

GOLDSWORTH NEWS

March 2020 – Issue 171



GPCA
Goldsworth Park
Community Association CIO
www.ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk

Spring edition



Picture: ROYER SLATER

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GOLDSWORTH NEWS

GOLDSWORTH NEWS is the magazine of the Goldsworth Park Community Association and is distributed free to approximately 5,000 homes and organisations throughout Goldsworth Park and the surrounding area.

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Please submit articles for the next edition
to: editor@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk

GPCA CIO MEETINGS

Meetings of the Community Association
are held at Goldwater Lodge.

2020 meetings, all Wednesday at 7.30pm.
April 22, July 22, AGM October 21.

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.

LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Conservative councillors hold a surgery at
Costa's in the shopping centre on the first
Saturday of the month from 9.30 to 10.30am.
Councillors: Ann-Marie Barker WBC
and James Sanderson WBC (Lib Dem).
Chitra Rana WBC, Saj Hussain SCC & WBC
and Colin Kemp SCC & WBC (Conservative).

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Please read and recycle

Views from the Chair

ON behalf of the residents of Goldsworth Park, I wrote to Jonathan Lord, our MP, seeking his support to ensure that the Walk-in Centre at Woking Community Hospital is replaced by an Urgent Treatment Centre, and not closed in the restructuring of local facilities.

I am pleased to say that he replied, saying: "The Walk-in Centre provides a very valuable local service and I think that it is vital that we have such a medical facility in Woking."

"I have already made good representations on this matter to the North West Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group and will be making further representations over coming weeks."

If you are not aware of the consultations on the proposed changes, I urge you look it up at <https://www.nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/consultation-and-engagement/the-big-picture> or I would be happy to provide you with some information. I also urge you to make your views known at nwscg.bigpictureprogramme@nhs.net

At the first general (public) meeting of the GPCA Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), we discussed what shape the meetings should take now that we are a new organisation. An idea that was popular was having talks on issues of local interest or concern and local history, nature in the Park, crime prevention, cyber security and fraud were all suggested.

I am pleased to say that Roger Westcott, who writes the From the Lakeside column, has offered to give an illustrated talk on the lake and the developments over the past 10 years, at our next meeting on Wednesday, April 22 at 7.30pm in the Community Hall. Please come along. If you have any ideas for talks that you would come to hear, please let me know.

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

Irene Watson, GPCA Chair



@ourgpca



facebook.com/goldsworth.park

Join the new GPCA

SINCE its inception in 1983, the GPCA has always worked on the basis that all residents were members simply by virtue of living in Goldsworth Park. However, now that we are a CIO, we are required to have a membership register available for inspection.

We are now inviting residents to sign up as members of the new GPCA CIO and be recorded on the register. Those who do will continue to get invitations to meetings, minutes, the annual report and accounts for the AGM plus relevant information and, more importantly, be able to vote for the Trustees, and on issues such as approving any changes to the Constitution and winding up the Charity.

Those who don't will soon cease to get personal invitations, etc., so please sign up. If you have any questions, try the FAQs below or email: chair@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk

To apply for membership, all you need to do is send a request giving your name, email and postal addresses and telephone number(s) to chair@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk or to Chair, GPCA CIO, 37 Willowmead Close, Woking GU21 3DN.

FAQs

1 What am I committing to by becoming a member?

By applying for membership, both individual and corporate members confirm that they will "exercise their powers in the way they decide in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the CIO."

2 What will it cost?

Although the Constitution says that members may be asked to pay reasonable membership fees, the Trustees decided not to ask for membership fees at present.

3 Can I leave the GPCA CIO?

Membership will come to an end if the member resigns, moves away, dies or owes money to the CIO, or if the Trustees decide that ending membership is in the CIO's best interests.

4 What if I represent an organisation in Goldsworth Park?

Organisations which operate within Goldsworth Park with whom the GPCA CIO cooperates or supports or which support the GPCA CIO can be Corporate Members. Email chair@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk for information on how to apply.

5 What happens to the information I give you?

The GPCA CIO has a Privacy and Data Protection Policy Statement which describes how we protect your information; it can be viewed on our website.

