



UPDATE

Autumn 2011

Issue Seventeen

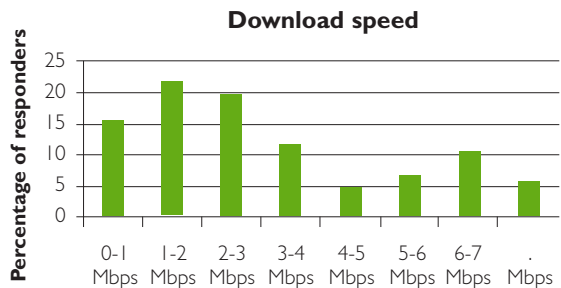
The results of our Broadband Speed Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed our survey on broadband speed. It was interesting to see that 58% of people who responded are getting download speeds of less than 3 Mbps and that 66% of people said that they would pay more for faster broadband.

We have sent a summary report to our MP, Jeremy Hunt, who is the minister responsible for broadband. He said recently that 'Fast broadband is absolutely vital to our economic growth, to delivering public services effectively, and to conducting our everyday lives. But some areas of the UK are missing out, with many rural and hard-to-reach communities

Contents

Broadband	1
Chairman's Notes.....	2
Planning	3
Biodiversity strategy	4
Paths and ditches	4
Directory.....	5
Lead Members	6
Adult Education	6
Allotments.....	6
Parish & Borough Councillors ..	7
What's on	8



suffering painfully slow internet connections or no coverage at all. We are not prepared to let some parts of our country get left

continued on page 2 ...

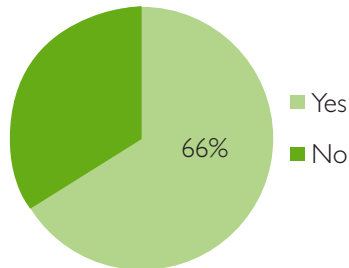
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behind in the digital age.'

Surrey Strategic Partnership, who are bidding for government funding to support faster broadband in Surrey, have been sent a copy of the results.

The full results of the survey are available on our website at www.witley-pc.gov.uk.

Would you pay more for faster broadband?



Chairman's Notes

If you attended any of the local fetes or fairs this summer you may have seen Witley Parish Councillors with marquee, broadband survey, flower quiz and details of walks in your Parish. If however you missed us, you can find all the information on our web site www.witley-pc.gov.uk where there are results of the quiz and the broadband survey, local walks to download and a couple of "interesting" photos of the marquee

and Councillors.

Despite some inclement weather we were very pleased to have the opportunity to speak with many of you and I hope we were able to answer some of your questions or give you information of who to contact if we were unable to help.

The Parish Council is the first tier of local government and, as such, we do not hold great powers or budgets, but are a good source of knowledge for parishioners trying to find the right people to speak to



and we are also more than willing to lobby higher offices on your behalf if the necessity arises.

We do however have some very important 'Parish' business to perform. We own and manage many open spaces through Witley, Milford and Brook—cricket and football pitches, ponds, allotments and cemeteries and we equip and maintain three children's play areas. I could go on... but I won't.

Discussions at Council recently have revolved around whether our parishioners really know who we are and what we do. Are we getting out into our community enough? Should we be making ourselves more visible?

With thirteen Councillors, and a small staff, we participate in local events, hand deliver newsletters to every house in the Parish (apart from the ones with very angry

dogs!), have an active web site, host the lighting of Christmas Trees in the three main villages and, with the help of our local Tree Warden, have a Spring and Autumn walk along some of the many public footpaths and bridleways in our local countryside. We also help local groups and organisations by awarding small grants or partnership funding.

So the question is, do you, the parishioners, know who we are and what we do?

If the answer to this question is no, then maybe you should come along to one of our Full Council Meetings held at the Burton Pavilion in Milford Heath Road (8pm on the last Thursday of every month) or visit our web site. After all it's your money we are spending to maintain the Parish and its facilities and we would welcome your feedback.

Changes to the Planning System

The Government has recently changed the planning classification of gardens to tackle the so-called problem of 'garden grabbing'. Put simply, this is the practice of developers snapping up back gardens and squeezing inappropriate properties onto the

land, therefore spoiling the neighbourhood and upsetting local residents.

Over the last decade, many communities have been left frustrated at the increasing amount of inappropriate development on

continued on page 4 ...

continued from page 3 ...

gardens which they have been unable to prevent. This is because planning guidance has classified gardens as 'previously residential land', in the same Brownfield category as derelict factories and disused railway sidings. This led to the increase in the number of new houses being built on previously residential land thereby robbing communities of green breathing space, safe places for children to play and havens for urban wildlife. The changes mean that gardens are no longer considered 'Brownfield land'.

Further changes to the planning

system are expected in the near future. You will probably have heard of 'Localism' in the national press.



What will this mean for the residents of our parish? We won't know exactly what the changes will be until the Localism Bill becomes an Act of Parliament. We do know that the Government is

committed to a radical reform of the planning agenda giving new powers to local councils, communities, neighbourhoods and individuals. It is working to change the planning system so councils have the freedom to make their own planning decisions in the best interests of the local area.

Jack Lee, Vice-Chairman of Council

Biodiversity **strategy update**



We have launched a biodiversity review of all our open spaces, to try to introduce a 'meadow' mowing regime in areas that won't conflict with sports use.

