

GOLDSWORTH NEWS

Nov/Dec 2017 – Issue 160



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- Centre car park problems
- North Meadow update ■ Hospice's designer gardens



GOLDSWORTH PARK REMEMBERS

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GOLDSWORTH NEWS

Goldsworth News is the magazine of the Goldsworth Park Community Association, published bi-monthly and distributed free of charge to approximately 5,000 dwellings and organisations throughout Goldsworth Park and the surrounding area.

EDITORIAL TEAM:

George Binyon (Editor), Royer Slater and Michael Farlam.

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Goldsworth Park GU21 3DN.

Email: editor@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk

GPCA MEETINGS

Meetings of the Community Association are held at 7.30pm at Goldwater Lodge.

2018 meetings: January 30; April 24;
July 24; AGM November 6.

All residents are welcome. If you would like to be put on the mailing list for minutes and other information,

Email: chair@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk or call 01483 714096.

COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES

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

Ann-Marie Barker (Lib Dem)

Ian Eastwood (Lib Dem)

Chitra Rana (Con)

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Views from the Chair

WELL – here I am again having been elected, once more, to the position of Chair of the GPCA.

Since the AGM, I have been thinking about what the next year will hold for the GPCA. I am sure that it will be a busy year, as usual, but we have major organisational changes to manage; agreeing the lease of the Community Hall with the Council, and changing the GPCA's constitution in order to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation [CIO]. Before we start on these tasks, we need to recruit a new Treasurer and Secretary to ensure we have a full complement of Trustees.

If this sounds a bit heavy, I can assure you that there is plenty of fun stuff as well, such as hosting the Hospice's Dragon Boat and Family Fun Day and organising litter-picks (yes, they can be fun). One of the good things about the GPCA is that you can develop your own ideas about what it should be doing and where it should be going, as Gerry Smeesters did with the Natural Goldsworth Park Project. There are many opportunities – writing for Goldsworth News – helping with the website – representing the GPCA on other organisations – in addition to the roles mentioned above. Why not make a resolution to get more involved in your community in the new year?

It is getting near to Christmas, so I would like to remind you that there will be songs and carols around the Christmas tree in the shopping centre courtyard from 5.30 to 6.30pm on Friday, December 8. Please come and join in.

Finally, may I wish you all a joyful Christmas and a happy, peaceful new year.

If you have any issues of general concern or would like to be involved in the work of the GPCA, please contact me through this magazine or at chair@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk.

Irene Watson, GPCA Chair



@ourgpca



facebook.com/goldsworth.park

Hospice acts on car park issues

WORKING HOSPICE has responded to criticism that staff are taking up too many spaces in the shopping centre car park with measures to try to reduce the congestion.

Hospice staff have met with business representatives and the centre managing agents following shoppers' complaints that they were having difficulty finding vacant spaces since the new facility opened.

Staff from the Hospice who use the car park are exempt from the three-hour limit that applies to other users.

Now the Hospice has agreed to look again at their parking policy within their own car park, amend the permits they issue for the centre car park with registration numbers to prevent possible misuse and park away from the shops.

In addition, Hospice staff will be encouraged to consider car sharing and using the drives of friends and colleagues who live locally. There is also a bike-to-work scheme.

Hospice CEO Jayne Cooper has written to GPCA Chair Irene Watson to address the issue. In her letter she says: "The management company is aware of and recognises the hospice's legal right to use the community car park, which is part of our deeds. In light of the concerns from local businesses, organisations and residences that there is now additional pressure on parking, we are looking at ways we can work with the community to help alleviate this.

"The hospice will do all it can to help raise awareness around parking with our staff, volunteers and in support of the centre."

Fran Siwicka, branch manager of Waitrose, has pointed out to the managing agents where she believes six or seven additional spaces could be created. These would offset those lost by the recent increase in disabled bays.

GPCA vacancies

TREASURER We are looking for a volunteer Treasurer to help us manage the GPCA's finances and to become a Charity Trustee. The position involves bookkeeping and banking, accounting and reporting, and ensuring financial compliance and governance. If you are self-motivated and organised with financial and IT skills and would like to serve the community for 15 to 20 hours a month, please get in touch.

SECRETARY We are also seeking a volunteer Secretary to help us administer the GPCA and to become a Charity Trustee. The work involves arranging and minuting meetings, communications and correspondence, record keeping and administration. If you are self-motivated and organised with IT and administrative skills and have around 10 hours a month to give to the community, please get in touch.

Contact the Chair at chair@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk or 01483 714096 to arrange to discuss these opportunities.

