

Hermitage Parish Council Update

- ◆ Planning for Christmas has started and this year the council hopes to be back to normal with carol singing outside The Fox as the lights are switched on to bring sparkle to the Christmas tree. Friday December 3rd is the date to put in your diary, lighting up time around 6.00pm. Mince pies and mulled wine too if Santa thinks you've been good enough.
- ◆ The autumn litter pick will take place on Sunday November 28th between 10.00am and 12.00pm. Come to the scout hut in Pinewood Park to get equipment including high viz jacket!
- ◆ Now the autumn term has started, WBC is asking motorists to help protect air quality around West Berkshire schools. Some people just pull up outside the school gates or park down residential streets and leave their engines on. Idling vehicles pollute the air which in turn we all breathe in as we walk past, and children get a greater impact of this - the shorter you are, the nearer to the exhaust fumes you are. More information about improving air quality can be found by visiting the Public Protection Partnership website. (Extract from the report from District Councillors, Garth Simpson and Hilary Cole.)
- ◆ A plan for managing the Furze Hill wildlife site during the next 10 years was commissioned. The ecologist made complimentary comments about the area and recommended that twice as much of the butterfly meadow is strimmed each August. Ash die back has been identified in the woods so professional advice will be sought on how best to deal with this. Ash die back is a fungus that can be identified by black blotches appearing on leaves which then quickly wilt. Affected trees show extensive die back of shoots, twigs and branches. Mountain Ash is not affected by this disease. WBCS will begin the hazel coppicing in the exclusion zone, previously postponed by COVID, on November 22nd.
- ◆ It has been mentioned before but if your hedge, tree or other greenery is overhanging the pavement please get it cut. It could be a hazard to people using the pavement, particularly wheelchair and disability scooter users as well as parents with children and pushchairs. Similarly, if you there is any foliage, or in fact anything, such as a car, that is a hazard to you using the pavement, please report it to www.westberks.gov.uk/reportaproblem. WBC is running a Cut it Back project and will contact the landowner to remedy the situation.
- ◆ Speeding is an issue that many residents report and the council has deployed different speed monitoring devices to help drivers keep to the 30mph limit and to collect data. These data have shown that more work is needed and council has now agreed the next steps. A speed monitoring sign which can be used in different locations will be purchased and also a speed radar gun. While still working alongside the road safety unit at WBC, this brings the council in line with the new Thames Valley Police policy where data will be collected and dealt with as TVP think appropriate.
- ◆ The November parish council meeting is on Thursday November 18th. All meetings begin at 7.30pm with agendas, minutes and information about the council being posted on notice boards throughout the village and www.hermitage.org.uk. All members of the public are welcome but the council would appreciate the parish clerk being notified in advance.
- ◆ Hermitage Parish Council can be contacted through the clerk, Nicky Pierce, by emailing hermitagepc@outlook.com.