



Extra News

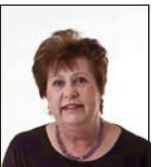
Spring 2015

Parish Councillors



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Message from the Chairman

We now have a date for the commencement of work to close the northern end of School Road – 7th April 2015. This dangerous junction has been of concern for local residents for many years and it is to be hoped that the changes will reduce both accidents and ‘near misses’.

Continuing with roads, at some stage in the near future the 40 mph speed limit on Sandy Lane will be reduced to 30mph which will then run from the junction with Braishfield Road to the bottom of Yokesford Hill.

A windy, rainy morning at the end of January saw me at the ‘Topping Out’ ceremony of the new Assembly, will take place at Abbotswood Court care home. Woodley Village Hall at 7.30pm. Assisted by the town mayor, Cllr Peter Hirst, I was delighted to participate in this traditional ceremony together with work of the parish council over the representatives of Harford Care who past year. They will be able to ask will operate the home and the questions of councillors and the Highwood Group, who are the annual accounts will also be builders.

The facility is certainly impressive and promises to provide a wonderful, homely environment for older people. The building has been designed to provide a range of opportunities for its residents, who will be able to enjoy an excellent quality of life. The home is light and spacious – in short, it will offer modern living for older people. I am delighted to welcome Abbotswood Court into the Romsey community and I look forward to seeing the finished project in the summer.

Continuing on the theme of Abbotswood I was pleased to attend a meeting to set up a new community association. This will be a trust, made up of residents, who will eventually be responsible for operating the community centre building. This will appear in due course. Led by a Hampshire County Council officer who led residents through the procedures necessary to form a trust, it was a very fruitful meeting. It was good to meet up again with residents who are prepared to give up the time to take steps to strengthen the Abbotswood community.

Finally a date for your diaries – Wednesday 29th April.

Parishioners are all invited to come along where they will hear about the work of the parish council over the past year. They will be able to ask questions of councillors and the annual accounts will also be presented. There will be a guest speaker Sgt Russ Hodges who will give a short talk followed by light refreshments.

Chris Wesson



Act of Remembrance — Andy Carter

On the drizzly afternoon of November 11th in a year marking the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War it was a pleasure to have attended the perhaps less well known about annual act of remembrance at the Botley Road Cemetery. The service was attended by members of the Parish Council, many well known local figures and Year 6 pupils from nearby Halterworth School. Following the service led by Revd. Canon Tim Sledge, Vicar of



Romsey, wreaths were laid including

one by the head boy and girl of The Romsey School. We then divided into groups to visit the 18 officially recognized war graves at various locations in the cemetery where at each, pupils from Halterworth School read pieces they had had written and planted remembrance crosses. I'm sure it was a moving experience for all who took part; it was certainly for me, and it was heart warming to see so many young people actively involved.

Straight Mile — Phoebe Merrick

The most attractive way to approach Romsey is from the east, along the Straight Mile. Whatever the season of the year, the trees form an avenue full of beauty. The houses are set well back with their access roads parallel to the main road, so, to the casual observer only notices the woodland. The road is now classified as A3090, but was A31 until relatively recently.

Despite the convenience of the road for those of us wishing to travel to Winchester, it is not old as important



routes go. It was built in 1758 by the Romsey and Winchester Turnpike trust. The big difficulty in opening up the road was the wetland in the vicinity of New Pond. In order to construct the road, the ground there had to be built up and the water to the north enabled to drain

down to the Tadburn. Within the woods themselves some land was built up to make a reasonably level surface, although at the far end, the road is in something of a cutting. The Turnpike Trust is long gone but its memorial is the milestone near the entrance to Crampmoor Lane.

The boundary between Romsey Extra and Ampfield slices diagonally across the Straight Mile. That boundary is more than a thousand years old. The Bishop of Winchester owned the Ampfield side, which was then known as Ticcensfeld, or Goats' Field. When King Edgar granted eastern Romsey to the Abbey, the boundaries of the grant were described in a charter and the Bishop's Bank was one of them. Parts of that bank still survive, although some people have levelled portions of it for the benefit of their lawnmowers. Unfortunately it is not a scheduled ancient monument, so has no statutory protection.

In 1944, Southern Hampshire was extensively used in the build-up to the D-Day invasion of Normandy and many troops were encamped in the Romsey area. Many older Romsonians can remember the American camps

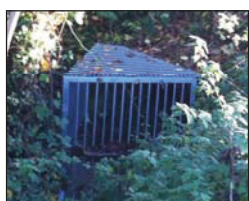
alongside the Straight Mile. Strict segregation was in force and the black and white soldiers were billeted quite separately.

