

From Watlington Parish Office

1 Old School Place, Gorwell, Watlington OX49 5QH
01491 613867 - wpc@watlington-oxon-pc.gov.uk

Outreach Meeting – have your say

The Annual Outreach meeting for residents who live outside Watlington town will take place at the Fox and Hounds in Christmas Common on Tuesday March 20th. This meeting has normally been held in autumn but did not take place last year. We have arranged it now because of the number of reports we have received on traffic problems. The agenda will include improving the road through Christmas Common and introduction of a 30mph limit through Howe Hill as well as reporting on current progress with the Neighbourhood Development Plan, but it is your meeting so please let the Clerk know if you have other topics you wish to raise.

Opinions please - recreation ground improvements

Last month we asked for your opinions on the conversion of the existing hard-court area at the rec into a floodlit Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) for activities such as Five-a-side Football, Netball, Basketball and Keep Fit sessions, as well as for Youth Club and Scouts outdoor activities. We received a number of replies which were almost entirely supportive, and did include a number of other suggestions for improving the facilities available at the Rec. These will all be considered by the Operations Committee. Thank you for your active participation in this survey – we can only know what you would like if you let us know.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

February and March look like being crucial months for the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan. The SODC consultation on the plan ended in January and we received the results of this consultation during February. A total of 68 responses were received of which two-thirds were from individuals. The individuals who replied mostly either supported the plan or expressed no clear opinion, and only four objected to the plan.

The consultation was distorted by the large number of responses (nearly 40% of individual responses) that were primarily concerned with traffic issues on Pyrton Lane, as discussed below.

The independent examiner requested a public hearing on the plan which will take place on Monday 5th March. The public are welcome to attend, but will not be able to speak unless they asked to in their response to the SODC consultation, and even then they have been asked to appoint two spokespersons to speak on behalf of all of them. The public hearing will cover only two issues; the proposed bypass and the housing allocations.

We expect to receive the examiners decision on the NDP by the end of March. Assuming the outcome is favourable, the NDP will then proceed to a referendum.

Pyrton Lane

The residents of Pyrton Lane have been very concerned about the proposal made in the outline planning application submitted last year for the WatA (Britwell Road) site. This suggested that Pyrton Lane could be widened to allow more traffic to use it. To anybody who knows the stretch of Pyrton Lane between Cuxham Road and St Leonards Close this idea was clearly not feasible. The developer for the site has agreed

to remove the suggestion from the application.

During February Tony Williamson and Ian Hill met with some of the residents of Pyrton Lane and St Leonards Close to hear their problems with traffic along the lane. The councillors explained that road improvement issues were not within the scope of the NDP and that the best hope for reducing traffic along Pyrton Lane was to make it less attractive as a rat run.

A second meeting is being arranged including OCC highways staff to look at the options for improvements in Pyrton Lane in the shorter term. This meeting is scheduled for late March.

High Street parking and buses

You may have noticed the posters that we have put up around the Town Hall area showing a bus jammed at the turn from Couching Street into High Street. The problem is people parking badly outside The Rhubarb Tree either wholly or partially outside of the designated parking bay. This is aggravated if it is a wide vehicle or somebody has parked badly or illegally on the other side of the road.

Can we ask that you are considerate when you park there? You might think you are only just a bit out of the parking bay, but that corner is very tight for the buses and they frequently get held up there. We have asked the local PCSO to be particularly strict there.

Why are we worried about it? Thames Travel have repeatedly complained to us about delays to the buses, including one occasion recently when the bus was stuck for 20 minutes. They have even suggested that will have the bus turn back at the Cuxham Road roundabout instead of coming into town, a walk that would put the bus out of reach of some of its users.

Planning approvals

SODC granted planning permission for three applications in the Parish during January. These were:

- Demolition of existing conservatory & erection of single storey extension at 27 Britwell Road
- Repairs to Grade II listed shop unit and house following fire damage, provision of pitched roof to existing flat roofed area to rear of shop, provision of lean to extension to rear of no 22 and associated works at DG Homecare.
- Increase size of existing pond to form a new larger conservation & wildlife pond at Hartwood in Northend.

Watlington Parish Council did not object to any of these applications.

***** OUTREACH meeting - Tues 20th March *****

Dates of March's regular meetings:

NP Steering - Mon 5th March

Planning - Tues 6th March

Finance - Thurs 8th March

Full Council - Tues 13th March

Pavilion - Mon 19th March 19:30

Operations – Wed 21st March

Strategy – Tues 27th March

All meetings start at 8pm in the Community Office unless otherwise stated. We welcome residents attending any of these meetings as observers. If people wish to speak on an agenda item it is necessary to contact the Parish Clerk during office hours by noon the day before the meeting. Minutes of all Parish Council meetings are available to members of the public on our website or in the Parish Office during opening hours.

Collated by Kristina Tynan, Clerk and Ian Hill, Chairman