IRENE WATSON, Chair, GPCA CIO

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GPCA public meeting, January 22

CHAIR Irene Watson welcomed everyone to the first general meeting of the newly registered GPCA Charitable Incorporated Organisation at Goldwater Lodge on Wednesday January 22.

Irene said it was an ideal time to rethink the way the meetings are run. In the past meetings were formal with committee members giving reports and answering questions. General meetings are for residents so the CIO trustees would like to hear how they would like the meetings to go.

Do residents want regular reports from trustees or would they be happy to wait until the AGM?

Would residents prefer to start meetings with questions? These could be sent in advance.

Would residents like to have a speaker from time to time on a topic of local interest?

The general feeling of those present was that talks would be welcome. A range of suggestions was put forward including the Surrey Bat Group, the Basingstoke Canal Society, the Surrey Police and the Fire and Rescue Service.

• Matters Arising/Outstanding

Irene proposed that instead of Matters Arising there should be Matters Outstanding on the agenda to ensure that questions which were not answered immediately were not forgotten.

Matters outstanding raised were the rat population around the lake. Fishing bailiff Roger Westcott reported that numbers were low at the moment but will increase in the summer.

The steep slope into the shopping centre car park that is difficult for wheelchair users to negotiate. A meeting of the managing agents and Hannah Rees, Woking Council's neighbourhood officer, is planned to discuss the issue.

Dogs not on leads or out of control. Hannah reported that a meeting of council officials to discuss the problem has been arranged.

The boat ramp on the lake. Gary Rimay-Muranyi of Dianthus Trading said the delay in completion was due to unfinished steel work. A welder had now been engaged to finish the work.

• Community Matters

Noise nuisance from aircraft flying in to Farnborough. Councillors present said they would look into why Woking was not represented in the consultative groups relating to aircraft noise.

Waste collection problems. Cllr Ann-Marie Barker reported that Woking Council's Oversight and Scrutiny Committee had discussed the issue with the contractors and would be monitoring performance.

Lifebelts around the lake. Some of the locations had become overgrown. Roger Westcott and Hannah Rees would review the locations.

• Chair's Report

Irene reminded the meeting that the GPCA achieved CIO status on October 4 2019. The new constitution can be seen on the Association's website.

The main issue at the moment is membership — the Charity Commission requires all Association CIO's to have a membership register so the GPCA is asking residents to sign up as members.

Full details on applying for membership and membership categories are available on Page 3 of this magazine.

• Natural Goldsworth Park

There has been a meeting with Thames Water about the woodland path and details of its exact route are to be confirmed. If the path is not constructed before bird-nesting time, it will have to be postponed until September.

A good start has been made on the wildflower meadow with funding from Surrey County Council.

• The Lake

Roger Westcott reported that the cormorants continue to be a problem as they have severely depleted fish stocks and this, in turn, could affect some of the resident birds which rely on small fish, such as heron and great crested grebe. The fish refuges which help to protect the fish from the cormorants may be left in place during the summer.

Tree work, involving felling a few trees, coppicing or removing dangerous branches from others was taking place. The affected trees are dead, dying or diseased.

• Social Secretary

The GPCA is organising a children's Easter Treasure Hunt on Saturday, April 4, 2pm to 5pm, on the North Meadow.

Cathy Salmon reported that the GPCA is also planning to hold a fun day in conjunction with Dianthus on Saturday September 12 which will be a showcase for other organisations such as the Scouts, Guides, Brownies, etc.

• Any other business

A question was raised about the future of Lakers Youth Centre. The Chair answered that Surrey CC are consulting residents on the use of youth facilities across the county. A public meeting had been arranged for March 21 at the Woking Youth Arts Centre in Knaphill to include Lakers.

Full minutes of the meeting are available on our website www.ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk/about/meeting-minutes

It's tidy-up time again!

IT'S time to give the Park a spring clean!

Come and join us on Saturday March 28 for another community litter pick — you are all welcome. Our last pick in October was especially popular with children — accompanied by an adult, of course!

We will be meeting at the side of Goldwater Lodge that faces the climbing walls at 2pm. Our own personalised high-viz vests and litter pickers will be provided. Bring gardening gloves and wear sturdy shoes.

We all like to see a clean and tidy Park so why not adopt an area close to home to keep litter free — it seems to be a welcome growing trend.

