

Worplesdon Parish Council Newsletter



AUTUMN 2025

Cllr David Bird – 1951 to 2025



It is with great sadness that we share the news of the unexpected passing of Cllr David Bird. David was a valued member of the Parish Council for many years, bringing not only his knowledge and dedication, but also his good humour and kindness to every meeting.

David had a particular passion for planning matters. His thoughtful approach and attention to detail ensured that discussions were thorough and balanced, always with the best interests of the community at heart. He was never afraid to speak up for what he believed in, yet he did so with warmth and respect. Beyond his council work, David was always ready to help anyone

who asked. He had an open, friendly nature that made him easy to approach, and he gave generously of his time and skills.

David's personal interests were many and varied. He was a great enthusiast for music and quizzing, and had a lifelong love of trains, cars, and motorbikes. He also took much enjoyment from working on his allotment, where he spent many happy hours cultivating plants and vegetables.

David's cheerful presence and genuine care for others will be deeply missed by all who knew him. The Parish Council extends its heartfelt condolences to his family and friends at this difficult time.

What's on in Worplesdon!

- **Saturday 27 September 2025 – Macmillan Coffee Morning and maypole dancing,** Wood Street Village Green
- **Wednesday 15 October 2025 – Community Volunteering Event,** Fairlands Village Hall – 4pm to 7pm. All are welcome!



MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE:
WWW.WORPLESDON-PC.GOV.UK

REPORTING ISSUES

If you notice any issues, such as potholes, flooding or leaks, don't leave it to someone else ... please report it!

Potholes, pavements, blocked and broken drains, flooding, fallen trees and overgrown vegetation can be reported  directly to **Surrey County Council** (www.surreycc.gov.uk).

This can be done **online**, or if you consider a problem to be an immediate threat to life or limb, or do not have internet access, call the Contact Centre on **0300 200 1003**.

To report **crimes** or **anti-social behaviour** do this directly to **Surrey Police** on **101** or via their **website** (if non-urgent) and **999** (if urgent).

Thames Water can be contacted on **0800 316 9800** for **sewage** flooding.

Flooding on highways and footpaths should be reported to Surrey County Council on  **0300 200 1003** or using <https://tellus.surreycc.gov.uk/>.

Fly-tipping on public highways or council land will be dealt with by **Guildford Borough Council**: www.guildford.gov.uk/reportflytipping.



Big Changes Ahead?

Understanding Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

As many residents may have heard, there are ongoing discussions about the future structure of local government in Surrey. These changes could have a major impact on the way local services are delivered — including here in Worplesdon. Worplesdon Parish Council is keeping a close eye on the developments and wants to ensure that our community understands what's being proposed, how it might affect you, and what role your parish council may play in the years ahead.

🔊 What Is Being Proposed?

Two key ideas are currently shaping the debate:

1. Devolution

Devolution means transferring more decision-making powers and funding from central government (in Westminster) to local or regional authorities. In practice, this could give councils greater control over:

- Local transport and infrastructure
- Housing and planning
- Adult education and skills
- Economic development

To secure these powers, local areas will be required to adopt new governance models — such as a directly elected mayor.

2. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

LGR would involve changing the current structure of local government in Surrey. At the moment, we operate under a two-tier system:

- Surrey County Council: responsible for services like education, highways, and social care.
- Guildford Borough Council: responsible for services like waste collection, local planning, and housing.

Under reorganisation, these will be replaced by unitary authorities — where one council delivers all local government services in a given area (e.g. West/East Surrey).

🏛️ What Are the Options?

Two models have been proposed by different councils:

◆ Surrey County Council's Proposal

SCC has suggested creating two unitary authorities for the whole of Surrey — replacing all 11 borough and district councils.

They believe this would:

- Streamline service delivery
- Eliminate duplication
- Reduce costs



Two unitary proposal



Three unitary proposal

◆ District and Borough Councils' Proposal

Some district and borough councils, including Guildford Borough Council (GBC), have expressed concern about two centralised authorities. They are proposing the creation of three smaller unitary authorities, such as:

- A "West Surrey" authority, potentially including Guildford, Surrey Heath, Waverley, and Woking.
- GBC say this would keep services more locally accountable and responsive.

