



Odiham Parish Council

Issue 14
April 2014

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



119th Annual Parish Assembly



Wednesday 23 April 2014
7.30pm – 9.00pm
Mayhill Junior School

The Annual Parish Assembly will be held on Wednesday 23 April from 7.30pm to 9.00pm at Mayhill Junior School to which all residents are invited.

The agenda will include talks by

**RAF Odiham—Group Captain Maddison and
Dr Hugh Freeman—NHS North Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group**
and question time

The following Councillors are attending to answer questions:

Parish Cllr Mark Faulkner: Chairman
Parish Cllr James Robinson-Giannasi: Vice Chairman and Chair of
Amenity Areas
Parish Cllr Jeremy Fellows: Chair of Community Committee
Parish Cllr Helen Fleming: Chair of Planning and Development
Parish Cllr Richard Harris: Chair of Traffic and Transport

District Cllr Stephen Gorys
District Cllr Ken Crookes

Priority will be given to residents who have given advance notice that they wish to speak and this also allows the Councillors an opportunity to give more detailed feedback on the day.

You are therefore invited to email your contact details and questions to the Deputy Clerk (deputy.clerk@odiham.org.uk) or by post or telephone to the parish office (contact details in the left hand panel).

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.

Keep up to date with parish council matters on the website at www.odiham.org.uk

CLLR JON HALE



I wanted to introduce myself as a new member of your parish council. I was delighted to be co-opted onto the team at the beginning of the year and see it as a real opportunity to positively contribute to the successful running of our outstanding and beautiful villages.

My wife and I moved here over 8 years ago having completely fallen in love with Odiham. I believe that it really is an exceptional place to live – and as a parent, consider myself rather lucky to live in such a wonderfully supportive and active community. I honestly can't think of a better place for my two daughters to grow up and I really am looking forward to helping my fellow Councillors protect and enhance everything about Odiham that makes it so special.

In the few weeks that I have been part of the council I have been made even more aware of the growing pressures being placed on Odiham and North Warnborough – as well as the Hart district as a whole. As such I asked to join the planning and communities committees, where I look forward to paying a very active role in helping the parish council continue to represent our community and Odiham's best interests.

INODIHAM

InOdiham is preparing a season of events and flowers. Planning is well under way for the annual Bands and Blues in The Bury, summer special markets, and, believe it or not, the Christmas Extravaganza. The High Street hanging flower baskets are being planted up ready to blaze out in glory in the spring and new pavement planters have been ordered for the centre of the High Street. And we have plans to do lots more!

Do you have ideas for Odiham? Would you like to be involved? Could you help?

If you would like to join an InOdiham group working on plans for planting and flowers, or a group working on ideas for concerts and similar events, please email chair@inodiham.co.uk or visit our website inodiham.co.uk.



Please note that InOdiham is independent of the parish council although it does receive some funding from it.

Hart Chairman Stephen Gorys presents InOdiham secretary Delly Howard with the Chairman's award.

InOdiham was recognised as a "small group of local businesses and residents who have come together to promote our wonderful village of Odiham. The aim of the group is to revitalise the village by encouraging a sense of community and by enhancing the local environment".

GRANTS TO PARISH ORGANISATIONS

Every year the council sets aside a sum of money for grants to parish organisations. Since the last newsletter the parish council has granted £1,000 to Holy Ridiculous, the parish's amateur dramatic group (www.holyridiculous.biz), for the purchase of stage equipment, £500 to OdSoc (www.odiham-society.org) towards making a copy of the parish's 1840 tithe map to display in All Saints' Church following the removal of the original to the Hampshire Archive, £25 to the Neighbourhood Watch to purchase overlays and £2775 to the RAF to purchase gift vouchers for the family of personnel at RAF Odiham who were deployed overseas at Christmas.

Grants are made twice a year in December and July. If your organisation would like to apply please see the council's web site for more information or contact the parish office.

Cllr Jeremy Fellows

CLLR JEAN-MARC DAVID

Cllr Jean-Marc David joined the council in March, representing the RAF ward. He will sit on the amenity committee and the traffic and transport committee.