Failing that, if there are any areas that need a clean-up let us know and we will do our best on the day to come picking!

Email: chair@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk



CARING KIDS — children are keen to keep our estate litter free

Next GPCA meeting Wednesday April 22, 7.30pm, Goldwater Lodge

A personal view

Royer Slater



SPRING is in the air! Here in Goldsworth Park, plants are responding to the increases in light and warmth. Buds are bursting open. Spring flowers are blooming. Trees are resplendent with green leaves and blossom.

Goldsworth Park was designed as a garden estate with extensive landscaping and tree planting during its development. Within our "big garden" at North Meadow, the Natural Goldsworth Park project is creating an area where wildlife and wild plants can thrive.

Re-wilding projects such as this are an important and essential way of helping ensure a healthy natural environment. It's vital to reversing the massive loss of nature during modern times, as well as to combating climate change and achieving net zero carbon emissions.

At the time of writing, the Government's landmark Environment Bill is making its way through Parliament. The first of its kind for over 20 years, the Bill will establish a new structure for managing the environment and will aim to strengthen environmental protections to reverse nature's decline.

With one in seven species in the UK now at risk of extinction and 58 per cent of species in decline, The Wildlife Trusts (of which Surrey Wildlife Trust is a member) have long called for ambitious new laws to allow nature to recover.

The Trusts stress that nature reserves alone are not enough for wildlife's recovery. The natural world is becoming more fragmented and desperately needs reconnecting to create more space for wildlife to recover.

The Environment Bill recognises this by committing to create local nature recovery strategies to support a Nature Recovery Network. By identifying areas which show where action needs to be taken so that nature can recover, we can help provide enough space for wildlife and greatly increase nature's capacity to tackle climate change.

Of course we don't know yet what this might mean for our region. However, it's just what Sir David Attenborough has been calling for. In a brief video, he said: "A wildlife-rich natural world is vital for our wellbeing and survival. We need wild places to thrive. Yet many of our systems and laws have failed the natural world. Nature urgently needs our help to recover — and it can be done. By joining up wild places and creating more across the UK we would improve our lives and help nature to flourish."

We're lucky to have a "wilder" area of Goldsworth Park and to be surrounded by large commons and woodlands where wild creatures and plants can thrive. It's essential they are retained and expanded upon, against demands to find space for housing and industry. It's important too that we create and maintain wildlife corridors to enable wildlife to travel between them. Let's enjoy, cherish, sustain and swell Surrey's "wild" spaces.

• You can see Sir David Attenborough's video at <https://youtu.be/7wZro6-4p94>



GREEN OASIS — Goldsworth Park is a garden estate

THAMES WATER report good progress on planning for the woodland path on their land to the north east of the lake, writes GERRY SMEESTERS.

Details of start dates and a plan of the route will be posted when available on both GPCA and NGP social media and at www.ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk Work will have to be deferred if it conflicts with the bird breeding season.

NGP is planning a photographic competition with entries to be judged later in the year. You can start now taking and submitting pictures in the following categories: nature, seasonal (weather or views etc.), events, living. You may interpret the categories liberally. Pictures must be taken on Goldsworth Park. Get snapping. You might have a winning shot! Send entries to the email address below.

Wildflowers have been sown in one area and we anticipate further activity on another plot on North Meadow in the near future.

Please contact me if you would like to spend an hour or so participating in North Meadow butterfly sightings. I would also welcome someone to help spot dragonflies around the lake this year, as little has been recorded. This might best suit someone who fishes or takes regular walks. Let me know if you are interested.

NGP will once again participate in the 2020 Horsell Garden Safari charity event on June 13 and 14. More information: www.opengardens.co.uk (search for Horsell).

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Our upside down church!

"GOLDSWORTH PARK'S church was built upside down!"

That's just one comment I've heard during the three decades since St Andrew's opened the doors of its new building, writes ROYER SLATER.

It's a fair comment: the main worship area occupies the whole of the upper of its two stories, while at ground level are the lounge and kitchen known as Andy's Community Café plus a chapel, crèche, offices and other facilities. There must be many who are not even aware there is an "upstairs"!

