



2012 Resolutions – Grinch or Glory?

Written by Lauren Goodchild (a local journalist student)

a month or two. Don't feel despondent by this, no need to chuck the skinny jeans or cancel your exotic trip in the first quarter of 2012; on the contrary, you are not weak, just normal,

as you join the masses around the world doing exactly the same thing.

The secret to a really successful New Year's Resolution ... is to make it in FEBRUARY!



Goldsworth Park residents, Miss S and her niece Megan were walking their dog, Roxy, down by the canal, when I asked them about their resolutions for the year. Miss S chuckled

and said: "My New Year's Resolution this year is to lose weight. It has been a resolution of mine for the past couple of years but I have a feeling that this year will be the year!" Megan added that she would like to be more confident at school.

Expressing resolutions like these, give us the confidence we need to tackle the year and the obstacles it may bring. What would life be like if we stopped dreaming? The 1st January, every year, grants us the perfect opportunity to express these desires without fear of being ridiculed. No resolution expressed at midnight is too silly, weird, unobtainable, or even boring – it is a time for dreaming and celebration!

No matter what your age, all of us have resolutions, and our local youth are not exempt from dreaming the New Year's Dream. We would expect most youngsters to express a resolution of self-indulgence but teenager, Lee, from Goldsworth Park surprised me by stating: "My New Year's Resolution this year is to help other people more. Helping my parents out around the house and stuff like that." Sometimes we really underestimate the youth of today!

Even though, many of the resolutions that we make this year will only last till the end of the month, some people have kept theirs going strong for over 50 years! Take Ms. R from St Johns, she decided to give up sugar when she was only 12-years-old and "hasn't touched it since." Now that is what you call dedication!

Happy New Year Everyone, wishing you all a blessed and prosperous 2012!

With the New Year just starting, many of us will be thinking about how to make 2012 better than the previous year and will probably even make a New Year's Resolution or two.

Whether it is stopping smoking or losing weight, people everywhere are promising to do something better for themselves, and Goldsworth Park is no different! There are, however, a fair number of us determined to stick to our resolutions this year, but realistically most of us will probably only last

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Councillors' Surgeries

The Goldsworth Park Councillors hold a surgery from 10am-11am on the first Saturday of every month (except August) at Strollers, accessed from the path between the shops and the lake.

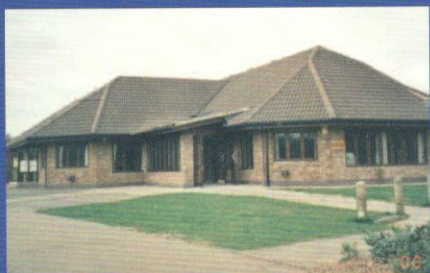
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Distribution of Goldsworth News is arranged by Mrs Linda Hill. Her details are:
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 Tel: 01483 835183

Email: hilllinda5@googlemail.com

The G.P.C.A. is always looking for people who can spend a little time each month to distribute copies of Goldsworth News to areas around the park not already covered.

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County Council Report



Diana Smith,

County Councillor for Knaphill and Goldsworth West

Youth Services – revolution on the way?

A lot's been going on behind the scenes to get the new 'commissioning model' of providing services for Young People up and ready to take over at the start of the next financial year.

One change will be to give us a Woking budget for 'prevention' work with young people at most risk of having problems. There was a paper brought to the SCC Local Committee meeting before Christmas about how this should be spent. We also got an update on the re-organisation of Youth Centres, including Lakers.

The details of what will happen are slowly becoming clearer – it's almost certain that most of the activities at Lakers, Sheerwater, and Woking Youth Centres will be run by the Woking YMCA as part of the 'Surrey Youth Consortium'.

At this point I also don't know what the plans are for WYAC, the Woking Youth Arts Centre in Knaphill, but I'm hopeful that the work done there will carry on, and even increase.

None of Surrey's Youth Workers are being made redundant, which is a relief when it's been so hard to recruit and retain them. The 'Youth Support Service', combining the Youth Justice Service and Connexions, will work from the Youth Centres; and Surrey is piloting 'Skill Centres' to support basic learning.

This should be an improvement on the present situation, though it's worrying that it's all happening with so much less money – a third or a quarter less in the next few years, depending on the figures you look at, before taking account of inflation or the increased need because of rising youth unemployment.

It will be fantastic if in eighteen months Lakers is a well-used hub of local activity for young people and I can stop moaning about it on your behalf! But what will this say about the way things were run until necessity provoked reform?

Surrey's Olympics

There was a cheerful update for the Local Committee on arrangements for the Olympic cycling races in Surrey this summer. Day 1 of the Olympics, 28th July, will see the Men's road cycling coming through Surrey. July 29th is the women's event. Then the Time Trials on the 4th of August will cover a

shorter route, but still go through Kingston and Elmbridge.

Surrey is preparing for 1 million spectators, with television audiences of a billion. Sixteen teams are already committed to training in Surrey, and SCC has been 'sending out Christmas cards all round the world' to try to get more to come and spend their money here.

We were told the 'practise race' had gone well, with 'not a single arrest on the day', although this was only a week before the riots in London. One problem had been that the 3,800 stewards needed came from as far away as Newcastle, and didn't have the very local information that would have helped; but the team want to recruit 450 local volunteers specifically for Surrey, to give help with spectators on the day. Communication, e.g. about when the barriers could be removed, also needed improving.

