

# Worplesdon Parish Council Annual Report



## Chairman's Report 2024/2025

### Annual Parish Assembly (APA)

The APA, which is the annual meeting of the electors of the Parish, was held at Worplesdon Memorial Hall on 4 March 2025.

This year the Parish Council decided to concentrate on biodiversity and arranged for local groups to have stands; these were:

- Surrey Dormouse Group
- Surrey Bat Group
- Swift Conservation Project
- West Surrey Badger Group
- Thames Basin Heath Wardens
- Surrey Tree Wardens
- Surrey Wildlife Trust
- Zero Carbon (Guildford)
- Surrey Beekeepers Association

There were also keynote presentations by:

- Surrey Wildlife Trust
- Zero Carbon (Guildford)
- Surrey Beekeepers Association

Our MP Zöe Franklin attended the meeting, and her social media post on the APA resulted in That's TV South East News approaching the Clerk for an interview on how the Parish Council deals with biodiversity in the Parish.

### Biodiversity

In the last 12 months the wildflower test areas within Harry's Meadow have been successful in producing flowers and aiding pollinators. As a result, thanks to a generous grant from Surrey Wildlife Trust, we have sown yellow rattle across half of Harry's Meadow. We will be reporting the results of this biodiversity project to Surrey Wildlife Trust later in the year.

### Precept (Council Tax)

The Precept pays for the administration of and work conducted by the Parish Council.

It is collected locally and used to benefit the residents of the Parish.

For 2025/26 the precept increased by £1.16 per month for a Band D property. You will also have noted in the breakdown in your council tax invoice that Guildford Borough Council (GBC) equate the Parish precept to 2% of the total Council Tax that you pay. The Parish Council is not exempt from the NI Employer increases applied by Central Government in the Autumn budget.

Guildford Borough Council reduced the LCTSS grant to the Parish Council by £5,000, and in the next Municipal year the grant will be completely removed. In addition, GBC no longer provides concurrent functions grant aid which was used for the benefit of facilities across the Parish. Therefore, to maintain or enhance the playgrounds, bus shelters, benches, or other projects, the Parish Council needs to build up its Earmarked Reserves.

### Financial Summary for Year Ended 31 March 2025

Worplesdon Parish Council remains committed to sound financial management and transparency. During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, the Council's income and expenditure were carefully monitored to ensure efficient use of public funds.

### Key figures:

Total income: £371,983.05

Total expenditure: £346,027.81

Closing balance (reserves): Earmarked reserves £144,105.45 and General reserves £148,440.61

The Council's finances were managed in accordance with statutory requirements, and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) has been prepared and submitted in line with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. A period for public inspection of the accounts is held annually. The full accounts, including the AGAR and internal audit report, are available to view on the Council's website:

[worplesdon-pc.gov.uk/your-council/financial/](http://worplesdon-pc.gov.uk/your-council/financial/)

Alternatively, copies can be obtained by contacting the Parish Office.

### Community Speed Watch

Regular deployments occur across the Parish. The aim is to report speeding offences to Surrey Police who then issue formal warning letters to the owners of the identified vehicles. The deployments are purely educational. Our efforts are showing a reduction in speeding offences during our deployments and Surrey Police are regularly deploying at one of our sites.





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### Grants

The Parish Council is immensely proud to have been able to give grants to a number of local organisations during the last year. Grants of up to £500 are provided by the Parish Council and local organisations are encouraged to apply. The application form is available on the Parish Council website.

The Parish Council has recently loaned its litter picking equipment to National Highways for a litter pick on the River Wey in Guildford, and regularly loans the equipment to local scout groups and other interested local groups.

### Grass Cutting

A new 3-year grass cutting contract has been awarded to GCB Gardens. The contract is for the cutting of a total area of 90,000m<sup>2</sup> (the equivalent of twelve football pitches) of grass across the Parish including Wood Street Village Green, Jacobs Well Recreation Ground, Harry's Meadow, Perry Hill Green, and Pitch Place Green. The contract gives specific durations for areas to be cut between April and November each year. Additionally, our groundstaff carry out grass cutting in its play areas.

### Christmas Lights

In November 2024, the Parish Council were able to have two temporary Festive light cones installed, one at Fairlands Community Centre and the second at Jacobs Well Village Hall. The power for these lights was provided by each of the community bodies.

WPC have renegotiated the contract for the next three years and can confirm that the Christmas lights will include the two Festive light cones, two Christmas trees (one at Wood Street Village Green and the second at St Mary's Church), together with lights in the avenue of trees on Perry Hill Green.

This year, the fir tree that was planted on Pitch Place Green will also be illuminated. To achieve this a new utility box and meter have been installed on the southern edge of Pitch Place Green with below-ground ducting to the tree.

### Food Caddies

Replacement roadside food caddies can be collected from the Parish Office by prior appointment.

This service reduces the need for Residents to journey to Millmead therefore reducing journey times, carbon emissions, and parking fees.

### Flood Forum

WPC have been informed that we do not have any statutory duties in connection with flooding (other than riparian ownership responsibilities) and have therefore decided to take a hiatus from the Flood Forum. We will still collaborate with the relevant Authorities.

WPC organised a successful Flood Awareness and Resilience drop-in event at Fairlands Community Centre in February 2025 at which there were stands for:

- Surrey Fire and Rescue Service
- Thames Water
- Flood Re Scheme
- Environment Agency
- National Flood Forum
- Surrey County Council
- Guildford Borough Council

Members from our MPs office attended the session to network with those attending. Contact details are available on our website for all the appropriate Authorities.

### Councillors and Staff

On 16 September 2024, Cllr Dr Paul Cragg passed away after a short illness. His insight into environmental issues is much missed by the Parish Council. It is with a heavy heart that we also report the death of Cllr Gordon Adam, who passed away suddenly on 27 April 2025. He will be greatly missed by the Parish Council and the community generally.

With the loss of these two councillors there are currently four vacancies on the Parish Council and any volunteers to fill these casual vacancies would be appreciated. What skills do you need? Common sense and a desire to help your fellow residents are key. There are 9,000+ residents in the Parish so please think about joining the Parish Council and becoming involved in making Worplesdon the best place to live in Guildford.

If you are interested, please contact the office on 01483 300094 and our officers will be more happy to receive your call.

After 15 years with the Parish Council our Head Groundsman, Peter Trevena, retired in April 2025. We are pleased to announce that Andy Connor has been promoted to Senior Groundsman, and he is being assisted by Groundsman Neil Smart.



**Chairman, Worplesdon Parish Council**