

Itchen Valley Parish Council - Chairman's Report April 2006

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 7.30 pm on Monday, 24th April 2006 at Martyr Worthy Village Hall, with a glass of wine before the meeting starts.

Parish Councillors for the two wards are as follows:

Easton and Martyr Worthy Itchen Abbas and Avington

Jennifer Ffennell Alison Matthews *Chairman*

Elaine Labram Cynthia Bolton

Fiona Parry Steve Gapper *vice chairman*

Geraldine Phillips Bob Banham

Eric Thompson

Representatives on the Village Hall Committees for the last year were:

Easton Eric Thompson

Itchen Abbas and Avington Steve Gapper

Martyr Worthy Fiona Parry

Other responsibilities for the last year were:

Executive of Winchester District Association Jennifer Ffennell

of Parish Councils and Alison Matthews

Old School Field, Easton Trustees Alison Matthews *ex officio*

and Elaine Labram

King George V Memorial Playing Field Alison Matthews and Fiona Parry

Footpaths Cynthia Bolton

Pranell Trust and Winchester Welfare Trust Fiona Parry

Webmaster Steve Gapper

Highways Paul Twelftree (till February)

Public Transport Bob Banham

Vacancy John Harris of Chilland Barn, Martyr Worthy has been co-opted to fill the vacancy arising from Paul Twelftree's resignation and we welcome him to the Parish Council.

Clerk/Proper Officer Joyce Edgell, Little Orchard, Station Hill, Itchen Abbas SO21 1BB.

She can be contacted on 01962 779643 or by email: jedgell@abbas97.fsnet.co.uk

Parish Council Meetings are held on the first Thursday in the month (except August) at 7pm in one of the three village halls. Members of the public are always welcome. Agendas and Minutes can be read on www.itchenvalleyparishcouncil.org.uk

Code of Conduct for Parish Councillors

All Parish Councillors have signed the code of conduct and there have been no complaints.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Current Parish Council papers and records may be inspected by prior arrangement with the Clerk. Older minute books and other documents are at the Hampshire Record Office.

Footpaths

We are very fortunate to have Charlie Yeates who continues to do an excellent job keeping the paths clear. Any problems relating to footpaths should be reported to Cynthia Bolton or Joyce Edgell.

Several tracks are showing the effect of damage by motorised vehicles.

Planning

South East Plan

The draft plan was approved by the South East Regional Assembly and was been submitted to the government for approval on 31st March 2006. Once it is approved, local planning authorities will be obliged to ensure that their decisions on planning applications conform to the principles of the plan. It can be read in full on the internet.

Winchester District Local Plan

The Inspector's Report was published in September 2005 and I have attended various workshops on the changes which he proposed to the Development Frontage Policy (relevant to the B3047 in Itchen Abbas) and infilling (relevant throughout the district).

South Downs National Park

The Inspector's report is delayed for the reasons set out in the March magazines. The problem arose from the introduction of a new definition of "natural beauty" by the Judge in the Meyrick case but the recent Natural England and Rural Communities Act has rectified the situation and it is hoped that the decision making process can now resume.

Local Strategic Partnership/ Community Strategy

This is a partnership of organisations that is drawing together several themes to help to shape and improve the District and is part of a national government initiative. The Community Strategy for Winchester is a document prepared by the LSP setting out action plans for improving the quality of life in the district.

I have represented the Winchester and District Association of Parish Councils in this partnership for the last three years but will be handing over to another Parish Councillor in June.

Planning Applications and Decisions

Planning Appeals

Heather Glen, Itchen Abbas

The Appeal was dismissed and no further planning application has been received.

Abbotsbury and The Paddock, School Lane, Itchen Abbas

Banner Homes (Wessex) Ltd appealed against the refusal by Winchester City Council to allow 14 dwellings with garages, parking etc on the site of these two properties but withdrew the Appeal when it obtained consent to build 8 houses and 2 one bedroom flats.

Planning Applications

The Police House, Itchen Abbas

So far there has been no application to develop this property and it remains vacant.

The Old House, Itchen Abbas

An application to put 5 houses on this site was refused and a further one is expected.

Roman Post/ Lunways

We were told in January that an application would be submitted for the construction of a Gospel Hall but so far it has not arrived.

Chillandham Cross, Chilland

Outline consent for three new houses was granted with an access road from Chillandham Lane past the front of the existing house. The property then changed hands and an application for demolition of the existing house and the erection of a total of 6 houses was refused in January.

Motocross on Matterley Farm

Details of this application were in the March magazines. It is expected to go to the Planning Committee on 20th April.