THE PARISH ROOM



If you are a local organisation and are looking for a small meeting room, the parish room in The Bury may be available for your use.

Please contact the parish office for more details at clerk@odiham.org.uk or 01256 702716.

TRAFFIC PARTNERSHIP GROUP

A traffic partnership group managed by the parish council meets quarterly to review and discuss traffic, transport, road and foot-path safety issues in the parish. These issues include; speeding, car parking, safety of school children getting to and from schools, footpaths from RAF Odiham to schools and the village and roads (damage, road closures etc.).

The group is made up of representatives from Odiham parish council, Odiham schools, Hampshire Police, RAF Odiham, Hart DC and Hampshire CC. Improvement projects being worked on at present include:

- Improved safety of RAF Odiham children crossing the Alton road
- Speeding on The Street in North Warnborough
- Safety of children coming out of schools
- Odiham High Street parking improvements
- Reducing speeding by the use of a transportable Speed Indicator Device (SID) and linking to Community Speed Watch.

Please report any transport safety concerns to the deputy clerk at the parish office.

Cllr Richard Harris

HELP SAVE OUR LOCAL BUS (NO 30 BASINGSTOKE-ODIHAM-FLEET- FARNBOROUGH)

Hampshire County Council is looking to save £1.5 million from public community transport spending by 2015/16. Our local bus service will be reviewed for cost savings such as reducing the frequency and/or days of service and the use of older persons' bus passes.

To help with their decisions they have begun a consultation that will end on 31 May 2014.

To save any reductions of our bus service it is important that as many individuals and organisations in Odiham participate with the consultation.

Consultation forms are available for individuals and for organisations. These forms are available from the parish office, the library and the post office or via download at www.hants.gov.uk/transportconsultation2014.

Please note that completed forms can be handed into the parish office for return to Hampshire CC.

Cllr Richard Harris

INSTALLATION OF THE NEW STREET LIGHTS

The HCC/SSE programme to upgrade street lighting in Odiham and North Warnborough has now been completed. All old posts/lamps have been replaced with new posts with more efficient white lamps. The parish council has received a number of complaints about these new lamps, mainly light colour, light pollution into gardens and windows, and inappropriate high lamp posts that are considered to be not in keeping with the area. These issues have been raised by the council with HCC, for which we are awaiting a resolution.

If you have an ongoing issue with a street light near you, don't suffer in silence but report it direct to either HCC or SSE using one of the methods listed below.

Website: www.hants.gov.uk/street-lighting

E-mail: hampshireepfi@ssecontracting.com

Phone: SSE Contracting 0800 048 2437

Cllr Mike O'Neill

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PARKING ON THE HIGH STREET

Parking on Odiham High Street has for many years been a troubling issue. The days of free parking for everyone, wherever they want it are, sadly, behind us. An unsuccessful attempt was made in 2007 to introduce charges for parking along the High Street and the lack of accessible parking on the High Street costs businesses and retailers the commercial footfall that the High Street needs to remain a vibrant centre of activity for the village into the foreseeable future.

As a very timely reminder of this situation, almost half of all comments (31 of 67) on Odiham High Street access at InOdiham's January open day expressed concern about the shortage of available parking in the centre of the village.

Two years ago a working party (the parking strategy working party) was established in an attempt to identify the problems and propose a solution to the parking problem. Although initiated by members of Odiham parish council, membership of the working party included equal representation by numbers from each of the stakeholder groups identified in the earliest stages of the group. Those stakeholder groups are: residents, retail businesses, non-retail businesses (of which there are a surprisingly high number on the High Street), visitors to the village and the parish council. Each group has involved the stakeholders that it represents via a series of questionnaires and communications (in some cases some while ago, for which the working party apologises!) and the results of the working party's work is, it believes, a workable and positive plan for future parking in Odiham. Not all stakeholder groups will be able to continue to park as they please, and there will be a small cost to residents of obtaining a residents' permit, but, overall, the working party believes that, in consultation with the stakeholder groups, it has arrived at a positive, achievable and sustainable proposal.

