



ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

June 2024

Chairman's Report

Annual Parish Assembly

The Annual Parish Assembly, which is the annual meeting of the electors of the Parish, was held at Fairlands Community Hall on 18 March 2024. This well-attended meeting highlighted the exceptionally varied work of both the Parish Council and the local community.

We were fortunate to have a number of excellent presentations at the event - from Stella Hancock Carriage Driving for the Disabled and Mick Bruder on behalf of the FLGCA regarding the proposals for the community hall. The Parish Council were also very grateful to the charities and local organisations who attended the meeting to inform the residents about the wealth of activities and opportunities that take place on a regular basis throughout the parish.

Precept

The 9.97% increase in the 2024/2025 precept (collected through Council Tax) was predominantly due to:

1. The employment of another part-time member of Groundstaff – necessary due to additional land management and devolved services
2. Having to pay Guildford Borough Council £3,000pa to empty bins on land for which Worplesdon Parish Council is directly responsible
3. Grass-cutting cost increase – the 2023 RPI increase was 13.5%
4. Loss of grants from Guildford Borough Council

Food caddies

Replacement food caddies can be collected from the Parish office during specified hours. This service means residents are saved from making the journey to Millmead, helping to not only reduce carbon emissions, but saving residents the cost of time, fuel and parking fees.

Biodiversity

As a public authority, in accordance with the extended/enhanced Biodiversity Duties announced by the Government on 17 May 2023 (Environmental Act 2021), Worplesdon Parish Council must consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity, agree policies and specific objectives based on those considerations, and act to deliver the requisite policies and achieve the objectives.

The Parish Council has been following its existing Land Management policies but will create a specific Biodiversity Policy on receipt of Surrey County Council's template. Surrey County Council are currently undertaking a county-wide consultation to create their [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) which all residents are encouraged to engage with:



www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development

Trees

This year the Parish Council received 420 free whips (slender, unbranched bare-root trees) from the Woodland Trust, and 10 feathered trees from Surrey County Council - who also generously provided the tree supports and spiral tree guards.

In addition to this, the Parish Council obtained a grant from Guildford Borough Council towards tree succession planting. These trees have been planted across the Parish.

A variety of different species of trees have been planted as commemorative Coronation trees at locations across the Parish. Plaques commemorating the occasion have been affixed to the metal tree guards. The diversity of flora is very important to our new King, our nation, and the planet.



Christmas Lights

In December 2023, the Parish Council undertook a survey to obtain the views of residents about the Christmas illuminations. The previous 4-year contract concluded in January 2024. The results of the survey were that 97% of the respondents confirmed their support for Christmas illuminations to continue to be provided, and for the number of locations to be increased to cover the Parish more evenly. The current contract will be extended by 1-year to allow an annual budget of £20,000 to be set aside for the Christmas illuminations in future years, with the Parish Council seeking sponsorship, where possible, from local businesses. Artificial Christmas 'tree' lighting will be created at Fairlands Community Centre and Jacobs Well Village Hall if the electricity can be provided via both community buildings.

The Late John Gunner

John Gunner was posthumously awarded the Freedom of the Parish in 2022 in recognition of his outstanding contribution to all the Parish communities. In addition, the Parish Council agreed to provide a memorial bench (through a 50% grant received from Guildford Borough Council), which has now been installed beside the pond, by Steve Gunner. We think it looks magnificent! A wonderful tribute to an incredibly hard working, and community minded man, who did so much for so many throughout his life. We hope it will be used as a friendship bench, as we are sure John would have approved of this.

Storm Henk

Unexpected and costly tree surgery had to be carried out at Jacobs Well Recreation Ground as a result of storm damage caused by Storm Henk in January 2024. Fortunately, there were no injuries as a result of a large poplar falling. For safety reasons the adjacent poplar was also felled.

Devastation caused by the storm was felt across the whole of the Parish. Flooding caused damage to approximately 90 properties. Regrettably, a number of families are still unable to occupy their homes and may not be able to return for sometime. The Parish Council has been working closely with the principal authorities and the Environment Agency, as well as other landowners, in a bid to resolve some of the problems. The severity of the damage caused has resulted in a Section 19 investigation being carried out by the County Council. Government funding has also been triggered to support those affected by this severe

flooding incident.

Maintenance

In Jacobs Well the high-security gate that had been installed by the Parish Council over 30 years ago, had reached the end of its life expectancy and a new gate has been installed to prevent illegal incursions.

Wildflowers

In accordance with the enhanced biodiversity duties placed upon the Parish Council, two new wildflower trial areas were installed in Harry's Meadow last September. The native wildflower seed that was used was from a specialist UK supplier.

Community SpeedWatch

The Parish Council continues to carry out regular Speed Watch deployments across the Parish. The Community SpeedWatch Scheme is overseen by Surrey Police. Team members are unpaid volunteers. The locations are surveyed by Surrey Police to ensure that they are safe for the volunteers and are clearly visible to motorists and other road users.

