



Message from the Chairman

Welcome to the Autumn 2018 edition of the WMG newsletter. Well, what a summer it has been! And what a contrast! We had one of the coldest winters for many years – remember the “Beast from the East” and storm “Emma”? Yes, in March we had snow followed by torrential rain (which handily filled our pond!). And now as I write, we are enjoying the tail end of the hottest, driest and longest summer on record! With weather like this, we can definitely be forgiven for having a reputation as a nation of people always talking about the weather!

Testimonial

In April this year we were delighted to receive an email, an extract of which is below:

“I am a local resident, having recently moved to Digdens Rise last year. I just wanted to send a quick note to say thank you for your work in helping to improve the parkland (in particular the pond upgrades). The new pond looks incredible, our young daughter walks past it every day and we can't wait to see how new wildlife interact with it in the coming weeks/years. We thought it was important to say thank you for all your hard work.”

Thank you! It's reassuring to note that our efforts don't go unnoticed.

Pond Restoration

Thank you



A very big thank you again to all who helped raise funds for the pond restoration. A lot of hard work went in to this. In case you missed our last newsletter we raised the money from a combination of donations from local residents and community groups, individual fund raising activities and successful applications for grants. The whole project took a considerable amount of time and effort but we are delighted with the outcome.

Local company Aquajoy undertook the pond clearance work in early March. I am sure you will

agree that it was a job well done and well worth the hard work to make it happen. Whilst at the time of writing it is somewhat depleted in water due to the exceptionally hot weather combined with little rain, the pond has never looked so good.

The pond was completely drained, then the silt and weed was cleared out and deposited on to another part of the green.

Whilst doing this we discovered that there were many fish still living there, we didn't believe there were any. They were transferred in to a container and taken to the Aquajoy site in Cobham and looked after there until the pond was ready for them to be returned. Whilst in Cobham they were checked to make sure they were healthy and put into clean water to clear silt from their gills. 350 fish were counted; these were a mix of carp, perch, bream and goldfish hybrids!

We had arranged for Thames Water to pump water into fill the pond but fortunately this wasn't necessary due to the heavy rain in March!

It was pleasing to see how quickly the wildlife settled back in. Soon after completion there was an amazing amount of both frog and toad spawn. It was great to watch the progress from spawn to tadpoles, great shoals of them and then to hundreds and hundreds of tiny little frogs hopping in the grass and on the paths around the edge of the pond.

The heron though has been very much in evidence on his favourite perch in the middle of the pond. Now that the weed has been removed he has clear sight of everything going on. Hopefully he hasn't caught all the fish and froglets.

Aquajoy have since been back on two further occasions to spray weed killer on weeds surrounding the pond. They have also now removed the netting around the area where silt from the pond was deposited.

Now that the restoration is complete we need to make sure the pond is kept looking as good as it is now and have therefore established an ongoing maintenance plan recommended by Aquajoy.

The Heron

Love them or loath them, the Grey Herons (**Ardea Cinerea**) are a protected species. Much to her dismay, earlier this year, a local resident witnessed the Heron catch one of the Moorhen chicks, and sadly we believe none of them survived. Nature can

sometimes be cruel however, it was suggested that we could help the Moorhen population by adding a floating Duck Nesting House – similar to but smaller than the one in Rosebery pond.



Whilst we don't want to turn the Green into a park we felt this would be a good idea and we are aiming to raise enough funds from this newsletter to cover the cost of the purchase of one such nesting box. Prices vary from £300 to £500 and it would be great if readers of this newsletter would support us as we would like to be able to purchase one of these by the end of the year so it can be installed ready for next spring.

Smoking

We continue to discourage smoking on the Green (which is proving rather difficult). Following some research we are now looking into the possibility of replacing the existing bins with the type that allow cigarettes to be extinguished easily and disposed of properly.

Tree Clearing

In June the large ash trees at the entrance to Sunnybank were reduced and the area below cleared and tidied up. I hope that you will agree that it looks much better.

Fundraising

The Woodcote Millennium Green Trust has always relied on philanthropic support to advance its mission and sustain its activities. Such generosity allows us to flourish, leading to continued impact from our work. Thank you as ever for your continued support.

We are delighted to say that earlier this year we were awarded £1,000 by Tesco from their community fund award scheme called 'Tesco Bags of Help Grant Scheme'.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sarah Nicholls who works for Lloyds Banking Group and who provides much valued admin support to the trustees. Sarah is able to claim funding for the Green via Lloyds Bank employee charity volunteering schemes and she raised £850 for us last year!

Lloyds Banking Group has a number of staff volunteering schemes that we have benefited from, for example the company matches pound for pound funds that employees help to raise for charities. This was a big help during the pond fund raising campaign.

Are there any other residents out there working for companies with similar schemes who would like to get involved in helping us raise funds for on-going maintenance? If so, please contact me.

The cake and flower sale we had in October last year was so popular that we are thinking it would be great to hold another one during the 20th October maintenance session. If you share our passion and would like to help with this, please contact us via info@woodcotemillenniumgreen.org.uk We would be very pleased to hear from you.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

In line with the latest Government guidelines, the Woodcote Millennium Green Trust's privacy notice is available online at www.millenniumgreen.org.uk.

Maintenance Sessions

We are a Trust run entirely by volunteers and we really do appreciate the fact that many of you come and help out at the maintenance sessions. We think you will agree that the rewards are well worth the effort. We also appreciate the fact that, in between times, some of you pick up litter clear the paths and cut the grass for which we are equally grateful.

Forthcoming maintenance days are:

Saturday 8th September 2:00 to 4:00pm

Saturday 20th October 2:00 to 4:00pm (Pond Clearance)

Saturday 29th December 10:00 to 12:00 noon

We meet by the human sundial; more details can be found on our website.

Trustees

The current trustees are:

Andrew Broadbent	Epsom General Hospital
Jason Cowling	Maintenance & Project Manager
Chris Frost	Life President
Liz Frost	Woodcote Residents' Soc.
Jeremy Hawken	Treasurer
Luke Jennings	Digital Marketing - Website
Paul Masters	Legal
Brian Saxby	Special Projects
Mark Swan	Chairman

And finally: we are always interested in ideas to improve the Green our newsletter and would be very pleased to hear from you if you have any suggestions.

Mark Swan, Chairman

Tel: 01372-729258 Email: mark.swanmail@gmail.com

