



Odiham Parish Council

Issue 13
November 2013

Serving the People of
Odiham & North Warnborough

USEFUL CONTACTS

Odiham Parish Council

The Bridewell
The Bury
Odiham
RG29 1NB
01256 702716 or www.odiham.org.uk
Email: clerk@odiham.org.uk

Basingstoke and North Hants NHS Foundation Trust

01256 473202

Hart District Council

Harlington Way
Fleet
GU51 4AE
01252 622122

Hart Planning Department

01252 774419

Hampshire County Council

The Castle, Winchester
Hampshire, SO23 8UJ
0845 603 5638

Neighbourhood Watch

01256 701805

Odiham Bridewell Library

0845 6035631

Odiham Volunteers Care Group / Transport

Mon to Fri: 9am to 5pm
07551 587862

Odiham Health Centre

01256 702371

Odiham Police Office

24 hr non-emergency
(PC P Franks & PCSO E Wallace)
0845 045 45 45

COUNCILLOR VACANCY

Would you like to be involved in influencing the future of Odiham and North Warnborough?

Odiham Parish Council is currently short of one councillor. Following a resignation earlier in the year, a space has opened up for a community minded and pro-active resident who has time to commit to the council and its various committees. The position is voluntary.

The villages of Odiham and North Warnborough combined, have a population of approximately 5,000 and are made up of almost 1,500 residences. The parish council's role is to administer public assets owned by the parish and to act as a consultant when senior councils (Hart DC and Hampshire County Council, for example) or other bodies look for input on matters concerning the parish. This is achieved through a parish council office, run by a very capable staff and through the activities of the councillors themselves. The office is funded by council tax precept and is maintained in the heart of Odiham, in the Bridewell building. You may know this building as the home to the Sure Start children's office, the library and the local Police force as well as OPC.

The council currently meets for approximately 2 hours, once every 3 weeks, on Monday evenings with the possibility of other OPC meetings and attendance at meetings of other bodies at which OPC is represented on an ad hoc basis. Councillors also get involved in "hands on" activities where necessary, for example supporting village events such as Armed Forces Day.

With the changes that are facing all of our lives it is difficult to stay abreast of the issues that will shape Odiham and North Warnborough in the coming years. By standing as a parish councillor you would be able to offer your input into decisions affecting how, for example, community services are funded and into the impact that changing planning legislation will have on the place where we live.

Without proper representation Odiham and North Warnborough will "barely muddle through" so, if you feel that you have something to contribute as a member of Odiham Parish Council, please do email Sarah Weir, Clerk to the council at clerk@odiham.org.uk or call her on 01256 702716.

PARISH OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS

The office is normally open to the public between 10am and 2.00pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday but we would recommend phoning in advance to ensure the office is attended.

Sarah Weir stepped up to the role of Clerk in June this year, the new Deputy Clerk Lorraine Jeffs began this May and Susan Bennett the Cemetery Officer has been in the role for a number of years.

VILLAGE AGENTS

A year ago Valerie Cloke and Sarah Voysey were appointed Village Agents for Odiham. Their role is to be a first point of help and guidance to anyone who is unsure of how to solve everyday problems, in particular the senior residents of Odiham. They (enthusiastically!) organise useful activities such as Computer Sessions to break through the mystery of computers and are also aiming to bring a Steady and Strong Session (to help with balance and avoid falls) to the Cottage Hospital...numbers permitting, so give them a call and sign up! They have had a very busy first year with their regular Tuesday morning open session in The Fountains Mall Coffee Shop (10.30 - 11.30am on the second Tuesday of the month), setting up well received talks on "The Home Library Service", a "Legal Advice Morning", "Fire Safety in the Home" and have just completed an electric blanket testing service by Trading Standards /Hampshire Fire and Rescue, for a second year.

Look out for details and information around the village of their activities which are intended to help to guide residents who find themselves in need of a little support towards solving issues of their daily lives. They are (I can vouch!) really nice people who will happily help to find solutions to what may appear to be thorny problems. If you need any help from them please call Valerie or Sarah on 07543 294703 or email odihamva@ageconcernhampshire.org.uk Alternatively phone the Age Concern Helpline on 0800 3287154 Monday to Friday 10-3.

