

News and Views

Issued by Overton Parish Council
Information and Comment on Village Activities

January 2003

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

From Parish Council Chairman Sue Johnson.

Parish Council Meeting

This will take place on Wednesday 8th January 2003 at 7.30pm in the Community Centre. Public time is immediately at 7:30pm when parishioners may speak about Overton issues.

The committee meetings will take place on Tuesday 28th January starting at 7:30pm with Highways & Byways, 8pm Planning and 8:30pm Finance & General Purposes. The next St Mary's Hall Management committee meeting is 14th January at 7:30pm in St Mary's Hall. The agenda and planning applications for each meeting are displayed on the events notice-board three days before the meeting. Minutes can be found on the notice-board inside the Community Centre.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Playgrounds

There was a great deal of opposition recently to the closure on safety grounds, of play facilities locally. In a recent newsletter Community Action Hampshire explains why. Play areas are intended to be exciting and so, by definition, are not entirely risk free. To make them ultra-safe would also make them boring. The equipment must however be inspected regularly and this is done weekly for Overton. If users of the Edward Kersley Playing field find equipment broken between these inspections, please let the Clerk know as soon as possible. We are doing everything we can to make playgrounds safe places but parents have to help us. Some of the equipment is designed for specific age group. It is important that children, particularly young children, are supervised when playing on any equipment.

Precepts and Budgets

At the Parish Council meeting in December, the precept for the year from April 2003 was discussed. The Parish Council has a number of projects that it wishes to undertake or complete and to this end the following have been earmarked for funding:

Planting of flower towers	£700.00
Contribution towards CCTV	£1000.00 Grants being sought
Contribution towards Project Berrydown	£3000.00
Funding for local transport	£2000.00 Grants being sought
Noticeboards and parish website	£1500.00
Completion of planting at Sapley Lane Playing Field and the cemetery extension	£2000.00 Grants being sought
Playground equipment for Edward Kersley	£5000.00 Grants being sought

If you have any comments on funding these projects contact the Clerk or a parish councillor with suggestions, questions or concerns. Alternatively, attend the meeting on 8th January at 7:30pm to voice your opinion.

CROW (Countryside and Rights of Way) Act

The Countryside Agency has now issued the draft maps identifying where the public would have the "right to roam". Broadly this is open, uncultivated land or common land. The draft maps do not show any land within the parish which would fall into this category.

Walkers should take care to follow designated rights of way when out in the countryside - have a look at the Overton Rights of Way booklet if you are in any doubt. (Overton Parish Council and from the Fireplace Shop.)

The CROW Act also sets a limit on the time period when existing but currently unused rights of way can be added to the definitive map of rights of way.

If you think you know of such a right of way and know of other people who have used it regularly in the past and would support an attempt to get it registered please contact Brian Langer (Chair of OPC Highways committee) ☎ 770848 or John Smith (Overton Ramblers) ☎ 770301.

Broadband Access

Peter Baker reported on difficulties with trying to provide broadband internet access for the village. BT has raised the threshold to a minimum of 250 subscribers. Currently 72 have signed up. If you would like more information please contact Peter ☎ 770007.

Skateboard Park

Good progress continues to be made with the skateboard park. The final siting of some of the equipment is being decided and work should start early this year.

Cemetery Extension

It is hoped to start work soon with landscaping and planting the Garden of Remembrance. Please note that this area is an extension of the burial ground and should be treated with due respect. In particular could we ask that dogs are not exercised here. It has been noted that rubbish is being thrown from the cemetery into the cemetery extension next door. The Parish Council asks that the bins by the cemetery gate be used for rubbish.

North Wessex Downs Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

All of Overton parish north of the railway line is within the above nationally designated area which stretches from the outskirts of Basingstoke to those of Wootton Bassett and from Pewsey to Wittenham Clumps near Wallingford. It covers the bulk of chalk downland in central southern England away from the coastal fringes and is one of the largest AONB's in England. A Director for this area has

recently been appointed and is based in offices near Hungerford and he and his team are helping to formulate a management plan for the area. A leaflet about the area produced by the Countryside Agency should have been delivered recently to all Overton parish properties within the AONB; further copies are available from Overton library. Brian Langer represents both Overton Parish Council and the Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils on the AONB's Council of Partners which meets quarterly. Contact him ☎ 770848 for further information.

