

Warden's Notes: June 2020

Hello

This is the latest of an occasional series of personal notes by me, Martin Stuart, the Parish Warden, where I talk about what's happening in Grappenhall and Thelwall, what work I've been doing recently and bring you some pictures of the amazing wealth of natural beauty and wildlife that I come across whilst travelling round the Parish.

I work 16 hours a week patrolling the highways, footpaths and public places in the Parish keeping them free from litter and clear of overhanging growth and weeds along with any other tasks that need doing. I also act as the 'eyes and ears' of the Parish Council by resolving problems that occur or reporting them to other authorities. I like to think that I act as an ambassador for the Parish Council, being out and about around the Parish and being able to talk to lots of residents. So, if you see me around (wearing my hi-vis vest that says what I am) stop and have a chat or at least say hello, as long as we do it with a safe social distance of 2 metres between us!



It is truly a strange time that we're living through in the midst of the global coronavirus pandemic. A frightening, and for some, tragic time with a very strange lifestyle in lockdown. At the same time, it has been truly heartening to see the way that the local community has come together to help and support each other and the vulnerable in particular. I love the way that everyone is giving stuff away, from plants to unwanted garden furniture by leaving it at the bottom of their driveways for anyone to collect.

My work also has been impacted and I have not been able to carry out many of my normal duties due to shielding issues, but I am now getting back into things but without the vehicle that I normally have access to for two days a week. This will restrict the range of duties that I can carry out or at least make me slower to complete them!

Bear with me however as I will plod on and continue to do whatever I can to keep the parish spick and span and accessible to all.

Community Litter Picks

Unfortunately, one of the first victims of the coronavirus pandemic is our programme of community litter picks as shown on the poster below. The first one was due to be held on 25th April and that had to be cancelled whilst the second one on 13th June will also not now go ahead. Hopefully the third and final one of the year scheduled for 3rd October may be possible but we will have to wait and see how things are progressing at that time. Watch this space.



If you would like to be placed on our database so as to be sent an email reminder shortly before the next litter pick just telephone the Parish Council office on 01925 264918 or drop a line to info@grappenhallandthelwallpc.org.uk

Hedges alongside Footpaths

It's that time of year when I need to get out and start cutting back the hedges that border many of the footpaths in the parish, before they engulf the path itself.



Here's a picture of one of the hedges at the footpath leading into Portola Close which would soon block the path without being cut back.

However, because of the need to maintain social distancing whilst trimming these hedges, I will need to close the footpaths temporarily whilst I'm working on them. So please would you comply with any '*footpath closed*' signs that you may come across and find an alternative route to your destination. I promise I will keep such closures to the bare minimum.

Rant of the month



This is the part of these 'Notes' where I let rip about a specific type of litter that I'm having to pick up which is particularly irritating me. The pictures above show a new form of littering that's becoming unfortunately all too common in these coronavirus times. In case you can't recognise them, they are, respectively, a surgical-type glove, an empty bottle of hand sanitiser and a face mask, all items that are commonly being dropped in our streets at the moment. I spotted all these within a 10 minute period in one day along Knutsford Road.

Now this is not only messy and untidy but potentially very dangerous if these items are contaminated with the virus. Although I never pick up litter without my trusty litter picker, I don't feel comfortable carrying around a black bag possibly containing the virus.

So please, dispose of all your litter safely in one of the many bins provided in the parish or take it home to dispose of it, particularly PPE items such as these.

Nature and wildlife



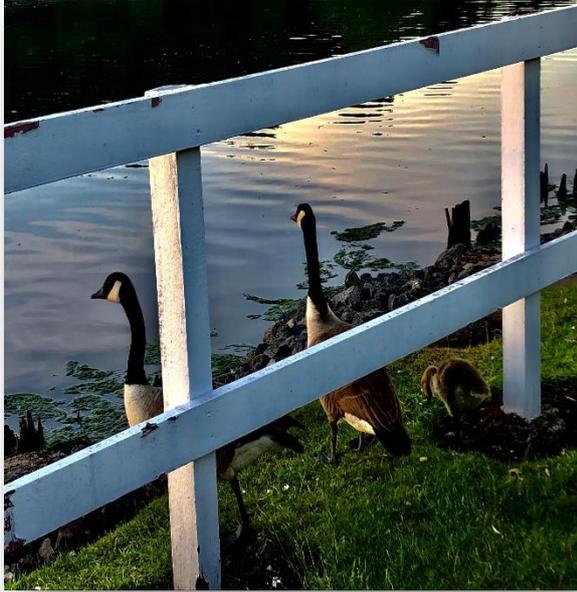
Despite what's happening in the human world nature seems to carry on as normal and thrive in these dark times.

The weather has been fantastic for most of the past two months and there's even some evidence that the reduction of human activity (less cars, trains, aeroplanes and industrial activity) has brought benefits to the natural world in terms of better air quality and lower carbon emissions.

This pair of ducks and their chicks on the Bridgewater Canal were certainly enjoying the sunshine.



Here is a great picture of a Heron taking wing over the canal where it runs alongside the playing fields of Grappenhall Sports Club.



My final wildlife picture shows two Canada Geese with one of their (rather large and fluffy) chicks at the Penny Ferry in Thelwall.

Fly tipping and litter

And finally, finally, if you come across examples of fly-tipping or large concentrations of litter within the Parish that I can clear up (or where there are larger items involved and the Borough Council will move them) please let us know by contacting the parish council on **01925 264918** or info@grappenhallandthelwallpc.org.uk . I can't promise to deal with everything reported instantly but can usually deal with most things reported within the week in order to keep the parish as clean and shiny as we all want it to be.