- THE delivery of the Goldsworth News to every household on the Park is dependent on volunteers. We have most roads covered but there are a few gaps. If you would like to help in any of the roads listed here please contact Linda Hill at hilllinda5@gmail.com
Ashton Road, Heythorp Close, Huntingdon Road, Kenton Way, Nethercote Avenue, Perleybrooke Lane.

Big Remembrance Day turnout

GOLDSWORTH PARK had one of its largest-ever Remembrance Day gatherings when residents and representatives of community organisations assembled to remember armed forces members who died in the line of duty.

The Remembrance service was in two parts: 88 children and 141 adults filled St Andrew's Church for a half-hour Remembrance-themed service at 10am, at which young members of Goldsworth Park's Scouts and Guides groups presented their colours.

The congregation was then swelled by over a hundred more for a solemn open air service of Remembrance at the War Memorials in

front of the health centre. Goldsworth Park's vicar, Revd Kate Wyles, led hymns, prayers and the two minutes silence.

The Ode to Remembrance was read by Charles Duncan Twigg a veteran of the RAMC, representing service veterans, and by Netra Chawla representing Sythwood Primary School.

Poppy wreaths were laid by representatives of the Scouts and Guides, local shops and the Goldsworth Park Community Association, Woking and Sam Beare Hospices as well as by Sloccock Nurseries, on whose land Goldsworth Park was built and which lost several of its workers in military service.

ROYER SLATER



Top: *HELPING HAND* – Revd Kate Wyles is assisted by Sythwood School pupil Netra Chawla

Middle: *THE MEMORIAL*

Bottom: *SILENT TRIBUTE* – Goldsworth Park's own scouts and guide groups



REMEMBERING – Charles Duncan Twigg and GPCA chair Irene Watson

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Nursery's Great War tragedies

IN our second extract from Fields of Memories by John Field, the author explores the impact of the Great War on his family.

MY grandfather, Surrey born, and also named John, had moved around in late Victorian times including one spell working in Canada on the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

He then moved on to Yukon Territory seeking his fortune in the latter years of the goldrush. Eventually, he found employment working with his brother Edward (Ted) at Slocock's Goldsworth Nursery. My father, Cyril, was born in Woking in 1914, but almost immediately the onset of war began.

When war broke out both John and Edward continued to work on the nursery land but within a year or so they had both volunteered for service in the Army. John joined the 2/4th Battalion of the Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regt. Edward joined the 11th Battalion Queens (Royal West Surrey) Regiment.

Brother-in-law, Harry Hambridge, whose family also worked for Slocock's was already in the army. Harry's family occupied one of the tied Harelands Cottages at Canal Bank, St John's. Harry was in military service at the outbreak of war.

Tragedy was swift. Harry had seen service in many parts of the empire but by the beginning of October 1914 was on his way across the channel into Belgium. His destination was at the frontlines at Ypres. In action to the east of Ypres, near Veldhoek, Harry and many others were caught in the open whilst being shelled by enemy artillery. Today, his last resting place is in the huge Tyne Cot cemetery, near Zonnebeke, Belgium.

The war left its mark on the family again in 1917. John Alexander first went to the Middle East in January 1916. He was posted to Egypt (Suez), then Gaza and finally Palestine, facing Turkish forces. Later in 1916 he was wounded near Gaza. After a period of recovery he again saw action in



Left: FAMILY PORTRAIT – (from left) Doris, Alex, Granny, Cyril and Monica
Right: JOHN ALEXANDER FIELD

Jerusalem. On December 21 1917 John was at the slopes of the Mount of Olives, his detachment was caught in the open and came under heavy machine gun fire followed by hand to hand fighting with fixed bayonets. John, along with over 30 men, were lost in this action. He and his comrades lie in the Palestine war cemetery at the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem.

By 1917 Edward Field had enlisted. His battalion returned to France from Italy in March 1918, and by April he was in Ypres, where his battalion were engaged in trench repairs and digging. In May they had moved to the west of Ypres and subjected to gas and shell attack. This situation continued, and on the morning of May 26 Edward was killed with seven others during yet another round of enemy shelling. Edward is buried at Gwalia War Cemetery, three miles NE of Poperinge.

Granny had lost her parents just before the war. Then lost two brothers, two brothers-in-law, cousins and her husband to the war. She was left with four young children.

As was the practice at that time, Granny was allowed to continue living at the Robin Hood Road cottage after WW1. There was no bread winner or social security to support them. So, Granny worked doing some domestic jobs plus working on the nursery to support her herself and her four children. She was such a gentle lady – always keeping herself and her house spotless. To the end she was always very slim and upright never needing assistance walking.

