

# Wonersh Parish Council

(Blackheath, Shamley Green and Wonersh)

## From the Chair of the Parish Council

NEWSLETTER, SPRING 2021

*Spring is now with us and many of you will have noticed the increase in work taking place around the common areas as ditches are cleared, the mowing will soon start and with the increased responsibilities the Parish Council have taken on, these next months will be a busy time.*

*To that end, we have looked to employ a book keeper / assistant to the clerk and an appointment will soon be made. As the Parish Council takes over the maintenance of land within the Parish from Waverley Borough Council and we take on the management of the Community Room in Garden Close, so it is important that we have staff to ensure that the best practices developed over the years can be maintained and, where appropriate, improved.*



Inevitably, with increased responsibilities comes an increased work load, not just for the Clerk but for Councillors; throughout the pandemic meetings have been held online but there are times that it is necessary to get out and – socially distanced – meet with contractors, representatives from our partner councils and occasionally the volunteers from the environment groups.

These environment groups in Wonersh and Shamley Green are now both taking an active part in the improvement of the maintenance of the common areas, protecting the flora and fauna and actively protecting and improving the biodiversity of these areas. Both ponds in Shamley Green have seen work on improving the quality of the water, banks and surrounding areas, making them more and more attractive to diverse pond life. The input from the volunteer teams is very welcome and cannot be underestimated.

At last, there would appear to be light at the end of what has been a long and often dark tunnel. We will celebrate our Annual Assembly on line (details are in this newsletter) but we are all looking forward to being able to hold meetings face to face. I would however, remind everyone that the need to abide by the rules until they are relaxed remains a priority. Stay safe.

*Rod Weale*

### Wonersh Parish Council Annual Assembly

Thursday 22nd April at 7.30pm

**Join us for a virtual village meeting to discuss all things local. Find out what has been happening in Wonersh, Shamley Green & Blackheath during the last year. Hear how the Councillors and volunteers are progressing on the issues identified in the village questionnaires. Enjoy a presentation on our new Environment Groups formed in response to the Climate Change agenda.**

Please register with the Parish Clerk on [clerk@wonershparish.org](mailto:clerk@wonershparish.org) to receive a Zoom invite closer to the time. To receive regular updates on what is going on in the Parish join our mailing list by accessing the Parish website [www.wonershparish.org](http://www.wonershparish.org).

You can also find out about local societies and organisations by accessing [www.wonershconnections.org](http://www.wonershconnections.org) in Wonersh; <http://www.shamleygreen.org/> in Shamley Green; and <http://www.blackheathsurrey.co.uk/> in Blackheath.



## Playgrounds Update

The Wonersh playground has been tidied up with tons of new bark, pressure washing of all equipment and mending any broken equipment, and similar works are planned for Lords Hill in Shamley Green. However, we realise some of the equipment is now getting old and needs replacing. We are looking for some willing volunteers to help us plan for the future and raise some money towards refurbishment.

Councillor Stephen Lavender is taking the lead on this for the time being in Wonersh and if anyone is interested in helping and supporting with this project, he would be grateful for some help! We are also keen for similar investments at Lords Hill Playground and for a volunteer to steer this too. Please contact Lisa our clerk if you would like to help with this at [clerk@wonershparish.org](mailto:clerk@wonershparish.org)

## Commons Update

**Wonersh:** It's been a busy few months in Wonersh, with the new maintenance contractor on board. You can already see the difference with the playground equipment pressure washed, weeding undertaken around the Pepperpot and bus stops cleaned out. In addition the ditches have been cleared in Wonersh for the first time in years and will look a bit unsightly until the grass grows! Meanwhile we are steadily replacing rotten post and installing some new posts. Over the summer we aim to continue regular tidying up and start to pressure wash and oil the benches.

Thank you to the Volunteers who pruned the trees along the road by the Sports ground – they look so much better.



