



BURPHAM COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Annual Report May 2021



Chairman's Statement

When I wrote last year's statement, I didn't expect to include the same sentence in 2021, but here goes.

I would like to start by expressing, on behalf of the BCA, sympathy for anyone who has suffered loss, illness or hardship during the coronavirus outbreak and associated lockdown. Thankfully, it looks likely that we can see an end to all or most of the restrictions and a resumption of social activities.

I am proud of the efforts of all those who have contributed to the Burpham Support Team and attempted to alleviate the harm done in Burpham. This has been done in cooperation with the Church and has demonstrated to me that Burpham does have a community and community spirit.

Other BCA activities have continued throughout the year, including many planning, development and infrastructure matters which have the potential to affect the quality of life in Burpham for the long term. I have no doubt that the BCA will continue to do its best for the community, but I will remind you that the committee is a small group of volunteers. We often find ourselves too stretched to do all that we would like to. In particular, our long-serving secretary will retire this year. Unless we can find a capable replacement, our range of activities and communications will inevitably be affected. Please consider whether **you** could spare some time to help the BCA achieve even more to the benefit of everyone in Burpham.

Burpham Community Support Group

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 led to the formation of the Burpham Community Support Group, a joint venture between the BCA, Burpham Church and the Mead Way Neighbourhood Watch. Every household was given details of how people could get help, and some 200 volunteers offered to assist with shopping, click and collect pickups, collecting prescriptions, parcel drop offs, dog walking and telephone support. Since the start of the operation, the Support Group has dealt with around 160 calls. This year, most have been delivering prescriptions as it became easier to book supermarket delivery slots.

None of this would have happened without the volunteers so many thanks to all of you who helped. In particular the BCA would like to thank our Membership Secretary, Liz Turner, and Ann, Gracie, Lisa and Marcelle from Burpham Church who worked so hard to get the Support Group up and running. We very much hope that we can continue to work together on projects in the future.

Although we look to be heading towards an easing of restrictions, the future is still uncertain so the Support Group will continue to offer help if needed.

Flood Forum

Background

Burpham was identified as a flooding hotspot in GBC's Surface Water Management survey of 2012. Serious flooding occurred in the winter of 2013/2014 and the BCA set up a Flood Action Group; this led to the formation of the Burpham Flood Forum. The Forum generally meets annually and consists of representatives from SCC, GBC, the Environment Agency, Thames Water and the National Trust. Up to the 2019 General Election, meetings were chaired by out then MP, Anne Milton; our current MP, Angela Richardson, has agreed to take the chair at future meetings and has recently indicated that she would like to set up a Flood Forum meeting in the near future.

Because of the pandemic, we have been unable to hold a public meeting but members of the Flood Action Group have continued to maintain email contact with the agencies involved.

Current situation

Merrow Common River

- There are two grilles, one in London Road and the other in Merrow Lane. These can easily become blocked which could lead to flooding of properties along the river, especially in periods of heavy autumn/winter rain. This year, they have been regularly cleared, either by GBC or the EA and we would like to thank them.
- Clearance work was carried out by Roots and Shoots for a resident whose property abuts the river. The EA carried out an inspection after completion and found it to be of a high standard and met their criteria.

The Wey Navigation

If you walk upstream from Old Bucks Weir, there is a ditch on your left, running by the towpath; it is the outflow from an ancient stream that appears at the rear of Abbotswood. Over many years, the ditch has become choked with fallen trees and other vegetation which has been dumped in it. This has impeded



the flow of water with the result that the towpath has become flooded.

The BCA raised this issue with various authorities back in 2013. There followed many years of playing that well known responsibility game called Pass the Parcel. Eventually the riparian ownership was tracked to GBC who are therefore responsible for clearing the ditch. The fallen tree which caused the major blockage has now been removed and we are hopeful that the full length of the watercourse will be cleaned. The section of the footpath shown above has now been repaired.

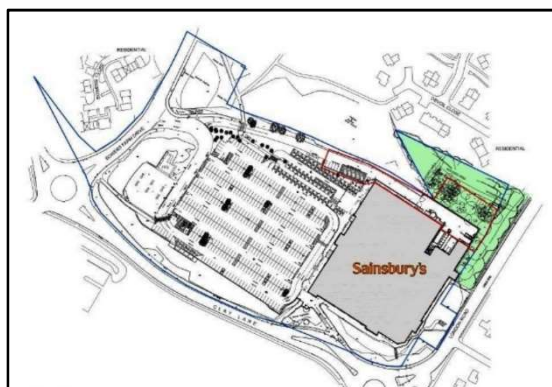
Other concerns

Access to the cameras that monitor the Merrow Common River at Merrow Lane and London Road has been withdrawn. These cameras are a very valuable facility which allows monitoring of water levels and potential blockages; the Flood Action Group are trying to resolve this issue.