👤 What About a Surrey Mayor?

As part of any devolution deal, government policy currently requires the introduction of a directly elected mayor — similar to those in Greater London, Greater Manchester, and the West Midlands.

This "Mayoral Combined Authority" could:

- Secure extra powers and funding from central government
- Oversee major strategic decisions across Surrey

However, it would also mean that key decisions are made by a single elected individual, potentially increasing centralisation.

👥 What Could This Mean for Residents?

Potential Benefits

Simpler council system
More efficient services
Greater funding for Surrey

Potential Concerns

Loss of local representation
Larger, more remote authorities
Risk of local priorities being overlooked

In particular, services that affect daily life — road maintenance, planning, refuse collection, and housing — could all be managed by a larger authority, with fewer councillors and fewer local officers.

🏡 The Role of Parish Councils – A Growing Responsibility?

For areas like Worplesdon, the role of Parish Councils may become more important under any new structure.

If borough councils are removed, parish and town councils may be expected to:

- Take on more responsibilities, such as maintaining additional parks, community buildings, or minor planning duties
- Act as the local voice within a much larger governing structure
- Engage more actively with unitary authorities and potentially with a new Mayor's office

This could offer opportunities to tailor services more closely to local needs — but also bring new demands in terms of funding, staffing, and training.

📝 What Happens Next For Worplesdon?

No final decisions have been made. Discussions are ongoing between Surrey County Council, Guildford Borough Council, and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The government would need to approve any structural changes. The public consultation has now closed and the government will confirm their decision in Autumn 2025.

📌 Worplesdon Parish Council's View

Worplesdon Parish Council believes that local voices must not be lost in any new system. We are:

- Monitoring proposals closely
- Engaging with our borough and county representatives
- Preparing for the possibility of taking on greater responsibilities in the future

We are committed to keeping residents informed and will continue to represent the interests of the Worplesdon community throughout this process.

👤 Want to Get Involved?

If you have views on how local government should be structured, please:

- Contact your borough and county councillors
- Watch for consultation announcements
- Consider attending a Parish Council meeting
- Consider becoming a Parish Councillor

We welcome your input and will keep residents updated through our website and future newsletters.

Challengers

Hitting All the Right Notes – £22K Raised!

A huge thank you to everyone who supported and sponsored this year's Wood Street Jazz Festival. Thanks to your generosity, an incredible £22,030 was raised! The contributions will help Challengers transform the lives of local disabled young people through the power of play. From the music to the community spirit, it was a wonderful day for a wonderful cause.

Litter Picking – Equipment Loan

If you would like litter pick in your local area, whether you are part of a community group or are simply an enthusiastic resident, you can arrange to borrow the litter picking equipment (adult pickers, child-sized pickers, and rubbish bag hoops) from the Parish Office. Please contact Victoria, Assistant Clerk to co-ordinate collection and return: admin@worplesdon-pc.gov.uk.

New Rector Welcomed

We are delighted to welcome Revd Dawn Lucas-Brown as the 48th Rector of the Parish of Worplesdon. Dawn was inducted by The Bishop of Dorking, The Rt Revd Paul Davies, in a packed service at St Mary's Church, Perry Hill.



Dawn Lucas-Brown

MAKE A DIFFERENCE WHERE YOU LIVE

- **Have a say** in local decisions
- **Represent your community**
- **Build new skills and confidence**
- **Get involved** in something that matters

All Parish Council meetings are open to the public. Why not come along to see how the Council operates. Our list of meetings can be accessed on our website.

BIN COLLECTION CALENDAR 2025

Residents are reminded that replacement kerbside food waste caddies can be collected from the Parish Council office, by appointment.

September

M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

October

M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

November

M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

RECYCLING COLLECTION WEEK

RUBBISH COLLECTION WEEK

Thank you for reading!



**WORPLESDON PARISH
COUNCIL**

www.worplesdon-pc.gov.uk
facebook @worplesdonpc

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