Cllr Mark Faulkner

PLAY AREAS

These are in Chamberlain Gardens, Recreation Road, Chapel Pond Drive and Bufton Field (this was recently transferred to OPC from Persimmon Homes).

All of these are currently undergoing maintenance/repair by our approved contractor following a recent condition survey. At Recreation Road the basket ball hoops are being replaced, the court re-marked and a new football goal installed to replace the old broken one. There will also be replacement ropes and swing. The wet pour at Bufton Field (as pictured) has been replaced around some of the equipment. At Chapel Pond Drive the broken timber board has been replaced. All play areas will also have new signs, with rules and contact details on in case of any damages.

The survey highlighted the poor and potentially dangerous condition of some of the equipment on the Hook Road site; as a result the contractor recommended removal of that equipment and this has been done. Chapel Pond and Bufton Field remain to serve the North Warnborough area.



Cllr James Robinson-Giannasi

CHARMAINE SULLIVAN

OPC received very sad news of the passing of our former Deputy Clerk in September at her home in Mumbai, India where she and her family had recently moved following her husband's career secondment in early 2013. She was just 43 years old.

Charmaine began working for OPC in December 2009 and brought with her a wealth of professional skills (she was a qualified accountant) and equally importantly a beautifully calm, balanced and human approach to her role with the council. For much of her time with us she was the face of OPC and greeted all visitors to the council's offices, residents, Cllrs or others with respect and a smile. During her time at the council she was involved in several projects and events and on more than one occasion ensured that important events for the village happened through her sheer persistence, organisation and will power. We were saddened when Charmaine left OPC to follow what should have been the next exciting segment of her life in India, but were devastated when we heard that she had passed away so suddenly and unexpectedly. She leaves behind a husband and two lovely children and our thoughts are with them.

Several members of OPC attended Charmaine's cremation in September and the parish council sent flowers as an indication of our deep respect for Charmaine and how closely we all felt the loss.

Cllr Mark Faulkner



GRANTS

OPC set aside £8,000 in this year's budget for grants to community organisations. Some of this is traditionally set aside for a grant to the RAF to purchase vouchers for the families of personnel serving away from the base over Christmas.

£2200 has so far been distributed this year: £1300 to InOdiham towards hanging baskets and planters, £400 towards replacement windows at the Baker Hall in Buryfields the home of the Odiham scouts and brownies, and £500 towards refreshment facilities at Cross Barn.

If your organisation wishes to be considered for a grant, please look at the OPC web site for details of the process. Application forms need to be at the parish office by the end of December to be considered at the meeting in January 2014.
Cllr Jeremy Fellows

ALLOTMENTS

OPC has earmarked the site on Hook Road (opposite the Methodist Church) as being suitable for use as allotments. OPC has not yet made a final decision and we are inviting neighbouring residents to let us know by 30 November of any issues they may have, in order to address these as far as possible in any preparation of the site and also of the information on any allotment holders' regulations.

Access and the water supply have been costed and on-site parking and the number of plots are still under consideration.

Any plots would be allocated by ballot and all holders would be subject to regulations regarding tidiness, noise etc. These would be drawn up by the parish office and approved by OPC. If you have already expressed an interest in a plot, please contact the parish office to confirm they have your details on file. If you have not, but would like to do so, please do the same by 30 November 2013.

Cllr James Robinson-Giannasi



CEMETERY AND THE CHAPELS

OPC has a schedule of works to ensure routine cutting, strimming and tidying of the cemetery area, with a view to keeping this as an attractive, tranquil area for all visitors. The weather this year has helped our contactors in achieving this aim.

The chapels are Grade II listed and as the owner, OPC has a duty to maintain these lovely buildings in good condition for future generations. To this end, OPC is in discussion with contractors to commence work on the roofs of the chapels and the porch of the north chapel, together with some weather-proofing repairs to windows. This work should commence by the spring of 2014; some preservation work on interior fittings may also be undertaken then.

