

GOLDSWORTH NEWS

December 2020 – Issue 174

Inside:

- AGM report – p4
- Woodland walk – p5
- Royer's view – p6

Winter edition

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GOLDSWORTH NEWS

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

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to: editor@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk

GPCA CIO MEETINGS

Meetings to be announced subject to pandemic restrictions. Membership of the GPCA is required to receive details of forthcoming meetings. Details of how to join are on this page.

LOCAL COUNCILLORS

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

THE GPCA has been trying to keep up some of our activities and traditions despite the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Looking back over the past few months, we were able to do a litter pick and plant wildflower seeds on North Meadow in much the way we had before.

I attended a very different Remembrance Sunday service, keeping the two-minute silence at 11am and laying a wreath, but without the children from the uniformed organisations in attendance with their flags and wreaths.

By the time you read this, I hope that another tradition, the Christmas tree in the shopping centre courtyard, will be cheering up people while they queue outside Waitrose. The tree is a joint enterprise between the GPCA, St Andrew's Church, GP Angling Club, the shops and the pub and we are grateful for all the contributions we receive. Again, it was not the same as previous years since we could not sing carols round the tree when the lights were switched on.

I think it is important to try to maintain these traditions, marking important events in the calendar, while we look forward to a return to some form of normality. The recent news of vaccines gives us all hope for next year.

It only remains for me to wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas, however different from Christmases past, and to hope that the new year will bring us all good news.

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



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Sign up to the new GPCA (it's free!)

THE GPCA switched its status to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in October last year and one of the Charity Commission requirements is that we keep a membership register.

So 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 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.

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 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.



GPCA CIO's first AGM

THE new GPCA CIO held its first AGM on October 21, electronically, via Zoom.

Chair Irene Watson explained that being a newly-formed charity there were no minutes to approve and that the old GPCA charity was dissolved on September 30, 2020.

The CIO's accounts and trustees report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

Irene went on to say that due to the pandemic the Goldsworth News magazine's summer and autumn editions had been published only online, but was expected to revert to a printed edition in December. Editor George Binyon and advertising manager Christina Candey confirmed this was the plan.

The GPCA Facebook group was growing by the week and now had 780 members and was a good way to communicate with residents.

Irene went on to report that April's public meeting was cancelled but that July's electronic meeting was well attended.

Community matters

The spring community litter pick was cancelled but September's pick went ahead and was well attended. It was hoped to organise three picks in 2021. Irene said that picking sticks and high-viz vests were available for members to borrow at any time.

The Easter treasure hunt was cancelled at the last minute due to the lockdown and planning for an autumn event was abandoned. It is hoped to hold social events next year.

Wildflowers planted on North Meadow as part of the Natural Goldsworth Park project had bloomed successfully and more seeds had recently been sown by volunteers. Contractors for Thames Water had completed the £10,000 woodland walk and there is a five-year maintenance plan to further open up the woods.

Irene told the meeting that the new charity was required to keep a membership register. Those on the register would have the right to vote on GPCA issues such as the election of trustees.

Treasurer's report

GPCA Treasurer Tina Hartley reported that all the funds had been transferred from the old charity. Cash assets stood at £27,875 and as required by the Charity Commission the trustees would be developing a policy on the use of the funds.

Election of trustee

Under the GPCA constitution two trustees are required to retire in rotation each year. George Binyon and Gerry Smeesters agreed to step down. Gerry did not stand for re-election. George's election was proposed by Cllr Saj Hussain and seconded by Christina Candey and he was elected by a unanimous vote.

Chair Irene said there were always vacancies for volunteers to help with the running of the GPCA and opportunities existed for the appointment of more trustees.

Before moving on to any other business Irene thanked all those who had given up their time for the benefit of the GPCA.

Other business

Irene said that after consultation, residents were in favour of using the £7,000 available from the Community Infrastructure Levy for benches and picnic tables in the recreation area. The meeting agreed to go ahead with the application which will be made by Goldsworth Park's ward councillors to Woking Council's Joint Committee.

Funds would also be available from Surrey County Council's £100million five-year community fund. The GPCA would look at possible projects after consultation.