The hope is to keep spectators happily in Surrey after the race has flashed past by putting big screens up in open spaces, for example West Byfleet Recreation Ground. SCC hopes it'll be good for Surrey businesses, as well as fun for residents. (Personally I wouldn't bank on the business but try for the fun.)

Knaphill Library threat lifted

David Hodge, the new SCC Leader, has abandoned plans to 'Community partner' a second tranche of libraries, which would have included Knaphill and West Byfleet. They'll go on being part of the main library network. This is excellent news for Knaphill and the parts of Goldsworth Park this great little library serves.

There have been some small concessions for the libraries like Byfleet that will be expected to somehow run without staff from the start of the new financial year in April. They'll be given the service of one member of staff for 20% of current opening hours, to support the volunteers. I don't think this is enough, and agree with everyone who's said that these 'community partnered' libraries are being set up to fail.

Diana Smith can be contacted by e-mail on Diana.smith@surreycc.gov.uk, telephone 07971665037, through her website <http://dianasmith.mycouncillor.org.uk> or on Twitter@CllrDiS



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From the Editor

Happy New Year to everyone on Goldsworth Park!

At the start of this New Year, as with every year, I can't help but feel a touch of nostalgia about the year that has just past. Did I do everything I set out to do in 2011? Did I get everything I wanted in 2011? Some might say this is a very depressing way to enter a new year but I try to swing it around and look at it differently – taking my mental list for 2011 and examining the goals I DID NOT achieve and compare it with things that actually happened which were not on my wish list and every year I am surprised by how many things unexpectedly changed in a positive way.

I wanted to change rental properties – instead I bought my first house! I wanted a job – instead I got elected as a Councillor! I wanted to visit family abroad – instead my family came here! I wanted to lose weight – uhhh still no change there! Hey you can't win them all – but you can always dream!

Our cover article this month talks about just

that and I hope it will inspire everyone around the Park to make as many New Year's Resolutions as their hearts desire to start 2012 full of inspiration and optimism!

2012 – The Year of the Volunteer

With the economy in the dumps and recession continuing to loom at our front doors, we all know that money will be tight and some of us will, even if we do not want to, be needing a helping hand from one of our local charity organisations. These organisations will also feel the pinch as needy numbers rise and financial grants decrease. The need for volunteers is now greater than ever and I would like to make an appeal to everyone living in Goldsworth Park to give some of your time to one of our local organisations so that we can ensure that they are able to function for many years to come. You never know when YOU might need their help!

Goldsworth Care's positive recruitment drive saw them gain 14 new volunteers recently – so let us take up the challenge and double this number for EVERY local charity organisation in Goldsworth Park for 2012!

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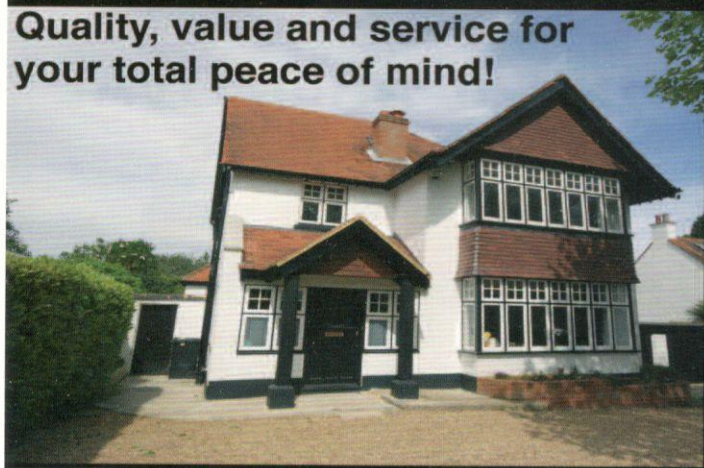


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Goldsworth Park Street Maps – HAVE YOUR SAY...

When Goldsworth Park was first built, back in the 1980s, Woking Borough Council installed street maps at the main road access points to provide some direction for visitors who would otherwise get lost in this most confusing of new housing developments. There are currently four maps on the park – Lockfield Drive / Wyndham Road, Lockfield Drive / Bampton Way, Lockfield Drive / Denton Way and Sythwood / Bullbeggars Lane. Originally, there were probably two more at Lockfield Drive / Clifton Way and Lockfield Drive / Kirkland Avenue.

Of the four maps remaining, only the first one by Wyndham Road, which is beside a left turn lane, has anywhere to stop safely to look at the map. The others have no easy place to stop and neither do the locations where there probably used to be maps. In fact, other than the one by Wyndham Road, it could be considered inconsiderate or even dangerous to stop, as the locations are fairly close to the junctions. Some are reasonably accessible on foot and others are not.

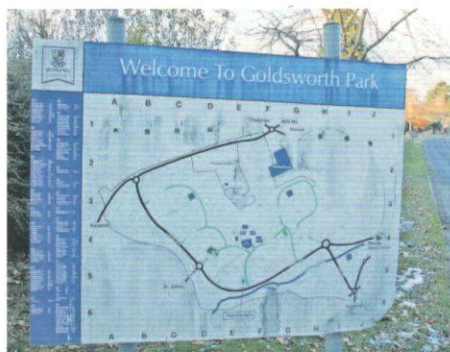
Over the last 30 years, the maps have become out of date and rather dilapidated; a couple of them have faded to the point of being almost illegible and others have suffered from vandalism. It has been suggested that the maps should be replaced with up-to-date

versions and the missing boards restored.

