



WEST CLANDON PARISH COUNCIL

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Chairman's Report 2020 – 2021

Throughout the last 12 months of lockdowns and restrictions, the West Clandon Parish Council's regular monthly meetings have continued using Zoom. This method of communication has proved very successful as an emergency measure but hopefully, we will soon be able to meet again in person in the Village Hall on the second Wednesday of every month.

Faster Broadband

Since the beginning of this year, a group of residents began working to radically improve Broadband speed in the village by tapping into the government's 'Fibre to the Premises' (FTTP) subsidy scheme. One of the residents May Ann Civil made a presentation to the Parish Council's February meeting on the advantages of faster broadband, after which the Parish Council agreed to help support the scheme with a £500 grant for funding for publicity. 'Open Reach' have now received the required number of subscribers to install FTTP in West Clandon and thanks go to May Ann and her FTTP project team.

Support for Send Scrubs

The Parish Council also supported the 'Send Scrubs PPE team' with a donation of £200 towards their running costs, while they were making and supplying PPE to local organisations during the early weeks of the Covid Pandemic emergency.

Planning

During the year, the Parish Council has continued to consider planning matters that affect West Clandon. Although the Parish Council has no control over specific planning applications in the Village, which are decided by Guildford Borough Council as the planning authority, we can and do comment on planning applications that are raising concerns.

During the year, we have objected to a number of applications for additional houses in the Parish, where we thought the sites were too cramped or would harm the openness of the Green Belt. An emerging trend seems to be for applicants to apply for permission for one or two quite large or very large houses and then once they have this permission to put in an alternative application for a larger number of houses, justified on the basis that the overall floor area is no bigger.

Although the proposed large developments at Garlick's Arch and Wisley Airfield lie outside the Parish, they are of significant concern because of their potential to significantly increase traffic in the surrounding villages. We continue to monitor developments.

Work continued during the year on the draft West Clandon Neighbourhood Plan. There was a public consultation on the draft Plan in February and March 2020, which was widely publicised. In June 2020, a revised draft was published for comment and in September 2020 a proposed final version of the plan was adopted by the Parish Council. The plan has now been submitted to Guildford Borough Council and the next stage will be a final public consultation, which will commence from May 10th for six weeks.

Garlick's Arch

Earlier in the year, the Parish Council responded to planning applications for the development of 30 and then another 520 houses on the Garlick's Arch site. The Parish Council wrote to both Guildford Borough Council and the Surrey County Council objecting to this development on various grounds including of the lack of facilities, over-development and the traffic implications for the A247 through West Clandon.

GBC turned down both applications on various grounds to do with design and environmental matters. Connected to this, an application was also made for land on Tithebarns Lane to be converted into a SANG to offset the impact of the housing development.

The Parish Council did not oppose this but proposed some improvements to parking, access and fencing. GBC approved this application. The result should be an area of maintained woodland and open grassland in our parish with footpaths open to all in the village.

The larger development has now re-surfaced and the Parish Council has again written to GBC and SCC with comments. Development will certainly happen on this site as it is included in the GBC Local Plan and it is the Parish Council's intention to do what it can to minimise the impact on West Clandon village.

The developers of the Wisley site have been holding consultation meetings with representatives of Parish Councils and other affected parties. The matter of critical interest to West Clandon is the issue of slip roads to/from the A247 at Burnt Common, which are included in the Local Plan for the Wisley scheme. So far, no further information has been made available although it is known that a study of traffic is being undertaken. The Parish Council has written to both GBC and SCC expressing our concerns at the impact such slip roads will have on the A247 and proposing that instead, slip roads should be sited at the Ockham roundabout.

The Parish Council also responded to the Guildford Borough Council's consultation on draft Development Management Policies. These, when approved, will govern how the Borough Council judges major development proposals. Regrettably, a number of these Policies were very weak or simply failed to cover things such as the role of our new Neighbourhood Plan and developments in the Green Belt.

Recreation Ground, Play Areas, the Clandon Dragon and Tennis Court.

Over the last 12 months there has been a great deal of activity on these West Clandon facilities and features.

- We have replaced the ageing toddlers playframe with a modern sustainable wood multipurpose play structure along with a new soft flooring surface.
- Renewed the ranch fencing between the play area and the British Legion along with a new gate.
- Repositioned the football posts and hung new netting.
- Carried out a comprehensive tree inspection and felled one tree, removed dead branches and crowned those lining the verge by the road.
- Trimmed the tall hedge at the back of the tennis court and treated the playing surface.
- Set up a programme for maintenance and strimming of the approaches to the Clandon Dragon.
- Maintained the grounds with a regular cutting programme.
- Replaced the broken post separating the parking area and the playing grounds.

Later this year, we have plans for the replacement of the broken roundabout along with a surrounding soft surface area.

Footpaths

With the pandemic present for all of the past 12 months, footfall on the parish's rights of way network has significantly increased. Our footpaths and bridleways have provided a useful solution for local exercise as well as providing the opportunity for residents to discover more of their local surroundings and appreciate the nature that it has to offer.

Increased usage has however created some challenges around social distancing and also exacerbated the issues of dog waste and cyclists using paths suitable only for pedestrians. However, in general it has been noticeable how considerate the great majority of path users have been.

The usual work on spotting and fixing broken signs and path 'furniture', fallen trees, fly tipping, etc has continued. In addition to the normal council vegetation cuts schedule, the Parish Council has commissioned some extra cuts to footpaths to ensure they remained passable, though this was less required in 2020 due to the lack of rain during the spring/early summer period.

Although the paths this winter have been muddy, we have experienced less flooding on our paths compared to the previous year, helped by good ditching work undertaken by some landowners plus culvert clearance funded by the parish.

Looking forward to the year ahead, the council have two new initiatives:

- Reclaiming lost footpaths as rights of way
- Tree planting along the highway verges and central reservations, for which we will be seeking residents' input.

A247 Matters

In an attempt to address excessive vehicle speed on the A247, local resident Drew Craig is currently in the process of forming a 'Speedwatch' team to monitor speeding cars, motorbikes and lorries as they pass through the village.

Last Summer, the Parish Council was in personal contact with Surrey's Police Commissioner David Munroe to report speeding motorbikes on the A247, particularly at weekends. Mr. Munroe has successfully initiated a motorbike speed campaign in other neighbouring villages and the Parish Council requested that this scheme should be extended to West Clandon with extra police patrols to stop such offending.

Ward Boundary Consultation

As part of a review of ward boundaries in Guildford Borough, the Parish Council responded to a consultation from the Local Government Commission for England stating that there should be no change to the existing boundaries of the Clandon & Horsley wards. There was widespread opposition by 210 local residents in 1998 when significant changes to the existing boundaries were suggested. However, because of the strong community ties in the four villages, the Parish Council were still strongly of the view that West Clandon should remain within the Clandon & Horsley ward.

Regrettably, our Parish Clerk Rebecca Pluthero has been forced to tender her resignation because of the pressure of her full time work. We thank her for all that she has achieved in her short time with us. A saviour has arrived in the form of Paul Edwards, who has tendered his resignation as a Parish Councillor, so he can take up the role of Parish Clerk. The Parish Council has agreed to his appointment and he will take up his new role on June 1st.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my fellow Parish Councillors for their help in assembling this report and for their help in running the Parish Council during the past 12 months. I would also like to thank our three Borough Councillors and Keith Taylor, our Surrey County Councillor, for all their help, advice and support during what has been a somewhat challenging year.

April 2021

Terence Patrick
(Chairman)