Cllr Hussain asked if any members would be interested in taking part in a speed watch. This would involve a short training course in Guildford. Anyone interested should contact him or the GPCA Chair.

Woking Council's Director of Neighbourhood Services, Geoff McManus, reported that there had been 80 applications for the vacant Goldsworth Park Neighbourhood Officer post and an offer had been made to the successful applicant.

The full minutes of this meeting, the trustees report and GPCA accounts are available to view on our website: www.ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk

Bid approved for rec area tables

WOKING COUNCIL has approved payment of £6,897 from its Community Infrastructure Levy fund for provision of three picnic tables, benches and litter bins on the Goldsworth Park recreation area.

The bid, prepared by the GPCA after consultation with residents, was presented to Surrey and Woking's Joint Committee by Goldsworth Park ward councillors.

The CIL is a charge that local authorities can set on new development in order to raise funds to help fund the infrastructure, facilities and services of an area.

The benches and tables will allow residents to make more use of natural green space in Goldsworth Park. They will provide several places for people to sit to enjoy the natural environment, picnic or simply get some fresh air.

The design of the tables will allow wheelchair or mobility scooter users to use the tables along with everybody else. All residents will benefit from these facilities

but they will be particularly appreciated by those who have little or no garden or live in flats or maisonettes. The refuse/recycling bins are necessary to prevent littering.

It is planned to locate two picnic tables near the children's playground and one tri-table on The Point on the lake bank.

Three benches would be located around the sides of the football pitches and one at the north end of North Meadow.

For the new benches, and the two already on The Point, rigid mesh matting will be laid in front of each bench to protect the grass.

Cllr Ann-Marie Barker expressed her thanks at the committee meeting to the GPCA for consulting on and costing the project.

GPCA Chair, Irene Watson, said: "It is very rewarding to be able to meet residents' requests like this. The picnic tables and benches will be a great addition to the park. The GPCA is grateful to Cllr Barker for her help in securing the funding."

The Council has so far received £4,847,389 CIL levy, and up to September 30 this year the allocation for the Goldsworth Park ward stood at £7,489.99.



PICNIC TIME — a tri-table is on order

Wildflower project blooms



VOLUNTEERS from the GPCA have taken a further step on the journey to turn North Meadow into a wildflower meadow.

Taking advantage of some mild autumn weather the volunteers sowed seeds across the meadow, mainly sourced from the trial beds planted last year that were funded by a grant from Surrey County Council.

North Meadow lies to the north of Goldsworth Park lake and the GPCA's aim is to improve the flora of the area for the benefit of bees, butterflies and other pollinators, as part of the Natural Goldsworth Park project.

The trial beds proved a big success and produced an impressive display of poppies, cornflowers, corncockle, wild carrot, lesser scented mayweed and daisies.

GPCA Chair Irene Watson said: "The seeds have been planted in small patches across a wide area of the meadow and the hope is that they will self-seed so that the whole meadow will have wildflowers.

"Hopefully, our community will benefit from the hard work of the volunteers with a wonderful display of wildflowers next spring."

The GPCA would like to thank Norman Johns, leader of

the Woking nature group LA21 and responsible for many wildflower displays in the borough, for his advice and donation of seeds.

The North Meadow area had been designated for possible use as sports pitches by Woking Council, but following a campaign by the GPCA to preserve its unspoilt status it is now under a 10-year protection order.



Woodland walk a super amenity

GOLDSWORTH PARK'S woodland walk was completed in September after a break in work due to the lockdown imposed in March.

The £10,000 walk and ride project was funded by Thames Water and constructed by specialist woodland contractor Maydencroft.

The walk and ride can be accessed from North Meadow and from the footpath on the east side of the lake. The surface has been laid with bark chippings. Piles of logs from the cleared cherry laurel trees have been left for wildlife habitats.

Woodland ride is a term used to describe an area where the tree canopy is opened up allowing more light to permeate the existing dark woodland floor, encouraging greater diversity of flora.



LEAFY RIDE —
the woodland walk is open

It will benefit residents by providing access to a different type of habitat on their doorstep, and nocturnal wildlife, such as the bats, by providing a dark natural corridor to and from

the lake for foraging.

