dance to gymnastics, karate and outdoor sports, there are lots of activities happening right on your doorstep for all ages and abilities - and many offer free taster sessions.

The easiest way to get started is simply to go

to rushmoor.gov.uk/activeinrushmoor to take a look at the range of activities and clubs available to you locally. You can also come and chat to us on the council stand at Victoria Day this Saturday and at the Armed Forces Day event at the end of the month.

A gentle way to start moving

If you do less than 30 minutes of activity a week, you can make a gentle start to better health with a range of free classes available locally. From Pilates and

yoga to Zumba and 'move it or lose it' classes, the 12-week programme is available to anyone aged over 18 with a Hampshire GP. You can even do some from the comfort of your own home. Find out more at beactivehampshire.org.uk or call **02382 512 366**.

Exercise in the great outdoors

If you prefer to exercise outside, have you discovered the ScanFit Trails at Aldershot Park, Southwood Country Park and Wellesley Woodlands?



Simply scan the Scanfit QR codes to follow the free guided exercises and short workouts suitable for a variety of fitness levels.

The ScanFit Trail was created by Rushmoor residents Carl and Rog whose aim is simply to encourage more people to move while enjoying nature.

Lido season is here!

It just wouldn't be the summer without the sound of visitors enjoying our lovely lido!

The main attraction is, of course, the pool, with three colourful flumes, a diving board and a fountain at its centre.

There's a paddling pool area plus a sandpit for toddlers, as well as plenty of space to spread out a picnic blanket and enjoy your day with the family. Everyone Active is now running Aldershot Lido on our behalf and has some exciting plans for new events and

activities - more details coming soon!

The lido still offers a great value day out, with special offers for family groups, season tickets, military discounts and more.

Throughout June, the lido is open for the weekends, but it will open daily from 1 July. Be sure to book advance tickets for the best prices and to guarantee entry when the sun is shining. Also, look out for details of our popular early morning lane swimming sessions.



The lido summer season wraps up in September, and that means it's time for our much loved dog days, when your four legged best friend can jump in and enjoy a splash too.

To find out more, go to www.everyoneactive.com/centre/aldershot-lido

Keeping you young at heart!

Getting older doesn't mean giving in - staying active and connected can make all the difference to how you feel.

To make it easier to find out what's available locally, we've produced a free 'young at heart' booklet for older people, which is packed full of information about local activities and groups, useful health information and important contacts.

You can look out for a copy at the council offices and the Princes Hall. You can also email us at communitydevelopment@rushmoor.gov.uk or call **01252 398 741** and we'll pop one in the post to you.

The booklet has been funded as part of the Live Longer Better Hampshire campaign.

Cuppa and a chat

Want to get out and meet new friends? The Farnborough Chit Chat Over a Cuppa Club for over 55s meets every Tuesday from 10am to midday at Cove Bowling Green, Horn Road, Farnborough. As well as the chance to chat, there's tea, coffee and biscuits, activities and guest speakers. Cost per session is £6. Find out more by contacting Pip on **07568 611 976**.



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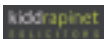
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25-26 JULY 2026

MANOR PARK, ALDERSHOT



SALESIAN COLLEGE YEAR 5 TASTER DAY

8.45am - 3.00pm Monday 29 June 2026

Are you curious about what secondary school is really like? Come and spend an exciting day at Salesian College and get a taste of the fun, learning, and adventure that awaits you!

For more details and book your place at this event
please scan this QR Code:



www.salesiancollege.com

The only all boys school with a co-educational sixth form in the area

Meet your councillors

Thanks to everyone who voted in last month's elections. We have 39 councillors in Rushmoor, three for each ward. If you are not sure what ward you live in, you can look up your councillors on our website, at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/councillors. For full election results, go to www.rushmoor.gov.uk/elections2026

Key

	Conservative		Labour		Liberal Democrat
	Reform		Independent		




CHERRYWOOD WARD

Christine Guinness christine.guinness@rushmoor.gov.uk 07759 812751	
Sally McGuinness sally.mcguinness@rushmoor.gov.uk 07854 194567	
Bill O'Donovan bill.odonovan@rushmoor.gov.uk 07715 816198	

FERNHILL WARD

Steve Harden steve.harden@rushmoor.gov.uk 01252 398002	
Rob Matthews robert.matthews@rushmoor.gov.uk 07977 130699	
Ian Simpson ian.simpson@rushmoor.gov.uk	

NORTH TOWN WARD

Gaynor Austin gaynor.austin@rushmoor.gov.uk 07707 125801	
Keith Dibble keith.dibble@rushmoor.gov.uk 07818 199378	
Sarah Spall sarah.spall@rushmoor.gov.uk 07934 456827	

ST MARK'S WARD

Craig Card craig.card@rushmoor.gov.uk 07779 718395	
Leola Card leola.card@rushmoor.gov.uk 01252 656033	
Thomas Mitchell thomas.mitchell@rushmoor.gov.uk	

COVE & SOUTHWOOD WARD

Sue Carter sue.carter@rushmoor.gov.uk 07958 240733	
Steve Masterson stephen.masterson@rushmoor.gov.uk 07931 950415	
Martin Tennant martin.tennant@rushmoor.gov.uk 07778 594821	

KNELLWOOD WARD

Mara Makunura mara.makunura@rushmoor.gov.uk 07799 765655	
Calum Stewart calum.stewart@rushmoor.gov.uk 01252 398037	
Paul Taylor paul.taylor@rushmoor.gov.uk 07887 561298	

ROWHILL WARD

Kevin Betsworth kevin.betsworth@rushmoor.gov.uk 07711 162213	
Lisa Greenway lisa.greenway@rushmoor.gov.uk 07879 551245	
Halleh Koohestani halleh.koohestani@rushmoor.gov.uk 01252 398067	

WELLINGTON WARD

Alex Crawford alex.crawford@rushmoor.gov.uk 07891 979457	
Uttar Gurung uttar.gurung@rushmoor.gov.uk 07828 212550	
Dhan Sarki dhan.sarki@rushmoor.gov.uk 07565 922800	




ALDERSHOT PARK WARD

Sharon Harvey sharon.harvey@rushmoor.gov.uk 07495 385867	
Sophie Porter sophie.porter@rushmoor.gov.uk 01252 398191	
Mike Roberts mike.roberts@rushmoor.gov.uk 01252 345737	

EMPRESS WARD

Julie Hall julie.hall@rushmoor.gov.uk	
Nicky Slater nicky.slater@rushmoor.gov.uk	
Gareth Williams gareth.williams@rushmoor.gov.uk 07519 169916	




MANOR PARK WARD

Jib Belbase jib.belbase@rushmoor.gov.uk 07900 905379	
Becky Williams becky.williams@rushmoor.gov.uk 07704 233102	
Ivan Whitmee ivan.whitmee@rushmoor.gov.uk 07707 054471	

ST JOHN'S WARD

Dave Bell dave.bell@rushmoor.gov.uk 07876 156692	
Peter Cullum peter.cullum@rushmoor.gov.uk 07501 581995	
Thomas Day thomas.day@rushmoor.gov.uk 07963 700376	

WEST HEATH WARD

Ade Adeola ade.adeola@rushmoor.gov.uk 07466 982041	
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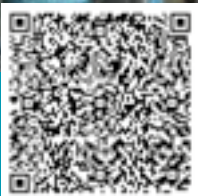
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