

NEWSLETTER

Greywell Parish Council May 2019

Village Emergency Telephone Scheme



The defibrillator has been available for use for two years now - fortunately there has been no need to deploy it. The Community Heartbeat Trust, which helped us to acquire the defibrillator, subsequently offered us membership of the Village Emergency Telephone Scheme (VETS). This scheme can be used in any emergency where the help of another person is required. It would be particularly useful when a lone rescuer is unable to leave a victim and needs help to obtain the defibrillator.

Ten Greywell villagers now operate the scheme. There is one telephone number that the person in need dials; the call is then forwarded to all the VETS volunteers. **That number is 01256 833919 but 999 should always be called first.** Once connected, the answering volunteer can be informed of the emergency and the type of help needed.

The local ambulance service also has the VETS number and will call it on request. In the event of another type of emergency, such as a fall or a flood, the person in need is able to call the VETS volunteers direct if necessary.

The Greywell VETS scheme went live in February 2019. The Parish Council would like to thank all the volunteers for their continued support. If you would like more information, please contact Sue O'Neill.

Please note that the VETS scheme is a 'best endeavours system' and may not always be available.

Local Planning and the Deptford Lane Field



The campaign to protect the character of the village from unwelcome and unnecessary development continues. In particular there is our opposition to the proposals to develop the field north of Deptford Lane (known in Local Plan parlance as site COM004) drawn up by Hallam Land Management Limited in 2015.

The Parish Council's role over the past year has focused on supporting the adoption of the Hart District Local Plan,

following the adoption of the Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan in 2017. Both Plans contain policies that should preserve the much-valued rural character of our small village by offering protections against inappropriate development.

One of the original proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan was to designate a 'local gap' between Greywell and North Warnborough (to prevent coalescence between the two settlements). This was overturned by the independent examiner on technical grounds. However, the Plan contains other policies that would make it difficult for a developer to obtain permission to build on the Deptford Lane field.

The Hart Local Plan is the primary instrument for controlling development in the Hart District. Its final version incorporated the Neighbourhood Plan policies without material amendment except that it helpfully reinstated the proposal for a "local gap" between Greywell and North Warnborough (one of nine across the whole District). However the "gap" policy was again rejected by the Planning Inspector although policies to stop coalescence remain.

Until the loss of the "gap" policy from the Local Plan, the Parish Council was ready to return the monies contributed to the Deptford Lane Fighting Fund to the original donors. The Fund currently remains unspent, as the only expenditure incurred to date was met directly by the Parish Council. Now, the feeling is that it would be prudent to retain the Fighting Fund for the time being, revisiting the issue later in the year. Encouragingly, a recent appeal by a developer against a decision to turn down plans for another major development, for 700 dwelling at Owens Farm between Newnham and Hook, has been withdrawn. Presumably because it was difficult to make a case when Hart has a more than sufficient land supply to meet the house building targets contained in the Local Plan.

The Parish Council Steering Group continues to work with our neighbours in North Warnborough and is currently examining contingency plans if a planning application for the Deptford Lane Field is submitted.

Planning

The Parish Council is what is known as a statutory consultee on planning applications. We are asked by Hart District Council, the planning authority, to comment on most of the planning applications within the parish of Greywell – on average, two or three a month. These typically involve extensions and modifications but can include new buildings and other more significant developments. The District Council is only obliged to take our views into account when it decides on the merits of an application, so our role is one of influencer only. Nevertheless, we take the responsibility very seriously and try to ensure that all applications are treated fairly and openly. As a general policy, we support in principle applications that improve facilities and amenities for householders, provided that they are not considered to be detrimental to the village environment or adversely affect their neighbours.

The comments we make fall under one of three headings:

- Support
- No objection
- Objection

We usually have 21 days to comment once an application has been lodged with Hart. Sometimes, because of timing issues, it is not possible to discuss an application at the Parish Council meetings, which are held roughly every two months. In these circumstances we will convene a special meeting or a comment will be submitted by the Clerk, as the proper officer of the Council, following comments received from Councillors. All such comments are formally reported to the next meeting of the Council.

Day Spa Proposals

One of the most contentious planning applications we have had to deal with over the past year was that to convert The Old Dairy buildings in White Lane to a new leisure facility – a “day spa”. National planning policy seeks to promote the rural economy by finding alternative uses for redundant agricultural buildings. This is a policy which the Parish Council would normally support. However, in this case there was grave concern about the amount of additional traffic going through Greywell that the spa would generate. Several public meetings were held, resulting in the Parish Council objecting to the proposals along with over half the households in the village.

The Parish Council spoke on behalf of Greywell at the Hart Planning Committee meeting to decide on the proposals. The Parish Council also encouraged a lobby of over two dozen residents to attend the Committee meeting to show solidarity and speak against the proposals. Regrettably, despite our best efforts, Hart decided to approve the application although we did manage to press for conditions that will place limits on the number of users who can use the spa each day

Traffic

Speedwatch

Community Speedwatch (CSW) is a national initiative where members of local communities work with the support of the police to monitor the speed of vehicles. Vehicles exceeding the speed limit are referred to the Police with the aim of educating drivers to reduce their speeds. In cases where education is blatantly ignored and evidence of repeat or excessive offences is collated (even across county borders) enforcement and prosecution follow. We have been trying to launch a Community Speedwatch in Greywell for a number of years but our efforts have been continually frustrated, firstly by delays in getting the necessary endorsement from the police, then recruiting sufficient volunteers and training them.