**Waverley Common Land:** Good progress has been made on the arrangements for taking over the maintenance of Waverley owned common land in Shamley Green, Lords Hill and Wonersh. Comments have been passed on the proposed draft lease and most of the outstanding queries have now been resolved. Detailed Maps and Service Level Agreements have been prepared showing the areas concerned and the future interfaces between Waverley and the Parish Council.

The Parish Council have already been carrying the work envisaged in the agreement and this has been paid for by Waverley. Discussions have also started with Waverley to explore their Tree and Woodland Group, providing a tree management advisory service to the Parish Council.



## **Village Environmental Advisory Groups**

**Environmental Advisory Groups** have been set up in both Wonersh and Shamley Green to provide recommendations to Council on how to best manage the local green spaces to the benefit of residents, including, but not restricted to, humans.

### **Shamley Green Environment Group update**



Over the winter we helped develop new plans for mowing our commons to increase biodiversity, working with the Parish Council. Volunteers have identified areas that can be mown less to encourage wildflowers to return and invertebrates to breed undisturbed, while keeping other areas cut short to accommodate the cricketers, communal areas like near the duck pond and playground at Lords Hill. We hope to do some wildflower planting in the autumn, based on expert advice.

We have also secured an expert to do an Invertebrate survey of the current state of our commons. 90% of all living animal species are invertebrates. This study is crucial to understanding the health of our environment and to make recommendations for improving it. Without these insects, spiders and worms, humans cannot survive. We need them to pollinate our crops, maintain healthy soils and assist in water filtration.

Volunteers have been out collecting data on what trees and flowering plants we have appearing on our commons, while others will be noting the bird species in Shamley Green. A street by street litter pick rota is being led by Patrick Mannix.

The group is also developing a new Shamley Green Environment website, while other volunteers have been working with our local schools to see how we can work together to support our natural world.

The Toad Patrollers have been out nearly every night since late January to pick up toads, frogs and newts as they make their perilous journey across Woodhill Lane, Madgehole Lane and Stroud Lane. Due to the number of volunteers this year we can now also patrol the bottom of Woodhill Lane near the Duck Pond, and Lords Hill. Although common by name, the Common Toad is increasingly rare and is protected by law. This year, we also found two young Great Crested Newts, which are extremely rare.

Thanks to generous donations by Patrick Mannix, of both his time and money, we now have our two ponds on the common being managed back into a healthy state. The Parish Council commissioned an ecological report last April and this has helped to guide decisions about what is best for the ponds moving forward. A long term management plan is currently under development.

Finally, the Parish Council with volunteers from SGEG have been working on improving the maintenance of our ditches and drains in the village. So important when climate change is bringing more extreme weather for us to cope with.

## Wonersh Environmental Advisory Group update

WEAG has been active researching ideas on how to improve biodiversity. The key conclusion, approved by the Council, is to mow the common land twice a year in March and then October/November, with paths regularly mown through the long grass. The Sports Ground will be mowed as needed, with the playground and most of the new bunds to be mowed every 3 to 4 weeks, depending on growth. The Platt continues to be mowed once a year in October or November with paths mown as before. St John's Church is also keen to move to a similar regime of an annual mow and regularly mown paths in the Churchyard.

We are all waiting to see if the wildflower trial on the bunds near the playground worked, or we need to rethink!

With the mowing now agreed, WEAG is turning its thoughts to new planting ideas, recycling bins and ideas on improved communication with residents. Watch this space...



### Dog fouling



Many residents with dogs have enjoyed our villages and countryside especially during the lockdown. Many people have acquired dogs during this period so there appear to be many more of our furry friends around. There are an estimated eight million dogs in the UK and they drop approximately 1,000 tonnes of waste a day.

The vast majority of dog owners clear up after their dogs but we are increasingly seeing reports of dog owners not clearing up or worse still depositing poo bags in all sorts of unsuitable places. In the parish survey it was raised as a concern by a majority of residents. **If you are a dog owner please do collect up after your dog and take the bag home to deposit in your black waste bin.** Don't leave it for other residents to do this for you.

