

## Warden's Notes: February 2022

### 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.

### Community Litter Picking

We are currently finalising our 2022 programme of community litter picks, trying to avoid key dates such as school holidays, Thelwall Rose Queen and Grappenhall Walking Day so as to maximise the turnout for the events. Once the dates have been agreed we will publicise them widely so that you can get them in your diaries and, hopefully, join in these enjoyable local events.

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 locality.

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.

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](mailto:info@grappenhallandthelwallpc.org.uk)

### Litter Bins

Whilst on the theme of litter, the Parish Council has recently invested in buying more public litter bins to meet the perceived shortfall of such provision. Warrington Borough Council are

at the limit of their capacity to empty litter bins so that any new provision has to be provided (and emptied) by the Parish Council.

These pictures show the rather elegant litter bin that the Parish Council recently purchased and which I have installed at the end of Ferry Lane in Thelwall, an area where there was a distinct shortage of bin provision.



It was of course necessary to secure the consent of the landowner to the placement of this bin and we chose the attractive slatted style of bin rather than the standard black plastic one due to the rustic location, near to the famous Thelwall Penny Ferry.

Based on my experience of emptying this bin regularly, it is well used and was clearly needed here.

I was recently asked, "Which are the two most overfilled litter bins in the parish?". My answer was the one alongside the Bridgewater Canal at Chester Road and the one on the footpath from Grappenhall Cricket Club to the Walled Garden alongside the new housing development under construction.

It was therefore decided to replace these two existing bins with new 'double bins' offering greatly increased capacity.

They were therefore purchased and installed by the Parish Council but will continue to be emptied by the Borough Council.

Pictures below show these new bins installed at these two locations.



## 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.



It's an old 'favourite' which I've probably ranted about before, the facemask, currently being worn everywhere to guard against Covid 19.

Whilst it is good practice to wear these things, particularly in indoor places, it is definitely *not* good practice to throw them on the ground when you come outdoors again, however uncomfortable they may be to wear.

And that is certainly what many people are doing judging by the many hundreds of them that I have to pick up on a daily basis.

So the message is the same as usual – please, please, take face masks home to dispose of them or put them in a litter bin.

## Nature and Wildlife



Here's a picture of a Buzzard, perched on a lighting tower on Stockton Lane in Grappenhall.

A few years ago Buzzards were almost extinct in Cheshire but have had a revival in recent years. There are several of them that regularly circle over the parish and magnificent raptors they are too.

You'll recognise them by their size, with a wingspan of up to 130 cm and by their characteristic mewling cry, rather like a cat!

And here's a picture of some of this year's brood of cygnets that our resident swan couple produced, alongside the Bridgewater Canal.



They're almost fully grown now but you can still see some of their baby brown feathers if you look closely.

It's a pity I can't show you a video of what happened next as they proceeded to run up Stockton Lane, slapping their great big feet down for what seemed like a long way before taking off into flight.

And that's about it for this month. Winter is a time when there's not a lot interesting to report unless you want to see a picture of me litter picking in the rain?

So roll on summer, or at least spring and hopefully a scaling back of this dreadful Covid outbreak and the chance to get out and about and mix with each other freely again.

### **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](mailto:info@grappenhallandthelwallpc.org.uk).

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.