The GPCA is grateful to Thames Water for funding the walk as part of the Natural Goldsworth Park project.

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Our £100 gift to Guides

THE GPCA has responded to an appeal for funds from Goldsworth Park Guides with a donation of £100.

Guide leader Sylvia Lambart said: "Covid restrictions and regulations have inflicted considerable additional costs across the board.

"We are requesting support with the additional cost involved in providing general stationery items for each individual child as rules now prevent them from sharing.

"Historically the 10 Guide, Brownie and Rainbow units would share general consumable stationery items as a common resource, which is now forbidden.

"On behalf of Goldsworth Park Rainbows, Brownies and Guides, we would like to say a big thank you for the £100 donation. This will help fund the additional expenditure required for us to get back to 'Covid safe' weekly meetings once the second lockdown is over.

"With all that is going on in the world, we feel that trying to get back to some sort of normality is best for our girls and parents."

The Guides have put the GPCA donation towards, glue, crayons, pencils, scissors and storage bags for individual use.

A personal view

Royer Slater



IF you were out walking in Goldsworth Park this autumn it's likely you heard a terrific squawking from the trees.

You may have assumed it was made by birds – crows perhaps? – but in fact it's the squirrels calling!

We have a lot of squirrels hereabouts – the grey species, not the reds – and they seem to have been more visible than usual due to the abundance of acorns from Goldsworth Park's many oak trees.

It's called a "mast" year and happens every five years or so when the weather conditions happen to be right in spring for fertilisation and for the acorns to grow. All the trees in a particular species react the same way, so this mast year we have acorns galore!

It's good news for the squirrels, which collect nuts and seeds in the autumn and bury them in many scattered hiding places. Apparently they have a highly-developed memory of where they buried them, as well as an acute sense of smell, which aid them in finding the food weeks or months later. Even so, many seeds and nuts remain uneaten each year allowing them to grow.

Grey squirrels don't hibernate in winter, but they are much less active: they sleep for long periods, as much as several days at a time, so are spotted less often during this season.

The squirrels have not only been more visible this year, but also more vocal, with a variety of sounds: today I heard short "kuks" and long "quaas" (sometimes described as a squawking), but moans are also common.

A few years ago, I failed to find any explanations for the various grey squirrel sounds online, but my search this autumn revealed there has been at least one university study into the variety of "vocalisations" and what they may mean.

It seems they have a number of voice and tail signals which have different meanings depending on how they are used.

The kuks and quaas are both alarm calls used when they spot a potential predator nearby – a dog or us humans, perhaps?

A trill or rattling call, sometimes heard among the squawking sounds, is a territorial signal which, when mixed in with the alarm call, probably means there's a territorial dispute. Squirrel language isn't as simple as it may first appear!

The grey squirrel is classified as an invasive non-native species. It was introduced into the UK in the 1800s from North America by the landed gentry as a fashionable introduction to country estates. With no natural predators, it has spread and displaced our native red squirrel: it's bigger and stronger, able to

find more food and store more fat in its body for winter.

Furthermore, grey squirrels carry a disease, a para poxvirus, which doesn't affect their own health but often kills red squirrels. The grey is also despised by foresters because it damages woodlands and by bird lovers because it is a frequent visitor to gardens with bird tables and feeders.

Although hated by many, there's no denying that the grey squirrel with its cute behaviour and bushy tail provides many people's primary sight of mammal wildlife.

If you aren't able to observe them in the wild this winter, go online and search "squirrel calls" on YouTube... and prepare to go "aaaah"!

TUFTY CALLING — squirrels are a vocal species



Picture: AMY LEWIS

A tail of togetherness!

THE squirrels have been going, well... nuts this week!

They've been dashing up and down the oak trees opposite my house, scrabbling among the autumn leaves searching for acorns, burying them and then rushing off to look for more.

Their frantic activities to prepare for the deeper winter remind me of my usual rush to get ready for Christmas, pre-Covid of course. I'd whiz in and out of Woking, dash up and down the Peacocks and scabble among the shelves in search of those perfect gifts!