Each year on Goldsworth Park, an Act of Remembrance is conducted for all those employees of Slocock's, and others, lost in both wars. Martin Slocock, last owner of the nursery business, always attended this service along with as many as the relatives and surviving employees of the business that could attend.

Next time John Field takes a look at more recent times when he spent holidays at the nursery at his Granny's.



CLEANING UP – the GPCA organised another litter pick in October and volunteers collected over 20 bags of rubbish from around the estate

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▶ Revd Kate Wyles reflects on Christmas time

THIS week cobwebs slowed me down in the middle of the Christmas rush.

Don't get me wrong – I love the busyness and bustle of the festive season: Christmas songs in the shops; lights and decorations going up everywhere; school and church carol services and the Goldsworth Park tree switch-on to look forward to... it's a wonderful time of year.

But with an ever-increasing to-do list and often troubling news headlines it can be hard to find the peace on earth the angels sang of that first Christmas when Jesus was born.

Out on Goldsworth Park's North Meadow instead of whizzing on with the dog back to church, I stopped. It was early morning and the frost had highlighted individual pieces of grass and the seed heads of summer cow-parsley. My eye was caught by dew hanging from spider-webs which

reflected the sunlight and sparkled. It was a stunning natural Christmas scene.

It is no bad thing to be made to stop and stand still, especially at this time of year. Jeremiah is a prophet in the Bible who shares these words: This is what God says: 'Stand at the crossroads and look. Ask for the ancient paths. Which is the good way? Take it and you will find rest for yourselves.' Jeremiah 6:16.

As we get ready for Christmas we sometimes forget we have a choice of roads. The main-road is often the busiest route and looks the most fulfilling as we strive for a 'perfect' Christmas, but for many of us it leads to overload.

Maybe if we stop, look and listen for a moment we might just hear the angels' song of peace and discover the ancient path that leads us to the manger and God's tender love for each one of us shown in the birth of the baby Jesus.

Have a very merry, and peaceful Christmas.

Andrew's Church



▶ Hospice's designer gardens

VOLUNTEERS from Goldsworth Park helped 2017 Chelsea Flower Show winner Charlotte Harris create her Retreat Garden at the Woking Hospice in Denton Way.

The new building has three garden spaces — the Retreat Garden, which is at the front of the hospice next to its café, the Wildlife Garden, to the rear; and the Encircling Garden, which follows the perimeter of the grounds. Charlotte is designing and advising on the landscaping and planting and she led the planting on the Retreat Garden with Willerby's Landscapers and the hospice's garden volunteers.

Woking & Sam Beare Hospices cared for Charlotte's Mother, who sadly passed away in 1999. Charlotte said: "My earliest memories are of mum in the garden. It is therefore a wonderful tribute to her, and as a way to be able to give

something back to the care provider that did so much for her and for me, by being able to design the hospice's gardens. I am greatly inspired by the work of hospices and I see a strong alignment with the principles underpinning my own landscaping work/vision. It is therefore my privilege to be able to do this."



LOCAL VOLUNTEER – Trevor Beere from French's Wells at work in the Retreat Garden

Jayne Cooper, CEO of Woking & Sam Beare Hospices, said: "Our patients and their families and carers are at the heart of everything we do and our motivation has been to create the very best possible environment for all who come to the hospice. We are thrilled to have the prestige of our gardens designed and landscaped by Charlotte Harris. It only seems fitting to have the same quality outside the hospice as in.

"We are extremely grateful to Charlotte and honoured to have such fabulous garden design. None of this would have been possible without Willerby's Landscapers and Deepdale Trees, and of course our volunteers. On behalf of all of us at the hospice and those who benefit from our care – thank you."

The hospice also boasts a café that is open to everyone and offers cakes, sandwiches and salads all freshly made on site at very reasonable prices.



Councils' News



Search on for young civic stars

NOMINATIONS are now open for the 2018 Young People's Civic Awards Scheme. Run by Woking Council, it recognises children and young people who have achieved exceptional success in three categories: Outstanding contribution to the community; triumph over adversity and outstanding achievement. Open to youngsters up to the age of 18 who live or attend school or college in the Borough, the scheme's deadline for nominations is Friday January 26, 2018. Winners will be invited to attend the Mayor's Civic Reception in April 2018.

Application forms, along with more information about the scheme, are available at www.woking.gov.uk/youngcivicawardscheme or email julie.northcote@woking.gov.uk

Environmental projects

A YEAR of activity and new projects were covered in reports at the Annual General Meeting of Woking Borough's environmental group, Woking Local Action 21 (LA21).

