



WESTCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

### **Tom Guilder's retirement**

I am delighted to let you know that, with the support of the village and Tom's patients, we successfully raised around £2000 towards gifts which Tom and Elaine had chosen in discussion with the WVA. We also put on a lunch-time farewell party, hosted in the village, to which Tom had invited around 35 people.

The Guilders had decided that some new garden furniture was what they really wanted and, learning that they enjoy fine dining, we surprised them with a voucher for a meal at the Michelin\* Clock House restaurant in Ripley. Tom is also planning before his final departure, an afternoon tea and cakes farewell party for all his patients to drop in and say their last farewells. Details in Tom's "thank-you" letter in this edition.

We will all be sorry to see Tom go, but wish him and Elaine a very, very, happy and enjoyable retirement.

### **Hut Development**

Disappointingly, it has not been possible for the Hut Trustees to reach an agreement to put a Doctor's Surgery and dispensary, a Community Centre, 6 houses and car parking on the Hut site. The financial aspects of the proposed agreement with the NHS/Dorking Medical Practice, and the Hut's constitution rules precluded an acceptable agreement.

The Village Association, working with the Church, the Reading Room, and The Hut, will be initiating a feasibility study to look at all potential sites within the village which together can be utilized to deliver the best outcome for our medical, leisure, and community care needs.

As a priority, we will be driving the identification of an alternative site for the Surgery/Dispensary within the village so that we stand the best possible chance of retaining this facility within Westcott.

We are also working together to define a Village Hall building which will meet the needs of the whole village. This will be a larger facility than the original proposal (from October 2017) incorporating facilities identified by all potential village users. The Hut Trustees may then decide to use this specification to progress a planning application with the Developers (Latchmere) for the Hut site.

## **WVA Draft New Constitution**

A meeting of proposed Trustees was held to approve the new constitution and the application has been registered with the Charity Commission. Disappointingly, the Charity Commission is advising that because of demand (and I suspect shortages of key staff) it has advised that there is up to six months delay in processing and approving new applications. We will update you when we have further news but we may not be able to vote the new Constitution into being until the AGM in October. In the meantime we will continue to operate under our existing constitution.

## **Your Village Association**

I am delighted to say that James Leaver and Nick Lund have agreed to join the committee and I am hopeful that we will bring the committee up to full complement (10 members in total) including at least one other lady to join the team and provide a reasonable balance of representation on the committee. Please talk to any member of the current committee about joining us – things are changing and we are very keen to make the WVA a force for positive change in the village.

## **The Crown and Indigo Spice Properties**

A number of you have written to me to ask what is happening to these two properties both of which are prominent within the village – particularly the latter which you cannot fail to notice as you enter the village from the West. The Crown has spent a lot of time talking within the village and engaging with new architects to design a housing development of seven 2/3 bed dwellings. The village Association welcomes this and has written in support of the Planning Application. The owner of Indigo Spice has put in a planning appeal against the refusal to grant development permission which neighbouring residents and landowners, and the WVA, objected to on the grounds that there was inadequate parking provision. Once the Planning Appeal has been heard and the outcome known we will be in a position to put pressure on the owner to improve the look of the building.

Please continue to comment on or make suggestions to improve the WVA website so that we ensure it is **THE** place to go for village news, information, and events.

As always, you are invited to write to me on issues which concern you, and the WVA will do their best to address them.

**Tim Way**

**Chairman, Westcott Village Association**

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