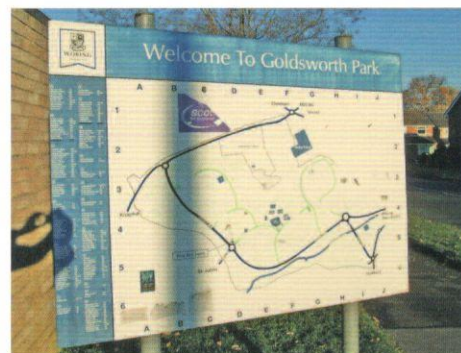
What do you think? Should the GPCA ask the Council to try to find the money to replace the maps? Should we be looking for alternative sources of funding? Should the maps be replaced where they are or are there more suitable locations? Do we need the maps at

all, now that so many people have satellite navigation in their cars?

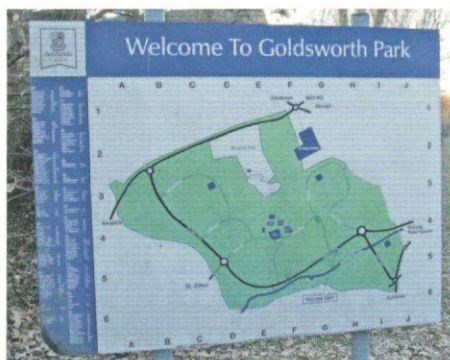
Please write to the Secretary of the GPCA, Irene Watson, at 37 Willowmead Close, Goldsworth Park, Woking, Surrey GU21 3DN or e-mail secretary.gpca@ntlworld.com with your views on this topic.



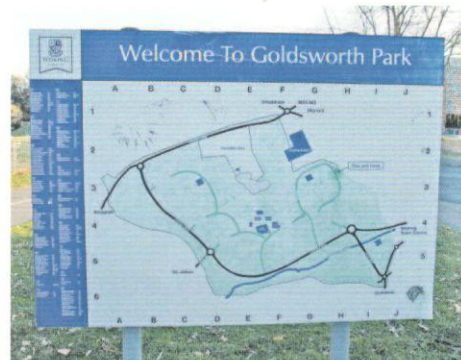
Bampton Way



Denton Way



Wyndham Road



Sythwood



Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' a great success!

Woking Choral Society's Mendelssohn's 'Elijah', on 3rd December in the H G Wells was a welcome revival. Under music director Ben Palmer and with the Bartholdy Chamber Orchestra this was a concert to be savoured. The forthright and confident performance by the choir from their first entrance onwards demonstrated commitment to the text and enthusiasm for Mendelssohn's harmonies. Especially notable was the Sacrifice Competition with the full force of choir and orchestra making an impressive effect.

Lewis Orchard, a well-known local musicologist stated: The final

section, in which Elijah triumphs, was particularly notable for the accurate tonality of the ladies in the angels' trio and in the effective contribution of both choir and orchestra in the subsequent retribution of earthquake and fire. In the final sequence Ben Palmer's vigorous direction ensured a glowing, triumphant ending.

Look out for Woking Choral Society's next concerts on Saturday, **31 March 2012** (*Durufle's Requiem and Haydn's Nelson Mass*) and **Saturday, 30 June 2012** (Orff's *Carmina Burana* and *Elgar's Songs from the Bavarian Highlands*).

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Council Acts Upon Bridge Concerns

A revised design for the replacement bridge over the Basingstoke Canal, known as the Bedser Bridge was announced by Woking Borough Council recently.

During October, the Council invited representations from local residents on plans for the new bridge. In total, 259 representations were received. In addition, an online petition received via the Woking Borough Council e-petition facility collected 535 signatures, and a further petition organised by local residents gained over 1,800 signatures.

By evaluating the representations, it was clear that the main concerns related to the height of the proposed bridge, accessibility issues caused by the length of the ramps and the number of steps, and its appearance.

Following these significant number of representations from local residents on the previous proposal, the Council has taken all representations into account and has worked closely with its architect, Hopkins, to address the key concerns raised.

Key concerns addressed

The new design is now significantly lower than the previous proposal, meaning fewer steps and shorter, more compact ramps, while remaining Equality Act and disability compliant.

Instead of a concrete and galvanised steel structure, the new design incorporates a

timber bridge, introducing retaining walls, similar to those that surround The Lightbox. The ramp and stair balustrades will be painted, with the handrail finished in galvanised steel.

The Brewery Road side has been reconfigured to improve public access to the bridge by incorporating split-level access to the WWF-UK building.

Shorter, curved ramps will now mean that it has been necessary to revise the landscape scheme, which will include planting two native species trees as part of the revised ramps.

Has the Council improved access to the bridge for local people?

The design has been revised so that users crossing the bridge to the Brewery Road side will have a choice to either ascend steps, or a ramp, to the public piazza and entrance to the WWF-UK building, or descend steps, or a ramp, to ground level.

On the town side, the ramp and steps have been removed altogether.