The group's achievements over the past 12 months included the installation of new community vegetable growing plots by LA21's 'Incredible Edible' project, as well as updates on wild flower seed sowing, invasive species clearance and habitat improvements by the Woking

Biodiversity Partnership. For further information on LA21 contact Woking's Green Infrastructure Manager, Tracey Haskins, on 01483 743888 or via email green@woking.gov.uk

Landlords licensing scheme in Woking

PRIVATE landlords with property in part of the Maybury and town centre area of Woking (Canalside Ward) from will need a licence to operate from April 2018. Woking has approved the first Private Landlord Selective Licensing scheme that will support the need for decent, affordable housing.

The area has a high proportion of tenants renting accommodation (44% of properties) from private landlords. In many cases, the accommodation breaches safety standards and is well below what is acceptable for people to live in. For more information visit www.woking.gov.uk/privatesectorhousing or email propertylicensing@woking.gov.uk

Twice around the world

SURREY'S gritting lorries covered more than 50,000 miles of road last winter to keep the county moving — the equivalent of travelling twice around the world. And with temperatures dropping the fleet of 39 gritters is once again prepared for action around the clock. The council has stockpiled 14,500 tonnes of salt and secured the services of more than 50 farmers equipped with ploughs to clear snow.

From the Lakeside



■ Roger Wescott is Goldsworth Park Angling Club secretary and fishing bailiff working in partnership with Woking Council to oversee fishing, monitor fish stocks and other wildlife, and keep the area clean and tidy.

AUTUMN is always a busy time of year around the lake as we prepare for the winter months when, for much of the time, the weather can restrict our intentions.

So, through late October and early November following the very successful litter pick organized by Hannah Jennings, our Neighbourhood Officer at Woking Council, and Irene Watson, GPCA Chairman, the angling club undertook some branch and reed trimming, margin litter picking using our new work boat and refurbishing the two platforms nearest the point of the lake where some of the timbers had become rotten. Well done to all who took part – it's much appreciated.

Serco have also been doing some of the heavier tree work round the lake by removing dead and dangerous timbers and, as a bonus, the

timber is chipped for us ready to top dress the platforms in the coming weeks. Another job you should see start very soon is some repair work on the lake path by the Council; this is great news because some of the cracks and root heaves have become a trip hazard. If all goes to plan, the lake and surrounding area should be safe and tidy by Christmas.

Of course, it's not just us humans who are busy during autumn. Our wildlife is also preparing for what's to come over the winter period, whether it's stockpiling food or preparing for hibernation. All over the country, young swans from this year's broods will soon be expelled by their parents and will be looking for a new home while adult pairs will be protecting their territory from interlopers. It may seem harsh to us but that's the way of the wild world.

Over the last few weeks, we have had several young swans coming to the lake only to be chased off by our resident pair, sometimes at risk of getting injured in the process. It is only at this point we may intervene by calling in the rescue team from Swan Support, run by Wendy Herman and based at Datchet, who take the birds to the care centre, nurse them back to health and then release them back into the wild to find their own patch of water. In this way, our three young birds will be sent packing very soon.

If you see any swans under threat, please give Wendy a call on 07968 868172 who is always happy to lend a helping hand.

And, finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Beacon shines for charity shop

THE Woking & Sam Beare Hospices charity shop in Goldsworth Park has received its latest donation of spotlessly clean clothes from its neighbours, the Beacon House dry cleaning and laundry business.

Beacon House manager Mumeeb Zubair said: "It's surprising how many customers don't collect clothes after we've cleaned and repaired them. We give customers six months to collect cleaned clothes, then give unclaimed items to the hospice charity shop. The clothes are laundered and in excellent condition, so we hope they will brighten up the lives of their new owners and raise funds for Woking Hospice, which is now one of our neighbours at Goldsworth Park Centre."

Mumeeb and his staff handed over a collection of unclaimed suits, coats and trousers, all cleaned and ready for display in the charity shop. Previous donations have also included dresses and skirts.

Napur Tyagi, assistant manager of the hospice shop, explained it is converting to one of the charity's "Boutique" outlets. She said: "It means we will be selling the better quality clothes from those donated by supporters. However, the shop will continue to sell a wide range of other good quality items at low prices and it continues to welcome all donations of saleable items."

Beacon House has been in business at the shopping centre since 1983.

ROYER SLATER



SUITS YOU — Aman Ullah and Debbie Aydemir of Beacon House hand over clothes to Hannah McAlister and Linda Carter, hospice shop volunteers

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News from the GPCA AGM highlights

CHAIR'S REPORT

The GPCA reports annually to the Charity Commission on how it is meeting the objectives set out in its Constitution. The Chair's AGM Report follows this pattern. The first objective is to promote the benefit of the residents of Goldsworth Park which is construed as representing and promoting their interests and there are several ways in which we do this:

Meetings: Public meetings are held on a quarterly basis and the Trustees meet between the quarterly meeting to conduct the GPCA's business. The public meetings are generally quite well attended with between 15 and 20 people at each. The mailing list of interested parties who get the minutes now stands at 85.