Let's step inside. Sunday worship and special services such as weddings and funerals are held in the beautiful upstairs space, reached by stairs at either side and a lift at the car park end. The seating is movable and arranged for services in a semi-circle, rising in tiers towards the back. So, unlike traditional aisled churches, no one is far from the front and everyone can see and hear what's happening – ideal for weddings!

The church was built as it is to satisfy the wishes of church members – who had been meeting in Beaufort School – for their new church building to be used seven days a week.

The estate's developers, Ideal Homes, donated space for the church at the heart of the Goldsworth Park community, between the shops and Health Centre. But it was rather small and awkwardly shaped.

The church's architect, Robert Potter, designed the building you see now, with two levels to accommodate everything the church members asked for. The chapel, offices, and the

coffee lounge with its well-equipped kitchen are on the ground floor to welcome people during the week. Upstairs is the large but comfortable area used for all the main services.

The semi-circular seating upstairs reflects the intimacy early worshippers had enjoyed on Sundays in the Beaufort School hall, where they were seated around three sides of a square. It's fully carpeted, the seats are comfortably upholstered and there's a super-duper sound system with a deaf aid loop, as well as twin overhead projectors to display words and pictures throughout services.

There are other interesting aspects of the building's design. One reflects the fact that the church is dedicated to the first disciple to be called by Jesus, St Andrew, who was a fisherman. So the dais (or raised area) upstairs, which you face during services, is pointed like the prow of a ship.

Above you, the roof has three steeply sloping sides towards the dais end, reflecting the tents used by worshippers in biblical times. The apostle Paul was a tentmaker: he supported himself by making tents while preaching Jesus's Gospel.

The whole effect is of intimacy even when the church is full. This reinforces the sense that membership of St Andrew's is to be one of a church family, where people know, love and support each other. But that love is not exclusive: welcoming newcomers and visitors, and supporting those in need, are key parts of the St Andrew's philosophy, whether in Andy's Café during the week or at Sunday services.

If you've never seen inside St Andrew's Church and would like a tour, contact the church office Monday to Thursdays, 9.30am to 1.30pm on 01483 723879.

In addition, I am usually available to chat to Goldsworth News readers in Andy's Café on Thursday afternoons during school terms, from midday until 2pm, and can arrange a quick tour.



TYING THE KNOT — a wedding at St Andrew's

WE'VE got something EGGS-tra special planned for Saturday April 4 — the GPCA Easter Treasure Hunt.

The Easter bunny will be hiding some treasure around North Meadow which can be exchanged for Easter themed goodies.

The Treasure Hunt is open to children up to age 12 and we are all meeting behind the playground by the lake at 2pm.

Children must be accompanied by an adult and the entry fee is £3 per child.

Tea, coffee and cakes will be available. If you would like to help by donating a cake or other nibbles, please contact Celia at secretary@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk

The event will run until 5pm and a first-aider will be in attendance.

The Treasure Hunt is the first event organised by the newly-formed GPCA Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The GPCA exists to promote the interests of all residents, so please bring your children along to make our event a big success. We look forward to seeing you there.

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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.



SPRING often seems a long way off with our recent stormy weather but the wonders the season brings are there if you know where to look.

For example, our resident pair of great crested grebe have been sitting on eggs for some time and coots and moorhens have also been busy building nests.

One moorhen has made good use of one of the fish refuges as a platform to build on. Good thinking, I would say, being well away from the bank and predators such as foxes which are often seen skulking round the lake after dark by night anglers.

With the ground having a good soaking after the February storms, it won't be long before thousands of frogs and toads will be making their annual journey to the lake to spawn. This should coincide with, as the water warms, the early fish spawners such as pike coming into the margins to lay their eggs among reeds and fallen branches.

As you walk round the lake you will see a few of the willow trees have been cut back by tree surgeons on behalf of Woking Council. The trees had become weak and unstable, and although looking rather odd at the moment with barren arms, they will soon produce new healthy growth making for stronger trees in the future.

Some of the cut branches have been

placed into the water close to the bank creating habitat for fish to use and for birds to nest. The rest of the branches were turned into chippings that are being used to top-dress the angling platforms to recycle as much as we can on site. There are still a few more trees in need of attention but they will have to wait until next winter when less disruption will be caused to wildlife and trees are dormant.