On the Brewery Road side, the length of the ramp leading to ground level has been significantly reduced from around 95m (312ft) to approximately 50m (164ft) in length. This will mean significantly fewer steps leading to ground level, from 26 to just 12 steps.

The width of the new bridge will measure 3.5m (11ft 5") on the town side, to 5m (16ft 4") on the Brewery Road side, compared to the current bridge which is 3m (9ft 8") wide. On the Brewery Road side, the ground level access ramp is 2.4m (7ft 9") wide, while the WWF-UK access ramp is 1.8m (5ft 9") wide.

What is the Council's financial contribution to the construction of the bridge?

The Council has capped its financial contribution towards the construction of the new bridge at £750,000. The agreed cost above this figure will be contributed to by WWF-UK. If the final cost of the bridge is below this figure, the Council's contribution will decrease proportionately. The existing bridge is owned by Woking Borough Council and its replacement is the responsibility of the Council.

Residents can view a static display of the revised design, including artists' impressions and architectural plans, at:

- Reception of the Civic Offices, Gloucester Walk, Woking
- Town Square entrance to the Peacocks Shopping Centre
- The Lightbox.

Plans of the new bridge design are also available to view online at www.woking.gov.uk/bedserbridge

Once development commences onsite in early 2012, which will mean the closure of Brewery Road Car Park in the New Year, the Council will work closely with WWF-UK and its contractors to minimise disruption to local residents.

More detailed information will be made available throughout the build programme. For further information, contact Woking Borough Council's Marketing Communications Manager, Andy Denner, on 01483 743026 or email andy.denner@woking.gov.uk



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The AGM was held on Friday, 18th November 2011 when the Chairman welcomed the residents and guests who attended. He reported on the management of the Community Hall at Goldwater Lodge which continues to be a popular venue for parties. There is also good use of the Hall on week days. Hire rates have been increased in line with inflation but still represent good value for money. No major projects had been undertaken during the last year but general maintenance and routine replacement was always necessary.

The lease for the Hall, outstanding for some 20 years, had still not been finalised. Some progress had been made on the lease, but this has been hampered by a discrepancy between the plans attached to the GPCA's lease and the plans attached to Careroom's lease. Problems with the drains continue and the Council undertook further work on the drains in the yard, lining them with plastic and commissioned a survey out to the main drain. As reported for the last five years, part of the Careroom water supply is connected to the GPCA mains water supply which would seriously affect the metered water charges but the GPCA has not received a water bill since the error was discovered.

The Chairman commented that the vandalism reported in previous years had reduced, due to considerable efforts by the police, but there had been some further damage to the roof from individuals trying to steal the small amount of remaining lead. It seems that the vandals' focus has shifted to the new public toilet which, as a result, has been out of action for more time than it has been in operation.

Another major activity of the GPCA is the Goldsworth News and the Chairman commended the Editor for the quality of the publication since she took over about a year ago. He referred to the new logo created for the GPCA by a local graphic designer and how this had been the impetus for a new masthead to re-launch the News under the new Editor. He added that past editions of the News are being digitised and will be available on the web-site, while the originals are going to the archives at the Surrey History Centre.

The Chairman then reviewed Roger Westcott's work on the lake, saying that the lake had been featured in the Woking magazine, and the work had been highly praised with organisations such as the National Trust visiting to see what can be achieved. On a general

point, he said that the GPCA was concerned that increased lake use for boating would have a damaging effect on the restored banks and planting as well as on the wildlife and fishing. Following a meeting with the Chief Executive of Woking Borough Council, it had been agreed that a policy on Lake usage will be developed after consultation with experts in the field and all interested parties will be consulted. Thanks to generous donations from WBC and the Environment Agency, it is hoped that work will start shortly on the improvement to the wildlife area.

The Chairman ended by thanking everyone who contributed to the work of the GPCA.

Next on the agenda was the Treasurer's Report and the accounts for the last year were reviewed. The Income & Expenditure Account shows that the GPCA made a surplus of £2,485 against the previous year deficit of £1,642. Bar income decreased by £2,500 as there were fewer events requiring the use of the bar and this is reflected in the bar trading position. Income from hall bookings increased by £1,800 but this now includes the charge for bar booking, which ordinarily covers the bar staff cost. Bar staff costs were £550 lower than the previous year, which again, reflects the reduction in the number of events requiring a bar. The Balance sheet shows that the GPCA still has a healthy cash balance. The funds in the deposit account are, of course, not earning much in the way of interest (0.5%). At the year end, the balance on Lake Bank Restoration Fund the fund was just over £1,500.

The Goldsworth News Editor followed and explained that becoming Editor late last year had been a bit of a surprise, but it was also a bit of a blessing because, as a relatively new comer to the area, the magazine provided the opportunity to get to know the Goldsworth Park Community better. She had used the magazine as a way of getting to know all the different organisations, community teams, local schools, etc., and had built relationships with them to encourage submissions to the magazine. When the GPCA decided to change the logo, it provided the opportunity to redesign the cover of the magazine. The new look has also prompted more companies to place advertisements in the magazine, resulting in 12 page issues every month, except for 2 issues this year. She thanked Linda Hill and all her helpers for their hard work this year in distributing the magazine and commented that the print run had been increased as there were now more deliverers

and places taking the News. There are plans to try to recruit even more deliverers in the New Year and the aim is to target those roads that are currently not receiving the magazine to see if deliverers can be recruited. This will, of course, also have the knock-on effect of increasing the circulation numbers.

