

Dogmersfield Parish Council Newsletter

News and views from your local Parish Council

Edition 25 – December 2011

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

The Council has been responding on your behalf to a number of public consultations that could have significant implications for our Parish. The full council submissions can be found on our website but we thought that you would appreciate a summary of the Council's concerns.

National Planning Policy Framework

This is a key part of the government's reforms to make the planning system less complex, more accessible and to promote sustainable growth.

At the heart of what are currently draft proposals is the much publicised presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means that local planning authorities should plan positively for new development and approve proposals wherever possible.

This draft policy replaces existing planning guidance and is perceived by many to be a significant threat to rural areas. For example the Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England claims that these reforms represent the biggest shake-up of planning for over 50 years which will place the countryside under increasing threat leaving local communities and planning authorities largely powerless in the face of developer pressure.

In our view the proposed National Planning Policy Framework is flawed and represents a totally inadequate basis for planning policy and individual planning decisions. In particular it fails to adequately identify all the relevant factors that should be taken into account; it is biased in favour of the developer and proposes only one-sided consideration of relevant issues.

We welcome the prospect that Parishes and communities will be given direct power to plan the areas where they live through the creation and approval of Neighbourhood Plans. However, this local control is revealed to be unbalanced and limited to promoting more development than is set out in the Local Development Plan.



Hart Local Development Framework

Hart District Council has consulted local residents on a proposed Core Strategy for the future development of Hart. This does not contain any detailed proposals but identifies

strategic locations to build an additional 2440 homes in the period from now to 2028.

We welcome the thrust of the Core Strategy, which is to maintain Hart's overall character as an essentially green and sylvan suburban set of towns in the east, with an attractive and essentially rural hinterland to the west.

Also of major importance for Dogmersfield is the stated principle that where new development takes place the Strategy will respect the separate character and identity of Hart's settlements and landscapes.

A major concern is that a number of the proposed developments will erode the separation between Dogmersfield and Fleet putting the separate character and identity of Dogmersfield and Crookham Village at increasing risk.

In particular the proposals include 250 additional new homes on the Edenbrook estate, a replacement Leisure Centre, 450 new homes at Grove Farm and land for a future Primary School. Taken together these new developments represent a significant expansion of the Fleet urban area into the green fields that currently separate Dogmersfield from Fleet.

Dogmersfield is also covered by the proposal to build 350 new homes in or on the edge of existing villages.

The Parish Council considers that these two factors represent double jeopardy for our community.

The Parish Council believes that for this reason none of the 350 rural dwellings should be earmarked specifically for our village.

The Parish Council supports early approval of the Core strategy as we are hoping that the approval of the subsequent Local Development Plan will provide some degree of protection against unplanned development in light of the presumption in favour of sustainable development proposed in the draft National Planning Policy Framework.

Boundary Commission Electoral Review of Hart

In January this year the Local Government Boundary Commission for England began a consultation on new electoral arrangements for Hart. They were looking for evidence of strong community ties, areas that should be included together in the same wards and the natural boundaries between communities.

In response to this request Hart District Council submitted a plan for dividing the district into 11 wards each represented by three councillors. They proposed that Dogmersfield should be part of a new ward that brought together the Edenbrook site, Zebon Copse, Queen Elizabeth Barracks site and Crookham Village.

However, when the Commission published its draft recommendations in August rather than follow the Hart District Council plan they favoured an alternative proposal submitted by the Community Campaign (Hart) Group.

With the draft recommendations Dogmersfield stays within the Odiham ward. The only change that immediately affects

us is that Winchfield moves to the Hartley Wintney ward which responds to their local wishes.

In submitting the Parish Council's views we welcomed and supported the Commission's recommendation that Dogmersfield should remain linked with the rural communities of Odiham or Hartley Wintney and not with the urban areas of Fleet.

Registration of the Village Green

In the late 1960s the Council applied to register the area on both sides of Pilcot Road to the north of the Queens Head as the village green. The application was rejected and although the exact reason is unclear it was due to an objection by Hampshire Highways.

In light of the uncertainty over the future of planning policy the Council have concluded that we should make a fresh attempt to secure the long term protection for this area afforded to a registered Village Green.

This proposed registration has no connection with the controversial scheme to restore part of the green that was abandoned last year.

As with other aspects of planning policy the government has drawn up a proposed package of reforms to the new greens registration system. Although the exact impact of the changes is difficult to judge the proposals are designed to make it more difficult to register a green particularly in circumstances where registration might be used to frustrate planning applications.

The Parish Council has examined these proposals and we submitted our views to the government consultation.

Most of our concerns are with the tightening up of eligibility criteria. These now includes a 'character test' which if applied rigidly could well prevent the registration of many green spaces at the heart of a community such as our own.

CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Thankfully our Parish has, over the years, not been inundated with applications for new houses and thus its character has remained much as it was.

This trend has continued although during the last year or so permission has been granted for two additional dwellings and the addition of minor extensions and conservatories.

The applications and permissions that will affect our village most are the sites at Edenbrook in Hitches Lane (some 300 dwellings so far) and the redevelopment of Queen Elizabeth Barracks in Church Crookham (Currently 872 dwellings).

The Parish Council, together with other local Councils, has registered strong concerns regarding the traffic that will be generated by these two developments. Nevertheless Hart District Council has granted permission for them to proceed without imposing any real safeguards for the adjoining villages and Dogmersfield will inevitably suffer from an increase in traffic.

The Hart District Council Strategic Land Availability Assessment is an exercise to establish the availability of building land within the district for the next twenty years.

While several sites have been put forward by landowners in Dogmersfield and Winchfield the majority of them are "not currently developable" and thus the probability of them being developed in the immediate near future is low.

During the last few weeks several landowners in Winchfield have got together and have submitted a proposal to Hart District Council stating that they have approximately 400 acres of land that they would like to see developed as a mini town extension to Winchfield.

Whilst this is at present only a speculative proposal your Parish Council will, together with Winchfield and other Councils be monitoring this and will prepare and submit any objections or concerns that may be relevant.

We will of course keep you advised of any further news on this worrying proposal.

To this end the Parish Council will be working to update and strengthen our Parish Plan that was produced some years ago with the aim of having it adopted by Hart District Council and used as part of their Local Development Framework which will help to control future development in the district.

ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Steve's winter funny walk

I don't know if anybody else found the same but you could always tell when the wet winter arrived, it brought out the interesting walking techniques which could have been a challenge on 'It's a Knockout'.

I am of course referring to the narrow and extremely muddy path (footpath 3) that runs from Tundry pond to Sprat's Hatch lane passing with a brief stop to say Hello to the pigs. My technique was to try and straddle the path but that often ended in disaster and pain!

Well I'm relieved to inform you all that this winter you can leave the comedy walk for after a visit to 'The Queens Head'.

The footpath has now been widened and sympathetically restored with woodchip bark for the surface. It now looks very attractive and will hopefully cure the path of it's winter blues.

On behalf of the Parish Council and the local residents I would like to thank Dogmersfield Park and the Four Seasons Hotel for the much needed enhancement to this footpath as shown below.

So I encourage you all to get out there and enjoy the winter season, masking the most of our local footpaths and beautiful surroundings.



Footpath Owners

This is a brief reminder for those landowners who have a 'Rights of Way' access through their land. Please ensure that the access is kept clear and well maintained at all times. Many thanks.

Private Sewerage Outfalls

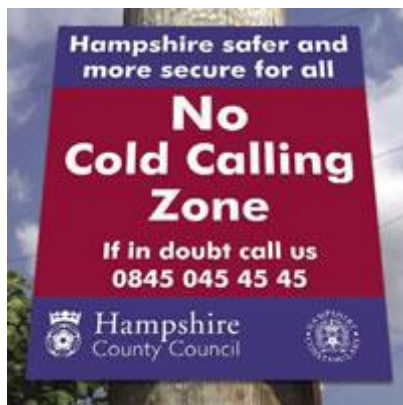
The Environment Agency is currently reviewing the registration of small domestic sewage discharges from septic tanks and small sewage treatment plants in England. In Wales owners of private sewerage already have to register.

In England the registration is currently optional whilst the regulation is under review. Should your application fail, you may be required to apply for a 'Small Sewage Discharge Permit' for which there is currently a one-off charge of £125.

A good starting point is the article and associated information on the Environment Agency web page. For those without internet access we can print out this information and send it to you or alternatively contact the Environment Agency direct on 03708 506 506. The Agencies web address is:

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/132387.aspx>

REGISTERING AS A NO COLD CALLING AREA



During the last year or so the village of Dogmersfield has been used by various organisations to carry out door to door sales including the sale of dusters, oven gloves and other similar household items. On a couple of occasions the young lads carrying out these sales visits have been irritable or rude when residents have said that they are not interested in seeing their wares.

Trading Standards have a scheme where, if a minimum of 66% of the residents in an area agree, the area can be designated as a "No Cold Calling Zone" with suitable signs displayed so as to discourage future visits by doorstep sales people.

Whilst such a scheme does not guarantee that there will be no further sales visits it should reduce them quite considerably.

The Parish Council is considering the possibility of setting up an NCCZ to cover Chatter Alley, Pilcot, Church Lane and Chalky Lane but before we make formal application to Trading Standards we need to gauge your desire for such a scheme.

If you have e-mail, please will you send a brief message to survey@dogmersfieldparish.co.uk giving the first line of your postal address and whether you are in favour of such a scheme.