Grants

The Parish Council is very proud to have been able to give grants to a significant number of local organisations during the course of the last two years. Grants of up to £500, or more in exceptional circumstances, are provided by the Parish Council and local organisations are encouraged to apply. The application form is available on the Council's website.

In addition to financial grants, the Council has been pleased to support local scout groups who have been regularly borrowing litter picking equipment.

Councillors and Staff

We are very pleased to welcome Saffina Ellahi (Fairlands Ward) to the Parish Council, and Andy Connor has joined as part-time Groundsman. Following Jan Messinger's resignation, there are two vacancies on the Parish Council, one for Jacobs Well, and the other for Perry Hill. On behalf of the Parish Council and residents of the parish, I would like to thank Jan for 12 years of service.

The following accounts demonstrate how and when the Parish Council expends the Precept collected through your Council Tax.

Cllr Nigel Mitchell, Chairman



WORPLESDON PARISH COUNCIL - INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS 2023/2024 - SUMMARY

Description	2022/2023	2022/2023	2023/2024	2023/2024
	Expenditure (£)	Income (£)	Expenditure (£)	Income (£)
Administration	63,978.48	11,114.35	65,488.79	10,260.61
Parks & Open Spaces	33,032.20	507.72	54,912.51	970.34
Bus Shelters	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
S137 Payment	1,835.00	20.00	1,050.00	20.00
GBC Grant Aid Expenditure	0.00	7,921.00	14,249.01	6,879.55
Ward Improvements	13,008.91	0.00	12,868.03	0.00
Earmarked Reserves	37,613.01	0.00	12,606.33	3,647.63
Precept	0.00	276,900.00	0.00	304,325.00
Bank Interest	72.00	1,260.71	72.00	4,435.93
Staff Costs	130,000.16	0.00	149,079.42	0.00
S106 Monies		0.00		0.00
Subtotal	279,539.76	297,723.78	310,326.09	330,539.06
Add Balance as at 1 April 2023 (carried forward)	0.00	117,901.89	0.00	132,463.12
Total	279,539.76	415,625.67	310,326.09	463,002.18
General Fund				
Total Income		415,625.67		463,002.18
Deduct Total Expenditure		279,539.76		310,326.09
Deduct Reserves Transfer		3,622.79		11,709.12
Balance as at 31 March 2024		132,463.12		140,966.97

BALANCE SHEET 2023/2024

Current Assets	2022/2023 (£)	2023/2024
Stocks and Stores	0.00	0.00
Work in progress	0.00	0.00
Debtors (Net of provision for doubtful debts)	0.00	4,325.07
Payments in Advance	10,677.40	9,172.41
VAT Recoverable	3,423.34	6,285.94
Temporary lendings (investments)	0.00	0.00
Cash in hand	252,576.48	251,397.35
Total Assets	266,677.22	271,180.77
Current Liabilities		
Creditors	-20,299.37	-4,589.95
Temporary borrowing	0.00	0.00
Net Assets	246,377.85	266,590.82
Represented by:		
General Fund Balance	132,463.12	140,966.97
Capital	0.00	0.00
Total Earmarked	113,914.73	125,623.85
Adjustments	0.00	0.00
Total funds available as at 31.3.2024	246,377.85	266,590.82



Parish Personnel - June 2024

FAIRLANDS WARD



Gordon Adam
Vice-Chairman
01483 234830



Brigitte Ahier
07852 533932



Saffina Ellahi
07939 013515



Bob McShee
01483 825907



Nigel Mitchell
Chairman
01483 232538



JACOBS WELL WARD



Mike Price
01483 571971



Jonathan Snowball
07788 916962

The Parish Council comprises sixteen councillors, the Clerk to the Council, Assistant Clerk, Finance Officer, Head Groundsman and Groundsman (currently there are **two** councillor vacancies).

Elections, whether they are contested or uncontested, take place every four years. If members leave during their term of office it creates a casual vacancy which is filled by co-option during those four years - you don't need to wait until the next elections. The next elections will take place in 2027.

Those wishing to be considered for the vacancies have to meet the eligibility criteria. Further details can be found on our website:

<https://worplesdon-pc.gov.uk/your-council/meet-your-councillors/becoming-a-councillor/>

PERRY HILL WARD



Martin Fance
07766 781929



Beth Nagle
01483 232036

Worplesdon Parish Council

Unit 2 Saxton

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Railton Road

Guildford GU2 9JX

<https://www.worplesdon-pc.gov.uk>

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WOOD STREET WARD



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07999 944601



Paul Cragg
01483 531597



Nuala Crampin
07775 297938



Curtis Riley
07802 891243



Terry Wright
07931 766770

STAFF



Gaynor White
Clerk
07487 686903



Victoria Fear
Assistant Clerk
07718 479409



Helen Lawrence
Finance Officer
07485 905403



Peter Trevena
Head Groundsman
07308 658882



Andy Connor
Groundsman
07485 905404

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