

Parish Magazine – November 2023 Issue

The Square, Shere, Proposed Pedestrianised Area – Surrey County Council (SCC) Placemaking consultation of their proposed plans for the part pedestrianisation of The Square went ahead, despite the Parish Council's concerns over the options available, the area of the consultation (which far exceeded the residents most impacted by the proposal) and the way in which process was communicated.

Chairman R Davey drafted a letter to the Head of Placemaking, explaining that the proposal was divisive in the village community and more extensive than the originally proposed scheme, which was the limited sectioning off, that had taken place through covid. It was also not what was envisaged by SCC Councillor B Hughes and most importantly that the village is residential, when the Placemaking Teams mission statement was as follows: 'coordinates and delivers cohesive place-led schemes to create high quality public realm in local towns for residents and visitors to enjoy while supporting local economic growth'. The letter was agreed at Full Council and sent.

The Council has also lodged a Freedom of Information request to find out the following:

- What was the brief for the plans
- Who provided it
- Who did they speak to in The Square about it

SCC Councillor B Hughes is arranging a meeting with the Parish Council and the Placemaking Team as soon as the results of the consultation had been analysed.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED) – the council owns and maintains four AEDs in the villages, one by the CO-OP in Shere, one on the wall of the Compasses in Gomshall, one on the wall of the Royal Oak in Holmbury St Mary and one on the Hurtwood in Peaslake. All units are in full working order **BUT** the units have now been discontinued and stocks of the vital accessories are now being run down and not replaced. We therefore need new replacement units in the next year to 18 months. The CO-OP kindly replaced the cabinet which holds the Shere AED recently but we would also like to update the boxes for the remaining three AEDs. The cost is in the region of £1,350 for each fully automated AED and £500 for each cabinet. **WE NEED YOUR HELP – would you be willing to spearhead community fundraising for this vital equipment? We need a volunteer/volunteers in Shere, Gomshall and Holmbury St Mary and Peaslake. Please get in touch if you think that you can help.**

Alternatively, you can give direct to the parish council, email me for details on how to donate - clerk@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk

Guildford Borough Council (GBC) News:

Concurrent Functions Grant Aid (CFGGA) – this Grant aid could be applied for each year by parish councils to help pay for projects in the community, such as benches, vehicle activated signs, play equipment etc. financing up to 50% of the cost. Unfortunately, due to the financial position of GBC, this has now been stopped and will significantly impair the ability of the Parish Council to carry out works on behalf of the community. This follows on from the removal of the grant to maintain the public toilets of £4,680.

More bad news from GBC - an audit is taking place to establish where the public bins are located; this means that Shere Parish Council will be charged for emptying any bin on land owned or leased by the Parish Council. An annual charge of £340 per bin (subsequent bins in close proximity £115 per annum). As many of the public bins are located on Parish Council land, this will be a significant annual bill of at least £5,000 - £6,000.

Finally, The Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) – the last finance the parish council has traditionally received from GBC. It has not yet been confirmed but given the trend recently, it is likely the council will not receive the annual amount of £5,303 again either.

So where does this leave the Parish Council and your community. The majority of income comes via the precept and is collected by GBC on our behalf through your council tax and there is also some rental income and donations from supporters of the Drop-in and Village Larder. However, that won't refurbish the toilets, replace play equipment, give grants to local initiatives or even replace the AEDs (see above). This is why we want to charge visitors to use the car park! Adjudication with the trustees is progressing and we should have an answer by early November.

Climate Change – what can you do as an individual. The Parish Council wants to support you to help with climate change. There will be information on our website and social media, as well as here in the parish magazine. Below are recommendations from **Friends of the Earth**:

- Walk, cycle, or take public transport
- Switch to a low carbon energy provider
- Insulate your home your home and install solar panels
- Plan ahead to reduce food waste
- Switch to an electric car
- Plant a tree
- Reduce, re-use and re-cycle
- Shop eat and enjoy leisure locally
- Choose energy efficient appliances
- Talk about the changes you make

Recycle more with Terracycle <https://www.zerocarbonguildford.org/terracycle>

Re-cycle a wide range of materials not taken by GBC, such as medicine blister packs, laundry capsules, etc. You can purchase tailor made collection boxes or take to existing collection points such as 47, Larch Avenue Guildford or Station Row Shalford.

See what your Parish Council does - view the minutes from every council meeting since January 2012 by going to:

<https://www.shereparishcouncil.gov.uk/council-meetings/>

Next Full Council meeting – 7.30pm Tuesday 7th November 2023 at Holmbury St Mary Hall, Felday Glade, Holmbury St Mary RH5 6PG

All meetings are open to the public and there is an opportunity at every council meeting for members of the public to address the councillors.

Dates for the meetings can be found on our website - <https://www.shereparishcouncil.gov.uk/meeting-date-diary/>

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