Communications: The GPCA publishes a community magazine, Goldsworth News, every other month. 5000 copies of the magazine are printed and delivered by volunteers to most homes in Goldsworth Park and are available in many of the shops in the centre and in Strollers, Lakers, St Andrew's and the Salvation Army Churches, WSB Hospices, Dianthus Trading and the new Lakeview Community Centre.

The website www.ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk Traffic on the website is significantly higher this year than last. The most popular pages are the Hall, its facilities and prices. Goldsworth News is now available on the website. Back numbers are available too. There are Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Community Matters: The GPCA was represented at the Remembrance Day Service outside the Health Centre and a wreath laid at the memorial, as usual. For the first time, the GPCA organised a Christmas tree in the shopping centre courtyard with contributions from St Andrew's and all the shops. This will be repeated this year.

In the shopping centre, the managing agents finally responded to the GPCA's request for more disabled parking bays. The statutory recommendations about the provision of disabled parking are now met.

In response to a suggestion from the GPCA, the managing agent has put up "No Smoking" signs around the play equipment in the courtyard.

The GPCA took part in discussions about Woking's Dementia Action Alliance.

This is an initiative to help shops and other organisations to identify changes they can make to become more dementia-friendly

The GPCA organised two litter picks – Spring and Autumn – both were well attended by residents who collected a lot of litter.

The Hall: Another of the ways the GPCA promotes the benefit of residents is managing the Community Hall. It has been back in occupation for two-and-a-half years now and bookings are going well.

Partner Organisations: The GPCA continues to work in co-operation with other groups on the lake and recreation ground – Radio Sailing Woking – Sea Cadets – Woking Hockey Club – Goldsworth Park Rangers Football Club – Dianthus Trading – Goldsworth Park Angling Club; and in the community – Goldsworth Care – Strollers – Lakers and our new neighbours the Woking Hospice, for whom it played host at the Dragon Boat Fun Day.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer explained that in the first full year since the fire there was a surplus of £16,070 for the year. Income from bookings of the hall amounted to £32,250 with a further £17,600 from bar takings.

NATURAL GOLDSWORTH PARK

Facebook and Twitter accounts have been set up. A Botany survey was conducted in August and will be repeated in the spring, and ecological surveys of insects and other wildlife are planned.

The Project's Patron, Martin Slocock, a renowned botanist whose family had owned the land, sadly passed away but his widow, Shirley Slocock, a well-known botanical artist has agreed to be patron to maintain the family's interest in the area.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

Irene Watson was proposed, seconded and elected unanimously as Chair. The rest of the Committee were proposed, seconded and elected unanimously en-bloc.

• *Full minutes of the AGM and past meetings are available on our website* www.ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk

Irene and Ian scoop award

WINNERS – Ian Rickard and wife Irene Watson

GPCA chair Irene Watson and her husband and past Chair Ian Rickard are the winners of the Eric Theobald Award for 2017.

The award is given annually in memory of Knaphill PCSO Eric Theobald, who sadly died in 2005, to the person or persons who have contributed most to the community of Woking over the last 12 months. Nominations are invited from the public and the judging panel includes Eric's widow, Edna, PC Craig Matthews and Cllr John Kingsbury from Woking Council.

Irene and Ian will receive the award on Thursday December 7 in the Woking Council Chamber before the full Council.

Irene said: "We are honoured and delighted to accept the Eric Theobald Award for our contribution to the community. We would like to think that this reflects on everyone who helps with the work of the GPCA."

Goldsworth Park resident and current Angling Club secretary Roger Wescott was a winner of the award in 2009.



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Sythwood's a picture of health!

SYTHWOOD has been given The Healthy Children's Centre award after an inspection by senior health professionals and Surrey County Council.

The programme, which is designed to improve health outcomes of children and their parents from pregnancy through the first five years, is audited by a set of standards which reflect the key health priorities for children in areas including healthy weight, healthy lives, oral health, emotional health and wellbeing, reducing alcohol and substance misuse and increasing coverage rate of childhood immunisations.

In order to achieve the award Sythwood Children's Centre had to adhere to and be able to demonstrate that they meet a comprehensive set of criteria which was achieved through presentations from members of staff and parents/carers coming in to speak about their experiences with the centre.