Towards the end of March it will be time to put new barley bales in the lake. We do this each spring to help cut down on algal blooms which can be a problem when the water warms. As a bonus birds love using them for nesting material and fish lay their eggs on the undersides. We are looking to put in about 40 bales, kindly funded by Woking Council.

In the past I have mentioned our concerns on the numbers of fish lost due to cormorant predation. Now that we have fish refuges and felled branches in the lake this will, we hope, go a long way in saving the lives of many fish, giving the lake a fighting chance to get back to its former glory.

With that in mind the fishing club, with help and advice from the Environment Agency, have transferred over 10,000 small roach, rudd, perch and bream from one of

our ponds in Brookwood to the lake to aid the stock recovery. The angling club will be monitoring the situation and we hope our efforts will be rewarded. I will keep you updated through this column.



MADE SAFE — one of the pollarded willows on the lake bank

New crossing makes it safer for shoppers

IT'S now a lot safer coming to or leaving the shopping centre via Bampton Way after the completion of a redesigned crossing point. The central island has been widened and there is tactile paving to aid the visually impaired on both sides of the road and on the island itself.

Budget constraints held up the project for four years but efforts from local councillors managed to secure the funding.



Brownies looking for volunteers

GOLDSWORTH PARK Rainbows, Brownies and Guides need volunteers to help run their units that meet at the Generation Centre.

District Commissioner Hannah Cole said: "We are looking for volunteers over 18 to get creative, have fun and help lead a group for girls on a weekly basis during school term times.

"As a volunteer you would work alongside other adults who have led the group for many years but would be happy to receive fresh ideas and work together to ensure the girls have the best time.

"We urgently need volunteers on a Monday between 6 and 7.30pm, working with girls aged seven to 10 but do have openings for other ages and groups on different days."

Contact Hannah at goldsworthparkguiding@hotmail.com



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Park's rich heritage

THE Goldsworth Park estate is built over much of what was the Slocock Nursery, one of the largest in the UK, writes GERRY SMEESTERS.

When the Royal Horticultural Society magazine *The Garden* recently ran a feature on their new propagation and nursery facilities at Wisley, explaining how they also sent a small group of staff to commercial nurseries in Holland, it reminded me about the early years of Walter C Slocock and the importance of propagation to a nursery.

Fifteen year old apprentice Walter started at Waterer's Knap Hill Nursery in 1869. He proved able at many facets of nursery management, including propagation skills. Subsequently, he joined Azalea specialists Frasers at Leyton, and then Turners of Slough. In 1876 he set off for Europe. Walter joined the famous Van Houtte's Nursery in Ghent, Belgium. Its owner, Louis Van Houtte, had founded the Belgian equivalent of our RHS in 1830.

Walter, armed with seven years of confidence and detailed notes, returned to England in 1877 and leased the Goldsworth site. Goldsworth already had a recorded tradition of nursery activity, as the following illustrates: *The Gardener's Magazine*, May 1826, reported a "recently erected propagating house with a span roof and hollow walls" at Goldsworth 'Old' Nursery, run by Robert Donald—who went on to supply landscaping and planting at the new Brookwood Cemetery in 1852.

Propagation facilities would have been paramount in Walter's vision enabling his nursery to be self-sufficient. During the Slocock

era facilities for propagation, such as greenhouses and cold frames, were located behind Goldsworth House. This area of land, known as Home Nursery, ran from St John's Road northwards up to 'Below Greenhouses', a field system backing onto the Basingstoke Canal.

The Home Nursery included the propagation structures but also included the Slocock family home, nursery admin, stables, 'sheds', water tanks, workshops, and more. Today it is occupied by parts of Badgers, Colyton and Abingdon Closes and Inglewood residential areas.

The propagation team expanded as the business grew. Chief Propagator Edwin Faggetter (1834-1919) performed his role for many years at Slocock's. Born in Carthouse Lane, he had formerly worked at Knap Hill Nursery. Edwin was once asked which of a number of new hybrids he thought was best. He revealed his favourite specimen. Thus the hybrid, still available, was named in his honour, as Faggetter's Favourite.

Major successes in propagation continued for Slocock's with the nursery excelling at hybridisation of rhododendrons and azaleas, winning numerous RHS awards until its final closure (at Knap Hill) in the early 2000's.

