

February/March 2021 Parish Magazine

St Martha Parish Council News

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Happy New Year to you all and here's to the vaccines and a more normal year than 2020!

I sincerely hope that all our residents were able to access appropriate help and support during the various lockdowns and I know the Chilworth Care Committee alongside Chilworth2together have helped many people and continue to do so.

The Parish Council has continued to have regular meetings, albeit via Zoom, and I should emphasise that you are more than welcome to 'attend'. There is always an opportunity at the beginning of each meeting to table a question. All you need to do is email clerk@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk for the log in details. Alternatively, please do email and we will always do our best to respond to your query.

During last year we approached Guildford Borough Council regarding West Lodge, the small dwelling at entrance to the Gunpowder Mills in Blacksmith Lane, who were looking to sell the property. St Martha Parish Council have submitted a planning application for change of use from residential to community use. Currently we are awaiting a decision on this. We are aware of concerns about parking etc. and would like to emphasise that we have requested 3 parking spaces to the rear of the Lodge, which we consider to be a vital inclusion. Any usage would only involve small groups.

As a parish council we are also aware of an issue with the canal which is suffering from a lack of flow of water, due to debris, obstructions, breaches of the canal edges etc. This passage of water runs across land in multiple ownership including GBC, and we aim to communicate with appropriate landowners in due course.

I would also like to enlighten you on discussions regarding traffic etc. in Blacksmith/Halfpenny Lane and Guildford/White Lane. As I am sure you are all aware these beautiful country lanes have a high volume of traffic, including HGV's doing untold damage to the banks and hedgerows aside from causing serious congestion and chaos. At one-point last year I witnessed a large lorry steaming up the lane bringing down a reasonable sized tree. Please see my own report on this situation, which follows below.

We are sadly anticipating when Graham retires from The Post Office, he has been a loyal, hardworking and entertaining member of our community who will be sorely missed.

Finally we are looking for more Councillors to assist us. If you are community minded and feel able to commit around 4 hours a week, we would welcome you joining us. We are a friendly group, and I am sure I speak on behalf of the other councillors when I say we work in a respectful, transparent way. We would also appreciate a volunteer with a background in book-keeping or accountancy to carry out an 'Independent Examination of Accounts' by completing an internal audit form for the

external auditors of the Parish Councils' accounting records for the year ending 31st March 2021. Further information from the Clerk – contact details as above.

Report on our Lanes

As a resident in Halfpenny Lane and as a Parish Councillor, I contacted Surrey County Council, the police, and Surrey Hills Group. SCC installed a camera last October recording the traffic speeds, types of vehicles etc. During the course of the week the camera was in place 6,566 vehicles used the lane, 3,301 vehicles travelled at speeds of 40-45mph and 285 recorded at 50-55mph. My reasoning in contacting Surrey Hills is because they are aware of the need to address the issues of traffic in rural lanes and have been discussing implementing 'traffic calming measures' in other rural lanes. They are keen to use Halfpenny and White Lane as a 'pilot' initiative. (Residents of the lanes have been informed of these discussions). The proposal is to have 'pinch points' at the bottom of Blacksmith Lane, Guildford Lane and at the top of White Lane/Halfpenny Lane from One Tree Hill Road direction. In essence grass verges would be built out to narrow the road to allow one vehicle at a time to pass through, post/rail fencing/gate would be sited on the verges stating 20mph, quiet lane, no HGV's. (Similar to Blackheath). Clearly, we have to retain suitable width for emergency vehicles etc. to pass through. The current 7.5 tonne lorry limit will hopefully be reduced to 3.5 tonnes. I have spoken to PC Milford regarding the lorries and highlighted the fact that the main issue is the driver following his sat nav. I am certain many drivers begin their journey totally unaware of how narrow the lane becomes, and then of course there is little opportunity to 'turn around'. I will be requesting that we have appropriate signs approaching these areas informing HGV drivers not to follow their SAT. Navs. I am due to have a meeting with PC Milford and a representative from Surrey Highways in mid-February to progress measures. We are unlikely to receive funding from Surrey County Council but hopefully we can to an extent fundraise ourselves and engage the services of for example Surrey Choices who offer employment to adults with mental health issues, or perhaps some students from Merrist Wood. If you wish to raise any comments please do contact the parish council or myself at clarehmprice@outlook.com.

Health and good wishes to you all

Clare Price