### Wonersh Litter Pick update

A number of residents already collect litter, which sadly seems to have got worse in recent months. If you interested in joining the established group led by Richard Bawden in Wonersh, or wish to do your own pick, please contact the clerk on [clerk@wonershparish.org](mailto:clerk@wonershparish.org) to borrow kit and get involved

### Reducing our travel impact

Led by Cllr Knight, Wonersh Parish Council are engaging with Waverley Borough Council as they look to respond to the Climate Emergency. We are currently exploring and sharing suggestions on cycling routes across the Parish and for onwards journeys and also ideas for EV charging points. If this is something you are interested in and have a view on, please contact Lisa, our clerk in the first instance ([clerk@wonershparish.org](mailto:clerk@wonershparish.org)).

### Visiting Blackheath?

It has been a very popular during lockdown with car parks often to capacity. Please be considerate of local residents and how they access their home if choosing to drive from outside the village. From within the parish there's some amazing walking routes too, if you are feeling energetic!

### Speeding in the Parish

The Parish Council are part funding the replacement of vehicle activated speed sign in Shamley Green with Surrey County Council. We will also explore other ways to reduce vehicle speed with the Surrey County Council and the Police. Including sharing concerns regarding the impact of planned yellow lines for Wonersh upon vehicle speeds and Speedwatch training for Wonersh volunteers.

### Pepperpot update

The road engineers have undertaken their research work and produced a draft Feasibility Study. The good news is that the proposed reconfigured junction works from a highways perspective. The main issue arising concerns the number of car parking spaces that could be provided in line with highway requirements. The Pepperpot working party feels that providing a similar level of parking to that currently available is important and will be exploring how this might be achieved. The intention is to make a full report to Parish Council shortly. Any ideas from residents would be very welcome



### Do you want to find out more about the Parish Council?

We hope you have enjoyed finding out more about Wonersh Parish Council and the roles your very local Councillors play in local democracy.

There are always options for you to understand more, by joining us for our Annual Assembly, or coming along to a Council Meeting, which is every second Thursday of the month, with no meetings August and December.

We are statutory consultees in the planning process and our Planning Committee hold public meeting every third Thursday morning, where we discuss planning applications in the parish and related matters. Recently we have met online for these and in the coming months we are likely to be returning to meeting in person.

Further details of our meetings are available via our website ([www.wonershparish.org](http://www.wonershparish.org)) and on public noticeboards around the parish.

### Had you considered volunteering with the Parish Council?

Your Parish Councillors are elected members, who volunteer their time and expertise to represent local resident views; their details are also on our website and on the noticeboards. There is currently a vacancy in the Shamley Green Ward and the Council will soon be looking for applications for co-option.

Other opportunities include joining environmental advisory groups, working groups influencing transport-related developments and place making, fundraising for playground improvements. The Clerk welcomes enquiries about all these ([clerk@wonershparish.org](mailto:clerk@wonershparish.org)) (and she will pop you in touch with a Councillor who can share the exciting bits!)

### SHAMLEY GREEN VILLAGE FETE AND FUN DOG SHOW



**SATURDAY  
10 JULY 2021  
FROM 1.00 PM**

**We are pleased to share  
hopefully this invite to Shamley  
Green Village Fete**

The Wonersh and Blackheath village events are postponed this year. The members of the Wonersh Fair Committee are hoping to organise an informal Village Picnic later this summer – Watch out for dates in due course.

If anyone would like to offer support or help please contact Francesca Rowe on 890275 or email [wonershfair@hotmail.com](mailto:wonershfair@hotmail.com).

**Interested in hiring the Shamley  
Green Community Room?**

**We have followed government  
guidance to make it Covid-secure  
and are looking forward to seeing  
the art classes resuming soon. Get  
in touch to find out more:  
[clerk@wonershparish.org](mailto:clerk@wonershparish.org)**