



**WITLEY
PARISH
COUNCIL**

UPDATE

March 2010

Issue Thirteen

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

A belated Happy New Year for 2010. Our Newsletter has been slightly delayed this year mainly due to the extended discussions taking place over budgets. We wanted to bring you our decision on the (Witley Parish Council (WPC) Precept personally as detailed in the report by Cllr. Maxwell-Miles in this publication.

A New Year and a new beginning. As you know we work very closely with our local constabulary in identifying problem areas brought to our notice by Parishioners and we are delighted to have a new Neighbourhood Specialist Officer in the Parish, Tracey Taylor, joining our NSO Dave Boxall. Tracey and Dave report to WPC on a monthly basis at our Full Council committee where they update us

on any changes and highlight areas of concern.

Over the past few months there has been an increase in shed and garage burglaries in our Parish. The Police are very aware of this increase and are working with the local community to supply information and in some cases equipment to help residents combat this problem. We had discussions recently and it was suggested that



Witley Recreation Ground

residents should report any suspicious vehicles or individuals in their area to the main police switchboard on 0845 125 2222. If you do this and get a report number Tracey and Dave will pick up the information and it may just be the last piece of

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the jigsaw puzzle they need in solving or preventing a local crime. This system works very well for Farm Watch.

On a 'lighter' note, the Christmas Tree Lighting events this year were as usual well received by residents. I would like to thank all those who contributed to the smooth running of the events especially the Milford WI, Milford Wives, The Dog and Pheasant, Harrison Hire, Show Sound, all the local ministers and choirs and the Parish Councillors

who gave up their time to make these events a success.

Finally, and back to the Parish Budgets. As you know we maintain all the local sports pitches at Milford Heath and Witley Recreation Ground, the users pay a fee towards maintenance costs. In the light of the financial burdens everyone is facing, we have made a decision for this year to freeze the fees for one year and hope that this will assist the teams with their finances.

Maxine Gale, Chairman



PLANNING

Witley Parish Council considered a number of planning applications in the last quarter, mainly for domestic extensions and house alterations.

In November and December we were asked to consider applications for the former Red Lion in Milford, which is causing considerable controversy in the area, as Tesco propose to open a Tesco Express. The issue would appear to be legal rather than planning and we were asked to consider a Certificate of Lawfulness, rather than an application for the proposal in principle. We also considered a number of minor items to do with lighting and building features.

There are ongoing issues with a new track at Rockwood House, on which the Council commented and the comments were generally upheld by WPC in their rejection of the application in its current form.

Parishioners are reminded that 10 minutes are always available prior to meetings for public presentation prior to items for consideration and we try to support parishioner's views when possible.

Stephen Dale, Chairman, Planning

HIGHWAYS

Witley Parish Council is preparing an Emergency Winter Highways Strategy for submission to Surrey County Council Highways and Waverley Borough Council. This follows the extreme weather we experienced last February and again this year.

It is clear that the whole country struggled with resources and WPC is trying to prioritise where treatment is required and highlight where attention is particularly lacking.

The Draft will be available to view on the Council's website, but it is clear that, whilst the Highways Agency and County Council favour treatment to keep main roads open, we need to ensure safe access to schools, care homes, surgeries, places of work and transport routes such as buses and local train stations.

It became clear in the recent bad weather that County Council treatment to footpaths isn't going to be immediate and perhaps it is time for a little 'self-help' and neighbourly assistance. It would help if we all cleared our own footpath area and helped

the elderly or infirm where we can. It is important to remember that snow should be piled where it is not a hazard. The verge or lawn area is fine, but there have been instances this year of residents clearing paths and piling snow in the road!

Finally, we are trying to make sure the County Council fill the salt bins as quickly as possible – please remember this is to assist vehicles and pedestrians on the public Highway and not for use in private drives. Hampshire are apparently introducing a system of locking the bins to stop theft and it would be a shame to have to introduce the same measures in Witley Parish.

Stephen Dale, Vice Chairman, Witley Parish Council





FINANCE

You may recall that in the September newsletter I

gave an overview of our budget spend in the financial year 2008/9. We are still in 2009/10 and each committee is working to ensure we meet our obligations within the budget set.

Budgets are set well in advance so it will come as no surprise to many of you that we have been working on our 2010/11 during the autumn and Christmas period to get it right. Part of the process is to try and anticipate increases, as you would in a household budget, for utilities, rates for contracted out work etc plus what we need to do on maintenance of our land and buildings. We also have to put something into reserves to cover us when expensive equipment needs replacing and for major works on our sites and, of course, emergencies.

In the past we have set a

budget which has resulted in a precept increase in recent years of about 3% per annum, close to inflation. This year we have had to make some difficult decisions and have therefore agreed to keep the Parish Precept down to just a 1% rise. We are aware of the financial difficulties that so many of our

parishioners and local businesses are facing, many having had pay cuts or at best no pay increases, many having lost employment both local and wider

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afield. This does mean that some spend on areas will not go ahead or that additional projects will have to wait another year or so. The old saying make do and mend comes to mind. We hope you all agree we have made the right decision for this year and will support us.

Let's hope this time next year the financial position and the economy are in better shape.

*Catherine Maxwell-Miles,
Chairman, Finance
& General Purposes Committee*

Amenities and Environment

Apart from the usual ongoing maintenance of all our green spaces, we have focussed this financial year, as you may remember, on two main projects – the new play equipment at Sunnyhill and the new allotments in Milford.

The Play area was re-opened in May and we decided to conduct a local survey in the autumn to see how people liked it. We did two questionnaires, one for children at the Chandler School and Witley Infants School and one for local householders.

We had over 200 responses from householders and over 120 from the children. Overall the response from the children who use it showed that they find it a great improvement on what was there before. Not unexpectedly householders felt that there was a lack of equipment for older children, in particular swings. We had been unable to raise the full amount required to complete our plan, so difficult choices had to be made.

