

News from St Martha Parish Council

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St Martha Parish recently held its Annual Assembly in Chilworth Village Hall. Annual Assemblies give members of the public the opportunity to learn what activities the various organisations in the village carry out during the year. It is also an opportunity to raise any issues with the Parish Council. Only parishioners on the electoral register can vote on issues but other members of the public may attend speak but not vote. The Annual Assembly is a legacy of the Middle Ages when local councils did not exist, and local decision making was carried out by a meeting of the whole community. These days the Annual Assembly is normally convened by the Parish Council but is not a Council meeting.

I'm afraid to say that this year's meeting was not well attended but nevertheless there were some interesting discussions about how people saw Chilworth, as a whole community, devoting in the future and about how better the parish council could tap into existing resources in order to disseminate information and gather views.

Looking to the future, consultations are taking place about the expansion of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) and we will tell you more about that and how it might impact on us, as things develop.

Looking forwards again, we are looking at ways in which we can contribute to a Carbon Net Zero future. Surrey County Council will no doubt take the lead on this but again we shall keep you informed.

On 4 July the North Downs Line Community Rail Partnership held its Annual General Meeting at Shalford. It was reported under the heading of 'performance and improvements' to the North Downs line: noise levels of the alarms at Tangley Level Crossing had been reduced as much as possible within permitted levels; the testing of Class 769 trains was continuing before the new trains are put into use; and the recent and future industrial rail action was highlighted.

Francesca Simpson, co-founder of 'Just Bring Yourself', gave an inspirational talk on a new very successful initiative set up due to the large number of visitors to Box Hill generated by the Covid pandemic. Many people started coming out from London and it was causing huge pressure with the number of cars and serious amounts of litter etc.

To address these issues, they consulted visitors and as a result are now running walking tours so people can engage with the area, begin to view it in a different way and learn to value it and not drop litter! Visitors are encouraged to have car-free days out in the Surrey Hills coming by train to Box Hill and Westhumble Station. There is an electric mini bus to take people around who have mobility problems and organised natural history experiences for inter-city school children are proving popular as are other attractions being offered.

Paul Millin, Group Manager, Travel & Transport at Surrey County Council gave a presentation on 'Surrey Transport' and the challenges facing Surrey to enable it to have

neutral carbon emissions by 2050. There would be a strong emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport. A new 'healthy street design' is to be rolled out, as well as a raft of other initiatives.

Speeding in the Parish: if you would be willing to support a speedwatch campaign in Blacksmith Lane – please contact Cllr Clare Price or the Clerk for further information.

Member Vacancies: – would you like to join us and make a difference? Being a Parish Councillor involves:

- Participating in the management of the Parish – including attendance at meetings, setting policies, strategies, the budget (Council Tax), service delivery etc.
- Representing the interests of the local community
- Putting something back into your local community and environment
- Having useful skills to offer
- It's actually good fun – most of the time!

Anyone wishing to be considered for co-option should contact the Clerk or any of the Members.

Councillors:

Jean-Pierre Pugh (Chair) - pugh.jp@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

Patricia Allen - allen.p@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

John Peake - peake.j@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

Clare Price (Vice Chair) - price.c@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

Julia Tantram - tantram.j@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

Parish Clerk: Anne Tait - clerk@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

Next Meeting: Tuesday 6th September 2022 to be held in Chilworth Village Hall at 7 p.m.