St Martha Parish Council
Clerk's Report for the meeting on 29th October 2026

1. Notes from the SLCC Surrey Branch Clerks meeting on 14th October 2026

- Rural Roar – Effingham Clerk asked for support
- BT Analogue Line will be cut from 01/02/27 – do all parishioners know…?
- AI – NALC have launched NALC's Online Resource Assistant (NORA) on their website
- **WEST SURREY SURVIVES -** Lib Dem-run West Surrey Council (which will replace Waverley, Guildford and Surrey) requested a new name "West Surrey and South Middlesex" but the Local Government Minister declined to make the change.
  Middlesex disappeared as a county over 60 years ago, and while some residents in Spelthorne understandably still feel an attachment to the name, many across the other five boroughs have been left scratching their heads over why this was a priority.

2. Parish Elections in 2027

SALC are very pleased to announce that nine new parish councils (some of which will likely vote to become town councils once established) have now been given the green light by the new East and West Shadow Unitary Councils, with all due to come into being in May 2027.
In the West, the new councils are Guildford, Englefield Green, and Pyrford. In the East they are Reigate, Redhill, Banstead & the Villages, Dorking, Westcott, and Boxhill.

This expansion means an additional 160,000 electorates of Surrey's 975,000 electorate will gain a voice through a parish or town council. This sector coverage will rise from 33% to 50%, marking a significant shift in local representation across the county.

SALC's Advice is:

1. To set the Annual Parish Meeting (Annual Assembly) in March 2027 – with the main thrust of attracting new Councillors in the May election
2. Sign of the AGAR in April – before existing Councillors leave
3. SALC are offering an on-line course: "Off to a Flying Start".

   As a new councillor, you want to do a great job for your community and in doing so, you will want to do things right – find out about your role, duties and responsibilities as a councillor and those of the council that you are now a member of.
   The session is specifically aimed at new councillors but is also suited to councillors that have completed training previously and would like to refresh their knowledge.

   "Off to a Flying Start" - Part 1 and Part 2 must be booked together at a cost of £45 + VAT per session. Takes place via Zoom on 3rd and 10th November 2026.

   Councils should be encouraging training to be made compulsory for new Cllrs joining.

3. Meeting dates of Full Parish Council Meetings:

Proposed SMPC meeting dates for January – May 2027 – Thursday starting at 7 p.m. in Chilworth C of E Infant School:

Month/ Year	**St Martha PC**	**Shalford CC**
January 2027	Thursday **21/01/27**	unknown
February 2027	Thursday **25/02/27**	unknown
March 2027	Thursday **25/03/27**	unknown
April 2027	Thursday **22/04/27**	unknown
May 2027	Thursday **27/05/27**	unknown

Shalford CC have not yet published their dates, so I have been unable to offer the above avoiding duplication. It is also helpful to add the SMPC representative attending Shalford to this list.
NB I have not contacted the school yet.

4. a) Highways, Footpaths and Rights of Way – the signs that have been erected at Chilworth Manor.

The Clerk sent a message to John Baker regarding the above.

Reply from: John Baker Countryside **Access Officer, West Surrey (Maintenance & Enforcement) Highway.** You are correct that the Sec 31 and 15 notices are a process by which Landowners can prevent new Rights of Way (and Village Greens) being established on their land. There is however no cut off by when paths may be claimed. The criteria is that the path must have been available for the public for 20 years or more. The Sec 31 notice has the effect of acting as a cut off for that 20 year period. So, if the notices are erected in August 2026, then the 20-year period must start before Aug 2006.

b) Downslink re-surfacing - Reply from: John Baker - Countryside Access Officer, West Surrey (Maintenance & Enforcement) Highways

With regards the resurfacing of the Downslink there are (or were) signs at either end stating that the works were carried out by SCC and the Parish Council were informed of this by E mail on 19th August. (the email was sent as a response to an enquiry by Debbie Toynbee and you were copied in).
The SCC surfacing schedule is decided using a framework whereby various criteria are considered. These include, among others, the degree of erosion, the level of use and the risk posed by the erosion.

I attach a photo of the path taken before the current works were completed. The path is advertised as one of a very few off road links to the south coast, it therefore sees heavy use and the degree of

erosion and degradation of the surface was getting to the point where sections of the path would have needed to be closed.

All users of the path are bound by the same Highway Code as any other highway, and cyclists should be giving way to horse riders and walkers. We have a 'Share with Care' sign which explains this. I will speak to the Albury estate to get permission to erect one at the top of the path.

As a result of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan consultation, we have identified a need for better communications with Parish Councils. I have visited PC meetings across West Surrey to explain what we do, answer any questions and enable councillors to put a face to a name.

If St Martha PC would like me to attend a meeting, I would be happy to do so.

5. **Additional Dog Waste Bins - in the Gunpowder Mills Site** **This item is on the agenda at point number 16 (c). Below is the time-line for correspondence between the Clerk and GBC – for information.**

From: Hendryk Jurk <Hendryk.Jurk@guildford.gov.uk>
Sent: 13 October 2025 13:16>

I am a replying to your email regarding additional (dog) waste bins at Chilworth Gunpowder Mills.
There are currently bins at the entrances at West Lodge and on the main road at the end of the Vera's Path.
The locations are chosen so that the bins can be accessed by the waste crews independently from ground conditions.
If we place bins further into the site that causes issues with emptying, both for resources requirements and creating muddy tracks.

The access track along Lockner Farm is not owned by the Council and the track's condition does not lend itself for easy access without off road vehicles to empty bins.

We were looking at the dog fouling issue at Chilworth some years back. At the time it turned out that significant dog fouling occurred despite the bins present, i.e. 50+ incidents within 10 metres of existing bins.
We would need to look at educating and enforcement to resolve.

I have copied in Galvin, for further consideration.

From 11/12/25 Galvin Gillies Team Leader - Parks & Streetscene
I do not have any further information to add. I agree with Hendryk's email below.
The land belongs to Countryside, and it is Countryside's decision on what bin provision is required on the land.
Galvin Gillies

On **01/04/26 the Clerk wrote to Hendryk Jurk and Galvin Gillies at Guildford Borough Council:**

The request has again been re-visited by Members of this Parish Council for an additional dog waste bin and you will see by the attached photo the alternative site can easily be accessed by the GBC waste crews, who must regularly access past this point to deal with the refuse of Longfrey Farm and the other large house along the track. *Additionally, this one could be used, not only by dog owners visiting the Mills, but also those walking past and onto the Downs who would not be going anywhere near the other two dog waste bins.*

We suggest that 'off road vehicles' would not be required to access the track at Lockner Farm, which as well as being used by residents of Longfrey Farm (located further than the suggested bin site), must also already be used by refuse vehicles because the residents do not bring their bins up to the Dorking Road to be emptied.

I would appreciate your views on the alternative site (as shown on the attached photo) and the comments I have made above.

The Clerk received an automated out-of-office message from Hendryk Jurk which referred to forwarding messages onto Neil Barton – which the Clerk had done.

However, no further communication has been received from any of the recipients regarding the photos and suggested new site.