The first visible result of the group's activities was a successful negotiation with Hart DC for the reduction, in May of 2013, of the maximum charge for an all-day stay in the car parks in Odiham, to £2. Previously the all-day fee had been £3.50. It is still early days, but it would appear that this has led to some increase in the utilisation rates of the car park, where the daily maximum charge is now comparable with the cost of a cup of coffee. Increased use of the car parks to relieve some of the High Street burden of all-day parking was the objective.

However, this move in isolation will not deliver a complete solution to the parking problem on the High Street and the group has developed and proposed to both Odiham parish council and to Hart DC a series of changes to parking regulations on the High Street, covering the stretch from the junction with London Road at the East, to the junction with the Alton Road at the West. The changes involve limiting stays in the retail segment of the High Street to 2 hour maximum, with no return to any other time limited zone in the retail area for 2 hours, extension of the area covered by the time limits down towards the new development at the Wood BMW site, and the establishment of a resident parking zone opposite the War Memorial where the majority of residents with no private off street parking live.

The changes to time limited parking requires increased enforcement to work and this is being requested from Hart DC. Hart DC will also be the issuing agency for a residents' parking permit scheme using Hampshire CC guidelines allowing provision for guests of residents to have some access to resident parking zone, too. Details of this scheme will be made available to affected residents as introduction of the changes comes closer.

Remember that the objectives of the changes are to:

- * Release more available parking for shoppers and visitors. These are the lifeblood of a vibrant, successful and sustainable High Street.
- * Ensure that High Street residents with genuine need for on-street parking can park safely.
- * Improve utilisation of The Bury and Deer Park car parks.
- * Reduce unauthorised parking on the High Street (parkers overstaying the 2hr limits by swapping parking bays or moving when enforcement officers are on the High Street).

Successful implementation requires that all users of High Street parking respect the new parking regulations and park considerately; if we all park carefully, for example as close to square-on to the pavement in the parking bays in front of and opposite the newsagent, then we can fit in more cars, to the benefit of all.

All-day parkers should park in all-day parking slots to allow free access to the short-term spaces for visitors coming to the village to spend money in our economy. For some all-day parkers, this will directly bring a benefit of increased footfall into shops and restaurants, making the disruption of changing their parking habits worthwhile.

Hart DC is currently working on introducing the amendments in the next few months. A map of the new parking scheme is opposite and the result should be improved utilisation of the limited parking resource that Odiham has on its High Street.

The proposals brought by the parking strategy working party have been endorsed by Odiham parish council and by Hart DC and should, in the coming months, lead to some relief from the lack of parking space on the High Street.

Many thanks to the parking strategy working party for their time and efforts in bringing the new Odiham High Street parking initiatives together.

MAP OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

NEWS FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

MORE HOUSES

For most people, planning becomes a controversial issue when development is proposed for a site near you, or which you particularly treasure.

The results of the parish council’s survey last year shows that most people don’t want to see development in the part of the parish most local to them.

The government (like all major parties) is determined to tackle the shortage of housing across the country so it is requiring local authorities to assess the housing need in their area over a 15-20 year period and show where the required houses should be built. This work is known as the local plan.

Last year, Hart’s proposed local plan was rejected for a number of technical reasons. This means that currently Hart is expected to grant all development requests in areas outside of what is called the settlement boundary, which were previously protected against development.

Initial indications suggest housing numbers across the District will have to rise to almost double those in the rejected local plan. It remains to be seen where Hart will propose that these go, but we expect the Odiham parish numbers will increase.

The Sunday Times recently described Odiham as an exception in Hart in not having grown into a “dormitory town ringed by bland modern estates”. On behalf of our fellow residents, we would like to ask all our landowners to have consideration by allowing time for us all to assess where additional housing can be put and not jeopardise the special character of Odiham and North Warnborough.

So what can residents do and what can the parish council do, when faced with unexpected planning applications?

