**September 2020, for immediate release.**

**WIMBLEDON GUILD ANNUAL WAGGY WALK FUNDRAISING EVENT GOES VIRTUAL FOR 2020**

**This year it’s your Waggy, your Way!**

Wimbledon Guild, the local charity that supports people across Merton, has announced that this year’s annual Waggy Walk fundraising event will take place virtually between Monday 28 September – Monday 5 October.

To make sure the event is Covid-safe, participants can walk anytime during the event dates - 28 September – 5 October. They can choose to do any route or distance that suits them, or they can do the suggested 4km or 7km Waggy Walk route from previous years; maps will be provided for these routes. As always, the event is open to people with and without dogs and the charity is encouraging everyone to get involved.

This year instead of buying a ticket, Wimbledon Guild are asking for minimum donations of £10 to take part. Every dog for whom a donation of £10 or more is given will get a coveted goodie bag from specialist pet shop Pet Pavilion.

 All the money raised will help support people in need in the local community affected by Covid-19:

* £10 would pay for a month of telephone befriending calls for lonely and housebound people
* £20 would pay for the preparation and delivery of 4 freshly cooked meals
* £30 would pay for food vouchers to help people who have lost their income

Participants will be able to collect their goodie bags from Pet Pavilion during opening hours on 28 September – 5 October.

Wimbledon Guild has introduced several new features this year including a ‘Meet and Greet with Waggy’ - the event’s official doggy mascot. There will be plenty of photo opportunities with Waggy over the week, plus an Instagram photo competition with a great prize.

Waggy Walk is one of the charity’s main fundraising events of the year and comes at a time when Wimbledon Guild is seeing an increase in the number of people needing their support due to the financial and emotional impacts of Covid-19, as well as the impact on people’s health.

Wendy Pridmore, Chief Executive, explains:

“Although we can’t all walk together this year, we’re delighted that the Wimbledon Guild Waggy Walk is still going ahead. We know that dogs really are part of family life amongst

people in Merton and we hope that the new format will encourage as many people as possible to take part.

“There is a serious side to why we need to fundraise. We are continuing to see the impact of Covid-19 on our community and expect to for some time. We’ve adapted our services to help those most in need.

“The essential services we provide come at a cost. By taking part in our virtual Wimbledon Guild Waggy Walk people can raise money whilst having fun and help us make sure that we are always here to support people when they need us.”

Local companies Ashworth Solicitors and Pet Pavilion are the proud sponsors of this year’s event.

**BOOK TODAY AT** [**www.wimbledonguild.co.uk/waggywalk**](http://www.wimbledonguild.co.uk/waggywalk) **Tel: 020 8739 2920**

**Terms and conditions apply.**

/Ends

Note to editors:

**ABOUT WIMBLEDON GUILD**

Wimbledon Guild is a local charity that provides people in Merton with help and support in times of need. Under normal circumstances the charity operates from its base at Guild House on Worple Road, Wimbledon. It aims to reduce social isolation and loneliness, help people who are experiencing difficulties and enable older people to be active and healthy.

The services Wimbledon Guild offer includes:

• Wellbeing support

• Talking therapies

• Grief support

• Small grants

• Clubs, classes, talks and trips

• HomeFood Café

• Befriending

• Volunteering

Wimbledon Guild rely heavily on donations and its work in the Merton community can only continue through the generosity of local people and businesses.

www.wimbledonguild.co.uk

**For further information please contact:**

**Phil McPherson, Marketing and Communications Manager, Wimbledon Guild,**

**Email: pmcpherson@wimbledonguild.co.uk Tel: 020 8946 0735**