

Wisborough Green Parish Council

Parish Council News

Issue: 39

August 2021

Chairman's Message

I won't use that C word; instead let's complain about this weather and what is loosely termed 'summer'. I confess to being solely responsible for the continuing rain having gone to the trouble of installing an automated irrigation system in my garden.

Over the past few months/years, especially since the end of November last year, the Parish Council has been wrestling with the incredibly important issue of development in the village. The PC, like most residents, accepts that development is inevitable; government diktat stemming from the pressure for new housing and the need for affordable (in both senses of the word) homes in the village make it so. That said we all, residents and the PC alike, want to ensure that the development is appropriate, phased, proportionate, doesn't alter village fundamentals & allows the village to evolve.

The document that gives the village a say is the Neighbourhood Plan (NP); WG has one and it has proved effective in preventing inappropriate development and guiding the development that has been allowed. There is a statutory process for the preparation and revision of a NP and this leads to a classic 'Catch 22' situation:

1. WG's NP contributes to the Chichester District Council Local Plan (LP)
2. WG's NP Review Team cannot get ahead of CDC's LP review (which has been delayed many times)
3. CDC didn't let WG know how many new homes it was expected to achieve (40) until November 2020
4. CDC is always considering planning applications in WG and yet
5. CDC is not obliged to take any notice of the WG Revised NP until the plan has reached a certain point in the statutory process, because
6. See Point 2. above.

Add into this ridiculous bureaucratic maelstrom that CDC might still alter the 40 figure (upwards, obvs) and you will appreciate that CDC has WG, and other parishes, done up like a kipper.

Anyone who thinks that the solution is controllable or easy is welcome to explain to me how. All I would ask is that you continue to engage with both the process as a whole and also the continuing consultations that form part of the NP process; the more responses the PC has the greater the, marginal, strength we have.

I am, as I am sure you all are, looking forward to the return of all village activities on the Green; the August Bank Holiday Monday Fête will shortly be upon us, albeit in a slightly different layout as the work to drain the Green will have begun. In the past I have described the Green as the 'hardest working turf in Sussex'; hopefully by adding effective drainage and the potential for irrigation we are giving it a helping hand. I look forward to seeing everyone out and about as we get back to the village life we love.

Pete Drummond, Chairman

Gatwick Airport

Aircraft noise is a huge issue; it became a major village one in 2014 when Gatwick conducted their trial of the ADNID departure route, when parts of the village were being subject to non-stop aircraft noise. Combined with the increasing and intrusive noise from arriving aircraft, especially to the east of the runway, this led to the 2015 Arrivals Review and, later, the formation of the Noise Management Board. Pete Drummond has led on this subject for the village since 2014 and was an inaugural member of the NMB.

Whilst not one of life's natural cynics Pete has latterly come to the view that the formation of the NMB and its successor organisations has been an exercise in Gatwick appearing to engage with communities but actually pushing the noise issues into the long grass.

Neither the airport nor the other air industry representatives appear willing to consider measures that would actively reduce noise and disturbance e.g. banning, health-damaging, night flights, and only consider non-binding remedies. Despite the downturn in flights that is likely to continue for the foreseeable future the airport is, for instance, pressing ahead with its plan to bring the emergency runway into full-time use. As aircraft noise once again becomes a live village issue we would urge everyone to complain when your mark is overstepped. A link to the complaints desk is on the village website.

Traffic Speed and Noise

We continue to be blighted by speed and noise through the village at weekends and increasingly weekdays, particularly early evening. High performance cars and motorbikes continue to use the A272 as their personal racetrack. Last Summer, Jo Shiner, Chief Constable of Sussex Police, stated the intention was to make the A272 a "hostile environment" to anti-social drivers and riders. This will inevitably take time and involve various strategies.

Wisborough Green is to have an acoustic camera installed for a trial period over the next few weeks, however, the legislation behind prosecution is complex, but Habs Rahman, Chief Inspector of Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, is confident of a positive outcome.

Our Community Speedwatch Team hold regular sessions, but our numbers are significantly depleted. We cannot rely on just half a dozen generous residents to provide the necessary data to the Police, on which they intend focussing their own law-enforcement efforts. It only takes an hour now and again to make a positive effect.

Our team have had numerous comments from residents, particularly those who live along the A272, that they experience a reduction in noise and speed during our sessions and for quite a time afterwards. Of those who recently completed the traffic survey, 87% agreed the traffic through the village affected their mental well-being and health. If you have just an hour to spare and would like to make a positive contribution to the safety of the village please email sophie.winship@wisboroughgreenpc.org.

We have submitted our application for the installation of a 40mph buffer zone heading out of the village towards Petworth with the support of Sussex Police. We hope that WSCC will acknowledge local concerns and support our application. We will provide an update when we know more.

Church / Glebe Fields

It will not have escaped your notice that the PC were vehemently opposed to the application for 25 new houses on this field, adjacent to the church; what is more the number of objections on the CDC website was, we understand, the highest number ever on a WG application (thanks for that). The PC voted unanimously to oppose the application and a huge effort was made, by four Parish Councillors, to make a full and effective objection: when lodged it was 56 pages long.