The BCA would like to thank all the members of the Flood Action Group for their efforts, in particular Tony Teal, Tony Mallard and John Beard, who drew up and updates the very detailed Action Plan that acts as a guide for Forum meetings. Thanks are also due to Jim Allen who continues to engage vigorously with various authorities in connection with erosion and other problems on the Wey Navigation.

Planning and Infrastructure

The BCA and the Burpham Neighbourhood Forum (BNF) monitor all planning applications in the Ward but the BCA does not normally comment on individual applications for single properties unless the wider neighbourhood is likely to be affected.



One such is the application that Sainsbury's lodged last year to expand their existing Groceries Online distribution hub which included the erection of a new loading bay. This would have destroyed much of one of Burpham's Local Green Spaces known locally as The Copse, and affected many residents living close by.

The BCA objected to the application on the grounds of encroachment into a Local Green Space, loss of amenity and habitat, and noise and light pollution incurred by residents in Weybrook and London Road.

The BNF also put in a strong objection and many residents made their views known – in total, 318 objections were lodged. Thanks to one of our residents, the application made national news with an intervention by Queen guitarist Brian May of the Save Me Trust and the Amazing Grace campaign which has instigated projects to ensure preservation of hedgehog friendly habitats. This was also reported in detail in the Guildford Dragon, complete with photograph of the BCA and BNF Chairmen in The Copse.



Sainsbury's withdrew their application in September 2020, announcing that they would work with local groups on a revised proposal. Several meetings have already taken place and we will keep you informed as to progress.

Local Green Spaces

If you are new to Burpham, you may not be aware of our Local Green Spaces.

Policy B-EN3 in the Neighbourhood Plan which outlines 20 green spaces in the Ward. These are now official Local Green Spaces, shown on the map (right).

You can find out more about the Burpham Neighbourhood Plan here
<https://burphamneighbourhoodforum.org/>



Parking Issues

The Riverside Park has been a very popular place for both residents and visitors during lockdown – so popular that there have been many occasions when the car park is full and people have left their cars in Bower's Lane. This has sometimes led to a complete blockage, with cars unable to get in or out – which also means that emergency vehicles cannot get through.

After discussion with GBC we were pleased to learn that the Joint Committee has agreed to consider putting double yellow lines at the top and bottom of the slope and also the stretch that leads down to the river. There will be a public consultation on this immediately after the SCC election and we will keep you informed.



As part of the proposal to develop the Weyside Urban Village, the nature reserve will be extended to Jacob's Well. This is to be welcomed but the proposed new car park has only 12 spaces, insufficient for the area according to Natural England. The BCA has raised this issue with GBC.

Improvements to Roads and Paths

The BCA was asked by Surrey County Council to provide, at short notice, suggestions to help planning the use of a small local budget for road / footpath repairs for 2021/22 financial year. There was not time to carry out a full survey or wide consultation so suggestions were based on committee members' observations from walking around much of the area.

We learnt that there is a plan to resurface the footpaths on Woodruff Avenue in the coming year (part of SCC horizon programme). The road surface of Woodruff Avenue and adjoining roads will be considered for the following year. Information about the programmes is available at

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/horizon-highway-maintenance-investment-programme>

Large stretches of the footpaths along Glendale Drive are in very bad condition. This is too big a job to be covered by this budget and will be considered for a larger scheme in the future. Defects which will be dealt with in this financial year include:

- A deep triangular hole between two slabs on Glendale Drive which could cause damage to vehicles.
- One end of the 'tactile crossing' on Burpham Lane at the junction with Clay Lane does not drain so fills up with rain water. It is unpleasant in wet weather and dangerous when frozen.
- A utility trench across the footpath from MJA Motors to Burnet Avenue, which is sinking, it also fills up with rain water as above.

If anyone wants to report issues relating to roads and footpaths, this should be done online at

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/report-a-highway-problem>

Anything immediately dangerous should be reported on **0300 200 1003**

Burpham Road Action Group (BRAG)

Background

All of us are only too aware of the road and traffic problems in Burpham as we live with the daily holdups and consequent pollution. A proposal to build the Clay Lane link road from Slyfield caused great concern and led to the formation of the BRAG.