So what next? While the Parish Council has funds for the maintenance of the Play Area, it does not have funds for additional equipment. The money for any new

equipment would therefore have to be raised. We will shortly be sending out a more detailed leaflet to the local residents covering a few queries that they had and looking for options for completing the project, as allowed under the national guidelines for such an area.



The new Allotments in Milford were opened on 1st November and currently all but two of the 59 are let. The Parish Council spent just under

£10,000 to set them up, but from now on they are expected to be maintained by the rents. These allotments are required to be organic due to the high water table and there are issues about structures and planning permission as the area is in the Green Belt and visible from the road. As with any new project there have been many queries and it has been agreed with the allotment holders to hold monthly Councillor Surgeries in the growing season.

Regarding **Blackhill Pond at Milford Heath**, we had planned to cut back an area of reeds to allow a better view from the road but were caught out by the weather and now it is too deep for waders, so

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unfortunately that will have to wait until the autumn. Meanwhile we are assured by Ian Baldwin, Waverley Countryside Ranger, that the pond is thriving as far as wildlife is concerned.

The current project is 'Walks on the Web'. It might be that by the time you receive this there will already be one or two on there. The book 'Discovering Walks in the Parish of Witley' was published in 2000 and rather than updating the printed

version we decided to publish the walks individually on our website. So Councillors are walking them, updating the route instructions and the maps and then putting them on the website at

<http://www.witley-pc.gov.uk/walks.php>.

We hope you enjoy them. Anyone without access to the website can ask for free printed copies.

Julie Grist, Chairman, Amenities and Environment Committee

Witley Parish Councillors

Milford Ward

Mr Donald Johnstone

07833 616131

Mrs Rosie Lander

01428 683765

Mrs Catherine Maxwell-Miles

01483 429311 (*Chairman, Finance and General Purposes Committee*)

Mrs Myra Newnes-Smith

01483 423001

Mrs Joy Nye

01483 414618

Mr Patrick Stewart

01428 681586

Witley Ward East

Mrs Christy Crouch

01428 682181

Mr Claudio Del Giudice

01428 682888

(Lead member for Wormley)

Miss Maxine Gale

01428 683055 (*Chairman*)

Mrs Julie Grist

01428 683448

(Chairman, Amenities and Environment Committee)

Mr Nick Holder

01428 682402

(Lead member for Brook)

Mr Jack Lee

01428 684853

Mr Tony Longrigg

01428 684925

Mr Nas Kuchimanchi

01483 527956

Witley Ward West

Mr Stephen Dale

01428 681356 (*Vice-Chairman; Chairman, Planning Committee*)

Your County and Borough Councillors

Surrey

Cllr Peter Martin **01483 426064**
(Godalming South, Milford and Witley)

Cllr David Harmer **01483 609792**
(Waverley Western Villages)

Waverley

Cllr John Sandy (Milford) **01483 429910**

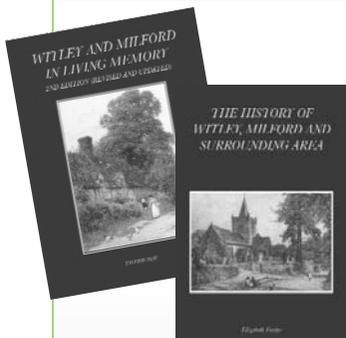
Cllr Keith Webster (Milford) **01428 644332**

Cllr Elizabeth Cable (Witley and Hambledon) **01428 682640**

Cllr Adam Taylor-Smith (Witley and Hambledon) . **01428 681783**

Cllr Nick Holder (Elstead, Thursley and Brook) . . . **01428 682402**

Cllr Bryn Morgan (Elstead, Thursley and Brook) . . . **01252 790048**



History Books

Witley Parish Council has recently published two companion volumes

about the history of Witley Parish. Both are by local authors:

'The History of Witley, Milford and surrounding area' by Elizabeth Forster; and **'Witley and Milford in Living Memory'** by Valerie Box.

The first editions of these books were published as part of its Millennium celebrations. As the books are now out of print, we decided to mark the 10th anniversary of their publication by producing revised editions.

The two authors have again given generously of their time to update the books, and have incorporated new material which has been provided by local residents. The first of these books is a straightforward and very readable account of Witley's surprisingly rich history from ancient times through to modern day. The companion volume collates the fascinating and often amusing recollections of local people and covers life in the Witley area over the last 100 years or so.

Witley Parish Council are selling the books at £7.50 each (plus P&P if needed) from the Parish Council Office in Milford Village Hall (Open Mon-Fri 8.30am-12.30 pm); Telephone: 01483 422044 email: asst.clerk@witley-pc.gov.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Annual Parish Meeting

22nd April 8pm

Burton Pavilion, Milford Heath Road, Milford

Brook Fete

Monday, 31st May 2010

Milford Fete

12th June 2010

Parish walk

**Sunday
16th May 2010**

Meet at 2 p.m. in the Chichester Hall car park for the Parish Spring Walk led by Tree

Warden, Peter Herring.

We shall be following paths through Enton and Tuesley looking at the burst of new growth and at the wildlife in general, returning about 2 hours later.



Meetings of the Full Council are held in the Burton Pavilion, Petworth Road. Milford at 8 pm on the last Thursday of each month except August and December.

Meetings are open to the public. The building is accessible for people with mobility problems. Residents wishing to raise any matter with the Council are asked to notify the Council office two days prior to the meeting.

Where to find us

Council Office, Milford Village Hall, Portsmouth Road
Milford, GU8 5DS

Office hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am – 12.30pm.

Tel: 01483 422044 Email: clerk@Witley-pc.gov.uk

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