

# West Wittering Parish Council®

Your Parish Council Newsletter...

December 2012

## News updates

Welcome to your Parish Council's occasional newsletter. In this issue we have news about the flood defences, street lighting and development plans. We are also launching an email service to help you keep abreast of what's going on. We aim to give you advanced notice of the topics on the agenda so that you can pick your moment to make your mark!

### Flood defences tested!

On 16th October the highest tide for at least two years occurred. As water slipped over the top of the old sea wall at Snowhill, for the first time we could fully appreciate the new flood bund doing its job.



Unfortunately the wettest summer for 100 years has taken its toll. The site manager, Nigel Purchase, explained to us, as we stood sinking in to the quagmire, mud is funny stuff. It's something to do with its thixotropic qualities. Too little water and it does not bind, too much water and it slides. Apparently in order to finish the last 300cm of height and cap the sea wall with the path way we need three weeks of dry weather. Understandably the contractors and Environment Agency have agreed to pack up and return in the Spring!

However a temporary gravel path to East Head and access to the crab pool has been restored whilst the site is vacated.

## Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) came in to force in April. These set out the process that Neighbourhood Planning Forums should follow to create a Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Plan for short. When adopted, they have the same standing as the Local Authority's Local Plan and will determine where development is possible, where green fields are to be protected and influence the appearance of new buildings where there is a local character to protect.

Chichester District Council recently set out their thinking on the potential numbers of houses that could be built in each settlement area. They are proposing for West Wittering for the period to 2029 a minimum of 50 houses and a maximum of 100. Your Parish Council has prepared a response to this which you can read on its web site.

A good deal of the work for a Neighbourhood Plan has already been done in the form of the Village Design Statement that was produced in 2006. If this document is updated and incorporated in a



Neighbourhood Plan it gains strength by becoming a full blown "planning guideline", not just a "material consideration".

An important part of the process is to demonstrate that the Neighbourhood Plan accurately reflects lo-

cal views and local needs. To this end we need volunteers from all quarters of the village and both rural and urban dwellers. At a later stage we will need residents' and local businesses' active participation in exhibitions, questionnaires and finally a vote on whether the plan is to be submitted for adoption.

## Light on Street Lighting

The plans were changed. Originally expected in 2015, West Sussex County Council advised us in March that they had brought forward new street lighting for the village to October this year. The work is being carried out by Scottish and Southern Energy plc under their 25 year contract with West

Sussex County Council, Hampshire County Council and Southampton City Council.

As we watched the preparations proceed for the new columns the curious and historical

anomalies of the village were revealed.

The lighting levels for street lighting, as opposed to footway lighting, is determined by British Standards, which, of course, now conform to European Standards. The intentions are good and the use of lower power lighting, dimmed or switched off at night, saves energy. But apart from the main road we live in a village where, on the whole, it is only the developments since the 70's that are adopted and qualify as street lighting.

The rest is either unlit or has occasional footway lighting owned and maintained by the Parish Council. Areas like Howards Avenue have lamps at the junctions and bends only. The Crescent, Joliffe

### **Did you know?**

*Three Fenner brothers served under Sir Francis Drake in attacking the Spanish Armada in 1588. They were all born and brought up in West Wittering and had served with Drake for many years against the Spanish. The three of them commanded ships in fighting the Armada and notable engagements were off Ventnor and Bracklesham Bay where they knew the waters well.*

*Later, James Lemon who was also born and raised in West Wittering served on "HMS Ajax" at the Battle of Trafalgar. Parish and City records show that he was baptised in the church here and later married a girl in Chichester.*

Road and Marine Drive are other examples of parish lighting. In all these areas, the contractors are simply replacing column for column, a metre higher than the old ones but lower than the highway. And then there are the areas without lighting such as The Wad, the Wellsfield and Webbs Farm estates which remain dark.

This mishmash is most obvious driving in to the village along Rookwood Road. The lighting from the bend at Malthouse Cottages is new "footway lighting" and then becomes "street lighting" at the shops. This leaves considerable gaps on the northern stretch, with 300 metres dark at one point, whilst the road south of the shops is a plethora of lamps, more than before so that not an inch falls below those standards!

Perhaps it doesn't matter. Although many respondents to the Village Design Statement consultation wanted less lighting. Our anecdotal experience is that most people are happy with the level of lighting they currently have. Maybe that's why they chose their location to live.

## Stay informed

Your Parish Council has started building a distribution list of people that would like to keep up to date with what's going on. We are at an early stage but the plan is notify those who have subscribed and supplied an email address with links to agenda and minutes as soon as they appear. We will also send out news from time to time of events, issues and alerts related to Council business. Please do sign up by visiting our web site at: <http://www.westwitteringparishcouncil.gov.uk/blogsignup/>.

Don't forget The Parish Office in the Sports Pavilion is open on the last Thursday of each month (11am to 1pm) for parishioners to question or raise matters with the Parish Clerk, Mrs Joanne Brown, and a parish councillor. Paper versions of current planning applications are also available to view.

For letters, the Parish Clerk's address is to West Wittering Parish Council, 100 Middleton Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 6DL or email [info@westwitteringparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@westwitteringparishcouncil.gov.uk)