Acknowledgements: Frederick Street: Walter C Slocock Ltd, Goldsworth Nursery Bi-Centenary 1760-1960; Millais Nurseries: Notes on 'R.Faggetter's Favourite'; EJ Willson: Nurserymen to the World — The Nursery Gardens of Woking and North-West Surrey and plants introduced by them; Surrey History Centre.

Beaufort's £3m pool target

BEAUFORT PRIMARY SCHOOL is launching an appeal to raise £3million to fund construction of a swimming pool and gym at their Kirkland Avenue site.

In November last year the school obtained planning permission to build a 25x9metre full-size pool with a small gym.

Beaufort see the pool as providing a much-needed resource for their own pupils, other schools and groups, swimming clubs and local families.

The pool, which will be eco-friendly and suitable for all users, will be situated on the boundary of the school site, allowing for easy access while maintaining the safety of pupils.

Head teacher Mrs Emily Ferris said: "It has long been a dream of the school to have its own swimming pool. The pool will be used to teach all our children to swim and also be open for community use when the school is closed. Now, we have the exciting task of raising £3million for the project and making our dream a reality.

"Over the years, Beaufort has struggled to teach its children to swim. With school numbers growing, we are finding it increasingly difficult to find pool space, and time to squeeze in swimming lessons.

"Across the country, children learn to swim in school pools and swim regularly at school from the age of four. I want this opportunity for all the children at Beaufort and other schools which may use our facilities, many of whom live close to the lake and the canal.

"Having a pool on site would ensure that every child at our school would have the opportunity to become a competent swimmer, a skill which could, one day, save their life."

The school has formed a pool project board and will shortly be starting up a fundraising committee. In the meantime, it is looking for anyone with fundraising or grant application experience to add to its directory of volunteers.

A spokesperson for the project board said: "We are very keen to use any contacts your readers may have within their workplaces or the workplaces of family and friends who might be able to help us with sponsorship or a donation."

Contact: poolproject@beaufort.surrey.sch.uk



ARTISTS IMPRESSION — how the pool will look

Cars torched in Claydon Rd

ONE car was destroyed and three others severely damaged in a suspected arson attack in Claydon Road.

The Surrey Fire and Rescue Service were called to the incident in the early hours of Sunday February 2.

A spokesman for Surrey Police said: "As fire officers at the scene suspected arson, police attended later that day to carry out house to house enquiries and view CCTV and video doorbell footage, but frustratingly there were no investigative leads.

"The case is no longer being actively investigated, but we are awaiting a report from the Surrey Fire and Rescue service. Anyone who saw or heard anything that evening that may be relevant, or has any information about the cause of the fire, is asked to contact Surrey Police on 101, reference PR/45200013110. You can also share information, anonymously, with the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."

Natural Goldsworth Park Project Manager Gerry Smeesters, a Claydon Road resident, raised the alarm. He said: "A fire tender arrived within 10 minutes of my 999 call, and remained for just over an hour.

"There was a moderate breeze that drove the flames, but despite constant rain, in the 10 minutes that passed after I logged the 999 call two other cars were engulfed and a fourth was in imminent danger. If the wind had been in the opposite direction

the garage block or residential properties would have been threatened."

The off road parking area is similar to many others found on Goldsworth Park, but it is not visible to the many residents who use it.

One of the cars had been left in the parking spaces for over three weeks and was untaxed. Residents had reported it to Woking Council.



DESTROYED — the burned out vehicles

Bin collectors pledge improvement

GOLDSWORTH PARK Councillors Chitra Rana and James Sanderson, both members of Woking's Oversight and Scrutiny Committee, heard a waste and recycling update from Joint Waste Solutions (JWS) at the council offices.

Many Park residents had complained to collection contractors AMEY and on social media about missed bin collections, a problem which worsened in the late autumn.

Richard Bisset, JWS head of operations for Surrey Heath and Woking admitted there had been problems with collections due to staff sickness at AMEY and problems with vehicles.

Sarah Beck, JWS operations manager for the west, told the committee that AMEY's annual improvement plan had been implemented which included a recruitment drive to employ 10

per cent more staff and a management restructure which would lead to more accountability. There would also be a new, improved approach to vehicle maintenance and servicing.

Some green bin collections had been impacted by subscription and invoicing problems but these issues had been addressed.

