



# Wolvercote Commoners'

## NEWSLETTER January 2017

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

to all our readers and may 2017  
be happy and healthy

The New Year is always a time to look forward to what may be in store for us in the coming months (we won't mention Txxxp). However, before we look forward it's always good to reflect on the past 12 months. The Commoners' Committee has had a busy year dealing with a wide range of subjects from UFO's on the Meadow to the future of the Target Hut.

**March:** In March someone quite a fright one dark night when a low flying object came rather too close. Sadly it wasn't our first contact with an alien force, just someone flying a drone!

**April:** Following discussions at various meetings and our AGM the subject of dog mess on the Common was raised yet again. There was a consensus that something should be done. We ran a short poster campaign warning of the dangers of dog mess, especially to young children. Sadly someone in village felt offended by the posters and repeatedly removed them. Our next move will be to get the City Council to help. Hopefully, with their help we can be more successful in 2017.

The tree planting on the Common by the railway line was also discussed and it was agreed almost unanimously that the planting should continue. The choice of trees came from the meeting as: Willow (*salix alba*), Field Maple (*acer campestre*), Blackthorn (*prunus spinosa*) and Hawthorn (*crataegus monogyna*). The final choice(s) however, will be based solely on expert advice.

It was also agreed to remove some of the willows around the pond on Wolvercote Common. On the north and west sides the trees are growing so vigorously into the body of the pond that, if left, they will gradually take over the pond completely, resulting in it reverting to no more than a bog. Again this will only be undertaken with expert help and advice.

**May:** The Target Hut on the Shiplake ditch has become very dangerous and in need of urgent repair. Sadly, no body or organisation would accept responsibility for it. However, repair would be prohibitively expensive and, following discussions at our AGM, it was suggested that a possible solution may be demolition. Although there was general agreement to this it was felt that further enquiries should be made. However, after further investigation we were told that we couldn't demolish it. This was a shock as no one seemed prepared to rectify the problem. Therefore, as a stop-gap, it will be fenced off until funding can be arranged to make it safe.

**September:** Sadly a horse died on the Meadow due to a discarded broken bottle and it lost so much blood that it couldn't be saved. The incident brought to a head the need to encourage people not to leave litter. The City Council have subsequently increased their litter patrols and several official signs have been posted.

**October:** After paying a specialist company nearly £2000 we are still having a problem with *Carssula Helmsii* (a non-native invasive weed which threatens native flora on the Common). We are trying a new approach with a high-powered flame gun which we will use routinely at work days. It may be that by short regular attacks on the weed we can gradually eliminate it. *Watch this space!*

**December:** And the year ended with our now famous carol service - a perfect end to the year!

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So it's been a busy year with some successes and with some issues yet to be resolved and we look forward to another year of working with everyone in Upper and Lower Wolvercote. We are, however, always looking for more volunteers both for our work days and to help out on our Committee. At our next AGM in April we will, as always, be looking for new members so, if you would like to contribute to the welfare of our village, why not consider joining us as one of your New Year's resolutions?

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**Don't forget Village Work Mornings second Saturday of every month**

Meet outside the Village Hall at 10am (Bring gloves/wellies). Children welcome

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