

Warden's Notes: September 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 around 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. 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. The first one was due to be held on 25th April and that had to be cancelled whilst the second one on 13th June also did not go ahead. It seems unlikely the third and final one of the year scheduled for 3rd October will be possible within government coronavirus guidelines 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 hedges that border footpaths have to be cut back before they engulf the path itself.

However, because of the need to maintain social distancing whilst trimming these hedges, I have had to close the footpaths temporarily whilst 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.

The programme of hedge trimming has now been completed, with the able assistance of Bradley, the council's apprentice who divides his time between working with me in the community and working at Grappenhall Heys Walled Garden.

Due to the difficulties of getting access to a vehicle because of coronavirus, referred to above, you will notice several piles of hedge clippings, particularly around the Morris Brook Park area. Rest assured though that they will be removed in due course, once we manage to resolve our transportation difficulties.

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.

You may recognise the canisters in the picture below. They are for nitrous oxide, commonly known as 'laughing gas' and are inhaled to produce some sort of *high* by breathing in from a balloon.



It's become quite common therefore to find these discarded canisters, often with deflated balloons, in our parks and streets.

Now as a form of litter it drives me crazy having to pick up these things but, perhaps more importantly, it can cause serious harm to your health and even death. It is, therefore, illegal to sell or import nitrous oxide for human consumption.

So please don't discard these things around the parish but perhaps, more importantly, don't use them at all for unauthorised uses and make sure that your children aren't using them.

Diamond Park



I don't know how many of you know Diamond Park, off Barley Road, at Thelwall but it's a delightful little park which the Parish Council has done a lot to improve recently. In addition to the new play equipment installed there, we have also made a permanent memorial to the NHS from the painted pebbles that the children of the area left in the form of a 'snake' at the park gates when it was closed during the lockdown. We have set them in concrete in the form of a rainbow and coated them in a clear lacquer to preserve them. The picture on

the left shows the memorial whilst the one below shows a close-up of some of the pebbles.



Other features installed in the park can be seen in the pictures on the page below. Firstly a series of 'fairy doors' and other pictures have been cut into the trees by a local artist. I am assured that they have been treated in such a way that they will do no harm to the trees.

Secondly, we have 'planted' a set of mushrooms in a magic circle under the trees. They are very robust and can be used for all sorts of imaginative play or perhaps for children to sit on and be told stories.



Fairy door



Mushroom circle

Nature and wildlife



And finally, here's a rather nice picture of a cheeky young chap who was very curious about what we were doing whilst we were cutting back the hedge at the entry to Menlow Close in Grappenhall.

Despite the lack of a redbreast, it's actually a young robin who was clearly too young to have developed a healthy (for him) fear of humans.

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 to keep the parish as clean and shiny as we all want it to be.