JWS emphasised the need to go to their website to complete a complaint form rather than making a post on social media. The website is being made more user friendly.

Goldsworth Park's other councillor, Ann-Marie Barker was also at the meeting and would like to hear from any residents who are still having collection problems. She can be contacted at cllrannmarie.barker@woking.gov.uk

<https://www.jointwastesolutions.org/contact-us/>

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APPROVED CONTRACTOR DOMESTIC INSTALLER

Tax increases announced

SURREY has announced a council tax rise of 1.9 per cent for 2020-21, plus a further increase of 2 per cent for adult social care. Woking has set an increase of 2.08 per cent. The county's rise will help deliver a capital programme of more than £700million of new investment over the next five years.

The capital programme will fund highways improvement, Surrey-wide flood defences, new school places, an uplift in education provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities, green energy schemes and extra care homes for the elderly.

Council leader Tim Oliver said: "This budget looks to invest hundreds of millions of pounds over the next five years to make Surrey an even better place — a County that is fit for the future, ambitious, innovative, and a place where people and businesses can thrive."

Woking's increase means that those living in a Band D property will pay £245.46, an increase of £5 per year, for services such as refuse collections, environmental maintenance, planning services and leisure facilities.

Cllr David Bittleston, Leader of Woking Council, said: "For 2020/21 we are yet again able to agree a modest council tax increase, yet maintain services for local people, and in many areas, increase them."

Woking's biggest project

WOKING councillors have approved the next stage of a £115million highways enhancement scheme, which will be the town's biggest infrastructure project to date.

Acceptance of a £95million grant, offered by the Government and administered by Homes England, paves the way for the Council to complete the acquisition of the Triangle site on the south side of the town, deliver the significant improvements to the town centre's road network and widen the outdated Victoria Arch bridge by 2024.

The decision to accept the Housing Infrastructure Fund grant is the first step towards determining official working arrangements with government agency, Homes England, and triggers the start of detailed negotiations to finalise the grant's conditions and contract.

The Council's successful bid sets out proposals to alleviate long-term congestion issues within the town centre, future proof the highways and rail network, and unlock 13 brownfield sites for much needed town centre housing, of which over 40 per cent would be affordable.

WHAT'S ON

WOKING PARK BOWLS CLUB is holding an open day on Saturday April 18 between 10.30am and 12.30pm. There is no need to book, but you will need flat shoes or trainers.

The club is situated in Woking Park and welcome both experienced and novice players. As a follow-up a four week coaching course will be held on Saturday mornings at 10.30 on April 25, May 2, 9 and 16. For more details see www.wokingparkbowlsclub.hitssports.com or call Carole on 07720 471318.

WOKING LADIES CHOIR will be performing their Spring Concert on Saturday March 28, 7.30pm, at Knaphill Methodist Church, The Broadway, GU21 2DR.

A varied programme will include pieces exploring home, foreign lands and travelling. Including 'Home' from Beauty and the Beast, 'Va Pensiero' a hugely popular operatic piece, 'Take me home, country roads' and many more contemporary and familiar pieces.

Adults £12, children 5-16 £6. Pre-order by calling 07957 593534 or at thehunties@virginmedia.com, [facebook.com/wokingladieschoir](https://www.facebook.com/wokingladieschoir) or wokingladieschoir.org.uk

WOKING CHORAL SOCIETY will perform Rossini's Petite Messe Solennelle, with Musical Director Richard Bannan conducting, at the HG Wells Centre on Saturday March 14 at 7.30pm.

Internationally acclaimed soloists, Miriam Allan (Soprano), Carris Jones (Mezzo-soprano), Peter Davoren (Tenor) and Robert Rice (Baritone) will be joined by award-winning pianists William Vann and Libby Burgess, alongside Edward Dean (Harmonium), to perform the work in its original 1863 instrumentation.

Tickets £18, parties of 10 or more £17, students in full time education £5, children under 16 free, at www.wokingchoral.org.uk or obtained from the Lightbox, or Christ Church Shop, Town Square or Brittons Music, 13 The Broadway, Woodham, New Haw KT15 3EU. www.wokingchoral.org.uk

Council leader David Bittleston said: "This is infrastructure enhancement on a grand scale! It's a once in a lifetime offer which would not be financially viable without the £95million grant and support of Surrey County Council and Network Rail."