Presenting the award to staff, Kate Crockett, Public Health Development Worker at Surrey County Council said: "Sythwood did an incredible job of working through and completing the programme. Every step of the way Centre Manager Nicola Norman and the team were amazingly well organised and thorough in all the evidence they collected and the way it was presented. I was so impressed with their presentation of their evidence that I have asked Nicola if I can use their work as an example of good practice for other centres to use. Well done everyone. What an incredible centre Sythwood is and what a lifeline it is for the families who use it!"

Manager Nicola said: "It was a real team effort. Every member of the team contributed to the process and the many parents that gave their time to talk to the panel were amazing. We can't thank them enough. It isn't often that the team have the opportunity to reflect on the impact of support provided through

our many services and one-to-one work with families. It was particularly rewarding to hear such positive feedback from the panel and to become one of Surrey's first Children's Centres to gain the award."

If you would like to find out more about the Centre please visit www.sythwoodchildrenscentre.co.uk



PROUD STAFF – Sythwood Children's Centre award winners

Engage's virtual gift scheme

ARE you tired of novelty socks or toiletries at Christmas? Are you struggling to think what to give your friends and family, or what to say if they ask you what you'd like for yourself?



PRESENT TIME – Helen Taylor (left) and Shelley Tuohy of Engage Woking Schools with gift certificate

The Goldsworth Park-based charity Engage Woking Schools has the solution! It has launched a fund-raising "virtual" Christmas Gift Scheme to help towards its running costs. You can give your friends and loved ones one of its "virtual" gifts, or ask them to buy one for you.

Many local schoolchildren will be familiar with visits to their school by Engage. Its workers and volunteers provide school assemblies and bible storytelling sessions in primary schools.

In secondary schools and Woking College, the charity provides various services such as student mentoring, Christian Union meetings and support for students and teachers. Its services are free of charge to schools and students, so it relies on financial support from churches and individuals, as well as on many volunteers who freely give their time and talents.

Choosing a "virtual" gift – such as paying for a costume or prop for assemblies, a bible used in storytelling, or the cost of a helpful booklet for students moving from primary to secondary school – will help Engage's work. The charity will provide a certificate recognising each gift for the donor to give to a family member, friend or loved one.

Copies of the "virtual" gift leaflet can be collected from Engage's office within St Andrew's Church at Goldsworth Park Centre; or either call them on 01483 762424 or email office@engagewoking.org to request a copy by post.

Full details and a PayPal payment option are also on the charity's website at www.engagewoking.org/christmas

ROYER SLATER

Lions fund-raising successes

WOKING LIONS raised £800 for Woking Hospice's New Build Fund at their Top Golf event. President Roger Chamberlain said: "The dedication of the staff and volunteers at the hospice to those in need is outstanding and we are delighted that over the past two years we have donated over £2,000 to the refurbishment of their new building."

The Lions are running Project Wenceslas again this winter with Woking's Citizen's Advice office. Funds come from donations by

pensioners who divert their winter fuel allowance to help others heat their homes. Last winter £4,500 was raised.

If you would like to donate any or all of your Government allowance this can be done by bank transfer – see our separate form on our website, or by sending your cheque payable to Woking Lions Club and marked on the back CA – Project Wenceslas to Appleby, Bury Lane, Horsell, Woking, GU21 4RT.

www.wokinglions.org.uk

Chance to Link up

LOCAL charity LinkAble, which supports individuals with a broad range of learning disabilities, is keen to hear from any Goldsworth Park residents who know an adult or a child who they think would benefit from their services. Most of LinkAble's activities are provided from The Link in Board School Road. They have a special playroom

with sensory equipment to help stimulate and engage users, an indoor soft play area and an outdoor play area with an accessible climbing frame. Their main hall supports a range of group activities. The charity provides services for three different age groups, children aged 4-11, youth aged 12-17 and adult 18+. During school term time most activities for children and youths are on Saturdays. A full range of weekday courses are available for adults. LinkAble can be contacted on 01483 770037 or via email at info@linkable.org.uk. More information can be found on their website www.linkable.org.uk

Nature's riches on our doorstep

YOU'RE lucky to live around here if you love nature!

The heathlands and commons in our area are acclaimed for their biodiversity and the rare species which inhabit them.

The most important is Chobham Common: the largest National Nature Reserve in the South East of England and one of the finest remaining examples of lowland heath in the world. It's a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA).

We are encouraged to enjoy this special area, but it also needs protection. The ecosystem will be destroyed and wildlife will suffer if too many people use it, and they (or their dogs) wander from the paths into the heath. Rare birds such as the Dartford Warbler and Nightjar are highly sensitive to visitors!