Whilst many people drive through our village at a sensible speed there are a considerable number, especially in "rush hours", which greatly exceed the speed limit. Hopefully our Speedwatch initiative will curb this. We have been given clearance by the police for two sites within Greywell to monitor traffic speeds (outside the Village Hall and near the entrance of the village coming from the dual carriageway). We also have some volunteers already in place, but **to be effective we urgently need more volunteers**. Please contact Henri Mogg (henriettamogg@hotmail.com), who is leading this initiative, as soon as possible, if you are interested in joining. Henri would like to organise a date for our first session in May.

Home to School Transport

Hampshire CC is under severe financial pressure and has decided to provide only those services that it has a statutory obligation to undertake. Home to school transport has come under the spotlight with the result that the County Council has decided to withdraw funding from numerous schemes including bussing children from Hook to Robert Mays School. It has suggested a 'safe walking route' instead. Understandably, this has met with condemnation from parents who are mounting a campaign against the cuts with the support of our County Councillor, Jonathan Glen.

The Parish Council can foresee implications for Greywell if the cuts go ahead. Many parents will drive their children to school instead and the obvious 'rat run' will be via Greywell with Hook Road and Deptford Lane being particularly affected. We have made representations to Jonathan Glen and are watching developments closely.

Roads in the Village – pothole spotters required

Hampshire Highways, like most local authorities, is financially constrained at the moment and the speed at which potholes and other road problems are fixed has slowed considerably. Whilst it might be argued that the resulting slowing of traffic is a good thing – it remains a fact that potholes can cause serious damage to vehicles and are a danger to cyclists.

The Parish Council maintains a dialogue with Hampshire Highways and Hart on general issues affecting our local roads, **but it is best if individuals report specific problems direct to the relevant authority**. This can be done easily via the user-friendly web site, www.fixmystreet.com, which allows a complainant to report and identify the exact location of highways problems (not just potholes).

Infrastructure

Village Clean-ups

The village clean-ups organised under the banner of the Parish Council, continue to make a valuable impact on the appearance of the village. Each Spring and Autumn a group of 30 plus volunteers divides into teams to tackle various projects including litter-picking, strimming, sign cleaning and cutting back. The mornings' activity is followed by an enjoyable get-together either at pub or the Village Hall. The initiative is now entering its seventh year and thanks are due to Susan and Kevin Sampson who are now organising the event.

Parish Lengthsman

Complementing the village clean-ups is the Parish Lengthsman scheme. Greywell PC has recently joined together with a group of surrounding parishes to participate in this initiative, which is sponsored by Hampshire County Council. The idea is that each parish is given about 50 hours of labour per year from a centrally employed contractor to undertake highways and village upkeep works. In Greywell it is used to for the tasks not undertaken as part of the village clean-ups because of their heavy-duty nature, such as the clearing of existing drainage grips, maintaining ditches, cleaning channels and outfalls. For this coming year we have already agreed a programme of work that include cleaning out ditches and other roadside maintenance.

Broadband

For over three years the Parish Council lobbied Hampshire County Council for the village to be included in the project to extend Superfast Broadband to rural areas. This campaign paid-off with Greywell going live last year. However, one postcode in the village was excluded: RG29 1BS. This covers all the properties in Deptford Lane which have individual connections (EO or Exchange Only lines) to the exchange, rather than via a cabinet. Implementing fibre is therefore too expensive when the name of the game is obtaining maximum coverage for the limited funds available. We have kept up the pressure on Hampshire and Openreach, with assistance from our County Councillor, and have elicited a promise that Ultrafast Broadband will be delivered to Deptford Lane within the next few months. Indeed, there are already signs of the infrastructure being put into place.

New Website and Social Media

We are still working on the re-launch of the village website. This will include a major redesign and increased functionality and we hope to go live in the next couple of months. The Greywell Village Facebook page has been running for a year now and is independent of the Parish Council. This was created by Dorchester Way resident Scott Flatman, who also maintains the village e-mail list. Please notify him of any changes at sflatman@gmail.com

The Parish Council

Greywell Parish Council comprises five members supported by a (paid) Clerk. The new Council was elected for four years (in an uncontested election as there were five candidates for the five seats on the Council) in May 2018.

Councillors and contact details are shown below:

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|--------------------------|--------------|--|
| David Millard (Chairman) | 01256 702162 | dmillard48@gmail.com |
| James Malmesbury | | eofmalm@btconnect.com |
| Henri Mogg | | henriettamogg@hotmail.com |
| Sue O'Neill (Vice Chair) | | sue@anscar.co.uk |
| Mike Barter | | m.barter@btinternet.com |
| Liz Ford (Clerk) | 01420 549645 | parishclerk@greywell.info |

Parish Finances

The main source of Parish Council funding is your council tax - we ask the collecting authority (Hart) for a sum sufficient to cover our budgeted costs. This is known as a precept and Greywell's precept income is £4,305 for the current year.

The salary of our Clerk accounts for almost half of our annual costs with the remainder spent on various activities and services that benefit the village. Our current balances include a reserve of around £19,000. Of this, just over £14,000 makes up the Fighting Fund established by donations to oppose the possible Deptford Lane development.

