



## Message from the Chairman

Welcome to the Autumn 2019 edition of the newsletter where I hope you will find inspiration if you feel you have the time to do something different and help with the Green!

This is my favourite time of year, not just because of the change in colours of all the leaves on the trees but because it gently ushers in the winter. We have had a glorious September so far and Autumn's beauty is something to embrace and enjoy we are fortunate to have the Millennium Green where we can experience some of this natural beauty. I hope you can find time out of your busy lives just to walk through the Green and delight in some of what Autumn has to offer!

## Birds

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has completed 40 years of its Big Garden Birdwatch. They recently highlighted the dramatic reduction in the UK bird populations. It says that in the past 50 years 40 million birds have been lost from British skies and more than half of UK species are in decline – depressing reading I feel! Those in trouble include birds generally considered common, such as house sparrows. Well, we like to feel that we are doing our small bit to help reduce this decline by maintaining and improving their habitat.

For those of you who are interested, the RSPB hold their annual Birdwatch normally around the end of January: for more information go to [www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch](http://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch). If you don't have a garden, you could do the bird watch on the Green!

## Beavers

As we have mentioned in previous newsletters the Green is there for all to enjoy. In July we welcomed three local Beaver scout groups: Clearwater Colony, Willowlake Colony and Windfalls Colony. As part of their programme they came along on three evenings and helped with litter picking, searched out the bird boxes, followed a Treasure hunt (to encourage them to explore the Green) and had a go at pond dipping! I think they all thoroughly enjoyed themselves and

maybe even learnt something along the way! We were delighted to receive a donation from the Beavers as a gesture of thanks.

## The pond

Following the restoration of the pond we have been monitoring the recovery especially of the weed/Lilly/bull rushes. The pond is recovering very well and perhaps a little too well as there seems to be a great deal of growth from plants that were not originally in the pond. We know that good minded people have added weeds etc to the pond in the past however, we must ask that people refrain from doing so in future. We do not want plants that are not natural to a pond like ours. We are also trying to let nature take its natural course but we do not want the pond to clog up again too soon.

## Duck House

I am delighted to report that the Duck House has been a great success with the Moorhens who quickly adopted it as their home! Sadly the first brood of six chicks didn't survive however, the two adult moorhens were not deterred and produced another brood, three of which have survived. Let's hope this leads to many more!

## Smoking

We continue to try and discourage smoking on the Green (which is proving rather difficult). To this end we have managed to have one of the existing bins replaced with the type that allow cigarettes to be extinguished easily and disposed of properly. Let's hope this helps with the dreaded dog ends!

## Tree Maintenance

As part of our regular maintenance programme and risk assessment process once again we have recently had a number of dead and dying trees removed.

Some of you may have noticed that we have a number of log stacks around the Green. This is deliberate as we try to enhance the woodland habitat and maintain a diverse wild-life friendly Green for all creatures. The food chain starts at the bottom. If we encourage bugs and beetles, they will be a food source for lots of other species especially the badgers that have their sett by the substation.

We also leave small piles of branches to encourage hedgehogs.

### **Volunteers Appeal**

We are looking for one or two people to spare just a few hours a year to assist with firstly, the editing of the newsletter ready for printing, and the distribution of newsletters to delivery volunteers; and secondly, with minute taking and production and the setting and circulation of meeting agendas (we have only 3 or 4 meetings a year). Please email or speak to one of the Trustees if you think you can help us. Contact details can be found on our website.

We are also keen to know of anyone who could get us a reusable weatherproof banner printed to promote the maintenance sessions. Are you that person?

### **Grass Cutting Team**

Following our recent appeal for volunteers to help cut the grass, we are delighted to have two new helpers on the rota – Kate and Neil. I hope you will see the benefits of having a bigger grass cutting team (we have recently had the ride on lawnmower fixed which helps too!).

### **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.

The Trust always needs help from volunteers whether it's litter picking, clearing pond weed, cutting the grass etc.

### **Maintenance dates for your diary in 2019/2020:**

- Saturday 26th October (2pm - 4pm)
- Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> December (10am-12 midday)
- Saturday 21st March (2pm - 4pm)
- Saturday 20th June (10am - 12pm)

We meet by the human sundial; more details can be found on our website. We try to make these community-focused sessions and we welcome adults and children alike, so, whatever your ability please do come along.

We always stop for refreshments and a chat too! Do you know of anyone who would be willing to help with refreshments for these sessions?

### **Fundraising**

The Woodcote Millennium Green Trust constantly relies on philanthropic support to advance its mission and sustain its activities. Such generosity allows us to flourish, leading to continued impact from our work. All donations are gratefully received and we thank you as ever for your continued support.

Details of how to donate on-line can be found on our website, this is our preferred method for receiving donations. You can of course if you wish donate via cheque or cash. Please see the attached donation form.

### **Trustees**

The current trustees are:

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

And finally:

### **Your feedback**

We would like to keep the Newsletter and website as interesting and inclusive as possible so please do get in contact if you have any ideas for future articles we could write. If you would like to write an article then please let us know.

Also, we would be grateful for any feedback on areas where you think we could improve. If you have any suggestions we'd be very pleased to hear from you. Please contact Mark Swan – details at end of newsletter.

In between newsletters you can keep up to date with all of our news on Facebook or on our website.

Mark Swan, Chairman

Tel: 01372-729258 Email: [mark.swanmail@gmail.com](mailto:mark.swanmail@gmail.com)