Chobham Water Meadows provide an excellent alternative for a gentle stroll and to exercise animals. The 23.5 hectare site is designated as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG): these areas are created as enhanced and attractive greenspaces that

provide an enjoyable natural environment for recreational use, and so avoid disturbing birds and other wildlife on SPAs such as Chobham Common. As if that wasn't enough acronyms, the eastern part of Chobham Water Meadows is classified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)!

Work completed earlier in the spring of this year made these meadows even more accessible. This former agricultural land beside the Mill Bourne stream was purchased by Surrey Heath Borough Council in spring 2015. It has since undertaken work to improve drainage, tree safety and alleviate potential flooding.

Some of the footpaths have been improved to provide a scenic and peaceful local greenspace with easy circular walks along public footpaths - even for visitors with wheelchairs. Both the purchase and the improvements were at no cost to council tax payers, being funded through developer contributions in return for building houses in other parts of the borough. The site was formally opened in May of this year by the Mayor of Surrey Heath, Cllr. Valerie White.

Visitors are welcome to exercise their dogs, to cycle, to run, or just to amble through this special place taking in the meadow vistas, woodland boundaries and the gentle Mill Bourne. There is parking in the public car park is situated off Chobham High Street, behind the "Chobham Rider" store.

Recommended is a 3.5 mile circular route alongside the Mill Bourne stream eastwards to Emmets Mill (now a private house and near Fairoaks Airport), returning via a footpath to the west of Philpott's Lane and then Sandpit Hall Road. The route is level, with several stiles. It is described in a leaflet which you can download at <https://tinyurl.com/yd26ehqp> The same walk is on the iFootpath site at <https://tinyurl.com/y7242tj8t>

ROYER SLATER



Dear Sir

A bad decision? On visiting the GWP Hospice Shop recently my first reaction was: "Where is everything?" It's now a boutique! The shelves of toys which the children ran to - gone. The china mugs, glasses and bric-a-brac where busy mums could buy an oven glove, kitchen scales etc - gone. The large range of handbags - gone. The baby section, clothes plus maternity clothes - gone.

I hope the cash turnover doesn't drop and that I'm proved wrong.

Diana E Over, Goldsworth Park.

Dear Chair,

This has been a something that has been bugging me for some time and now you have an article titled 'Playground gets an upgrade' is a complete lie! The fence has been replaced that's all! How about the safety and use of the play frames and slide and the condition of the tarmac and replacement of missing equipment? This park is dated, at least 30 years old, from memory, it's unsafe and to be honest a complete let down to Goldsworth Park and to those that travel to also come here! Maybe it's time for the rest of the park to be done! Very much like to hear your opinion on this.

Regards

Emma Keywood

Response from Irene Watson, Chair, GPCA.

Hello Emma,

I have checked with the Council as I was sure that the play equipment is not as old you thought it was. In fact, the playground was fully refurbished over the winter of 2008-9, re-opening in January 2009 so it is eight years old; it is well used so parts do look worn. The slide was not refurbished then but the wooden parts were redone in 2011. I gather that there are a couple of items currently out of use, but Serco is having problems getting the correct parts for the repair.

I was concerned about your comments about safety and asked particularly about this; I was told that the play area is inspected weekly by a qualified play inspector, as well as having an annual independent inspection. If you or anyone else who uses the play area notices any damage or potential safety issue, please contact the Serco helpdesk so that they can assess and respond as appropriate - 01483 775422 or Helpdesk.woking@serco.com

Email us your views at editor@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk



RARE SURREY RESIDENT - the Wolf Spider.

Picture: JANET PACKHAM

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Kate Surey on: 07855 768 850 or 01276 857 450 or:
email: kate.surey@moveitorloseit.co.uk



Our project is flying high!



THE Natural Goldsworth Park project now has a top quality aerial photo of North Meadow.

This was taken by a 'Friend' of NGP, a keen drone enthusiast. All CCA guidelines were observed! We will use this as a benchmark in future years to compare the habitat as our project proceeds. This photograph will also be used for marking each area detailed by the botany survey, undertaken in August.

Who says this area does not have wildlife? In September we had buzzards circling overhead. Photo posted to our Facebook account. Take a look at it. Additionally, during a 15 minute walkabout on North Meadow without going near the lake, in late October, a Surrey Wildlife Trust director, with myself in tow, spotted the following birds: starling (Red List Bird of Conservation Concern), blue tit, great tit, robin, wren, carrion crow, magpie, jay, woodpigeon, goldfinch, great spotted woodpecker, black-headed gull, ring-necked parakeet (Non-native species). Can you do better? Then let me know.