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 Jean-Marc David

Cllr Jon Hale

Cllr Mike O’Neill

Cllr Rebecca Reid

RECENT EXAMPLES

At Hatchwood Farm, where 89 houses have been approved in principle, the parish council and residents are still working hard to try to influence and obtain the best development we can. Unfortunately Charles Church has so far been resistant to what we saw as reasonable requests for small changes which would make all the difference, but with the help of Hart’s major sites planning sub-committee, we hope still to achieve some worthwhile changes in terms of design, drainage and footpaths.

On the Wood BMW site, the parish council was able to argue successfully for a reduction from 23 to 20 houses, and to put the case strongly for additional car parking spaces beyond those proposed, to prevent further problems with High Street parking.

Very recently, at the far end of North Warnborough Street, the parish council, working with residents, won support from Hart’s planning committee not to grant an application on a plot standing 12 feet above its listed neighbour and impacting the Whitewater Valley, looking down to Greywell, King John’s Castle and the Basingstoke Canal (photo below). At the same meeting, councillors agreed with our and residents’ concerns by refusing plans for 3 houses on the corner of London Road with Linden Avenue, on the grounds that it would have been overdevelopment, and harmful to the character of the surrounding area.

So, working together, we can have an effect on planning outcomes, but it requires a great deal of time, study and energy. We pay tribute to residents potentially affected by Hatchwood Farm, Adams Farm and Linden Avenue for their contribution to what has been achieved. Residents’ contributions materially strengthened the overall case for objection; they also helped ensure all relevant documents and policies were identified and researched, then shared and jointly considered. Parish Councillors are not professional planners; moreover we are volunteers with other commitments and so although we have acquired experience of the planning system, we will always be stronger when we work together.



NEW SITES

We are aware that landowners are in the early stages of promoting new sites outside the settlement boundary. These include: 41 houses at Hatchwood Hill (beside Archery Fields); 43 houses on Close Meadow between the Alton Road and the church; behind the Chilli Pad in North Warnborough (estimated 35 – 40 houses). Also, inside the settlement boundary (which means its development is acceptable in principle) early discussions are being held with Hart on the large site behind The Oast Garage in King Street (maybe 32 age restricted dwellings - flats and houses).

In all cases of large proposed developments we will be pushing applicants to consult residents and neighbours by means of exhibitions, letters and meeting **before** they submit any application. Our district councillors support this approach.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

You will see on the back page of this newsletter an article asking for help from residents. In order to try to have some say in “the type, design, location and mix of new development” we can opt to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. This is a huge undertaking, requiring a great deal of evidence collection, assessments, examination by a planning inspector and finally a referendum. The parish council has its continuing role as a statutory consultee on planning applications, which sometimes requires members to drop everything and give all their spare time to working on current applications. This work will not stop; indeed it will probably increase in response to the known proposals outlined above. Councillors therefore have very little spare capacity to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan, but we have concluded that **IF** we obtain the support of residents in terms of time, skill and willingness to contribute to producing a plan, and if we believe such a plan will make a material difference to the parish’s ability to prevent *injurious* development, we will consider becoming one of the early parishes in Hart to start work on a Neighbourhood Plan.

Please see the final page for more information.

THE GEORGE HOTEL

On a positive note residents will be pleased to learn, if they are not already aware, that plans by new owners for the refurbishment and upgrading of The George have been approved.

TRYING TO FIX PROBLEMS ...

WITH ROADS, WITH DRAINS, WITH POLLUTION INCIDENTS?

Where to turn to report that exasperating pothole, drains flooding, a streetlight not working?

All the big organisations rely heavily on their computer systems and databases for information about what needs doing and prioritising work scheduling work. If something needs fixing, it is important to report it even if you know someone else has already done so, as this can affect the priority with which it is treated. Please also copy the parish office with your complaint.

This is particularly vital for issues such as overflowing drains and pollution incidents, which may vie for priority treatment with others across a wide area.

Problems with roads: for potholes, water flooding on roads, overgrown hedges, verges, streetlights, traffic lights, etc please for preference report them on the web, at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/index/transport/highwaysdefects>. If you don’t have web access, you may phone 01329 225393 from 8 am to 8 pm.