Before the M27 was constructed, the A31 was a main artery for people from London motoring to the New Forest and Bournemouth. By the 1920s there was a café which later also sold petrol in the Straight Mile. The business



closed in the 1980s and a new bungalow built on the site. During the 1960s and 1970s Saturday holiday traffic would back up from Romsey well down the Straight Mile, often as far back as Jermyns Lane, and local people wanting to get onto Winchester Road or the Straight Mile could take 20 or more minutes trying to turn right. Romsey needed the M27 to remove that pressure.

Flooding Highwood Lane — John Parker



County Council will prevent future floods, especially the new cage installed across the entrance to the culvert under the A27. When we met the Highway Engineer and his team we

This year we haven't had the same extreme weather but hopefully the work done by Hampshire were astounded to discover that they didn't have a regular programme for cleaning the culverts and, indeed, had no maps to show where the drains ran. As a result of our meeting they cleared the culverts - including removing a washing basket which was the main cause of the blockage - and they built and installed the cage to stop rubbish getting into the drains. The team assured us that the problem was down to the blocked culvert. It

was nothing to do with the ditches in Highwood Lane and that there were adequate ponds and drainage on the Abbey Park industrial estate. However, they did suggest that we remind all landowners that the hedges and ditches that front their land is their responsibility to keep clear. If they don't then the County Council can clear them and recover the costs from the landowner.

Revised Local Plan

Romsey Extra Parish Council has taken a great interest in Test Valley's draft Revised Local Plan (RLP) from 2006 when the proposed Core Strategy was first published through various iterations to the current day. The RLP is the draft of the document which will control how Test Valley is developed over the next 14 years. Locally people talk about extra housing or employment land being allocated in Romsey. That is not strictly correct. Romsey Town is full; any development will be in Romsey Extra. Consequently, the RLP is of vital significance to how Romsey Extra will develop.

At each iteration of the RLP we have carried out a thorough review of the document and put in detailed comments. The process has now reached the stage where the RLP has been submitted to a government-appointed Inspector whose task is to determine if the plan is legally compliant and sound. As part of his review the Inspector held an Examination in Public over December and January. Based on comments made on the January 2014 version of the plan various bodies were invited to put forward their views to the Inspector in a series of round table discussions. There were 22 different sessions spread over 12 days. REPC was represented at all the sessions and Cllr John Parker, as REPC's spokesman, was invited to speak at 12 of them. For a number of the sessions Cllrs Wesson and Hibberd attended as observers.

The key matters raised by REPC and others included:

- The lack of vision and proactive strategy especially with respect to the countryside, flooding, renewable energy, transport and neighbourhood planning. The lack of vision for Romsey itself.
- Whether Romsey is a small market town or a major centre

attracting major development.

- The lack of flexibility afforded by the tight settlement boundaries proposed.
- Whether the sustainability analysis method was sound and the assessment was done well and fairly.
- Whether the rigid broad areas of search and the 50 dwelling cut-off unduly constrained which sites were put into the melting pot.
- Whether there should have been a proactive public consultation on general options such as whether a more dispersed model would be more acceptable and more deliverable than a few major strategic housing sites and on options of combining various sites.
- Whether more flexibility should be provided by identifying reserve housing sites.
- Whether the plan reflects local consensus given the scale of objections received on three occasions to the Whitenap proposal with around 1000 objections being received on three occasions but with no significant changes. The lack of encouragement for neighbourhood planning in contrast with other authorities and the constraints created by identifying so many policies as Strategic and, therefore, not open to Neighbourhood Planning.

Apart from these key policy matters REPC presented its objections to the proposed Whitenap development:

- The land proposed includes high grade agricultural land.
- A good proportion of the site is at high or medium risk of surface water flooding.
- The development will adversely impact the rural landscape setting of Romsey and the visual appearance of a major entrance to Romsey including the ancient woodland of Beggarspath Woods.
- This scale of development

south of Romsey is inappropriate as it will, over a very short space of time, fundamentally alter the nature of Romsey as a small market town exacerbating the impact already being felt from the Abbotswood development. Overall, including Abbotswood, this would result in an increase in the population of Romsey of over 30%.

- The site itself is tacked on to Romsey and is not and will not become an organic part of the town.
- The proposed development is not located near the likely centres of employment which are more likely to be south of the M27.
- The transport links to Romsey are poor and traffic in Romsey could increase by 30% in proportion to the population increase. The reliance on two large development sites in Southern Test Valley, both in the ownership of the same land owner, increases the risk that the necessary houses may not be delivered on time and restricts the number and type of developer, the variety and choice of the properties and flexibility to respond to changing circumstances.