This Christmas with lockdowns and social distancing the preparations will be different. Our rush around the high streets and the amount we have to spend will be restricted. Yet, perhaps a slower, cheaper, Christmas won't be all bad.

Many of us have reconnected with the humbler things of life to help us get through the hardships of Coronavirus, like: watching mad, crazy squirrels, enjoying a hug from a loved one, or a smile from an unmasked stranger. Simply being together has taken on a new importance.

Togetherness is a message that is behind Christmas; God coming to be together with us in Jesus, who, born very humbly, shows us God's love, and how, together with that love, we can be the very best of ourselves to one another.

This past year we've seen that loving-togetherness in action with neighbourhood groups and volunteers from all faiths and none pulling together across the Park as we've helped each other get through the worst of times. With God and with one another we'll get through this strange Christmas too.

I pray that your Christmas will be peaceful, and that you will be able to look forward to the year ahead with hope.

Kate is Vicar at St Andrew's Church

St Andrew's Christmas services: December 20, 7pm Carols by candlelight; Christmas Eve, 4pm Crib and Christingle service; Christmas Day, 10am Celebrate Jesus' birthday. All services are available to stream at www.standrewsgwp.org

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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.

HOW fortunate we are, in these unprecedented times, to have amenities like the lake and the surrounding open space in which to take our permitted exercise.

A walk or jog around the lake path or a gentle stroll through the new woodland walk can really lift your spirits.

Thames Water, owners of the lake, funded the construction of the woodland walk and it can be accessed from the east side of the lake path. It is well worth a visit.

A real bonus for all who visit the lake is the abundance of swans. I have counted 15 of these beautiful birds gathered close to an angling platform being fed by delighted children and parents.

Soon a dominant pair will probably force off most of their rivals who will have to seek a home elsewhere. That's nature for you!

Our resident pair of great crested grebes produced two broods this year with two chicks each time. They are all doing well and, like the majority of the swans, will soon be forced to look for a new home.

I've also noticed kingfisher activity over the water, hopefully they are making use of the nesting bank built by volunteers back in 2013.

The angling club has just completed a tidy-up around the lake, trimming back vegetation and trees that obstruct the platforms. Some of the cut branches have been left in the water as wildlife habitat and shelter for fish.

Cormorant predation is a problem for our fish stocks, but the branches and the six fish refuges that were put in place last year look to be having a favourable impact. Anglers have reported good fishing this year with encouraging numbers of young fish, the favourite diet of the cormorants.

My thanks go to night angler Andrew Shaw who reported an unusual catch in October — a huge 44lb 8oz European wels catfish. The club reported the non-native fish to the Environment Agency, a necessity as the lake is not enclosed and feeds into the river system. The catfish's removal will benefit the native species in the lake and prevent its possible migration into the river system. The fish was not harmed and was rehomed in an enclosed lake.

Since the new signage went up around the lake encouraging responsible dog ownership it is good to see the majority of dogs on leads. The safety of small children is paramount. Even a small dog can seem intimidating to a toddler. The wildfowl will be happy to see dogs under control too!

While enjoying the lake please respect social distancing and any other Covid rules that may be in place.

Stay safe and have a merry Christmas and a happy new year.



WHAT A CATCH — Andrew with the huge catfish

Worth the weight!

INDEPENDENT gym La Palestra Health and Fitness made its debut on the Park this autumn and we caught up with owner Max Cacace who answered questions from Cathy and Matt Butt.

We're so excited that there is finally a gym in Goldsworth Park. What attracted you to the shopping centre location?

I first noticed the empty premises in lockdown while waiting outside Waitrose. The space is an ideal size for a boutique studio and the parking and nearby amenities such as Waitrose and Costa are bonuses.

What is on offer at the new gym?

All the standard cardio and weight training equipment is available for members to use. One-to-one personal training sessions are offered, and we hope to introduce ballet fit and combat fit classes soon.

Is it mainly for people experienced with fitness or can complete beginners join?

Complete beginners are more than welcome — anybody over the age of 16.

How did you keep fit during lockdown?

Mainly martial arts and combat fit training. Also boxing and mountain biking with my son and long walks with my four dogs.