If you suffer from overflowing manhole covers or other foul water flooding problems, please contact Thames Water 0845 920 0800 for immediate action. If other people are affected, EVERY household affected should also complete a form to be found at <http://www.thameswater.co.uk/tw/common/downloads/aboutus-projects-sewer-flooding/sewer-flooding-questionnaire.pdf>. This is the only way we can find to make Thames Water aware of the priority level, and of how many people are suffering the problem.

For pollution incidents, contact the Environment Agency pollution hotline on 0800 80 70 60. They take pollution of sites of special scientific interest especially seriously. In the parish these include the Basingstoke Canal, Odiham Common, North Warnborough Greens and Bartley Heath.

Cllrs Helen Fleming and Richard Harris

HOW WE CAN INFLUENCE OUR PLANNING DESTINY

THE PROBLEM

Hart District Council is producing a plan to say how many houses will be built in Hart over the next 15-20 years, and where they will go. Odiham parish council, like all parish and town councils in Hart, will have some limited input into this process but ultimately it will be for Hart to decide, subject to the agreement of an inspector who will examine the plan. **This plan will therefore determine how many houses will be built in our parish and objecting to the number allocated to us is likely to have limited effect.**

HOWEVER

The government has provided the possibility for communities to create their own plan of how to develop their areas, known as a Neighbourhood Plan. This gives residents a real, legally-binding say in **how** development takes place in a neighbourhood particularly **how it should be designed, and where it should go, and what should go in between, around and near the houses** (e.g. recreation facilities, green space). Odiham parish council is therefore seeking the help of residents to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. It is quite a formal process, which relies on collecting and weighing evidence, considering all possible options, and whose outcome has to undergo several formal consultation periods, an independent examination, and finally a referendum. If it passes the referendum, Hart has to adopt it and it becomes the main method for managing development here.

We therefore believe that it will be worth the considerable effort required to produce one. Initially we will be looking to form a steering group of some 12 people comprising residents and parish councillors

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Parish councillors do not have the time or all the skills to produce a plan by themselves so we are looking for volunteers to help us in this really important task for our parish.

The sorts of skills required include "leadership, project management and organisational skills, an ability to engage a diverse range of members of the public and to listen, analytical skills, communication and negotiation, and ability to work in a team".

More specialist skills may include handling mapping systems, reading plans, data analysis, organising and running community engagement, production and management of a web site, graphic design, and all forms of publicity. Also knowledge of specific topic areas, such as urban design, retail, housing and affordable housing or other planning issues, heritage, environmental and landscape assessment.

If any resident is or was involved in a professional capacity in planning or associated disciplines – architecture, environment, development, traffic or other infrastructure and could provide advice and guidance to the process we would also be very pleased to hear from you.

In addition this community effort will also need people who may not have specialist skills or experience but who could bring their enthusiasm, people and organisational skills to help us in any way they can. We would particularly welcome those who could represent or are involved with residents that the plan development process might normally struggle to interest e.g. youth, people who don't like meetings or committees, or who aren't normally interested in planning.

Four specific areas where we know we will need help are:

- Liaising and meeting with parish groups and organisations to get thoughts and ideas from their members
- Reviewing and refreshing the Village Design Statement with a view to incorporating it into the Plan
- Pulling together an 'evidence base' of data from various sources covering, for example, the number of people and households in the parish, its age profile and facilities within the parish
- Creating and maintaining a communication and consultation programme using social media, web and print

And there are bound to be other areas too.

It is vital to be able to show the examiner that the plan has been properly produced, its conclusions are derived from evidence, and that it has undergone thorough consultation.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

If you feel you can help, in the first instance please either call the parish office on 702716, or preferably send an email to neighbourhoodplan@odiham.org.uk with your name, contact details and the sort of help you could offer. **Please be in touch before the end of May.**

Assuming the parish council receives enough support to allow the plan to proceed, we will invite all interested parties to a meeting to launch the process.

To read more about Neighbourhood Planning, there is useful information at <http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/> and <http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/further-support/>. Further information on why we need a Neighbourhood Plan is available at www.odiham.org.uk.