

West Wittering Parish Council

Your Parish Council Newsletter...

February 2020

The **Neighbourhood Plan** is ready for the next step. There will be a **Public Consultation** of the latest draft plan and an opportunity for residents to view the documents, ask questions and make their comments on the following dates.

24th February 2-4 pm in the Sports Pavilion, Rookwood Road

3rd March 10am-12pm in the Sports Pavilion

7th March 10am-12pm in the Witterings Medical Centre

In this issue we also look at the future options for the **Mobile Waste Recycling** service and plans to create meadow land on an enlarged **Village Green**.

Mobile Tip at Risk

The news in August that West Sussex County Council were considering the closure of the Mobile Household Recycling facilities at Selsey and Wittering came as a shock. Apparently the County has already closed four similar facilities. There followed meetings with the affected Town and Parish Councils to consider the possibility of jointly funding the service. At the request of the Councils the County Council ran a questionnaire in October. The results showed overwhelming support for continuing the service.

If the plan goes ahead it is estimated to add £7-8 per annum to the Council Tax. This is not out of keeping with the costs of meeting rooms, playgrounds and gymnasium that the Parish Council provides: Schemes for “pay to tip” were considered but deemed too complicated for the size of operation.

Eco-friendly Village Green

The Parish Council has had the village green enclosed with a post and rail wooden fence in order to address the problem of illegal parking and erected a



new notice board containing the bye laws for the village green. This year it is planned to refurbish the outside of the public toilets, that were acquired by the Parish Council in 2014 to avoid closure, and replace some of wash facilities.

The area to the rear of the public toilets on the village green was recently purchased from Chichester District Council. It had fallen into disrepair with



overgrown nettles and brambles.

After a successful bid for a Chichester District Council's New Homes Bonus grant for this project, the area has been cleared to reveal a traditional Sussex flint wall. Work is being carried out to a specialist specification for the creation of a bee and insect friendly wildflower meadow to flourish within the conservation area. The Parish Council met with Jane Reeve of the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group for valuable advice on the project. To complement the wildflowers we also plan to plant two trees and Jane is looking into the best type for this site.

We hope this will create an eco-friendly environment for bees, insects and other wildlife within the conservation area and give residents and visitors a pleasing vista when passing by.

The Parish Council Footpaths and Open Spaces working party will monitor the work throughout and ensure that this space enhances the village green with a less manicured appearance.

Neighbourhood Plan Drafted

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with its consultants has made steady progress on the project, limited at time by external factors.

Following the village questionnaire in 2016 when residents were asked what housing, if any, should be built and what local facilities were most valued, the Steering Group undertook a “call for sites” survey of landowners and principal authorities. This

yielded several potential sites all of which were assessed for their suitability to meet local housing needs. These results have guided the evolving policies in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

A housing needs survey was also commissioned with consultants working for Locality which is government funded. This piece of work reinforced the developing policies regarding the type of housing needed in West Wittering.

The West Wittering Village Design Statement (2006) has been updated to reflect changes in national planning guidance and will be appended to the final Neighbourhood Plan.

The emerging Chichester District Local Plan was



reviewed, in particular for housing numbers and future land supply. The Local Plan reflects national planning policy and the Neighbourhood Plan must meet, as a minimum, the Local Plan housing numbers. The Steering Group decided to hold up the Neighbourhood Plan until the Local Plan review was completed to ensure local policies were not in conflict with the Local Plan. Meanwhile the Group were advised that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was necessary due to the protected designated areas within West Wittering. This has now been completed.

Work has also been undertaken on habitats and land drainage. The Neighbourhood Plan also allows for aspirational development needs and the Steering Group has put forward proposals for safe cycling routes and designated quiet lanes.

The Plan is now at pre draft stage and subject to minor amendments regarding biodiversity and habitats will shortly be sent to Chichester District Council. There is then a six week public consultation as part of the statutory process.

Did you know?

In the last two years your Parish Council has installed tennis courts, an urban gym and teenage climbing frame, saved the public conveniences from closing, purchased more land to extend the Village Green, re-surfaced Snowhill track, enhanced the planting at Marine Drive “triangle” and much more!

Announcements will be made at the time including on the notice boards, the website. (www.westwitteringparishcouncil.gov.uk) and through e-newsletters. Residents are strongly encouraged to participate in the consultation and express their views. The higher the response rate the more force the results carry.

Following this stage there will be an inspection by an independent Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate and finally a referendum of the electors of the Parish to approve the Plan. It is hoped that the Plan will be in place by the end of 2020.

Planning Mornings

That Parish Council meetings are too long is the view of councillors and residents alike. This is mainly due to planning. When paper copies of planning applications were distributed to statutory consultees members could study plans in advance of meetings. Now, with only on-line access many members rely on the projected version during meetings. This takes extra time. The Parish Council has therefore followed the example of many others and set up a Planning Committee to meet on the Wednesday morning eight days before the Council meeting. This enables the majority of plans to be agreed in advance with the benefit of shorter Council meetings. Planning items that are deemed controversial or plans that arrive too late for the Planning Committee are referred to the full Council.

This new day timing may not suit everyone although Local Planning Authorities hold their planning meetings in working hours. The Council is always willing to consider special circumstances that might justify deferring a planning application to the evening Council meeting.

Stay informed

The Parish Office in the Sports Pavilion is usually open on Wednesdays. This is an opportunity for parishioners to raise issues with the Parish Clerk, Mrs Sue Hawker or email her on clerk@westwitteringparishcouncil.gov.uk.

There is a subscription email service to keep you abreast of council matters. If you haven't done so, give us your email address by visiting our web site at <http://www.westwitteringparishcouncil.gov.uk/newsletter-sign-up>.

To join a visit to Moutiers-les-Mauxfaits with the Twinning Association 24-27 September 2020 contact Mireille McGinn on 511116 or Sue Taylor on 513361.