Do you have any advice for people who are struggling to get out and exercise during the pandemic?

Find something you enjoy to keep your mind positive, whether it's painting or cooking. In terms of exercise it's so important to keep active, even if just a 10-15 minute daily walk. Online exercise videos are great for any level of fitness!

• La Palestra is located at 9 Goldsworth Park Centre, Denton Way and will re-open when lockdown restrictions allow. Membership details are available at www.lapalestra.co.uk



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Living with lockdown

BROCKHILL, in Clifton Way, is a 47-flat development that is part of Woking Council's independent living scheme. Manager Michelle Chilcott kept a diary of the challenges that lockdown and other pandemic restrictions presented tenants and staff.

HELLO neighbours! To say 2020 has been challenging for all is most definitely an understatement. However here at Brockhill we have strived to find the positive in very difficult times.

When lockdown was imposed on March 23 we had to not only reassure, comfort and protect our tenants throughout this unsettling time, we also had to keep them in and change the way our lives here worked. Initially this seemed daunting and scary but on reflection we adapted quickly and have had (and are having) some good times!

MARCH

Everything changed and tenants were no longer able to leave due to shielding and their loved ones could not visit. We adapted and put things in place. Lunch was now served in flats, we brought in a lot more council colleagues to help us, meaning tenants met new faces and made new friends. We offered a weekly shopping service, enabled by Waitrose who allowed us to queue jump. We collated prescriptions and went to chemists for tenants and even had help from local volunteers in Goldsworth Park assisting us with this! Everyone chipped in and a new 'norm' was established.

APRIL

We were blown away with the amount of scrumptious Easter Eggs we received for tenants. We had a delivery from the local mosque as well as Waitrose, again coming up trumps. We gorged ourselves on chocolate while keeping up our spirits. This was aided by some beautiful letters from the children of Beaufort Primary School.

MAY

Bank Holidays, beautiful weather and VE Day. We didn't let a little pandemic get in the way of us celebrating! Also in order to give our hardworking kitchen team a day off we spoke with Brookwood Fisheries and ordered fish and chips for Sunday lunch.

JUNE

Although tenants were missing their families we still kept spirits high. We launched our internet café to encourage Zoom sessions and we were joined by local musicians in the garden.

JULY

As measures started to change, tenants were able to enjoy some normal activities. This included our coffee bar re-opening as well as daily activities. Volunteers from the community restored our gardens to their former glory.

AUGUST

Bye-bye shielding as we welcomed back family and friends. We of course still had to be very careful and have certain measures in place but with everyone working together a breath of fresh air circulated its way around the building.

SEPTEMBER

With Christmas creeping up many were concerned about how they would buy gifts so to help combat this issue we welcomed local stallholders into Brockhill to sell their goods. We limited this to one stall at a time and again social distancing and relevant measures were put in place. It was wonderful to see our tenants coming out of their flats and enjoying themselves as they purchased gifts and goodies.

OCTOBER

To celebrate World Food Day we set up stalls in our lounge and had delicious morsels from around the world. Then to round off the month we had a Spookie Wookiee tea party complete with homemade scones.

NOVEMBER

Lockdown 2. It's back talking to family and friends online, but together we will get through this and I am sure come out the other side stronger. We are looking forward to Christmas and making tentative plans to ensure that Father Christmas does not miss out Brockhill.

If you would like more information about Brockhill or if you are interested in volunteering in any capacity please contact us on 01483 743975 or at brockhill@woking.gov.uk



CHOC FULL — residents enjoyed a selection of Easter eggs



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A day to remember

THE GPCA held a short Remembrance Sunday service in line with lockdown restrictions.

Revd Malcolm Herbert from St Andrew's Church conducted the service and wreaths were laid at the war memorial at the health centre by Woking Hospice Chief Executive Marian Imrie, GPCA Chair Irene Watson, 1st Goldsworth Park Scout leader David Morriss, Guide District Commissioner Hannah Cole and Michael McMurtary on behalf of St Andrew's.

Goldsworth Park Guides, unable to attend the service, commemorated the day by placing homemade poppies on the lawn outside their Generation Centre headquarters. They were made from the bottom of plastic bottles, painted red and attached to a green garden stick using a black button and wire.