Hotel Site at Morn Hill

This will also go to the Planning Committee on 20th April. WCC officers have concluded that a substantial start on building the hotel was not made within the relevant time limit but unusually they intend to ask Councillors what the next step should be. We believe that the s.106 Agreement should be enforced and the site returned to open countryside.

Updates on both the above items will be given at the Annual Parish Meeting.

MSAs at Shroner Wood

We continue to monitor the use of the gate into Chillandham Lane. This should not be used as an exit from the MSA and the gates should be kept locked. If anyone sees them unlocked or large holes in the wire please let me know. An application to renew the consent for an hotel on the northbound site was refused.

Oil well near Cheesefoot Head

Many of you will have noticed the bright lighting on this site. We are told that the operators are currently drilling continually and that the lighting is required for health and safety reasons. The County Council have agreed to see if this can be reduced. There is a new Act aimed at reducing light pollution which may influence their thinking.

Low Cost Housing

Work on this project has been delayed by a variety of problems mainly connected with water and electricity but it is hoped that these have now been resolved. Hyde Housing Association is aiming at completion of the houses in July/August.

Homelands Festival now Hi-Fi South

This will run from 5pm on Friday, 28th May to 4pm on Monday 29th May with noise permitted between 1pm and 4am on both Saturday and Sunday, the permitted decibel level reducing at 11pm each night. A helpline will be provided by the City Council, during the event, to deal with complaints about noise: probably 01962 863493 but this will be confirmed in the May magazines.

This Parish Council, with Tichborne and Bramdean, considered that running the event over the whole Bank Holiday weekend with two motocross weekends in the pipeline imposed an unreasonable level of disruption on local people but the three City Councillors on the Licensing Sub-Committee appeared to believe that, as there had not been a high level of complaint in the last few years, there was not a problem.

The lesson seems to be that the tolerance we have all shown towards the one day event has resulted in the four day event and we suggest that this year if anyone is even mildly irritated by the noise they ring the helpline!

King George V Memorial Playing Field, Couch Green

Accounts for the field are prepared up to the 31st March each year. Thank you to Lee Tovell for auditing them each year. Copies will be available at the Meeting or from Joyce Edgell. As the KGV charity has no funds, all expenses have to be borne by the Parish Council and the small income from football and occasional parking is used to off set these as far as possible.

The team which was using the field has folded so if anyone knows of any homeless football teams do please ask them to contact Joyce Edgell.

Sewage Treatment Plants

Couch Green and Itchen Abbas

Neither of these projects has made much progress in the last year. Neil Baxter chases the City Council regularly but they claim that the delays are due to difficulties in acquiring the land.

Traffic Calming

Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy - B 3047

We have an independent consultant coming to look at the road on 25th April to see if an outsider can come up with solutions to the various problems.

Easton:

The change in priority at The Cricketers went well and the other work at the entrances to the village is now being done.

Police

The beat officer for the Itchen Valley is Police Constable Andrew Murphy. He can be contacted on:

Email Andrew.Murphy@hampshire.pnn.police.uk or 0845 045 45 45 ext 635 134. During the coming year a new national number "101" will be introduced for non-urgent enquiries, news of this will appear in the magazines.

Accounts

As the financial year only finishes on 31st March audited accounts are not available. Unaudited accounts will be available at the Annual Parish Meeting or from the Clerk. As usual notices will appear on notice boards and in the magazines when audited accounts are finalised.

We try to keep an amount roughly equivalent to one year's precept in reserve and this is currently in the region of £8,500.

Last year the Parish Council made grants of:

- £300 to each of the PCCs for maintenance of the churchyards,
- £650 to each of the village halls (Easton's share for the next 5 years is dealt with differently to enable them to qualify for matched funding from WCC)
- £130 to the Easton and Martyr Worthy News (Itchen Abbas and Avington Village News is offered the same amount but declines it)

while cutting grass at the King George V Playing Field and the Old School Field Easton costs about £1700 and footpath maintenance about £1000 per annum.

Parish Precept

You may have noticed that this year we managed to buck the trend and reduce our precept by 8%. While we cannot expect to do this every year we try to keep our expenditure as low as possible.

Parish Councillors

Paul Twelftree has resigned after representing Easton and Martyr Worthy on the Parish Council for five years and we thank him for his hard work particularly in relation to matters connected with the A 31.

Elections are held every four years and the next ones will be in May 2007. Some of us who have been on the Parish Council for many years, including myself, will not be standing and we will therefore need new people coming forward. Itchen Valley Parish Council is highly respected by those we work with (even if they do not always agree with us) and it is important for all of us living in the Valley that this standard is maintained.

Joyce Edgell as Clerk makes a major contribution to this and I thank her and all of the Parish Councillors for their work and support during the year.

Alison Matthews
Chairman