We hoped that we could form something akin to the Flood Action Group which is a semi-autonomous group with its own convenor and secretary; this has not yet been possible, partly because of the pandemic. The appalling proposals in the Local Plan will make our problems far worse; this was highlighted in the 2020 Annual Report:

https://burphamca.weebly.com/uploads/3/0/0/1/30019471/bca_annual_report_may_2020_-_final.pdf

We do need more people to come forward – ideally representatives from a road or group of roads so that the whole village is involved. If you would like to help, please contact the Secretary at secretary@burphamca.org.uk

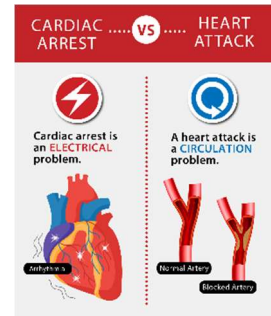
West Clandon Draft Local Neighbourhood Plan

This was put out for consultation in February 2020 and the BCA commented on issues that affected Burpham. We suggested tripartite discussions with West Clandon and Mellow but the pandemic has put this on hold.

Public Defibrillator

The BCA has been exploring the possibility of installing a public defibrillator in Burpham. It has been shown that administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and using a defibrillator within a few minutes of someone suffering a cardiac arrest increases the chance of survival from 6% to 74%.

The diagram on the right explains the difference between cardiac arrest and a heart attack.



A working party has been set up to look into ways and means. We were greatly helped by Alex Donaldson who kindly offered to undertake the necessary research. Thanks are also due to Stephen Gee from Beating Hearts Merrow who responded to the notification on our website and offered assistance. We were also approached by Derek Goddard, who recently took over as Chair of the Burpham Juniors Football Club; they have a defibrillator, not yet installed.

There is still a great deal of work to do but the ultimate aim is to have two defibrillators in Burpham – one at Sutherland Memorial Park, the other located somewhere in the shopping parade. There will have to be some serious fund raising – we are looking at £5,000plus. Although you do not need training to use a public defibrillator, we would also like to run some courses in CPR

Merrow Lane Gates

We reported back in 2019 on the combined efforts of the BCA and Merrow Residents' Association to get the gates that link Gosden Hill farm to Merrow Lane removed as there is documentary evidence that they are illegal. We were told that the authorities were considering the issue. In 2020, we reported that the authorities are still considering the issue. There has been no change.

Meetings and Public Events

Pre pandemic the BCA held public meetings every two months and usually one or two social events each year. We have not been able to have any public gatherings for the past year. The 2020 AGM was cancelled and the Annual Report and Financial Report were emailed to members.

Committee meetings have continued via Zoom and the 2021 AGM will also be held on Zoom. We do not know when we shall be able to hold a public gathering.

Links with other organisations

We continue to work closely with the BNF and also with Merrow Residents' Association and to maintain links with other neighbouring RAs and Parish Councils – Jacobs Well, Sutton Green, Worplesdon and West Clendon.

The BCA is a member of the Guildford Residents' Association and subscribes to the Campaign to Protect Rural England and the Open Spaces Society which campaigns to protect common land and green spaces.

Litter Picking

When we first mentioned the idea of regular litter picking groups, several people came forward but Covid restrictions meant we were unable to make a start until recently. On the 10th April, sixteen people in hi-vis jackets and armed with litter pickers scoured the following areas:

London Road, Merrow Lane and New Inn Lane
Sutherland Park

Around the shops

Woodruff, Coltsfoot and Burnett Avenues

The area behind Pimms Cottages

Clay Lane and Bowers Lane

The main streets in Wylea Farm and Weybrook Park

The photos record their success – if that is the right word to use about such a vast amount of rubbish so carelessly discarded.



We would like to thank all the volunteers who turned out. Thank you too, to our Membership Secretary Liz Turner for organising the litter pick and liaising with GBC who provided the equipment and arranged collection of the rubbish bags.

Burpham Bowling Club

The Club have been negotiating a new lease with GBC and were required to show evidence of local involvement. The BCA was happy to send a letter of support.

Riverside Park

Some residents have expressed concern about the leasing of the fields in the Riverside Park to allow cattle to graze during the summer. The large metal gates deemed necessary to keep the cattle contained effectively also keep disabled people using wheelchairs or mobility scooters out. There are other worries regarding the safety of walkers and the appalling mess caused by cowpats. The BCA will be in touch with the Parks Department to see what can be done to answer these concerns.

Guildford Lottery

Members can support the BCA by buying tickets for the lottery. Each £1 ticket gives us 50p and the amount raised from the lottery over the last year is £1099. Thank you to all those who support us in this way.