Mayor's Charity Appeal

The next fund raising event in aid of CLIC (cancer and Leukaemia in childhood) is the Mayor's Valentine Charity Ball- The Anvil, Friday 14th February. For further details please contact Margaret Payne, Mayors Parlour. ☎ 845591 or e-mail: mayor@basingstoke.gov.uk

Recycling

Don't forget, as well as recycling your Christmas trees in St Luke's Hall forecourt, from 2nd January, you can recycle all your clean foil there too and your (empty) festive bottles at the bottle bank at the Memorial Institute. All those postage stamps can also be recycled; just take them up to the Primary school or drop in at the editor's door, 41 Winchester St.

Older Driver Assessment

Hampshire County Council has told the Parish Council that it is running a campaign to improve the safety of both car drivers and passengers in the 60+ age group. To do this it has introduced the Older Driver Assessment – a confidential, practical driving assessment delivered from the driver's own home in his/her own vehicle. If you are interested in taking part in this, please contact the Road Safety Team at Hampshire County Council ☎ 01962 846888.

VILLAGE TOPICS – A ROUND UP OF THE YEAR'S EVENTS

From Brian Langer.

Road and Pavement Surfaces

Section of B3400 through High Street and London Road will have its sub standard surface dressing rectified in financial year 2003/4. Potholes will be dealt with by Hampshire County Council once the hole is free of water but they need to be told where the worst ones are – ☎ 764444.

New Lighting

Being considered for Elm Road junction with Station Approach and Copse road junction with footway into Foxdown near Hilltop Road.

Traffic Lights Junction

Pedestrian phase too costly for Parish Council to fund alone; HCC considering ways to deal better with right turning traffic off the B3400.

Grit Bins

These should all have been filled with salt ready for use in icy weather; the location of the one earmarked for Charledown Close still has to be agreed with Kingfisher Housing Association.

Overton Rights of Way Booklet

Due for new edition spring 2003; separate map detailing circular walks, for display in village, should be available during 2003.

London Road Carpark

Small increase in parking spaces to be implemented by Borough Council.

Village Centre Parking

Borough Council survey found no severe or persistent problem. Parish Council eager for the problem to be seriously addressed before the additional 75 houses at Foxdown and 60 off Overton Hill are completed – two estates that could add another 200 cars to the village total.

Bridge Street Parking Regulation Relaxation

Still waiting for HCC to issue the formal notice to remove the yellow line restrictions, as per residents' request.

Battens Ave Traffic Management Survey

Any outstanding forms need to be with parish clerk by 18th January for the matter to be discussed at 28th January Highways Committee meeting.

Quiet Lanes

For discussion with HCC – several in parish could be considered for this designation.

Edward Kersley Playing Field Equipment

There is planning approval for two further items of equipment – a zip line and a spacenet – but as their cost amounted to c£20,000 the Parish Council could not proceed without grant assistance.

Allotments

A few plots remain available for rent at the Woodlands site – contact the clerk ☎ 01962 774296.

Community Centre Clock

Previously known as the millennium or Jubilee clock! Erection on the Community Centre has to await completion of the repair work on the building itself.

Cemetery

The Parish Council is tasked with ensuring there is enough space for interments in a cemetery. Although the cemetery, as opposed to the churchyard, is about half full it is understood that space will become available in the churchyard once the cemetery is full.

CCTV

Liaising with police and other organisations over provision in village centre but cost too much for parish to fund entirely hence the wish to see some funds from the sale of the police house directed towards this facility.

Waste and its Disposal

Parish Council not satisfied with standard and frequency of cleaning undertaken by Borough Council – many parts of the village looks scruffy. But litter and dog mess doesn't appear by accident- the parishioners who allow it to be left are a significant part of the problem.

St Mary's Hall

Now owned by Parish Council and its management sub committee reports to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Meetings are open to the public. Property valued at £400,000 for insurance purposes.

St Luke's Hall

The management committee has been asked to report future plans to the Parish Council's January meeting following the village-wide referendum on the new village hall.

Elections

A new Parish Council needs to be elected in May 2003 and there will be twelve seats to be filled. It is not yet known how many of the current council will seek re-election but if you are interested in serving as a parish councillor – which is unpaid – come along to the remaining meetings of this council and get to grips with the issues under consideration and/or contact the clerk to learn of the rules and regulations governing how a parish councillor has to behave and comply with. The next council will run from May 2003 to May 2007. The last time the full council was contested was in 1991 – in 1995 and 1999 there were insufficient candidates to force a vote among parishioners.