Party in the Park applications

APPLICATION lists are now open for Party in the Park 2020, for performers, artists, entertainers, traders and food vendors to be part of this year's event in Woking Park on Saturday July 4.

Now in its ninth year, the free-to-attend, summertime festival is one of the largest of its kind in the South East. Attracting thousands of people from across the county and beyond, the event features a packed programme of free cultural entertainment.

New for 2020 is Screen on the Green, providing two free outdoor cinema experiences on Friday and Saturday July 3 and 4, both with a range of food and refreshment stalls. Interested applicants can apply online via the Celebrate Woking website: www.celebratewoking.info/partyinthepark

Support for young carers

WOKING, assisted by Surrey, the NHS and Action for Carers, has signed up to the Young Carers Pledge to identify and help support young carers living in the borough.

There are over 14,000 young carers in Surrey — a young carer is anyone under the age of 18 who cares for someone with a physical or long-term illness. This may be a physical disability, frailty due to old age, a learning disability like autism, a mental problem like depression, or a drug or alcohol problem.

For more information contact Julie Mémé, Woking's Home Independence Manager, on 01483 743412 or email julie.meme@woking.gov.uk

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Have your say on Lakers

GOLDSWORTH PARK residents can have a say on the future of the Lakers Youth Centre that has been closed since being damaged by fire in January 2018.

Surrey County Council, which wants to make better use of existing youth centres, is consulting on proposals that would allow voluntary, community and faith organisations wanting to work with young people to have access to buildings such as Lakers for free or at minimal cost.

Lakers is still awaiting repair after the fire damage and not likely to be back in use any time soon, but SCC would like to hear your views on possible use. These can be submitted online at the council website and there is a public drop in meeting to discuss the future use of Lakers and the Woking Youth Arts Centre at the WYAC, Trinity Road, Knaphill, GU21 2SY on March 20 at 6.30pm.

The GPCA would prefer a meeting at Goldwater Lodge to discuss Lakers only and has asked Surrey Councillor Saj Hussain to look into this.

Currently many of Surrey's youth centres are only used a few hours a week. The council's proposals will ensure that the youth centres are being used consistently to their full potential.

They also provide an opportunity in some cases for a more comprehensive and joined up service, with organisations working together out of one building and sharing good practice to meet the needs of the young people in the community.

Cllr Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families, said: "We know our existing youth centres are not being used fully. It's about making use of our assets and the experts in the community, voluntary and faith sector to bring these buildings alive again."

The consultation, which runs until the end of April, asks if the council should continue to deliver universal open access youth work and how it could enable the voluntary, community and faith sector to use the youth centres at little or no cost.

Open access youth work is often provided in youth centres and is open to all young people without referral or a specific need. Whilst there is no statutory duty for the council to continue to provide open access universal youth work, the youth centres themselves are a valued community asset and can play a larger role in achieving the Community Vision for 2030 that includes community participation as one of the priorities.

These proposals are intended to maximise the potential of the existing youth centres whilst recognising this needs to be achieved within the available existing resources. The consultation is not proposing any budget reductions but the council want to use existing resources more effectively and enable youth centres to be a vibrant community asset.

Full details are available at: <https://www.surreysays.co.uk/csf/universal-youth-work-proposal/>

Goldsworth Care's 10k landmark

WHEN Eileen Gorman called Goldsworth Care's helpline to arrange a lift to Frimley Park Hospital for an appointment she didn't expect special treatment.

But her request was Goldsworth Care's 10,000th and to mark this milestone Eileen was presented with a card and bouquet of flowers by Secretary Pat Moore and Mike Griffiths, Goldsworth Care's Chair.

Goldsworth Care, members of Woking's Good Neighbour Scheme, are Park people who have been providing practical help to residents since 2001.

They assist with transport to the doctor, the hospital or other appointments, help with shopping, household odd jobs or form filling or simply providing a spot of company.

If you need help with attending appointments or are able to be a volunteer, please call 07751 801587 or see <https://www.wokinggoodneighbours.com/>



HELPING HAND — Eileen Gorman (centre) with Goldsworth Care Chair Mike Griffiths and Secretary Pat Moore



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