National Planning Policy acknowledges that decisions on sustainability must be a balance between the social, economic and environmental dimensions. It is the Council's view that the right balance has not been achieved and that the economic demands of housing have overridden the social interests of the Town and the environmental interests of the land.

We now wait to see what the Inspector's opinion is as to whether the plan is sound, requires major modifications or is irredeemably unsound. We should know by early summer.

Woodley & Crampmoor Friendship Club

The club meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month in Woodley Village Hall at 2 pm and is open to members over 55. There are slideshows, talks, demonstrations, bingo and some social time (chat) at

APRIL

15th Carol Watson

MAY

6th Blue Lamp Trust

20th "Memories of Romsey" Barbara Burbridge

JUNE

3rd Club Outing

17th "Is this the Real India?" Gwen Appleton

JULY

1st Members Afternoon

15th Bingo

AUGUST

5th & 19th Half Day Outings

SEPTEMBER

2nd Club Celebration 25 Years

16th "New Zealand" Geoffrey Blackford

OCTOBER

7th "History of Underwear" Ruth King

21st "Meandering Along the Meon" Jill Daniels

NOVEMBER

4th "Wildlife of a Working Forest" Mike Read

18th "The Humorous Poet" Dennis Bryant

DECEMBER

2nd Bingo

16th Christmas Party

Council Meetings

The Council **NOW** meets at 7.15pm in the New Dining Room, **Stroud School**, Highwood Lane, Romsey, SO51 9ZH (unless otherwise stated):

Annual Parish Assembly:

Wednesday 29 April 7.30pm
(Woodley Village Hall)

Thursday 21 May **AGM**

Thursday 11 June

Thursday 9 July

Thursday 13 August

Thursday 10 September

Thursday 8 October

Thursday 12 November

Thursday 10 December

Vibrant Village Hall Needs New Treasurer

Woodley Village Hall has achieved much over the last few years. Major improvements have been completed bringing needed improved facilities for the users. Further major improvements are in the final stages of being planned. The detailed specification of certain parts of this work has been complicated and taken a lot longer to complete than envisaged.

Amongst the improvements planned are a complete refurbishment of the main hall with disabled access to the stage, deepened windows, a ventilation system, a screen and ceiling mounted projector and a multi-functional sound system. Groups wanting to provide catering will be pleased to know that the kitchen will be completely refitted with features such as a double oven and a commercial grade dishwasher.

The front of the Hall will be improved with new paved areas and benches and a new porch over the entrance. During a visit to Romsey Show last summer, the Hall's Chairman, Rod Simpson, visited a trade stand offering oak framed structures and realised the potential for the new porch at the Hall. Discussions

are taking place with the Parish Council to see if funding might be available to enable a new oak framed porch to proceed ahead of the other improvements.

Whilst all the planning of these new improvements has been taking place, usage of the Hall has continued to increase. This is due to some extent to the improved facilities in some areas of the Hall.

One important person in the day to day matters of the Hall is our Treasurer, who acts as a book keeper for the accounts. Our current Treasurer will, unfortunately, be stepping down from this role in a few months' time due to ill health. We really do need to find someone to take over this role who has a good head for figures and can spare just a few hours a month. The reward would be to contribute to a very valuable community facility that is really moving forward.

If you can help or would just like to talk about it, do please contact Rod Simpson on 01794 368009 or email rodsal_81@talk 21.com.

Contact List

Borough Councillors:

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County Councillor:

Roy Perry 01794 322472 or roy.perry@hants.gov.uk

Member of Parliament:

Caroline Nokes 01794 521155 or caroline.nokes.mp@parliament.uk

Carers Forum & Carers Club:

anne@meader.com

Diabetes Aware: 01794 515126

Mobile Library: 023 80 267393

Moped Loan Scheme: 0845 5216405

NOMADS: amateur dramatics - ticket sales 01794 523578 or 02380 348317

Police: Safer Neighbourhood Team: 101

Romsey Citizens Advice:

01794 516378

Romsey Dial-A-Ride: 01264 356808

Romsey Sea Cadets: 01794 514387

Romsey Twinning: 01794 514880

Test Valley Community Services:
01794 519998

Scouts - Romsey District Scout

Council: Mr D Sutton 01794 502817

Woodley Village Hall Booking:

Mrs Garland wvha_1@hotmail.co.uk

Youth in Romsey: 01794 500581

E-mail: clerk.romseyextra@parish.hants.gov.uk

We welcome any feedback you might have on any issues raised in this newsletter or any other issues that concern you in the local area. Your feedback will help us to confirm that we are representing the general views of the parish as well as identifying particular problems that we are not aware of. We welcome any comments you might have and your participation in our activities. Please send them to the Clerk at the address on Page 1 or e-mail as above.