The Chairman then invited the other organisations present to give brief reports on their activities.

Barry Pope spoke on behalf of both Dianthus Trading and the Woking and District Sea Cadets. Dianthus Trading was beginning to find its feet but there was much to do to integrate fully into the community. Steady progress is being made and it was hoped that some of the genuine concerns which were expressed were beginning to abate. The company was particularly pleased to see the developments for the lake which have been proposed by Woking BC and would be ready and willing to play its part in achieving this vital aspect of environmental protection. The lake has great potential for fun for a large range of people within the community and they hoped to see this develop within the community over the coming year.

On behalf of the Sea Cadets, Barry Pope said he was very pleased to say that the Sea Cadets had 10 new members, 8 of whom were from Goldsworth Park. The Band has started up again and practice on Thursday evenings. It is hoped that they will soon get to the standard where they are winning awards again. The Sea Cadets offer training for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award to non-Sea Cadets and thought that some of the D of E candidates could get involved in environmental activities around the lake.

Richard Cook, the Vicar of St Andrews Church and Chairman of the Lakeview Community Action Group, said he was gratified to see so many people at the Remembrance Sunday Service and was pleased that more organisations had laid wreaths this year, at his invitation, including Waitrose, Woking Borough Council and Goldsworth Park Rangers Football Club.

St Andrews had appointed a part-time Children and Families Worker, who had organised the Light Fantastic Party at the end of October which had been a real success. An Assistant Youth Worker, had also been appointed.

2013 will be the 25th Anniversary of the

opening of St Andrews Church and plans are being developed to celebrate the occasion.

The Lakeview Community Action Group has taken over the management of the community centre hall from Woking BC and is planning to redevelop the centre to better meet the needs of the community.

Roger Westcott said that he was very pleased with what had been achieved in the 4 years in which the project has been running. His reports in the Goldsworth News keep everyone informed but he highlighted the fact that the new reed beds are all flourishing and the island is now doing well although some additional planting on the edges will be needed in the spring. All this additional vegetation had helped to bring in more wildlife and there is a wider range of birds, dragonflies and other insects than before. There were many more nesting birds this year and more broods of young moorhens, coot and grebe and kingfishers now visit regularly. Fish stocks have increased with rudd and perch, in particular, doing very well. From the number of predator fish, it is clear that the general fish population

is healthy and, as a result, more anglers are visiting the lake. In fact, more people from all over the area are visiting the lake for exercise, dog-walking, etc. For the future, the plan is to improve the wildlife area at the North East end of the lake with a new fence and hedging. It would include a kingfisher nesting bank, log piles for insects and the kind of plants that provide both cover and food for the birds and animals. In the longer term, there are suggestions for the wooded area to the North West of the lake which could include nature trails, a wetland area, wild flower meadows, etc. He ended by thanking the GPCA for providing a "home" for the Project, and the Environment Agency, Thames Water, Woking BC, the volunteers and members of the public for their support.

Woking Hockey Club sent a report saying that the club was now the 5th largest in the country with a youth section of 350 children. There had been some significant achievements in that they have won Club of the year, Youth Coach of the Year and Youth team of the year at the Woking Sport Awards, run the hockey part of

Woking's entry to the Surrey Youth Games – free coaching for children 7-15yrs interested in learning a new sport. They are an integral part of the community, providing their clubhouse for meetings for community groups AGMs and, on Sundays, open up their café and facilities for the use of football groups/spectators playing on the grass. In a press statement this year, the England Hockey Board (the governing body) said: "Woking HC has an astounding junior set up - a dual pitch club that fully utilises its facilities and runs an amazing amount of junior hockey. A great deal of volunteering hours goes into making Woking the well-oiled machine we see at junior and senior levels."

One of the final actions was the election of officers and committee. Only one set of nominations had been received and the voting was unanimous to re-elect Ian Rickard as Chairman, John Green as Vice Chairman, Peter Hill as Treasurer and Irene Watson as Secretary

Before the meeting ended, Richard Cook expressed his thanks to the GPCA Committee for their work for the community.



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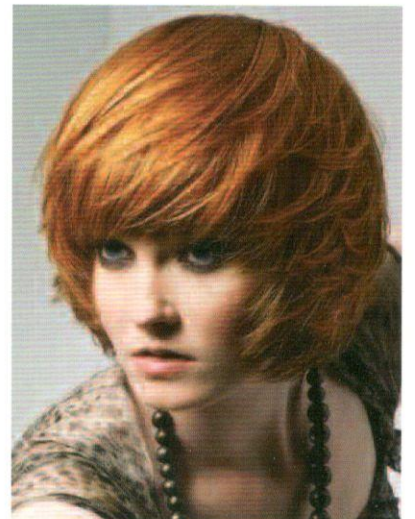
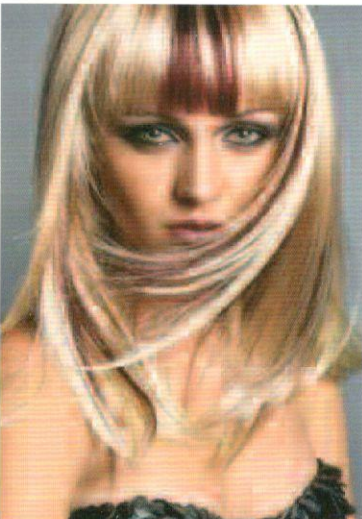
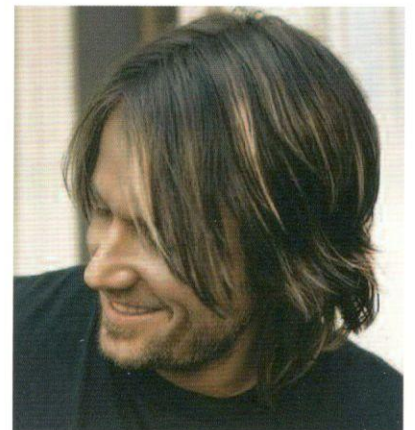
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Operation Hibiscus

