

Warden's Notes: October 2021

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.



Litter Picking

Our second community litter pick of the year was held on 2nd October and was, despite on and off rain all day, a considerable success. Some 30 people took part and collected a total of 40 bags of litter as well as reporting various instances of fly-tipping which I was able to remove with the parish council vehicle. After the litter pick everyone enjoyed a drink and one of the delicious cakes baked by Eryn the daughter of our assistant Parish Clerk. The picture below shows our vehicle loaded up with the collected litter.



In addition to our organised picks, there are several individuals and groups that continue to carry out litter picks, not least the admirable Thelwall Grappenhall Litter Picking Group and Clean up my Community-Warrington who both do amazing work in the community.

Should any groups or individuals who have carried out litter picks within the parish need refuse bags collecting, simply send me a message in Facebook messenger telling me where the bags have been left (or, ideally, describing the location using

the 'what3words' app) and I will collect and dispose of them.

In the new year we will publish a schedule of litter picks for 2022 to give you an early chance to put the dates in your diary. We may also base one of the litter picks in Thelwall so as to spread the good work a little further since people at our events naturally prefer not to walk too far from the litter picking base.

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

Diamond Park

You may (or may not) have noticed this sign erected recently on the main gates into Diamond Park at Thelwall. It is there to warn people of the thick and oily substance that we have painted on the top edge of the gate to prevent people climbing up the gate on to the adjacent sub-station. It was felt that this was necessary after we received reports of children doing precisely that, a very dangerous activity. The special paint makes the surfaces slippery and hard to climb and will hopefully prevent such hazardous activity in future.



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.

This week it's single use plastic water bottles of which I collect hundreds every week from our roads and pavements, mostly I imagine tossed out of car windows.

Now not only are these an irritating litter source but there's increasing evidence that discarded plastics have a harmful effect on the environment, in particular the marine environment, and on human health.

Personally, I find that the device in my house called '*a tap*' delivers much cheaper and fresher water (it hasn't been stuck on a warehouse shelf for months or years) and is much more convenient.

But whatever, if you must use such bottles, please take them home or dispose of them properly in a litter bin or other waste receptacle so they don't end up despoiling wildlife or the human environment.

Thelwall - Footpath



There's a footway on Stockport Road just before Lymm Road goes off on the left which tends to get obstructed by both branches and nettles as well as soil spilling out from the little triangle of land overgrown with trees. As the photo shows, I've cleared it so that the footpath is again passable on foot.

As a matter of interest, there is a story that this little triangle of land was an ancient '*Pinfold*', an area of common land where, in times gone by, any livestock found wandering on the highway were taken to until their owners reclaimed them.

I've no idea whether this is the case or not but it's an interesting story and an insight into the areas agricultural past.

Nature and Wildlife



And look at this fairy grotto that I came across in the woods alongside the canal at Grappenhall Sports Club. You can imagine that fairies gather there after dark to dance around these mushrooms !

Actually they are called 'Fly Agaric' and are poisonous so please do not be tempted by their bright colours to pick or handle them.

Road Signs



Have you ever wondered why there are no green road signs, like this one, in Grappenhall and Thelwall parish ?

This green goo on road signs seems to occur where they are under trees or foliage and often makes them difficult to read for motorists.

The answer of course is that I go out and clean them regularly with my trusty long handled mop and bucket, where I am made aware of them.

So if you see any dirty road signs that I have missed in the parish, please ring in to the council office and let us know so I can go out and clean them.

Then all the signs in the parish will continue to be as clean and shiny as this one below.



Incidentally, the '*before*' picture of a green sign, above, was taken outside the parish as I could not find a dirty one within it to illustrate the point.

Fly tipping and litter

And 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 which Warrington Council will move) please let us know by contacting the Parish Council on **01925 264918** or info@grappenhallandthelwallpc.org.uk.

As reported above, our recent community litter pick sent people out looking for litter and provided me with several reports of fly tipping which I was able to collect there and then.

I can't promise to always 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.