You may have noticed this on Witley Rec and we have displayed information for consultation at our stands at the village fetes this

Black Hill Pond, August 2011, showing water lilies after a swathe of reeds was cleared.

summer. The response has been positive and we hope to be able to introduce the same approach on all open spaces over the next year or two, with areas that will be left to allow wild flower development and so improve the habitat value of otherwise species-poor mown

grass and will also reduce our mowing requirement.

We will display plans on the website as soon as possible and hope parishioners agree with this principle.

Steve Dale, Lead Member, Witley Recreation Ground and The Pleck.

Keeping paths and ditches clear

Overgrown hedges and overhanging trees that block paths and impede sight-lines can be a danger to pedestrians and to motorists. It is important to keep pathways and roads clear by regularly trimming hedges and trees on your boundary. Did you know that, in the majority of cases, it is the responsibility of the

landowner to clear ditches adjacent to the road, not the responsibility of the council? Please keep your ditches clear so that excess surface water can drain away safely, reducing the risk of flooding.

Go to www.surreycc.gov.uk (search for Report it Online)

to report any other blocked paths that are causing a problem.

Directory

Our annual printed directory is being delivered with this newsletter and is also on our website. The Parish is one of three Local Authorities covering our area and between us we cover all local government responsibilities. We find that it is most effective for parishioners to take any issues direct to the relevant authority rather than the Parish Council trying to act as a conduit. If you have access to the

internet, it is often better to report problems to Surrey or Waverley online – that way they get logged and are more easily followed up. So the directory will help you work out who does what. Keep it handy!

If you would like to add your club to the directory or change the information, please contact the Council office and we can update the website and include it in the printed directory next year.

Lead Members for Villages and Hamlets

One of the recommendations in the Parish Plan was to consider modifying the structure of the Council to achieve better representation of the various communities in the parish, so some time ago we appointed lead members to cover Enton, Brook,

Sandhills and Wormley. Milford and Witley villages are covered through ward representation. The contact details of the current lead members are on p7 so please get in touch if you have any issues you think they can help with.

Want to learn something new or more about what you know already?

There are a range of Adult Learning Courses available in our area whether it is Italian, Painting, Zumba or Pilates.

For information on individual courses contact the Farnham Adult Learning Centre on 01483 518558.



Do you want an allotment?

Contact Witley Parish Council

01483 422044



Witley Parish Councillors

Milford

Donald Johnstone (*Chairman,
Planning Committee*)
..... **07833 616131**

Jack Lee (*Council Vice Chairman*)
..... **01428 684853**

Catherine Maxwell-Miles
(*Chairman, Finance and General
Purposes Committee*)
..... **01483 429311**

Stephen Mills. . . . **01483 429311**

Myra Newnes-Smith
..... **01483 423001**

Patrick Stewart. . . **01428 681586**

Witley Ward East

Christy Crouch. . . **01428 682181**

Steve Dale (*Lead Member
Wormley*) **01428 681356**

Maxine Gale (*Council Chairman*):
(*Lead Member Enton*)
..... **01428 683055**

Julie Grist (*Chairman, Amenities
and Environment Committee*)
..... **01428 683448**

Gillian McCalden **01428 682405**

Witley Ward West

Nick Holder (*Lead Member Brook
and Sandhills*). . . . **01428 682402**

Your County and Borough Councillors

Surrey County Council

Godalming South, Milford and
Witley

Peter Martin . . . **01483 426064**
peterj.martin@surreycc.gov.uk

Waverley Western Villages

David Harmer . . **01428 609792**
david.harmer@surreycc.gov.uk

Waverley Borough Council

Elstead and Thursley

Jenny Else **01252 702036**
jenny.else@waverley.gov.uk

Bryn Morgan . . . **01252 794993**
bryn.morgan@waverley.gov.uk

Milford

Lynn Graffham . **01483 426636**
lynn.graffham@waverley.gov.uk

Denis Leigh **01483 420025**
denis.leigh@waverley.gov.uk

Witley and Hambledon

Elizabeth Cable . **01428 682640**
elizabeth.cable@waverley.gov.uk

Adam Taylor-Smith
..... **01428 681783**
adam.taylor-smith@waverley.gov.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

QUIZ EVENING

to raise funds for the community
Christmas trees

Friday 21 October at 7.30pm

at The Clockhouse, Chapel Lane, Milford

Tickets £10

including baked potato supper

Teams of eight – or contact us
to be included in a team

**Tickets available from the Parish
Council Offices, Milford Village Hall**

Please make cheques payable to
Witley Parish Council

For more information email
clerk@witley-pc.gov.uk
or phone **01483 422044**

or contact

Jack Lee **01428 684853** or
Christy Crouch **01428 682181**

Christmas Tree Events

Residents of the Parish are
warmly invited to join us for
mulled wine and mince pies
at our traditional ceremonies
to light the community
Christmas trees

**Friday 2 December
at 7.30pm**

**Milford Village Hall
Chichester Hall, Witley
Pirrie Hall, Brook**

We are looking for help on
the evening. If you are able to
help please contact
clerk@witley-pc.gov.uk.

Council Meetings Meetings of the Full Council are held in the Burton Pavilion, Milford Heath Road, Milford at 8.00pm 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 at least 5 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

Clerk – **Fiona Fox** (email: clerk@witley-pc.gov.uk)

Assistant Clerk – **David Ralf** (email: ast.clerk@witley-pc.gov.uk)

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

