

# West Wittering Parish Council

Your Parish Council Newsletter...

*December 2020*

Welcome to the latest edition of your Parish Council's newsletter.

Since the end of March, West Wittering Parish Council has been adapting to a new way of working which involved us all learning to attend meetings virtually via ZOOM. The public were also invited to attend via Zoom and have done so on several occasions. This has been very successful and enabled us to continue to carry out our duties to the Parish in an efficient and timely way. We were pleased to be able to provide office accommodation for the F G Woodger Trust and the Pavilion building is now their registered office.

The Cricket Club has now completed the Pavilion expansion thanks to their fundraising efforts and a successful grant application to the F G Woodger Trust.



## Neighbourhood Plan update

The Parish Council would like to thank all of the residents who kindly commented on the draft Neighbourhood Plan that was out for consultation in February and March 2020 just before the current Covid restrictions were introduced. The team were able to analyse the results and discuss subsequent amendments to the plan, however, during the summer it became apparent that, due to changes in circumstances and the delay in Chichester District Council's Local Plan review, the allocation of sites needed review.

The consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan included the proposed allocation of a site at Church Road for 25 homes to meet the target in the emerging Chichester Local Plan. Since that time Welbeck Homes have brought forward a proposal for a much larger development on land which includes the proposed allocation site. It is considered that the identification of land for such a large development is a strategic matter that should be assessed through the emerging Chichester Local Plan in the context of discussions about overall housing numbers required and other options for such proposals in the district.

Instead the Steering Group is considering including a criteria-based policy that would apply to all housing proposals outside of current settlement boundaries that come forward ahead of the adoption of the Chichester Local Plan. In addition Chichester District Council has

advised that a proposal for affordable housing at Rookwood Road could come forward under the existing Local Plan policies as a 'rural exception site' and therefore does not now need to be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Further evidence to support the policies in the Draft plan is also required and so a further questionnaire is being delivered with this newsletter.

The Steering Group and Parish Council would ask that you do complete the survey and return it as soon as possible. It is anonymous and the information will only be used to assist with the compilation of policies regarding housing requirements in the village and the green space between the east and west of the village.

Please do respond as this will ensure that your opinions are taken into account before this important planning policy document is finalised. It is anticipated that a further consultation will take place and details will be announced on the Parish Council website and noticeboards.

## Parking

After the first lockdown restrictions were lifted, the problems with parking in the village became quite challenging but with the co-operation of West Wittering Estates who supplied much needed support by putting in extra resources to enforce No Parking (Cones and Signage) and the Civil Enforcement Officers from Chichester District Council who had the unenviable task of issuing tickets, the situation gradually became better controlled. We are continuing discussions with West Wittering Estates, Chichester District Council, West Sussex County Council and the Police to avoid the situation occurring next year.

## Mobile Waste Site

An agreement has been reached with West Sussex County Council, to avoid closure, that the Mobile Household Waste Recycling Service (HWRS) on the Manhood Peninsula will be funded by neighbouring parishes to cover the cost of providing this service for a minimum of three years from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. The service will operate for one day per week between 08:15 – 15:00 at, alternately, East Beach Car Park, Selsey and Marine Drive Car Park, West Wittering.

## Village Green

Our village green has seen a great deal of use during the Summer and the public toilets, now the responsibility of the Parish Council, have been painted to enhance their appearance. Recently the handwashing facilities have been upgraded with contributions from the Woodger Trust and a new cleaning contract

providing cleaning twice a day has been implemented funded by West Wittering Estates.

The Christmas Tree planted earlier this year is dying, possibly as a result of incorrect fertiliser but will be replaced free of charge. We have also installed an electrical supply to the Village Green for use at the Christmas Carols on the Green.

## Footpaths & Open Spaces

One of the Parish Council's responsibilities is to monitor our local footpaths. Inspection walks have been undertaken to ensure they are fit for purpose and this was an enjoyable pastime during lockdown. Apart from debris caused by strong winds, i.e. trees and fencing being blown down, most are in very good order. Where there are problems these are reported and action taken.

All trees within Parish Council ownership have been inspected and all remedial work identified has been carried out. The areas inspected were the allotments in Ellanore Lane, Snowhill, Village Green, Millennial Meadow in Elms Lane and the Rookwood Road recreational area. The Council was pleased to facilitate the upgrading of the outfield of the cricket field in the Millennial Meadow and the resurfacing of the croquet lawns.

## Allotments

We have had many requests for allotments during the pandemic and I am pleased to report that the uptake has



been so great we now have a waiting list. As well as making sure all our plots are usable, we have divided some of them into smaller plots to make them more manageable.

## Tree Planting Project

Chichester District Council has just informed the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage group, MWHG, that an application for funding the creation and maintenance of a native tree nursery has been successful. This is a very exciting development. While trees are not the first thing people notice on the Manhood Peninsula - clearly it is mainly a flat open area but it is one where there has been a decline in tree and hedgerow cover as a result of Dutch Elm disease, the effects of the hurricane in 1987 and now Ash dieback - so there is a job to do of repairing these areas.

So, a nursery of locally sourced native trees would be a great asset to support local planting initiatives. Part of

the FLOW project, Fixing and Linking Our Wetlands, set up by the MWHG has involved mapping the ditches and recording any "gappy" hedgerows in need of additional trees so there is plenty of work to be done. On top of that, trees help by storing carbon and they play an important role in flood risk reduction.

West Wittering Parish Council is helping to put this project into effect and has offered some land at the allotments where the nursery could be based and developed which is marvellous. So a great partnership is developing which only requires.....yes, you've guessed it, people!! The nursery will require some attention to create an area suitable to hosting native seeds, saplings and eventually trees. The site has water. Once cleared and created, the area could then be covered in leaf litter (free and advertised for locally) so that when the project is ready to go the site is ready.

The peninsula is exposed to salt incursions and salty winds, so our local trees have had to adapt to these conditions. So, the initial job after making the site suitable will be to collect seeds from local trees, look after them and bring them on so that when they become saplings the nursery can supply trees to use on local projects. So, this is a long-term sustainable project.

If you are interested in helping, then please email Alex Ainge via [aainge@mwhg.org.uk](mailto:aainge@mwhg.org.uk) and she will keep a list so that we can galvanise a hit squad to prepare the tree nursery site when we are ready to go!

## Grave restoration

Following a comment on the sad state of the Malcolm Davies Memorial Stone in West Wittering Parish Church cemetery from Parish Councillor, Bill Buckland, Peter Clementson (former Parish Councillor) organised the restoration funded by the Parish Council. A commemorative wreath was laid by Rear Admiral Alan Rymer on Remembrance day this year.



## Stay informed

The Parish Office in the Sports Pavilion, Rookwood Road is usually open on Wednesdays from 9am to 1pm. This is an opportunity for parishioners to raise issues with the Parish Clerk, Mrs Sue Hawker or email [clerk@westwitteringparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@westwitteringparishcouncil.gov.uk).

There is a subscription email service to keep you abreast of council matters. If you haven't done so, give us your email address by visiting our web site at <http://www.westwitteringparishcouncil.gov.uk/newsletter-sign-up>.

## COVID Testing information

There is now a testing centre based in the Northgate car park in Chichester. Testing is available to anyone with coronavirus symptoms by appointment only and can be booked [online](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/) <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> or by calling 119.