

Apologies – David & Val Lerner, Andy Parkinson, Mary Morley

Chair's address –

- Grant Webster announced his resignation as Chair of the WVF explaining that he and Anne were moving to the coast mid April.
- Achievements of past year:
 - Howard's Close Pavilion: CIL funding £120k, we await the outcome from Your Fund Surrey also for the pavilion. WVF have approached TWRA also for a donation for the pavilion rebuild. Grant thank all those who had worked to achieve this funding. who've helped
 - Mere Pond: thanks to David; Greenspaces team funding to desilt.
 - WVF have received Pfizer donation of £3k for 2022 which is the only financial support WVF receive and without WVF would be unable to maintain the work and support carried out for the benefit of the village.
 - Tennis court refurbishment from CIL funding
 - Walton in Bloom – flowers, poppies and Christmas garlands; thanks to all who helped
 - GW thanked all councillors and their help in driving progress and working with the local authority
 - WVF provide duck food for the children at Bramley Hill School which the children love encouraging them to walk to the pond to feed the ducks. Apparently all the ducks have been given names by the children who can't wait to get back to school on Mondays so they can feed the ducks.
- Grant thanked the committee members for their continued support and he made a further call for volunteers as there were vacancies on the committee, in particular a Chair was required due to Grants departure.

Andrew Brown proposed the committee minutes seconded by Philip Truitt. The current committee members were agreed and voted on unanimously.

Treasurer's update –

- In addition WVF had made £250 donation to The Fox for the Christmas lunch for those over 65 and isolated. Continued support for Walton in Bloom, duck food for Bramley Hill school children and as mentioned above
- Marilyn Ridgewell, Treasurer advised that the accounts for 2020/2021

and 2021/22 are with the auditor and will be shared on the website

AOB (George Curry) – made thanks and acknowledgement of Councillor Rachel Turner's forthcoming retirement from the council for the work she had made for the community of Walton and Tadworth including litter picking and working with the local group and village forums.

1. Approval of minutes (10 May and 11 October 2022) – proposed by Charles Harvey and seconded by Philip Truitt. Minutes were agreed.
2. Lucy O'Shea, Clerk of the Banstead Common Conservators (BCC) – gave an update on the work of the BCC and her role. The state of nature in the UK and how we are one of the most nature depleted countries in the world. In order to address this, very important that we as a community understand our local wildlife and the biodiversity around us in order to be able to protect it.

Fortunate to live in an area with ancient woodland (Epsom and Ashted common), North Downs and protected grasslands. Banstead Commons owned by Reigate and Banstead council and in 1893 the Banstead Commons Conservators were given control to protect the land (although without the ability to raise funds). 2 keepers and clerk as paid staff. Operating budget of £150k pa. Statutory duties always take precedence.

4 sites: Banstead Downs (SSSI, chalk downland); Park Downs (SSSI, chalk grassland); Burgh Heath (important local amenity in high density housing, pond and grassland); Banstead Heath (grassland and woodland). Site management (historical enclosures, cattle grazing, cut and collect). Fly tipping and anti-social behaviour including damage from motorised vehicles.

Public engagement – quarterly meetings, guided walks, consultative group, volunteering.

Wildlife monitoring and priority species identification

How you can help - #pawsonpaths (keeping dogs on the paths and avoiding disturbance); social media (facebook, Instagram and twitter)

3. Matters arising

- Mere Pond (Grant Webster) – WVF had commissioned an independent assessment of pond Mere Pond had been undertaken and will be publicly available on the website. Frequency of drying up events which has happened historically but is likely to increase given climate change; council have some CIL funding for the pond which could be used for desilting and/or

- natural solutions such as reed beds (LINK available); have requested a 'no fish dumping sign' from council
- Howard's Close (Grant Webster) – aside from gaining additional funding things haven't moved on a great deal but now that approximately three quarters of the funding has been obtained discussion about the purpose of the building can begin as well as more detailed cost estimates. Funding is there for work to begin in 2024 and hopeful that the pavilion will be completed end 2024/start 2025.
- Walton in Bloom (Jean Bye) – hanging baskets will be the same this year as last with the red, white and blue colour theme and bunting at Gun Corner for the Coronation using the same contractor. Successful bulb planting at Howard's Close and lovely to see the previous years bulbs at the pond and Gun Corner. Also successful summer pond clear-up day. Jean gave thanks to the small group of volunteers that she had helping her.
- Defibrator at Gun Corner – first aid training organised by Jane Gandey and Sam. Six people have stepped forward as volunteers who would be available for VETS training. Community Heartbeat Trust will run a session in May for those volunteers and hoping there will be 4 more to meet the quota of 10 but we will go with those who have kindly volunteered even if we don't reach the desired 10.
- Fibreoptic equipment moved from Gun Corner to hedge at top of Breech Lane following conversation with committee members and the contractors
- Phone box at Gun Corner painted last year and pleased to report no panes of glass (there had been occasions of broken glass panes) have been broken recently...fingers crossed!

AOB

- Christchurch is currently up for sale (£1.5m and deadline for sealed bids is 31/3). A decision was made very quickly without consultation. Possibility that it could be registered as a community asset but probably out of time to do that. URC may accept less if it would be a community asset but the forum understands that a local person is putting in a bid as a private dwelling.
- Mead Court Residents Association. (George Curry) Issues regarding the cobbles in carpark and entrance of development. Issues with cobbles coming lose and who pays for the upkeep. Surrey County Council will be putting some traffic monitoring strips in place to be able to monitor the traffic and any future costs can be shared proportionally. Costs for the traffic monitoring shared by TWRA, Mead Court Residents Association and WVF.

- 'Welcome to Walton' sign on entrance to village from Tadworth (George Curry) – have requested a new quote and once that is received can procure a new one.
- Gage Theatre (Lorraine) – one of the groups who used Christchurch hall for rehearsal so also displaced. Production at end of April. Welcome any one who wants to be involved.
- May Pageant (Lorraine) – programme booklet available end of April and going to print after Easter. Anyone who wants to advertise or publish anything in the programme should get in touch. 15 people involved in committee. May Queen and attendants chosen. Volunteers needed on Friday including a vehicle (open back truck ideally) and stewards on the Saturday (24 people for an hour). Volunteer litter picking on Sunday. Website and email address.
- Friends of St Peter's (Philip Truitt) – preservation of church building and churchyard not what happens within it. Formed about 7 years ago with goal to have an ongoing income. Church has to come to FOSP's for money but do have an ongoing arrangement for maintenance of grounds. Pay what you like monthly, quarterly or annually and open to all. Music evening at 7.30pm on Friday 12 May at St Peter's with Royal Males Senior Babershop Quartet. Tickets available for £10 – please contact Philip Truett

4. Councillor reports

- Breech Lane will be re-surfaced but has been delayed slightly
- Coronation – possibly something happening in field at back of Fox and Hounds
- Farmland and buildings up for sale at Frith Park and access routes being revitalised
- Average speed cameras on Dorking Road will be installed over the summer

5. TWRA (Jeff Temple)

- Saturday 15 April event recognising all volunteers and to hear about volunteering opportunities in the Borough.
- Walton Heath Golf Club holding women's international AIG tournament in 10-13 August – one of 5 majors and only one being held in Europe. Golf Club will be holding meetings with residents in May (w/c 7 August).

6. Appreciation and Thanks for Grant's role as chair of the WVFC (echoed by Charles Harvey and Rebecca Henderson-Paul)

7. Future meetings: 22 June 2023 and 10 October 2023.