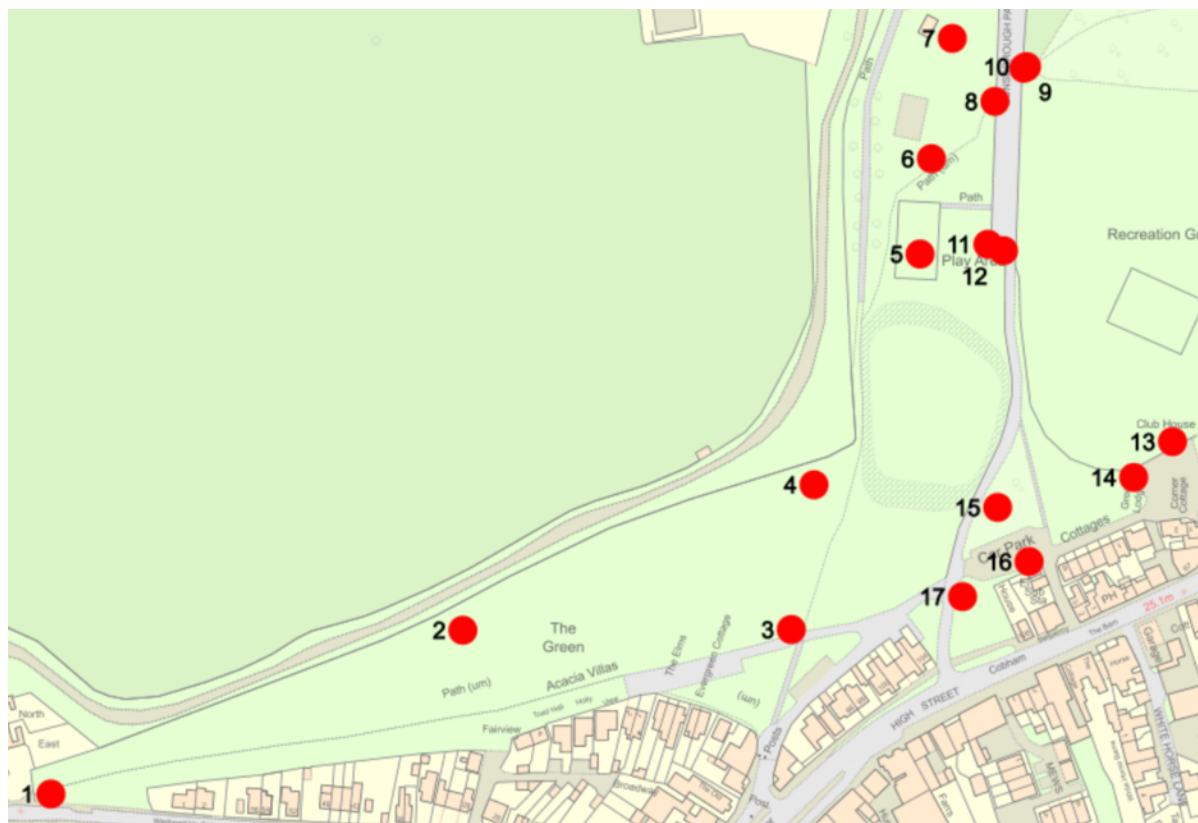




GBC collects bins from just one site in Ripley. There are currently 17 bins on The Green. The operatives attend site three times a week. To maintain the same level of service, the council would need to budget £6,783 for 2023.

Bin 11 is due to be moved to replace the deteriorated bin no. 3. Bins 2, 9, and 14 can also be removed with very little impact as alternative options are available. Dog bins do not allow for as much capacity as standard litter bins, and there are also manual handling issues for the operatives. Removing those bins would bring the council's required budget down to £5,088.

Bins 1 and 3 would be the last remaining dog bins on The Green. It is recommended that these are replaced with standard litter bins, which would increase capacity. GBC is able to carry out replacements for £120 per bin.

Agenda item 11iii: *Surrey Association of Local Councils' AGM & Conference*

The standout item from the Conference (held 30.09.2022) was a presentation by Alistair Bayliss of the '20s Plenty for Surrey' organisation. His slides are available at:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1hdOj8l0eJ1IfXAoCEKi-w2E2UmRguiY3/edit#slide=id.p51>

East Horsley Parish Council has subsequently messaged parishes in the east of the borough to enquire whether they intend to engage with the project.

Agenda item 11iv: *Parish Liaison Meeting*

Notes from the recent meeting at Millmead:

Customer Services

The item had been raised by Shere Parish Council and the co-signatories to Shere's letter. Tom Horwood, Joint Chief Executive of Guildford & Waverley Borough Councils, had responded:

Subject: RE: Joint Letter from Parish Councils

Dear Suzanne

Thank you for writing and for raising the concerns of the listed parish councils.

You are correct to note that Guildford BC has struggled to respond in the way we would wish in some areas of service delivery, particularly in customer service and in processing Planning applications, which have been the subject of public statements.

We have put in place measures to improve these. For example, we have recruited to some of the vacancies in the customer service team and have completed extra training so that the team is more resilient to changes in demand from customers. Signing up for and accessing self-service through MyGuildford is growing, with more than 46,000 users registered, which in turn allows us to help those who need other direct support. We have arranged for an external Planning agency to process 200 Planning applications and agreed extra hours of work within the team. This is working; so far in September we have determined over 220 applications which is our highest monthly figure for some time. We also have a new planning officer starting shortly to fill a vacant position and are advertising for other vacancies. While there is still a way to go, these improvements are having a positive impact.

You mention concerns about housing and benefits; if you would share with me a little more information about these specific concerns, I can follow them up and respond.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss all of these concerns and the specific examples you have in mind in person. We have an occasion to discuss this at our scheduled Parish Liaison Group meeting on 14th October and this would be an excellent opportunity to go through our progress and plans in more detail and listen to your views. I shall add this to the agenda and invite relevant colleagues to attend. I would also be interested in reviving my suggestion earlier in the year for periodic meetings of clerks, GBC directors and me, as I have found that this works well in other boroughs to keep communication flowing and build relationships across our whole public service team. Clerks can also always contact me and Directors directly by email or phone on matters as they arise.

I look forward to seeing you and exploring these matters further on the 14th.

With all good wishes

Tom

A presentation was given by Nicola Haymes, Joint Executive Head of Communications and Customer Services. 75% of customer contact was digital, 20% was by phone, and 5% was face-to-face.

Planning Performance

A presentation was given by Gemma Fitzpatrick, Temp Team Leader Development Management – Applications Team. 25% more planning applications had been received in 2021, compared to previous years. The adoption of the Local Plan had increased applications for ‘Major’ development schemes, which is classed as 10+ dwellings. Staff disruption, including the departure of senior officers and some poor appointments, had also been significant. The departure of a senior officer leads to 40-50 cases needing to be reallocated. Three senior officers had left GBC since May. A recruitment campaign had not led to any applications for the post. More recently, a new member of staff had been appointed from New Zealand.

A Planning Consultancy firm had been appointed to help clear the backlog, but the standard of work had been acceptable. 220 cases had been resolved during September, however, and the rate of new cases was slowing. It was intended that planning training for borough and parish councillors would be provided after the election in May 2023.

Elections

The Elections Act 2022 was due to come into force, and GBC would offer officer training in February 2023. The election is likely to be held on Thursday 4th May 2023, although the recent announcement of the King’s Coronation on 6th May could lead to an alteration in the date. The closing date for nominations was likely to be on or around 22nd March. Uncontested elections will cost £200, contested election costs will be shared 50/50 with GBC.