COMMUNITY TRIBUTE — GPCA Chair Irene Watson



SALUTING THE FALLEN — 1st GP Scout Leader David Morriss



WE REMEMBER — wreaths at the war memorial

Help is still at hand

GOLDSWORTH CARE is a group of Park people who have been helping residents since 2001.

They have received fewer requests for transport during the pandemic, but Chairman Mike Griffiths is keen to let the community know that the organisation is still up and running.

Mike said: "We are still here and there are still things we can do such as picking up prescriptions and groceries. And of course we like chatting on the phone to you our clients and hearing how you are getting on. If you haven't heard from us and you'd like to talk please give us a call on our helpline — 07751 801587 — and we will get back to you.

"Sadly, we won't be having our annual Christmas party this year!

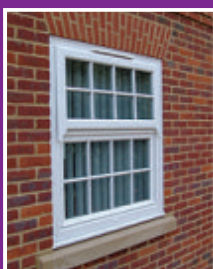
My Santa outfit (you did know it was me didn't you?) will have to stay up in the loft, hoping the moths don't get at it!

"Fingers crossed things will get closer to normal in the new year, Goldsworth Care will be out of hibernation and our volunteers, old and new, will be ready to take you to doctors, dentists, shops and hairdressers as before. After that, we can look forward to a strawberry tea in the summer and another Christmas party at the end of the year!

"In the meantime keep safe, enjoy some fresh air and keep in touch if you need anything — if we can't help, we'll find someone who can.

"Best wishes and a happy Christmas."

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Park fly-tippers fined

TEN fly-tippers who dumped rubbish at the roadside charity collection bin store on Parley Drive, Goldsworth Park, have been tracked down by Woking Council and handed fines.

Between June and September the lawbreakers were caught on CCTV stopping at the collection point to discard mattresses, sofas, beds and other waste items.

The perpetrators were tracked down using number-plate recognition and vehicle records.

Cllr Kevin Davis, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, said: "It is hard to believe that when there are so many options available in the borough for waste disposal, we still see people using public spaces as their own personal rubbish dumps.

"Fly-tipping is a serious criminal offence, not to mention the fact that it is unsightly, dangerous and shows complete disregard to the local community. Regretfully, the situation on Parley Drive, and across the borough, has become even more pronounced since lockdown was introduced.

"Whether one small bag, or an entire house clearance, the council will penalise anyone caught. It's also important to remember that the obligation to ensure that waste is disposed of lawfully falls on to whoever produces the waste.

"If you use a waste carrier that is not licensed and that carrier

then illegally disposes of your waste, it is you as the householder who is liable to receive the fine and even face prosecution.

"I urge residents to consider the repercussions of using cheap waste removal solutions or shortcuts. And, if you witness an incident of fly-tipping, report it as soon as you can, to allow our officers the best possible chance of catching the perpetrators."

Every incident of fly-tipping that takes place in the borough is investigated before it is cleared up and fines issued wherever it is possible to correctly identify and locate the perpetrators.

Anyone caught fly-tipping could receive anything from a £400 fixed penalty notice to a £50,000 fine or a 12-month jail sentence if convicted in a magistrates' court.

Council officers invest hours of time scrutinising CCTV footage and tracking down offenders, as well as thousands of pounds dispatching contractors, Serco, to remove the items.

Data protection regulations mean *Goldsworth News* cannot name and shame the offenders as they received fixed penalty notices rather than being prosecuted. Pity.

Residents wishing to learn more about fly-tipping and waste disposal in Woking, and how to report an incident of fly-tipping, can find information by visiting www.woking.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling

All change at sea cadets

WOKING Sea Cadets, based at TS Dianthus in Wishbone Way, have a new officer in charge — Petty Officer Sea Cadet Corps James Rickwood.

PO Rickwood replaces Captain (SCC) Paul Chapman, RMR, who had been at the helm for 10 years.

