

RWPC – Wallington Parish Annual Report 2023-2024

- Neighbourhood Plan – 87% “yes” vote in the referendum and an exceptionally high turnout of 68%, meaning that 59% of all possible voters said “yes”. The plan is now “made”, and is part of the North Herts Local Plan. This means that the priorities of residents are formally recorded and will have to be taken into account for any future planning applications. 13 green spaces, 22 important views and 5 non-listed buildings or structures now have additional protection within the plan.
- The Parish Council website continues to develop and evolve and has up-to-date information about the Parish and wider North Herts activities as well as information about past and future PC meetings. Traffic to the PC website has grown by 80% during the financial year, with 49% more page views. Each visitor views an average of 3 or more different pages. 64 visits in the last 30 days.
- The PC continued to inspect and carry out light-touch maintenance on trees in the Spinney and at the corner of Kits Lane and The Street.
- Highways – HCC carried out the complete replacement of drainage gulleys down The Street following extensive lobbying by PC, in conjunction with District / County Councillor.
- Defibrillator – the unit was serviced by the Ambulance Trust and records were updated. No training is needed to use the AED in an emergency – the 999 operator has the code for the box.
- 20mph speed limit – it is now possible to cooperate with another village to take part in Community Speed Check – looking out for possible collaborations.
- We arranged a talk from Revlvel community group about the source of the Cat Ditch and the state of the local water table. We put them in touch with Wallington Farms – we believe their recommendations for a “leaky dam” project near the source were accepted – can’t confirm whether action has taken place yet. Offer to arrange local volunteers for the project was declined.
- Planned presentation by Community Development Action was postponed because our contact, Giles Meredith left the organization. We will meet with his replacement at the earliest opportunity.
- KH Attended training on charitable trusts. Formation of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) may be the way forward for unregistered green spaces in Wallington. More to follow.
- FP22 – continued to liaise with interested parties, within the limits of our remit. There has not been a firm proposal that we’re able to agree to, given the mandate to protect The Spinney as a green space. Option to use a new route along a driveway seems to be problematic for NHDC and HCC. Further meeting with HCC Rights of Way is planned. Ultimately, HCC will be obliged to provide a usable route for walkers, whether the diversion goes ahead or not.
- Introduced safeguarding policy in response to the murder of Victoria Greenwood, who was found close to Wallington. We will ensure up-to-date signposting to appropriate organisations and resources is always available via the PC website and noticeboards.
- The PC shared information with residents about the proposed Beane Valley solar development, in case they wished to respond to the consultation.
- PC finances remain under control even in the high inflationary environment. The Parish Council are forecast to be underspent against our precept budget and therefore we are able to freeze our precept request at last year’s level, thereby helping keep the associated council tax rise to a minimum.