

Lighthorne Parish Council

January 2015 Newsletter

Introduction

Welcome to 2015 from the Parish Council! 2014 proved to be a busy one for village life, with all of our Societies continuing to provide entertainment for all and FORSE working together with Lighthorne Parish Council and the wider community to try and stop the New town of GLH. Our Parish has gone from strength to strength in its resolve to protect Lighthorne for the foreseeable future.

Help us to Serve you

The rôle of a Parish Councillor is to serve the best interests of the people who reside in the Parish of Lighthorne. Most Parish Councillors tend to be co-opted onto the council and don't necessarily have a mandate from the local community.

In this day of modern communications, access to email is available to nearly everyone, young and old, technophiles and technophobes alike. A suggestion has been made to collect email addresses from the residents of the parish to enable fast communication between the parish council and the residents. All email addresses would be kept totally secure and not made visible to any third party. Similarly, email addresses would not be given to any other person on the email register so as to ensure everyone's anonymity.

If email addresses are available to the Parish Council then if any major decisions need to be taken about our community everybody would be able to have their say at the touch of a button and your wishes then put into action.

In order to keep you informed of parish issues, please forward your email address to the Clerk at lighthornepc@gmail.com.

New Councillors

Since the last Parish Council newsletter there have been a number of new faces on the Parish Council. Rachel Parker stepped down over the last year. Notices were displayed asking for anyone interested to put themselves forward to join the Parish Council. With no names submitted the council co-opted Paul Daniel. Contact details for all the current Parish Councillors and the Clerk are at the end of this newsletter.

If anyone would like to offer themselves as a future Parish Councillor please let the Clerk know so a list can be compiled. The standard notice advising of any vacancy will always be displayed.

Carol Drake-Lee also stepped down as Parish Clerk after many years of dedicated hard work for the Parish. We thank her for all her dedicated labours. Cllr Laura Steele is acting Clerk, but we are looking for a full time Clerk to take over the role. Please contact us if you feel you could fulfill this position.

Core Strategy Examination in Public Overview

The month-long Examination in Public of Stratford District Council's Core Strategy, in front of Government planning inspector Peter Drew, ended on 29th January 2015 Cllr Laura Steele attended every day and here is an overview.

From **Day One** it was clear that SDC simply hadn't done their job – one could almost feel sorry for them as the country's best planning QCs took their Sustainability Appraisal apart. SDC had cobbled together a "lowest denominator" attempt at comparing sites, their expert

apparently pleased with himself for binning Long Marston Airfield's detailed evidence on the grounds that the other sites he had skimmed over would be disadvantaged.

Inevitably, they were told that they were wrong in law, they had applied the wrong tests and their appraisal wasn't worth the paper it was written on. Hours into the planned month-long Examination, and Mr Drew was offering SDC the opportunity to have it suspended whilst they went away and did a proper job. It became a constant January refrain with, each time, SDC opting to blunder on.

Day Two dealt with housing numbers, and once again SDC had got it completely wrong, as everyone round the table had the evidence to prove. Worse still it had not properly co-operated with its neighbours and they had not considered the region as a whole. Even they admitted their figures did not add up!

Day Three, on Economic Development and provision of employment land, did not go well either. SDC were subjected to a barrage of attacks not least on their lack of effective policy. Mr Drew once again invited them to consider cutting their losses but once more SDC opted to plough on. It was during this session FORSE (representing Lighthorne Parish Council) made strong representations that the JLR employment land should be cut loose from GLH, leaving the housing site to fight its own battles.

SDC fared little better in Week Two. On **Day Four** - dealing with the "big picture" housing plan - heavy criticism was levelled for its championing of unsustainable sites to the detriment of more sustainable ones. SDC's figures, calculations and justifications were again taken apart. A strong case was put forward for more housing South-East of Stratford and for recognition that people actually want to live at Long Marston.

Day Five, dealing with Housing Supply, can be summed up thus - SDC's trajectory (forecast) cannot be relied upon, they have overestimated their figures and their major site (GLH) won't deliver! Mr Drew yet again told SDC this was their opportunity to go away and rethink.

And so it went on – SDC did not fair well on **Day Six**, Green Belt Day. One chink of light - the Inspector did say in relation to Main Rural Centres and Local Service Villages that the Council had had a "good day" - but he only ever said it the once. And on **Day Seven**, when in-depth discussions were had about Stratford's Area Strategy and Housing Allocations, those present were once again left with the feeling that SDC's work lacked thoroughness and detail.

Day Eight dealt with housing allocations and Area Strategies, bringing us to **Thursday January, 22, Day Nine and GLH** – and a series of surprises from CEG/Bird. In spite of rules and timetables regarding production and service of evidence, they covered the room with documents and letters no-one else had seen before. A fair playing field this was not - but not that it did them any good.

There was widespread criticism around the table that there was still no evidence to support the contention that GLH was a sound choice of site. When The 'Great Bund of Gaydon' was raised – a 9m high and 52m wide monstrosity designed to mitigate motorway noise – even Mr Drew was driven to ask them "have you really thought this one through?"

