



# SHERE PARISH COUNCIL

Serving the villages of Gomshall,  
Holmbury St Mary, Peaslake, Shere  
and a large part of Abinger Hammer

## ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022

### Chairman's Report

The Parish Council first put forward the idea for building some affordable housing on the yard at Peaslake Farm in 2014. After extensive public discussion and consultation, it was established that the idea had wide public support but it has still taken until Christmas 2021 to get full formal planning permission (nearly two years after submission) from Guildford Borough Council (GBC).

However, with planning permission now granted, Greenoak Housing Association (GHA) is at last able to begin scheduling the building phase for these much-needed new affordable homes and it is hoped that they can be completed for occupation by Autumn 2023. In the next few months, as promised, GHA will be consulting with residents living near to the site to hear their concerns over the building phase. GHA will then formulate a plan and have a public meeting to address any residual worries residents may have, over any disruption and inconvenience arising from the work, but the conclusion of this major project is now in sight.

On a more modest scale, for the last three to four years the Parish Council has taken the decision to use some of the annual precept and some of its reserves, to part fund infrastructure works in the Parish, that would normally be seen as the sole responsibility of Surrey County Council (SCC) or GBC. This pragmatic approach of the Parish Council has helped ensure and bring forward improvements in infrastructure that would otherwise not have been undertaken (at least not

at that time) by SCC or GBC due to budgetary constraints.

The year 2021/22 was no exception – although our reserves are not limitless and our ongoing demands on the precept continue to increase each year.

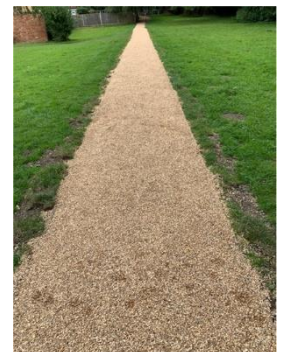
Nevertheless, for pedestrian safety, the Parish



Council supported the creation of the 'virtual' pavement in Queen Street, Gomshall, the widening of the pavement and installation of bollards outside Shere Delights in Shere and due to be installed shortly, the

traffic calming for Horsham Road, Holmbury St Mary, where traffic enters the village from the Ockley direction.

Also, many Shere residents will have been pleased to see, via the support of Handa Bray, the much-improved surface to the path across the Swimming Pool Field.



Most significantly in the last few years, we have witnessed a continuing increase in visitor numbers in all our villages. In 2021/22 the Parish Council began forward planning via the implementation of a Strategic Five-Year Plan, which looks at how we can improve the Parish over the next five years. Part of the plan is to mitigate the social and

financial impact of the increased popularity of our villages, exacerbated by the pandemic lockdowns and increased publicity via social media.

We have all seen more people, more cars, more crowded village centres, more litter and an increase in inconsiderate and illegal parking and traffic problems. The increase in numbers is highly visible, giving rise to concerns from residents. The financial impact of so many visitors, whilst an obvious benefit to businesses, creates a direct and incremental increase in the cost that the community must cover, via the precept (money collected on our behalf by GBC, through council tax). This is at a time when SCC and GBC funding for services and support normally provided to Parish Councils, is under ever increasing strain. Whilst we have reluctantly been forced to increase our 2022/23 residential precept charge above the rate of inflation, the increase in our income is nowhere near sufficient to cover additional future costs. Some of these are as follows:

- Higher numbers of visitors have led to increased cleaning costs to the public toilets – yet the traditional contributory grant made by GBC has just been axed.
- Greater vehicle movements and use of car parks, increase repair and maintenance costs – but GBC is no longer willing/able to help the Parish Council cover these heavy ongoing costs.
- Huge increases in take-away food and coffees leads to more litter - which has led



the Parish Council to spend £5,852 (with help from GBC) on additional larger litter bins for Peaslake and Shere. GBC are also currently reviewing all the bin locations, with

the intention of charging for emptying the bins, where possible.

- Increased footfall on the river bank in the centre of Shere leads to more frequent turfing.

The Parish Council has spoken and listened to many residents throughout the Parish, both in person and via correspondence received from the recent public consultation, in Shere. We have also studied the future demands on our finances and conclude that visitors, whilst welcome to enjoy our valued village settings, should be asked to contribute to the costs. The repair and maintenance of the car parks they use, the public toilets they visit, and the amenity spaces, footpaths, river bank etc, all incur extra annual maintenance and repair costs, due to the increase in footfall.

The implementation of parking charges for the main car park in Shere is a necessary move to increase the Parish Council income to cover these costs and better balance the burden between residents and visitors. The Parish Council recognises the parking needs of residents without off street parking, those who use the local shops and those who work in the village and we are looking into ways to try and accommodate these needs, by hopefully negotiating an agreement with the Trustees of Shere Recreation Ground, for use of the overflow car park. In the main car park, the council can report (subject to the agreement with the Trustees of Shere Recreation Ground) that we will include 30 minutes free parking before charging commences, to allow for drop-off at the Nursery and School or to pop to the shops etc. and the charging period thereafter will be from 8am to 6pm, at £1 per hour. Charging is never popular and is not something the Parish Council wanted to do but it is the only way a suitable car park will be available for use by both residents and visitors. Alternative locations for additional car parking have been investigated and no land is available for this purpose at present.

The Strategic Five-Year Plan also covers subjects such as wellbeing and climate and is a live document which can be added to and improved.

To view the initial document, please see our website.