The application has now been withdrawn, but we cannot breath easy as the developer is bound to apply again. Were they to be successful be under no illusion, any development on this field would be a gateway to a total of at least 80 new houses, on the beautiful fields running down to Newpound Lane, and against the express wish, both in general and specific terms, of WG villagers.

Some people have argued that WG should not need even 40 new homes (ain't gonna happen) or that certain sites should be discounted from the Revised Neighbourhood Plan; the NP team have to balance different site criteria, compromise and are governed by rules. The sites that made it into the draft NP are ones that the village, as a whole, has voted on, twice; Church Fields did not make the cut.

Building on Church Fields would be grotesque and we, as a village, should resist it with all our might.

Success - Provisional Tree Preservation Order

The Parish Council made an application to protect the Scots Pine in the middle of Church Field as the threat of the development application included its felling.

The tree in question is a fine, healthy and tall specimen of Scots Pine, that stands on its own in the middle of the field, in a prominent position north-east of St Peter's Church. Those of you who walk this way will know it well, as it is visible from the footpaths and enhances many longer views.

The Parish Council felt that its loss would be to the great detriment of the recreation, views and amenity of the area, and its relationship with the history of the area and the church. Although the original vicarage was demolished in 1963 to create Glebe Way, the value of the remaining trees was acknowledged with a TPO Area designation. The PC was able to provide a photograph, taken in 1928, which showed this as quite a substantial tree even then and are delighted that CDC also recognise its value.

A provisional TPO has now been made and is on consultation. We hope that the order will be confirmed.

It has been a warm and wet summer so far, resulting in considerable vegetation growth. Can we please remind you that you can start cutting hedges again from September without fear of disturbing nesting birds.

Landowners have a responsibility to cut roadside hedges; it's important to keep road signs visible and allow cyclists and pedestrians space to move off the road. Likewise, clear pedestrian access, especially for those with wheelchairs, pushchairs and mobility scooters, is important, so please cut back vegetation bordering pavements. Thank you

Village Green Drainage and Levelling

Many of you will be aware that significant works are planned to commence on the Green in August.

The Green sits on poorly drained Wealden clay and during the winter months becomes waterlogged and practically inaccessible in parts. Over the years, the lack of an effective drainage system has contributed to the Green becoming uneven and potentially unsafe in places for sporting activity as well as a soggy, wet walk for people just wanting a stroll. This project's aim is to improve everyone's enjoyment of the Green all year round.

The Parish Council, Wisborough Green Sports, the Cricket and Football clubs are responsible for funding, planning, implementing, and scheduling the project. The project scope, procurement process and implementation plan have been approved by the Parish Council and a contractor (TurfDry Ltd) has been appointed.

Given the different uses of the Green, ground conditions, weather and the time needed for reinstatement, there is a narrow window in which to undertake the work. As such, and as previously advised, the main work will commence on the southern section in late August and will last approximately 5-6 weeks. Two weeks prior to that the southern end will be cordoned off and herbicide will be applied to kill off existing vegetation.

The Village Fete, and Mr Trickett's Fair in September, will still be going ahead but on a smaller scale and in a slightly different configuration to normal. As such, work to remaining areas will not start until after the August Bank Holiday and no sport will be played until January 2022 to allow the grass to regrow. Unfortunately, the balloon festival will not be able to go ahead this year and we're very grateful for Brian and Co's understanding on this.

Ultra-Fast Gigabit Broadband Connection

Last year we advertised the possibility of a community Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) scheme; just over 60 households expressed an interest.

We registered with BT Openreach and have received their installation quotation, quite staggering to say the least! Although Government vouchers towards this cost are available, they won't come close to covering the cost.

We are currently making further enquiries with Openreach to ascertain the financial implications for residents, both for installation and ongoing contracts, and whether this is a viable project to pursue. We will keep you posted.

Satisfying and frustrating!

Despite being a relatively small group, our community litter pick in May still managed to clear a considerable amount of litter from the village verges which had accumulated over the lockdown months. Thank you to those who turned out to help.

We will be organising another session in early October so look out for that date in Ad Vincula. Do consider joining and please keep doing your bit to keep our village beautiful. Thank you.

A grateful visitor and unwelcome graffiti

It goes without saying that we are lucky to have the public toilets in WG when so many facilities have been closed over the years. Not only do they support our village events, encourage visitors that support our local businesses, but are no doubt welcomed by many residents caught short. During Covid restrictions, a number of people rang the Parish Council to enquire if they were open before planning an afternoon visit or meeting with friends on the Green. One grateful and unknown visitor handed £40 to a resident to pass onto the Council to help towards the cleaning cost; this generosity is much appreciated.

On a negative, for the first time in years, the facilities have been vandalised by graffiti. Fortunately, not offensive but it will require specialist cleaning which will diminish the PC's limited resources. Hopefully, this is a one off, but please report any suspicious behaviour to the police or Parish Council.