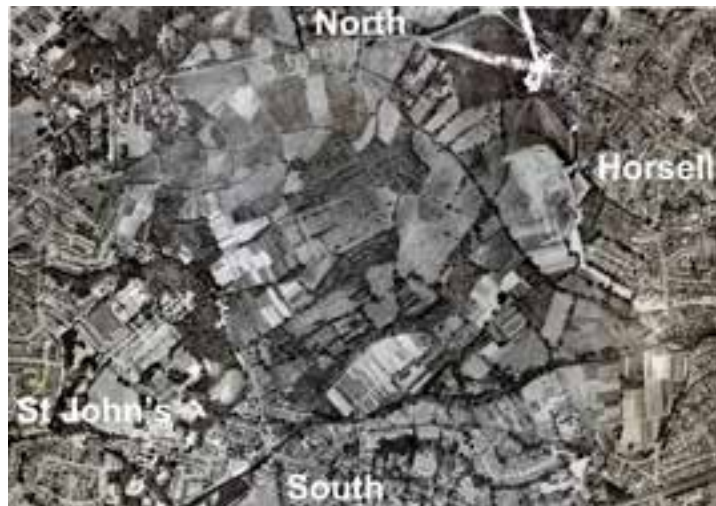
Rachel Woodman, Senior Ranger at the Horsell Common Preservation Society (HCPS) also visited North Meadow in October. Fittingly, a kite was spotted by her overhead. Rachel has offered advice on options for us moving forward, for which I and the GPCA are most grateful. Rachel was very enthusiastic about the relative rarity of our natural habitat site within the confines of an urban development and praised the opportunities that we hope to exploit to improve residents' health and wellbeing as well as conserve the nature. We look forward to staying in touch with Rachel and the HCPS.

Congratulations to NGP Patron Shirley Slocock. In October Shirley had her drawing accepted into the prestigious archive of the Hampton Court Palace Florilegium Society. The archive contains botanical drawings of plants growing in the gardens and glasshouses at the Palace. This is an obligatory annual event for members of the Society. Only those drawings displaying the highest level of excellence

are accepted for inclusion to the archive. Shirley is a Fellow of the Society.

We have social media accounts with Twitter and Facebook. @Natgoldsworth or search for us using Natural Goldsworth.

GERRY SMEESTERS



Have you ever wondered what was here before our estate was built? What did the area look like? The picture above is 'rural' Goldsworth Park to an approximate scale of 1:2500.

Using sophisticated mapping software we are also able to locate individual properties on the modern estate and pinpoint them to their whereabouts within the former landscape that you see in the picture.

Interested in knowing more or perhaps obtaining a print? Email Gerry Smeesters for more information at: projects@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk or contact him on Facebook Natural Goldsworth.

What's on

GPCA Christmas Tree lights songs and carols, Friday December 8, 5.30-6.30pm at the shopping centre. All welcome.

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, Goldsworth Park. Sunday December 3, 9.45am, Christingle – for all ages, especially children.

Sunday December 10, 6.30pm, Light up a Life – Woking Hospice Memorial Service.

Sunday December 17, 7pm, Carols By Candlelight, followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Christmas Eve, 11.15am Advent Service; 4pm, Crib Service – especially for families with children; 11pm, Midnight Service with Holy Communion.

Christmas Day, 10am Christmas Celebration followed at 10.45am by Holy Communion (optional).

GENESIS choral concert, Saturday December 9, 7.30pm at St John's Church, West Byfleet. Gounod's Messe Solennelle plus modern versions of carols and audience carols. Tickets £12. www.genesischorale.org.uk

BISLEY LADIES CHOIR Christmas Concert, Saturday December 16, 4.30pm at Knaphill Methodist Church, The Broadway. A mix of Christmas music and readings. Tickets £10 per adult, £5 for 5yrs -16yrs, under 5 free. Available at the door or ring Brenda on 01483 474911 or Sylvia on 01483 425527. Refreshments free, raffle available. Free parking behind the church off Englefield Road.

www.bisleyladieschoir.uk

EPWORTH CHOIR Family Christmas Concert, Monday December 11, 7.30pm at Christ Church, Woking, conducted by Music Director, Michael Waldron. The choir will be raising funds for yourSanctuary, a local charity, which has been supporting survivors of domestic abuse for the past 40 years. Tickets available on 07771 726 722 or online. www.epworthchoir.org

Action on dementia

GOLDSWORTH PARK'S Dementia Action Alliance is hosting a Dementia Friends session at Brockhill, Clifton Way, on Wednesday December 6 between 3-5pm.

Dementia Friends gives people an understanding of the condition and the small things you can do that make such a difference to this debilitating illness.

All are welcome and refreshments including mince pies will be available.

For more details contact Julie Meme at Woking Council on 01483 743412.

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