



News from St Martha Parish Council

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Having entered a new year, the Parish Council has been looking at the Budget for the Financial Year 2022-23. Costs have inevitably risen but the Council is mindful that times are difficult for many and has therefore been careful to keep costs down as much as possible, whilst still maintaining the best interests of its residents and looking at new ways of making improvements.

Extending the Surrey Hills? The Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally important landscape, something everyone living in the area should be justly proud of. There has been a desire locally over many years for a review to decide whether areas adjacent to the existing AONB boundary should also be designated. One of these areas under consideration abuts Chilworth and is currently *locally* designated an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). AGLVs are areas of high landscape quality with strong distinctive characteristics which make them particularly sensitive to development but which don't have the same protection as areas in the AONB. A review is already underway, led by Natural England, and the first phase is to gather evidence about the natural beauty of the areas under consideration, currently outside the AONB, and views have been sought from people living in, around, and visiting the Surrey Hills, to help inform the decision. (The evidence gathering period ends on 31st January.) For more information/news on this and other Surrey Hills matters please go to:

<https://www.surreyhills.org/> or on Instagram @SurreyHillsAONB

Chilworth Station Improvements At the time of writing this, the much-awaited enhancement by NetWork Rail contractors, with funding from GWR, is taking place. This project has been a long time coming and it is good to see new fencing and the removal of redundant old concrete posts. The replacement metal fencing is due to be white powder coated to match in with the existing picket fencing. We would like to thank the Southeast Communities Rail Partnership (SCRIP) and Surrey Hills AONB who have worked with us for nearly 4 years on this project. Another initiative is also underway. Due to GWR funding and help from SCRIP, Art Work produced by the children of Tillingbourne School and Chilworth Church of England Infant School should soon be on display in the platform shelters. A great way of livening up the station and celebrating the work of our local children and their schools!

Being more sustainable We have very few street lights in our lovely semi-rural Parish and the ensuing dark skies are enjoyed by many but dark skies can be degraded by external lights if left on unnecessarily. Perhaps in 2022 we could

all make a little more effort to reduce our energy consumption wherever and whenever we can. The wildlife might also appreciate it!

Friends of the Gunpowder Mills

The '***Friends of the Gunpowder Mills***' are a volunteer group who work in conjunction with Guildford Borough Council to help maintain this historic site and its heritage. Most activities involve clearing vegetation in the site under the supervision of Countryside wardens so that it remains an interesting and picturesque place for people to enjoy. But we need more people to help us: so if you, or anyone you know, are interested in joining then please contact Councillor Clare Price if you would like to hear more:

price.c@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk It's not however all work and no play and we are planning a number of fun activities at the site in coming year.

West Lodge Parish Council is continuing to apply for external funding for this project. In the meantime you can assist us:

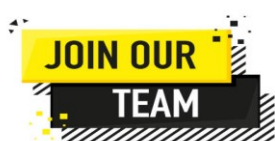
Your support for this project will be of great benefit in helping us secure vital funding to make West Lodge an asset we can all be proud of so please also add your 'Votes' /comments on:

<https://yourfundsurreymap.commonplace.is/comments/603f85454a9338fd005be703> *This link it on the PC website.*

Tree planting Surrey County Council and partners have been awarded almost £300,000 of funding from the Forestry Commission's Local Authority Treescapes Fund to plant 25,000 new trees across Surrey. The funding is being topped up by Surrey County Council to allow an additional 9,000 trees to be planted as part of the scheme, bringing the total to 34,000.

Trees improve water quality, air quality and biodiversity, and help to transform communities. The new scheme supports the County Council's ambitious target to plant 1.2 million trees by 2030 and is in addition to the planting programme already planned for this autumn. The Parish Council is extremely keen to promote the planting of further trees in the Parish to mitigate our carbon footprint so if you have any suggestions on where you would like to see more trees in our parish, or if you have a place in your garden, or land where you would like some planted, please get in touch with us as soon as possible:

allen.p@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk



Parish Council Vacancy - There is one vacancy on the Council, so if you are considering getting involved with local matters do let us know. It is varied and interesting work, and a great way of helping your community. Have a think! Parish Councillors would be very happy to tell you what is involved and answer your questions.

Councillors:

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

Patricia Allen (Vice Chair) - allen.p@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

Graham Brown - brown.g@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

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

Clare Price - price.c@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

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

Clerk:

Anne Tait - clerk@stmarthaparishcouncil.co.uk

Next Meeting: 22nd February 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in Chilworth Village Hall