Parish Council Budget 2003/4

The draft budget will be tabled at January's Parish Council meeting for approval. As proposed it reflects an increase of around 21% on the budget for 2002/3

New Housing

Only Foxdown (south) has been earmarked as a major development area in Overton in the Borough's revised draft Local Plan taking us up to 2010 and this was already zoned for development with around 75 homes. Apart from Overton Hill, which is already going through the planning processes, none of the other major areas in the parish proposed for development by landowners or developers has at this stage received Borough support.

Bio-diversity Action Plan

Contact Ken Mackenzie ☎ 771121 if you want to be involved.

Faulty Street Lights

Contact 0800 506060 and give the lamp column number, the street and village names. HCC is giving priority to those that do not illuminate rather than those that stay on all day.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mission Coffee Morning

Thank you to all who contributed to the Mission Coffee morning on 16th November and to all who came and spent generously. The result was a magnificent £1041. This will be divided equally between Ungareni Orphanage and Christian Aid African Famine Appeal.

Doris Shorrock.

Royal British Legion

The Poppy Appeal collection in & around Overton amounted this year to £2356.76. Many thanks to those who displayed boxes in their shops & businesses, to all the collectors and all who gave.

Tony Brown.

YOUTH BADMINTON

From Debbie Tomlin.

There won't be any youth badminton in the New Year as it isn't currently viable with the low numbers attending. However, we do intend to start again after Easter when the evenings are lighter and hopefully more of you can make it. Thank you to all those who currently attend and even though some of you did manage to beat the adults last week we also look forward to seeing you again. If you have any questions please ☎ 770154 or e-mail debbie.tomlin@btinternet.com

OVERTON RECREATION CENTRE

From Mike Williams, Vice Chairman.

As well as many other interests, Ken Hogan devoted enormous energy and much of his time to the Overton Recreation Centre having become involved almost from the time he and his family moved to the area. He very soon took on the role of Chairman, in which capacity he served for more than twenty years and was very much the driving force behind the ORC, through times which have seen considerable changes and the challenges they bring. Following his retirement from full time employment some two years ago Ken had given extraordinary time and effort to the formulation and development of a major project to extend and update the ORC's facility at Berrydown. His sudden and untimely death in November has left a huge gap, which can only be filled by spreading responsibility over a number of areas.

We have been most fortunate, that as a personal tribute to Ken, one of our Trustees Alan Turner, who is a proven fund raiser for St Michael's Hospice, has stepped in to lead the Berrydown Project to a successful conclusion; when by common consent it will be known as the Ken Hogan memorial sports ground.

Individual sections and their representatives on the Management Committee must be prepared to work for the common good and take more responsibility for everyday running; a concept dear to Ken's heart but which frequently fell short when he was conveniently on hand to pick up the pieces.

On the broader front, we must as a community, see to it that the ORC, which was Ken's pride and joy, remains viable and well managed in its provision of sport and leisure facilities for the village. In this respect, it would be pleasing to see a good turnout (all are welcome) at the AGM on 3rd March next, with perhaps some new blood joining the committee to drive us into the 21st century.

Underpinning the whole organisation of course, is the membership scheme which requires Collectors and above all more members to overturn the shameful situation where with a continuing growth in village population, our membership level has fallen by about a thousand over the past few years.

If you are interested in joining please contact the membership secretary, Debbie Tomlin, ☎ 770154 or e-mail debbie.tomlin@btinternet.com

LIBRARY NEWS

From Chris Vane, Library Supervisor.

New Year - New Technology!

Those of you who have visited the library recently will have noticed the arrival of some new equipment. In the New Year you'll be able to send emails and surf the net, as well as accessing Microsoft Office programmes to produce letters, tables and spreadsheets.

Now for my annual reminders:

The Village Diary is held in the library. Put your future events in it to avoid unnecessary clashes. Advertise your meetings and special events on our noticeboards. Some library users come from out of Overton and might otherwise not be aware of what's going on in the village. With best wishes for 2003 from Chris & Kathy.

1ST OVERTON BROWNIES

From June Davies.

Is there anybody out there who still has a Brownie uniform from when their daughter was a Brownie? If so, please let me know and I will buy it from you, for some of the Brownies waiting to be enrolled. ☎ June on 771139.

EXERCISE WITH THE BCCSC

From Dick Hudson.