Respected Ecologist Tom Langton told them GLH was 'shouting out' its strong biodiversity values which SDC had ignored and the bund would destroy any semblance of wildlife. The Grade One Heritage Asset of Chesterton Windmill raised much debate and must be saved, we argued, being irreplaceable and no harm to it being acceptable. At the very least GLH should be remodelled to exclude development on any land visible from the Windmill or its immediate vicinity. This was a problem which money and "mitigation" could not fix, we said.

Day Ten brought us the clear picture that SDC was hell bent on stopping any development at Long Marston Airfield, and equally that this made no sense in planning terms as the area has been confirmed as sustainable by the Secretary of State. St Modwen argued that their Meon Vale development should be classed as a strategic location and there was no sensible

argument against.

Week Four, **Day 11**, Transport, and there was positive support for a reinstated rail link from Honeybourne to Stratford - from everyone except Stratford's County collaborators, Warwickshire CC - and the inspector insisted the route be preserved. Long Marston Airfield re-stated that they have offered land for a station.

After **Day 12**, Leisure and Tourism, the final day, 13, dealt with policy, modifications and submissions. FORSE (on behalf of Lighthorne Parish Council), with great fairness from the Inspector, was allowed the floor in the morning session to answer points and shoot some of the developers' GLH Day rabbits.

Indeed, throughout the hearings, one impression stood out - the astonishing degree of competence demonstrated by Mr Drew who was not wrong-footed once and whose complete familiarity with the documents made him master of the brief. To say we were impressed is to understate.

Thanks to him, we leave this gruelling process with heads held high in the knowledge that we could not have done more. We have every faith that he will put together a balanced and impartial report and make the right decisions on the evidence before him.

What happens now? We have been told to expect an Interim Report from Mr Drew mid March dealing with the 'Big Issues' of Sustainability Appraisals, Objectively Assessed Housing Need, Duty to Cooperate and JLR/AML. We will then be expecting a full report mid May subject to any delays caused by new works required after the interim report.

Playground Update

Following the results in the Parish Plan where 80% of those who responded felt the playground needed improving, the Parish Council has endorsed the plans put forward by a group of parents, 'Friends of Lighthorne Playground' (FLIP), to improve and update the playground facilities. There were concerns raised over the safety of the location of the current entrance to the playground and as a result a new gate has been located, by the side of the Village Hall building, leading in from the path. The old gate remains as an additional entrance.

2014 has however remained largely quiet on the playground front, the majority of fundraising activity in the village being focused on fighting the proposed new Town. The group of parents fundraising to provide new equipment and update the playground were able to reach a new target and purchase and install a new "sea horse see saw", which has proved very popular amongst playground users. 'FLIP' will continue fundraising where possible and applying for any grants available to complete the upgrade of all out of date equipment.

Lighthorne Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

A Neighbourhood Watch scheme has been started in Lighthorne and it is registered with the Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network and with the police. The scheme is a civilian administered scheme and membership is free of charge. The village co-ordinator is Colin Such. To become a member it is necessary to register and this can only be done online via the website www.ourwatch.org.uk. Simply enter your postcode and follow the instructions. Once you are registered, the co-ordinator will notify you by email of any Lighthorne crime and anti-social behaviour reports, received from the police or from local residents. Members can also opt to receive national and regional news/reports from Ourwatch. You will also be able

to report incidents to the co-ordinator, though urgent matters should be reported directly to the police. Since the scheme is an online scheme only, members are asked to pass on details of crime concerns to neighbours who do not have access to a computer. The co-ordinator has a number of brochures about advice on making your home safe and a supply of Neighbourhood Watch stickers for doors/windows and can be contacted on 01926 651411.

Parking

Parking in the village continues to be a problem. Guidelines were produced in conjunction with the police to try and provide residents with a guide to responsible parking. There were delivered to every household in the village. Could we politely ask that everyone tries to adhere to these guidelines? Anyone with a driveway should always try and park their vehicles and, if possible, visitors' vehicles on the driveway. With the increased number of vehicles travelling through the village it is more important than ever to try and avoid a potential accident caused by irresponsible parking. Further copies of the guidelines are available from the Clerk.

Speed of Traffic

With the increased volume of traffic travelling through the village there is more concern over the speed at which it is travelling. The Parish Council is in regular contact with Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) to try and address the issue. If anyone spots a vehicle travelling at excessive speed and is able to get the registration number, please let the Parish Council know. In many cases the vehicles are owned by JLR and they will speak directly with the driver and give them a warning. There are ongoing discussions with JLR and AML to try and find new solutions for dealing with their workforce traffic.