Operation Hibiscus, a series of coordinated dawn raids which took place during November 2011 resulted in 17 people being charged with a variety of offences in connection with the supply of class A drugs and burglary. Included in this operation were properties in Frenchs Wells and Bankside in Goldsworth Park. The Safer Neighbourhood Team are very pleased with the outcome of Operation Hibiscus which demonstrates the determination of Surrey Police to tackle the supply and selling of illegal Class A drugs.

Get involved in 2012

There are numerous ways in which you can make voluntary contributions to positive policing and crime prevention in Surrey:

Go to Neighbourhood Panel Meetings - organised by our Safer Neighbourhood Teams, Neighbourhood Panel meetings determine the priority issues that local people would like us to concentrate on. Panel Meetings also keep you informed about progress made on

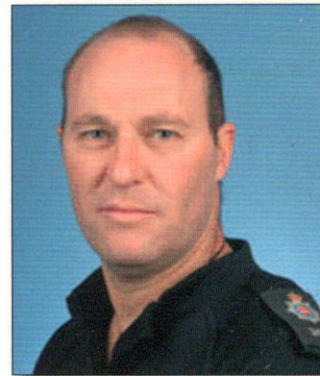
previous priorities. Everyone is welcome to come along and have your say, it could make all the difference. In Goldsworth Park meetings are held at Goldwater Lodge on Wishbone Way.

Join Neighbourhood Watch - the largest volunteer group organisation in the UK, Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) is a truly effective crime deterrent. In fact, it has been called 'one of the most successful crime prevention schemes ever conceived'. NHW also helps to build community spirit and foster good relations. Scheme members are updated with the latest home security and crime prevention advice - and may even qualify for a home insurance discount.

Join the Surrey Special Constabulary - If you are over 18, fit and interested in part-time policing - apply to the Surrey Special Constabulary. 'Specials' are given a thorough grounding in police work, hold the same powers as their regular colleagues and wear a similar uniform. Forming a vital link between the regular police and the community, Specials perform important policing tasks. You may find yourself conducting a foot patrol, teaching local school students about safety, tackling anti-social activity or carrying out house-to-house enquiries. You could provide security at major events, present evidence in court or assist at scenes of accidents, fights or fires. Each day brings a new and 'special' challenge. For more information call 0800 328 7597 or email volunteer@surrey.pnn.police.uk Go to Surrey Police Authority meetings - the Surrey Police Authority monitors the performance of the Force, appoints the Chief

Constable and the Chief Officer Group and sets the policing budget for the county. Part of this process involves consultation with the public at numerous meetings. For more information, timings and agenda visit www.surreypa.gov.uk

As always residents are encouraged to call 101 for all non-emergency policing matters and to call 999 if you have a genuine emergency requiring the attendance of the police (for example a crime is in progress or someone is in immediate danger).



New member for Goldsworth Park Neighbourhood Team - PC Steve Anderson

PC Anderson joined Surrey Police in 2006 originally as a PCSO on a project dealing with youth anti-social behaviour in the community. From there he joined as a Police Officer in 2007 where a short time later he was assigned to the Criminal Investigation Department based in Guildford investigating all levels of crime and disorder.

After 3 years in CID he joined the Waverley Neighbourhood Support team dealing within problematic and ongoing issues within the community that had the greatest effect on the local area.

In September 2011, he was then posted to the Woking Safer Neighbourhood team as one of the team for the Goldsworth Park area working alongside colleagues to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

PC Anderson said: "You will see me out in the local area working on the problems you have identified as being your problems. Please stop and take the time to say hello to me."

Goldsworth News would like to give a warm welcome to PC Anderson on behalf of the Goldsworth Park Community and the Goldsworth Park Community Association.

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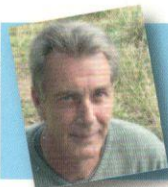
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FROM THE LAKESIDE – JANUARY 2012

Roger Westcott is the Project Manager for the Lake Bank Restoration Project, under the auspices of the GPCA. He is also one of the voluntary fishing bailiffs appointed by Woking Borough Council to oversee fishing, monitor fish stocks and other wildlife, and keep the area generally clean and tidy.

By the time you read this, we may have already started work on the Wildlife Area, getting 2012 off to a good start. The plan is to clear the area of unwanted growth, remove the old fencing and erect a new, more appropriate stock fence. Inside this will be planted a hedge consisting of Hawthorne, Blackthorn, Hazel and Dog Rose. Once established, this will not only secure the area, it will bring colour and provide a great

source of food for birds and small mammals. At one end, there will be a (locked) gate allowing access for maintenance. Two parts of the project – the Kingfisher Bank and the Interpretation Boards – will be left until later in the year to avoid disturbance during the breeding season.

Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience that may be caused whilst these improvements are undertaken. If you have any concerns or questions related to the project, call me on 07779 896393 or Irene Watson, Secretary of the GPCA, on 01483 714096.

December is often very quiet on the fishing front, mainly down to the weather; short days and cold nights start to have an effect on the fishes'

feeding habits, making the chance of a catch more of a challenge. This December has been true to form with many of our most seasoned anglers spending fishless days by the water's edge, dreaming of a bite. Don't despair – as the fish adjust to the lower temperatures, they will start to feed again. My tip is to keep feed to a minimum and try to fish off the bottom. Fish will often move to the warmer layers away from both the surface and the bottom of deep water; find the fish and you will catch. Don't be afraid to experiment; you have nothing to lose and everything to gain!

Last month, I reported an unconfirmed sighting of what might have been a Water Rail and offered a prize to the first person to send in a photo of the mystery bird. Well, I am pleased to inform you that we have a winner. The photos have been authenticated and the winner, who wishes to remain anonymous, has received a box of chocolates and a bag of wild bird food for her efforts. Well Done!



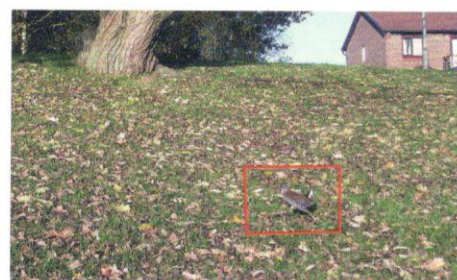
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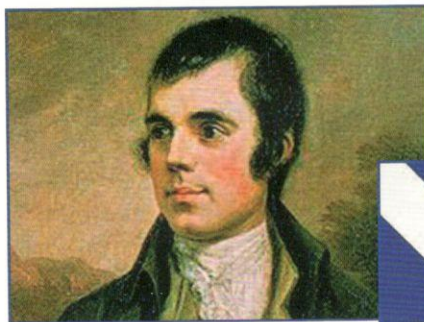
Our suspicions were correct – it is a Water Rail but what, you may ask, is so unusual about that? Not much if you are in the middle of the Norfolk Broads or the fens but we are not – far from it. Here we are, on a comparatively small lake surrounded by houses and yet this shy, fairly rare bird seems to have made its home here. In fact, one yet unconfirmed sighting suggests that it may not be alone. If that is the case, who knows, they may breed here and wouldn't that be fantastic! In the mean time, here are the photos for you to enjoy.

And finally, we would like to welcome the St Johns Scout Group to the lake. They will be using the lake every other Saturday between 9.00am and 12noon for canoeing. They have been made aware of the fragility of the lake and its inhabitants and of the need to work in partnership with other users – anglers, the Sea Cadets, the Model Yacht Club – to maintain a manageable balance of usage on the water.

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Burns Night is celebrated on or around 25th January to commemorate the life and works of the bard (poet) Robert Burns, who was born on 25th January 1759. The day also celebrates Burns' contribution to Scottish culture. Burns is best known for the popular New Year's song "Auld Lang Syne".

Burns Night Suppers vary enormously - formal dinners full of pomp and circumstance with a piper to welcome the guests and toasts and readings of pieces written by Robert Burns - informal gatherings of friends with some recorded traditional music. But whether you are planning a formal dinner or a casual meal with friends, there are many elements that will be the same.

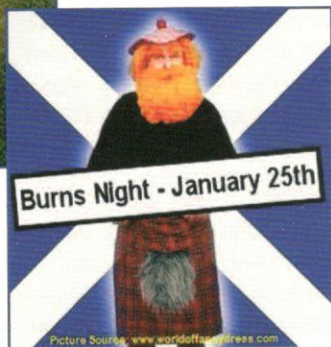
The Scottish flag is often displayed at Burns' Night celebrations. It is known as the Saltire and consists of a rectangular blue background with thick white bars on the diagonals. The diagonals form a cross that represents Saint Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. The men should, of course, wear kilts.

A short but important prayer is said before the meal. The Selkirk Grace, sometimes called Burns' Grace at Kirkcudbright may be printed in English, but it is usually recited in Scots.

*Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it,
But we hae meat and we can eat,
And sae the Lord be thankit.*

The traditional food associated with Burns' Night includes **cock-a-leekie soup** (chicken and leek soup); **haggis** with neeps (mashed turnips or swedes) and **tatties** (mashed potatoes); **cloutie dumpling** (a pudding boiled in a linen cloth or cloot) or **cranachan** (a mixture of cream, honey, whisky, oats and raspberries); and cheese with **bannocks** (oatcakes). Whisky is the traditional drink.

Recipe Idea for Burns Night



The evening will center on the entrance of the haggis on a large platter to the sound of the bagpipes. When the haggis is on the table, the host reads the "Address to a Haggis" and at the end of the reading, the haggis is ceremonially cut.