Capt Chapman oversaw the unit's move from Westfield Avenue to Goldsworth Park in 2011 and under his leadership numbers rose from just eight to 60, with ages between 10 and 18. Despite living near Gatwick, he has commuted to Woking to fulfil this role and for the past 18 months has been both the commanding officer of Crawley Sea Cadets and the national representative for SCC shooting.

The Cadets are also bidding farewell to Chairman Jim Flaherty, who is moving out of the area. Taking over as Chair is Chris Evans, whose wife Geraldine is a senior instructor at the unit.

After his time as a cadet, Jim returned as an instructor before moving across to the unit committee. Along with Capt Chapman he has done much to increase and improve training and infrastructure for the unit.

Despite the pandemic interfering with cadet training, the unit has ticked over behind the scenes, with online training, some new instructors joining and preparations for the future both inside the building and beside the lake. A new slip was put in this year and a new boarding platform will be built next to this in the coming months.

PO Rickwood and his team are looking forward to 2021, when they can return to normal and hopefully welcome more new young people and adults to the organisation.

<https://www.sea-cadets.org/woking>



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Estate lights going green

GOLDSWORTH PARK'S street lights are to be converted to energy-efficient LEDs as part of a £20million county-wide programme.

It's expected to take three years to change all 89,000 lights in the county. Work started in Guildford earlier this year. A time frame for conversion in Woking has yet to be published by Surrey County Council (SCC).

SCC spends £3.8million a year on energy for street lights. By converting to LEDs the council expects to use around 65 per cent less energy, which will save £2million a year based on February 2020 prices. The LEDs will last for 20 years – six times longer than traditional bulbs.

But despite the savings Goldsworth Park and the majority of the county will still be plunged into darkness between 1 and 5am. SCC has no plans to reinstate night-time lighting despite the huge cost saving.

Matt Furniss, SCC Cabinet Member for Transport, said: "Investing in LED street lights demonstrates our commitment to reducing our energy consumption. As well as supporting our aim of being net carbon zero by 2050, the reduced costs also benefit the taxpayer.

"The lights will be a warm white colour and are designed to direct the light more onto the highway so will be less intrusive into people's homes and gardens."

To find out more about the streetlight conversion, visit surreycc.gov.uk/streetlights



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New leader's unity pledge



CLLR AZAD

WOKING COUNCIL'S new leader, Cllr Ayesha Azad, has vowed to put party politics aside in these difficult and uncertain times.

Conservative Cllr Azad (Heathlands) was elected following the resignation of leader Cllr David Bittleston at the council meeting on October 15.

Cllr Azad said: "I take the helm at the most uncertain of times. The pandemic continues to hover over our daily lives and recession looms. The impact of this upheaval will inevitably be felt by the council and all the people it serves. So these are challenging times that require us to come together.

"It is during these times that we need to put party politics aside and for each member to take ownership and responsibility for the decisions we make as a democratic organisation. We have shown during the course of the past few months how working jointly, we can speak with one voice to assure our residents we are working collectively on their behalf.

"I fully appreciate that we are a council with no group in overall control and it is imperative we utilise the skills and experience of every member."

Cllr Bittleston will remain in his role as ward councillor for Mount Hermon until his retirement in May 2021.

Lions fuel appeal

WOKING LIONS, in conjunction with Citizens Advice offices, are again asking those that do not need their winter fuel allowance to donate all or part of it to those in need.

A spokesperson for the Lions said: "This year in particular many local people will not qualify to get help and struggle to keep warm and meet fuel bills.

"Woking Lions Club is therefore promoting Project Wenceslas as part of its service to the Woking and district communities. We hope you will support the project, all donations being managed by Citizens Advice Woking or Citizens Advice Runnymede.

"If you do not need this money a donation of your winter fuel payment or perhaps some of it would be much appreciated. Please submit on line at Virginmoneygiving.com/fund/Wenceslas2020

"Alternatively cheques made payable to Woking Lions Club CIO can be posted or hand delivered to Citizens Advice Woking, Provincial House, 26 Commercial Way, Woking GU21 6EN. Please write "Project Wenceslas" on the reverse side. Gift Aid would add a further 25 percent, if you are eligible.

"Our sincere thanks go to all who donated to our winter fund last year, we hope that you will be able to help us again."



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