Rural Crime Co-ordinator

Lucy Lambert is the Rural Crime Co-ordinator for Stratford District Council. Working closely with Warwickshire Police and Neighbourhood Watch, the aim of the role is to raise awareness across Stratford District of crime prevention techniques. As part of this Lucy will highlight information from the Warwickshire Police website on how individuals can protect themselves to minimise the risk of becoming a victim of crime. Should you wish to contact Lucy please either call 01789260200 or email Lucy.Lambert@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Oil/LPG Syndicate

Sarah Brooke-Taylor from Warwickshire Rural Community Council (WRCC) came along to last year's Parish Council Meeting and made a presentation on the benefits of the Syndicate and how it works. The system is very straightforward and there is no minimum number of people that can join. Oil and LPG is purchased for many villages at the same time so real benefit can be had for even low users. The cost is only £20 a year to join and this is earned back quickly on the savings you will make. Members paid just 52.95 pence per litre for oil in January. Oil is delivered every month and the minimum order is 500 litres. LPG is available too, both in cylinders and in bulk, and also at a good saving.

For further details please contact Sarah on 01789 472611, email oil@wrccrural.org.uk or visit www.ruralwarwickshire.org.uk/oil.

Flooding and Sandbags! Luckily so far this Winter flooding hasn't been an issue – should anyone require any sandbags please contact Laura Steele as she has a further 150 supplied by WCC. The remaining stock are located at the Cricket Pavilion.

Dogs

Walking a dog is the main opportunity for many people to enjoy being outdoors and to add to their health and well-being. On the other hand, many people, including many farmers and land managers, have concerns about dogs when they are not under proper control as this can cause serious problems, including worrying of and injury to livestock, disturbance of wildlife and alarming other people. Farmers also have concerns about dogs spreading diseases, particularly if dogs have not been regularly wormed.

Dog faeces can carry diseases that affect humans, as well as farm animals and wildlife. The highest risks are in fields of cattle, sheep and other animals, in fields where fruit and vegetables are growing, and in public open places where people can come into direct contact with dog faeces, such as sports pitches, playing fields, play areas, the roadside, along paths and tracks, and along riverbanks and lake shores.

If your dog defecates in these sorts of places, pick up and remove the faeces and take them away with you. Not doing so in any public open place is an offence, so take a poop-scoop with you every time you walk your dog. Also, do not allow your dog to stray away from your home as it may well then defecate in a public open space when not under your control.

The Parish Council has provided several bins specifically for dog mess but, if there is no bin where you are, take it home and dispose of it with the household rubbish.

Never allow your dog to stray from a public right of way and always keep it on a short lead (less than two metres) or under close control (responsive to your commands and kept close at heel) near animals.

Lisa Parks, the new dog warden for the area will come out and patrol upon request, please also note that there have been fines imposed by the new dog warden for fouling etc.

New Contract Brings Superfast Broadband to Additional Communities

Over 17,000 additional homes and businesses across Warwickshire and Solihull will be able to get high-speed fibre broadband following the announcement of a new £10.73 million contract between CSW Broadband and BT. This part of the project (known as Contract 2, Part 1) will extend the CSW Broadband partnership roll-out which began connecting the first homes and businesses to faster fibre broadband in April 2014.

As with the announcement of Contract 1, there is a lot of work still to do before details can be given of when the rollout will actually occur in each area. At present there is an indicative schedule of rollout commencing during the summer of 2016 and continuing until summer 2019. However, as with the current programme, the CSW Broadband team are working to accelerate this and over the next few months will be working closely with BT to ensure that they gain maximum efficiencies from the programming. This approach has borne fruit with Contract 1 where the project is just 9 months into the rollout but is currently over 3 months ahead of schedule on the planned programme.

The potential coverage for Contract 2, Part 1 has been mapped. This is a single block colour only at present and, as with Contract 1, the colours will be introduced as the detail is known. There is a lot of surveying and other work to do before we get to the stage of being able to break things down into Phases though.

The latest map, showing the Phasing for Contract 1 and the overall coverage for Contract 2, Part 1, is available at: <http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk/the-project/latest-maps/nga-network-coverage-map>

Enquiries about the project should be sent to: broadband@cswwbroadband.org.uk

If you go to the [rolling 12-month plan](#) you will see that our exchange, [Moreton Morrell](#), is listed as part of the October 2014 tranche, but is not flagged as complete. The next tranche started last month, and the following one will start in April. Their plan is to have two tranches running side-by-side so, unless there are any issues, our exchange should be ready by April.

Reminders

Your parish council would like to remind everyone of the following:

Footpaths and Bridleways:

Many of the rights of way within the parish are maintained by parish volunteers with the agreement of the land managers. However, we rely on the public to report any that need attention. If you'd like to volunteer to help, or to report a problem with a right of way, please get in touch.

Tree & Building Control:

Much of the village of Lighthorne is within a designated Conservation Area. Within that boundary planning rules are tighter than elsewhere and all trees are subject to protection. No tree may be pruned or cut down without appropriate notification.

Check with Stratford-upon-Avon District Council as soon as you start to consider any building or tree work. If you are not sure about the conservation area boundary, the Clerk can provide a map.

Sports Ground Gate:

The gate to the car park needs to be kept locked, otherwise we could be powerless to evict any squatters who might choose to take up residence.

There have been several such incidents in the area in the past. However, the lock has a combination and not a key, and the Clerk, or any regular user of the facility, would be happy to give the combination to anyone who lives in the parish or has a genuine need to gain access.

Who are the Parish Council?

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