The Address to a Haggis by Robert Burns

*Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great chieftain o' the pudding-race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy o'a grace
As lang's my arm.*

*The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your pin wad help to mend a mill
In time o' need,
While thro' your pores the dews distil
Like amber bead.*

*His knife see rustic Labour dight,
An' cut you up wi' ready sleight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
Like ony ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin', rich!*

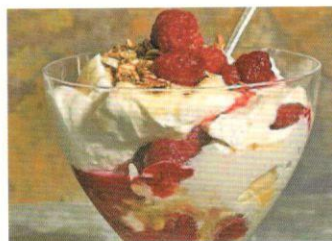
*Then, horn for horn, they stretch
an' strive:
Deil tak the hindmost! on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swail'd kytes
belyve
Are bent like drums;
Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive,
Bethankit! hums.*

*Is there that owre his French
ragout
Or olio that wad staw a sow,
Or fricassee wad make her spew
Wi' perfect sconner,
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu'
view
On sic a dinner?*

*Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckless as wither'd rash,
His spindle shank, a guid whip-
lash;
His nieve a nit;
Thro' bloody flood or field to
dash,
O how unfit!*

*But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his
tread.
Clap in his walie nieve a blade,
He'll mak it whissle;
An' legs an' arms, an' heads will
sned,
Like taps o' thrissle.*

*Ye Pow'rs, wha mak mankind your
care,
And dish them out their bill o'
fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking
ware
That jaups in luggies;
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer
Gie her a haggis!*



Burns Night Recipe - CRANACHAN

My recipe this month is for Cranachan - one of the tradition puddings served at a Burns Night Supper. There are many versions of this Scottish pudding, the simplest being a stir-up of toasted pinhead oatmeal, whisky, honey and a mixture of cream and "crowdie" (a soft Scottish cheese). Modern versions omit the cheese which is difficult to come by outside Scotland or use Mascarpone instead. They also make the most of Scottish raspberries by folding them in at the last minute.

Just a note about why a pudding served in January uses raspberries - Burns night was originally celebrated on 21st July (the anniversary of his death in 1796) when raspberries were in season. It was later changed to 25th January (the anniversary of his birth in 1759) and it is only in recent years that we have been able to buy fresh raspberries in January for this delicious pudding.

Ingredients

- 60g of medium pinhead oatmeal
- 300mls of double cream
- 300mls of mascarpone cheese
- 4 tablespoons of a pale malt whisky
- 4 tablespoons of runny Scottish heather honey
- 200g of raspberries (optional but very tasty) and a little caster sugar, if desired
- mint leaves to garnish

Method

Scatter the oatmeal onto a baking tray and toast in a low oven (pre-heated to 180°C/fan 160°C/gas mark 4) or under the grill or in a dry pan over a moderate heat until they become golden brown and smell warm and nutty - about 5 to 8 minutes. The trick is to toast the oats slowly, whether in the oven, under the grill or on the hob in a dry pan but be careful - they can quickly burn.

Put 300 grams of cream into a bowl and lightly whip until it thickens. Put 300 grams of mascarpone cheese into a second bowl, pour in half the whisky and whip lightly. Spoon in the honey and continue to whip. Add the rest of the whisky and continue to whip. Finally add the whipped cream and stir until you have a smooth consistency. Taste the mix and add more honey and/or whisky if you feel the need.

If you are using raspberries, make a raspberry purée by crushing half the fruit with a fork. Sweeten this to taste with a little caster sugar, if desired.

Fold the purée into the cream mixture along with 50g of the toasted oatmeal. Don't be too thorough - it's nice if these are not completely incorporated so that the effect is marbled.

Spoon the mixture into individual serving dishes or you could serve it from a big glass bowl. Scatter the remaining oatmeal and raspberries on the top and garnish with a sprig of mint.

Note: the later you fold in the oatmeal, the crunchier it will remain. You could make the cream mixture earlier and keep in the fridge for a few hours and add the oatmeal and raspberry purée just before serving.



Goldsworth Care Gains New Volunteers

Good Neighbour group Goldsworth Care is celebrating the success of its recent Recruitment Campaign, which resulted in the enrolment of 14 new volunteers. Volunteer co-ordinator Pat Checksfield said, "We are really pleased. We now have more front-line helpers, driving and doing other tasks for our clients, and more people manning our telephone line, which is crucial to our whole operation."

The group's campaign was funded in part by a grant from Surrey County Council. It culminated in an open day at the A2 Room, Goldsworth Park. In addition to those attending who were enrolled into the group, several people were referred to other volunteer organisations more suited to their interests.

The Recruitment Campaign marked Goldsworth Care's tenth anniversary. Chairperson Marian Alden said, "It's been great to have such a positive response. It confirms the local support for the group and it sets us up for the next ten years!"

Goldsworth Care is one of 11 Good Neighbour schemes in Woking borough. Operated entirely by volunteers, it seeks to provide a helping hand to those who need it. Typically, Goldsworth Care drives clients to hospital and doctors' appointments, helps with shopping, does small household maintenance tasks, assists with form filling and even dog walking.

All volunteers are CRB checked. They are unpaid but are reimbursed their expenses. Clients make a voluntary and anonymous donation when using the group's services.

Anyone interested in volunteering with Goldsworth Care, or using its services, can contact them on any weekday morning on 07751 801587.

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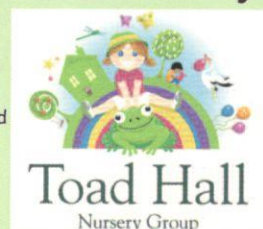
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