If you do not have e-mail then please complete the enclosed reply slip and return it to our Vice Chairman at Pippins, Chatter Alley, Dogmersfield RG27 8SR. All responses and any e-mail addresses given will be treated as confidential. We look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

THE PARISH COUNCIL

In May the Parish Council agreed unanimously that David Everett should become the Chairman. He writes that it has been a very hectic time since he took over from Alastair who has become the Vice Chairman. Most of the issues that the Council has been dealing with are covered in this newsletter but he also explains the changes to the Council that have taken place over recent months.

Peter Curnow-Ford left us when he moved out of the area. Peter served as a Councillor for 6 years during which time he concentrated on a wide range of the Council's business including both finance and planning. We are grateful for his efforts and commitment.

Phillip Whitehead also stood down after just over a year. He was proving to be a very valuable member of the Council and his enthusiasm and energy are sadly missed.

Christine Toms has also resigned. Christine had been the Clerk to the Council for four years during which time we benefitted from her advice, help and support on all Council matters.

When Peter resigned a Councillor vacancy was advertised on the Parish notice boards. At the July meeting the Parish Council agreed to co-opt Geoff Beaven

Geoff has lived in the village for 20 years and has worked in central government, private industry and as a self employed consultant. His considerable experience and wide interest in local matters are already proving to be a great asset to the Council.

The advertisement for the Clerk vacancy attracted seven worthy applicants. After carefully assessing all the candidates the Council are pleased to welcome Karyn Reid as the new Clerk. Karyn is already the Clerk to Rotherwick Parish Council and combining these two roles will bring benefits for both Councils.

We would also like to thank Christine Randall who stood in as locum Clerk whilst the selection process was underway.

Councillor Vacancy

Are you a "people person" who enjoys talking to other residents but, more importantly, do you have the concerns and best interests of the Parish as a whole at heart?

Do you want to be a voice for your community and effect real change? Can you represent the aspirations and concerns of your friends, neighbours and the all members of the Parish?

Do you have special skills and experience that can be used for the benefit of your fellow residents?

As this newsletter demonstrates the threats and opportunities that must be addressed by the Parish Council are greater now than at any time in recent years.

To serve the Parish we need an active and effective team so why don't you become a Councillor and see what a difference you can make to your local community?

LOCAL NEWS

Carol Singing -11th and 18th December

The village Carol Singers will be calling at homes in the village during the evenings of Sunday 11th and Sunday 18th December. If you would like to join them, or request a visit on a particular day or do not want them to call, please contact Mike Ricketts on 01252 810689.

Village Street Party - 5th June 2012

Dogmersfield Church intends to liaise with the local business communities and the Parish Council to organise a fun community event next June to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, the Olympics, and School centenary. Please contact Christine Lowe or Mike Ricketts if you would like to be involved in any way.



Dogmersfield Primary School

There will be a Christmas Fayre at the School on Saturday 3rd December from noon to three o'clock. Please come along and support the School.

This year's Carol service will be held at All Saint's Church on Friday 16th December at 9.30am. All are welcome to attend.

Spring Term commences 4th January 2012

PRIVATE G WILSON

On a lighter note Geoff writes that as regular users of the online auction site 'Ebay' my wife and I are always on the lookout for objects with a local interest. Luckily a few months back we were able to purchase an old cigarette lighter and the reason that we bid on this item was that the lighter bears the following inscription.

PRESENTED
TO
PRIVATE G WILSON
IN APPRECIATION OF
HIS WAR SERVICE
FROM THE
PARISH OF DOGMERSFIELD

From the style of the lighter, which has obviously been well used, it seems likely that Private Wilson served in the Second World War. However, tracing his military record without a Christian name or other distinguishing information has proved to be very difficult.

We would like to find out more about our illustrious former resident but need your help. If anyone can identify Private G Wilson and provide any information about his military service or even the circumstances of the presentation We will be delighted to hear from you. Hopefully we will have more to say about Private Wilson in a future news letter.

PS – Was he in the local Home Guard?

THE DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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Steve Bramwell (Environment / Highways)
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Clerk to the Council: Karyn Reid
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PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

All our meetings are held at Dogmersfield Primary School starting at 7.30 pm. Agendas are available on our website and are displayed on our three notice boards (outside the School, adjacent to The Queen's Head and at the southern end of Chalky Lane). Minutes of previous meetings are also displayed.

Please do come along, if only to stay for short while, to let us have your views on any issues that concern you.

Provisional future meeting dates are:

5th December 2011
9th January 2012
13th February 2012
19th March 2012
23th April 2012

Do you have any comments on the matters covered by this newsletter? Would like to suggest what the Parish Council should be focussing on over the next year? Please let us have your views by contacting any of the Councillors or the Clerk at the addresses given above.

Visit our website: www.dogmersfieldparish.co.uk