Cllr James Robinson-Giannasi

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Cllr Cllr Mark Faulkner
Chairman

Cllr Jeremy Fellows
Chair of Community

Cllr Helen Fleming
Chair of Planning and Development

Cllr Richard Harris
Chair of Traffic and Transport

James Robinson-Giannasi
Vice Chair and
Chair of Amenity Areas

Katie Sheppeck
Chair of Staffing

Cllr George Daws
Cllr Mike O'Neill
Cllr Rebecca Reid

ROCK SALT BINS

Hampshire County Council is responsible for filling the rock salt bins and have assured us that all bins have been refilled after the last harsh winter. If you have a bin near you, please check that it has been refilled. If not, please inform HCC using the contact number inside the lid and also inform OPC at deputy.clerk@odiham.org.uk.

Before use, you may notice that the rock salt has settled forming a crust. Please break the crust and mix the contents as thoroughly as possible. This will allow easy and more economical spreading, therefore better conserving the rock salt.

Cllr Mike O'Neill



CEMETERY NEWS

This summer we have had a trial in the south meadow which contains 19c burials, managing it to enhance the wild-life and biodiversity. The grass has remained uncut during the summer and there has been a lovely display in the area of wild flowers and grasses which have been given the opportunity to flower and seed. The area is relatively small at .75 hectare and does not include any memorials. In September the grass was cut, then came the job of raking up the hay, quite a job and my thanks go to Amanda Ingham of Hampshire Wildlife Trust and three other hard working volunteers! Removing the cuttings avoids a build up of nutrients which allows coarser plants to dominate. 97% of England's wild flower rich meadows was lost between 1930 and 1983 so even small fragments such as the cemetery can make a contribution to the wildlife resources, especially since the area has not been treated with any fertilisers. We hope that from this modest start it may be possible in the future to move on to include larger areas and maybe a log pile to encourage bees, wasps and beetles. This regime is ongoing and under review. If you have any comments or offers of help, please contact me at cemetery.officer@odiham.org.uk.

This year we have updated our rules for the cemetery, which are available to view on our website. Please note that it is essential that you notify us before undertaking any work on memorials in the grave area or the garden of remembrance.



Susan Bennett

INODIHAM

Inodiham is a group of volunteers, made up of local business-people and residents, that has formed to promote our fabulous village and the many businesses and services that we have to offer.

The main aim of the group is to revitalise the village by engaging both the local residents and the many visitors to the area and to encourage them all to support the various individual retailers and businesses by using our High Street for their daily needs; organising the return of a weekly grocery market is just one of our initiatives!

It would seem that the easiest and most effective way of achieving this is by holding various events in the village throughout the year and back in August about 3500 people joined us at our first event, an Italian Market, which we plan to repeat early next year.

We welcome applications for all events from any stall-holders out there, especially those interested in the Christmas Extravaganza on 28 November; just visit inodiham.co.uk or email stalls@inodiham.co.uk for more details.

FOOTPATHS

OPC has received complaints about some footpaths being restricted by overgrown private hedges and bushes. Although Hampshire County Council (HCC) is responsible for maintaining the many footpaths and rights of way, they are **not** responsible for cutting privately owned hedges/bushes that are allowed to grow across or into footpaths (or rights of way) thereby restricting the width of paths. We would like to remind private property owners/landowners that it is their responsibility to maintain hedges/shrubs on the footpath side also; this is to ensure that walkers are allowed un-restricted access along the path.

Maintenance of hedges/shrubs also applies to any private property with the boundary next to the pavement/highway. Hedges/shrubs should not be allowed to grow into roads or across pavements, thereby restricting width and forcing pedestrians to walk near to the pavement edge or actually onto the road.

HCC is responsible for maintaining rights of way across Hampshire by: ensuring that they are free from obstruction and can be used by the public, clearing surface vegetation and ensuring that it is in a fit condition, the maintenance of some, but not all bridges, signposting and way marking.

OPC is responsible for monitoring the state of public footpaths within Odiham/North Warnborough and ensuring access and maintenance standards are met. OPC and HCC also decide a yearly FP cutting/maintenance schedule for designated footpaths within Odiham and North Warnborough.

Please raise any concerns at <http://www.hants.gov.uk/rh/row/problem-report.html> and copy it to OPC.

Cllr Mike O'Neill