The Basingstoke Coronary Care Support Club is a Registered Charity and affiliated to the British Heart Foundation. The Club seeks to help all people who have suffered from coronary heart disease. It offers the lowest cost professionally supervised rehabilitation exercise facilities in the Basingstoke area. It also offers non-exercising membership for people that just wish to join in the Club's various social activities. We exercise at Fort Hill School at Winklebury on Tuesday (6.15pm) and Friday (7pm) evenings throughout the year. We exercise in the evening so that working members can get to the Club. The ages of the active and enthusiastic membership range from about 40 to well into the 80s and their camaraderie and joie de vivre are a superb advertisement for the benefits that flow from coronary rehabilitation exercise.

If you have been thinking about taking exercise following rehabilitation training at REHAB in Alton there will never be a better time to start! For those of you who have not had a coronary problem but whose lifestyle would benefit from this type of exercise there is a scheme for joining with your doctor's recommendation. The cost is £2 a session. The Club will be delighted to welcome you if you would like to have a look at what goes on.

If you are interested and would like to find out more please contact Dick Hudson ☎ 770169, Betty Burden ☎ 770927 or Billy Knox ☎ 771045.

ADULT EDUCATION

From Glenda Walsh, Community Education Officer

The Spring 2003 Adult Education programme is available, containing all of the usual topics and some new ones that you may be interested in. Free copies from ☎ 306347, the local library community centre or Safeways.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

From Public Transport Representative Brian Langer.

Trains

Station overflow car park

Although the land has yet to be transferred from Croudace to Hampshire County Council (HCC) it is understood that the Borough Council recently gave planning approval for

the thirty place overflow car park. This in itself will do nothing to increase the number of parking places near the station but once HCC have ownership it will enable improved management of the site.

In the meantime some people parking on the verges between the overflow and proper station car parks are not leaving enough room for large vehicles to get through. This road is used by school buses, the refuse collection lorry, the Shuttle bus and delivery lorries to the business units adjacent to the station. Hampshire Constabulary and British Transport Police are liaising with the intention of taking steps against drivers of vehicles obstructing the road so please be thoughtful of other road users before you park there, in a rush, to catch your train.

South West Trains (SWT) operating franchise – update

The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) announced in November that SWT would be given a one year extension - to February 2004 - of their current franchise and agreement of key principles with Stagecoach Holdings plc for a new franchise extending beyond then to 2007. All domestic services into Waterloo will be operated by SWT as part of the SRA's objective of having a single operator at each major London terminus. This means that the West of England line through Overton will continue to be operated by SWT until 2004 and very likely to 2007. It is also expected that the current services from South Wales and Bristol to Waterloo via Warminster will also come under the control of SWT. Although this decision does not provide SWT with the 20 year franchise which was being mooted some months ago it is to be hoped that this announcement will provide SWT with the willpower and commitment to resolve, with Network Rail and others, such matters of concern to Overton parishioners as station car parking facilities, the adoption as public highway of Station Approach and the provision of adequate facilities for wheelchair-bound travellers to travel from the London bound platform without hindrance.

Buses

Stagecoach Hampshire Bus services 76/86 Monday to Saturday to/from Basingstoke/Andover /Winchester:

It is to be hoped that with the imminent completion of the roadworks near Winchester station our buses will be able to maintain their schedules. In the run up to Christmas congestion at both Winchester and Basingstoke caused serious delays to some services and exasperation amongst passengers.

DEADLINE NEWS & VIEWS

This will be 16th January. Please send your articles to the editor in writing, on a PC floppy disk or by e-mail. The email address is Reynoldsxx@aol.com

Comments and contributions for *News and Views* are welcomed by the editor, Teresa Reynolds, The Three Horseshoes, 41 Winchester Street, ☎ 770248, e-mail reynoldsxx@aol.com. The editor reserves the right not to print articles without giving a reason.

For problems or comments about Parish Council matters, contact the Parish Council Chairman, Sue Johnson, 19 Lordsfield Gardens, ☎ 770975 email sue@johnsn.freeserve.co.uk or Vice-chairman Lucy Sloane Williams, 1 Riverside Close, RG25 3JU, ☎ 770607, email LucySloaneWilliams@btinternet.com or Clerk to the Council Laura Harley, Oak Tree Lodge, Roundwood, Micheldever, Winchester, Hants. SO21 3BA, ☎ 01962 774296, email laura.harley@virgin.net.