Given the pressures on funding and what services the Parish Council can provide, it is gratifying to see community spirited support, stepping in to help fill some gaps. These are just some of the activities our residents are involved with:

- Litter clearance from highway verges and public footpaths by the local authority is now limited, but the creation and efforts of The Garbage Gang initiative is making a huge impact and a very noticeable improvement in our environment.
- The Drop-in Centre has restarted and the numbers coming on a Monday and Thursday morning for a cup of coffee, cake and a chat continues to grow. Shere Village Cinema provides the group with a free film showing once a month with Shere Village Hall providing the venue, and our cake donations from Hilly's and the Kingfisher Farm shop are always well received.



- There is a newly established Speed Watch team in Holmbury St. Mary that owes its existence to the enthusiasm and energy of a group of residents that came together in response to speeding in the village.

Thank you to all residents who volunteer their time and work tirelessly to help the community. The Parish Council tries to help support and facilitate community-generated initiatives. Thank you as well, for all of your support and

understanding of the Council's efforts to keep our Parish an attractive and welcoming place to live.

### **Roy Davey (Chairman)**

#### **Thanks to:**

Parish Councillors, in particular Brian Grover who is stepping down as Parish Councillor after many years; his knowledge, experience and calm personality will be greatly missed.

Suzanne Hoyland (Parish Clerk & RFO), Samantha Robins (Assistant Clerk) and Jonathan Duffy (Drop-in Coordinator and Parish Assistant) for their time, hard work and dedication.

Robert Hughes (Surrey County Council Councillor), Richard Billington (Guildford Borough Councillor) and Diana Jones (Guildford Borough Councillor) for their advice, help and regular attendance at meetings.

#### **Thanks also to:**

David Colebrook for ongoing repairs to the playing field in Peaslake.

Christina Gorsuch and the team, for caring for the Shere ducks.

Annabel Alford-Warren and her team for their gardening around Shere village.

The Council Contractors - Christopher Rapley, Graham Rapley and Thomas Gruber (and team).

**Special Thanks** goes to Brian Hilsdon who is leaving us this month. Brian has worked for the Parish Council in many capacities over the years as maintenance contractor, gardener, cleaner for Tanyard Hall and the Old Fire Station and lastly as the person to open the Shere toilets. Thank you Brian, for all your hard work, you will be missed.

**And finally** thank you in advance to the Dabbling Duck who have volunteered to open the toilets daily for the Parish Council.

#### **Parish Council Information**

Shere Parish Council is a non-political Council and councillors are entirely voluntary. This means that the Councillors do not claim any remuneration for their work.

Shere Parish is the largest geographically, within Guildford Borough and serves four villages:

Gomshall, Holmbury St Mary, Peaslake and Shere and a large part of Abinger Hammer excluding the village centre. The Parish is unique in the amount of land it owns and leases and is a popular attraction for tourists, and film companies. These influence the Parish greatly regarding the facilities it can offer and the character of the environment it seeks to preserve.

At least nine full council meetings are held each year as well as many other committee meetings. All council/committee meetings are open to the public and there is at least one adjournment during each meeting to enable members of the public to ask questions or to address the Council. Meetings are held around the Parish in the village halls. Dates and times of these meetings are published on the village notice boards and on the Council's website. A short report of each council meeting is published in the Parish magazines and the full Minutes of all recent council and committee meetings are available on the Council's website, together with the contact details of individual Councillors.

#### **Routine Services provided by the Parish Council**

Much of the Council's work each year involves the management of ongoing services across the Parish and involvement in statutory consultation processes. The Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications in the Parish and liaises with other authorities e.g., Police, Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council. It is also a consultee on a whole range of policy documents from other authorities.

#### **How to contact Shere Parish Council for assistance or information:**

**Council Office:** Tanyard Hall, 30 Station Road, Gomshall, GU5 9LF. Tel: 01483 203431



**Email:** [clerk@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.shereparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.shereparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Please note that correspondence to the Council should be sent for the attention of the Clerk, Suzanne Hoyland, at Tanyard Hall.

#### **Shere Parish Council Councillors (as of April 2022)** **North Ward (Shere & Gomshall)**

**Candace Brooke** - The Old Netley Mill, Shere Road, Gomshall, GU5 9HA. 01483 203267

[candace.brooke@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:candace.brooke@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Jonathan Cross** - 1 Shere Court, Hook Lane, Shere GU5 9QH. 01483 203443

[jonathan.cross@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.cross@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Roy Davey** - Fernside, Upper Street, Shere, GU5 9JE. 01483 202443

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**James Hutton** - Netley House, Shere Road, Gomshall, GU5 9QA. 01483 203800

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**Mike Keeble** - The Cottage, Lower Street, Shere GU5 9HX. 01483 202869

[mike.keeble@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:mike.keeble@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**One Councillor Vacancy for North Ward – please contact the office if you are interested in this role**

#### **South East Ward (Holmbury St. Mary & a large part of Abinger Hammer)**

**Bob Andrews** - Ansells Cottage, Pitland Street, Holmbury St. Mary, RH5 6NP. 01306 730693

[bob.andrews@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:bob.andrews@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Christopher Carlisle** - Upfolds House, Holmbury Lane, Holmbury RH5 6ND. 01306 621209

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**Raymond Smith** - 7 Felday Houses, Holmbury St. Mary, RH5 6NJ

[raymond.smith@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:raymond.smith@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk)

#### **South West Ward (Peaslake)**

**Paul Carter** - 3 Rose Cottages, Ewhurst Road, Peaslake, GU5 9RP. 01306 731616

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**Beverley Harrap** - Little Orchard, Wonham Way, Peaslake, GU5 9PA. 01306 731009

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**Geraldine Reffo** - 1 Rose Cottages, Ewhurst Road, Peaslake, GU5 9RP. 01306 775023

[gerry.reffo@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:gerry.reffo@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Marion Taylor-Cotter** - 9 Fulvens Cottages, Peaslake GU5 9PG. 07803 893648

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