

Environmental Sub Committee Report

Due to various holidays the Environmental Sub Committee did not meet with all its members. However, we have been very busy with sub group meetings, attending meetings and events, and carrying out small projects.

Village Green Status for two wooded areas.

Fran Smith and Flip Cargil met twice to finalise the questionnaire for Village Green status for Leach Grove Wood. In Flip's absence, I can report that 90 questionnaires were distributed before she left for Tasmania. I have some of the questionnaires in case someone wants to take one away.

Flip also met with Lucy Quinnell in order to share her information about Village Green status for Teazle Wood. Lucy has a wealth of endorsements of public use of Teazle Wood and is ready to submit her application.

Both applications are very time sensitive because the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs(DEFRA) is asking the Council to change the legislation and exclude wooded areas from Village Green Status. Flip has been assured that our application will be considered right up to the time the legislation is changed.

The key to gaining this status is that the area has had unimpeded use by members of the public for at least 20 years. The ownership of the land is immaterial. Both woods satisfy these requirements.

Norbury Park Liaison Group

I attended the Norbury Park Liaison Group on 10th October. I was asked to relate to our members the information about tree planting in Norbury Park by volunteers on two days in January, the 15th and 22nd 2012. On each day the times are between 10 a.m. to 12 noon and between 2 and 4 p.m.

A wood of 2000 cherry, ash and field maple is to be planted. If you are interested you should contact Ranger Graham Manning 07968 832 508.

Graham Manning has plans to place 3 Tenax fenced enclosures in Norbury in an experiment to help judge the extent of damage to trees and other flora by deer. I was requested to share this information to allay public concern when the fences appear. The exact locations are not yet known. Apparently they will be 6 feet tall, wire covered in green plastic, and 15 square feet each. This experiment is a requirement of some funding that has been applied for.

There continues to be some concern about the way the sawmill workers have been treated with only 3 out of 7 still employed. The manager was made redundant and SWT have now taken on the responsibility of managing the sawmill. SCC are once again trying to save the sawmill from closure.

Swanworth Farm was highlighted as a special agenda item. Surrey Wildlife Trust(SWT) have committed themselves to coming to an amicable agreement with farmer, Nick Bullen and keeping the NPLG members advised of the result of an upcoming meeting with the farmer and his representatives.

High Street Beautification

Failing to get the two planters that Ann Cardew thought were promised for the west end of the High Street, several of the committee members decided to look for any place on the High Street that could be brightened with some plants.

Two beds on the east end of the High Street were located that had only weeds. With permission of the nearest office the beds were cleared, enriched with new compost and planted.

In a further effort to experiment with planting and watering, inexpensive planters were purchased, planted and placed in the 'waterless feature'.

We were pleased that Flip Cargill and Ann Cardew were allowed to attend the latest High Street Advisory Group.

Open house at the community garden

On 24th September the Community invited the public in to showcase the work that has taken place this year. Caroline Brown represented the LRA and was very impressed with what she saw. She has written a letter to the Leatherhead Advertiser to commend the work and it was printed. There is a more complete report in the LRA newsletter which will be ready for distribution shortly.

There was an official hand over of the Cheque for £250 from the Green Mole Forum. As has been mentioned earlier, the Environmental Committee decided to donate the money for the purchase of berry bushes for the Community Garden fruit cage.

I attended a meeting at West Hill School on 12th October with Rebecca Bevan, Wisley's fruit and vegetable expert, who has given some advice on planting the berry bushes in the fruit cage. There will also be more about this in the newsletter.