We do listen - Village Playground

Having received some requests from parents, we are looking into attaching closing mechanisms to the playground gates. As with such things, we have to take into account health and safety implications, such as finger entrapment, as well as ensuring that those children who use the playground independently can come and go through the gates easily, whilst preventing little children from leaving unaccompanied.



The playground is a central part of the village, and we want it to be a safe and enjoyable space for all children and accompanying adults. It is inspected on a weekly basis and a full RoSPA inspection is undertaken each summer by a specialist company. We will be addressing some general maintenance issues in the near future. If you have any comments, please email clerk@wisboroughgreenpc.org

New Trial Collection Service

CDC is launching two free kerbside collection schemes this month to help residents recycle even more. One scheme will collect unwanted textiles and broken or unneeded small electrical items, and another will collect used coffee pods.

The main settlement area of WG is included in the trial area, but other outlying properties are not at this stage. You can find out whether you are included in the trial by using the quick postcode checker on the CDC website www.chichester.gov.uk/textileandelectricalrecycling

Included households will receive a pack from CDC through the door containing an explanatory leaflet and two recycling bags that need to be used to keep the textiles and small electricals separate.

Collection days are: Friday 20 August and Friday 17 September
Items should be put out, where you would normally put your bins,
by 7am on the collection day.

A new duck house last year, now it's time for a pond revamp

With the low water level last year, it was identified that the pond brickwork requires re-pointing to maintain the structure's stability and aesthetics. The lilies have also taken over again and need to be cleared. The Parish Council has therefore applied to CDC for New Homes Bonus funding to complete this work in the autumn, along with replacing the low-level fence.

With the addition of two new donated benches later in the year, we hope that this area will continue to be enjoyed, by many, for years to come.

See it. Note it. Report it.

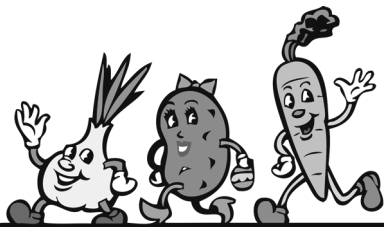
If walking or driving around the Parish and you notice or hear that something needs repairing or is a concern, then please let those responsible know. It's only by things being reported that we can get these repairs/issues addressed. **If you are unable to report online, please call the Parish Council on 701102.**

Village Maintenance Items/General Appearance: generally in the Conservation Area around the village green, please report by email to the Parish Clerk clerk@wisboroughgreenpc.org

A problem with a road or pavement: potholes/loose granite setts/manhole covers/pavement concerns/highway issues, please report to WSCC <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem-with-a-road-or-pavement/>

Public Rights of Way: issues with way markers, broken stiles, obstruction, missing planks on bridges, please report to WSCC: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/land-waste-and-housing/public-paths-and-the-countryside/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-with-a-right-of-way/>

ALLOTMENT PLOTS AT HARSFOLD LANE NOW AVAILABLE



Is the thought of growing your own fruit & veg appealing but yet you haven't enough space in the garden? This is your chance. Call Louise, Parish Council Clerk, on 701102 for more details.

The Parish Council has a vacancy

The Parish Council is the first elected tier of local government. The role of a Parish Councillor is to bring local issues to the attention of the Council and to help make decisions on behalf of the village. Following the resignation of Steve Rollinson, there is now a vacancy to become part of this village team!

You will need to be able to attend the Parish Council meeting held one evening each month and spend extra time on areas of specialism or interest. Enthusiasm and commitment are more important than experience.

You must be aged 18 or over, an elector, and have been a resident or worked within 3 miles of the Parish for the past year. The position is unpaid.

For further information, please email or call the Parish Council Clerk.

Thanks to Steve

We are hugely disappointed that Steve has just tendered his resignation from the Parish Council.

Steve joined the PC in January 2019 and was, he admits, quite spiky to start with; however Steve has learned along the way and was, up until his resignation, effective, thorough, enthusiastic and hard-working.

Steve was the PC driving force behind revitalising the village Speed Watch team, the formation of WG Campaign Against Noise and Speed and an excellent member of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Team.



PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Please refer to the agendas displayed on the village notice boards and website for information - a meeting will only be called to meet CDC deadlines.

Meetings will be held in the Committee Room at the Village Hall.

3 & 17 August
7 September
5 October
2 November
7 & 21 December

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS Held in the Committee Room at the Village Hall at 7.45pm on the following Tuesdays:

No meeting in August
21 September
19 October
16 November

No meeting in December

**Members of the public most
welcome to attend.**

Your Parish Council

Peter Drummond (Chair) T: 01798 865546

Communications
Finance Committee (Chairman,)
Gatwick Airport
Local Council Associations
Planning Committee

Andrew Jackson (Vice-Chair) T: 700574

Finance Committee
Neighbourhood Plan Review
New Pavilion Project/Pavilion Trustee Liaison
Planning Committee (Chairman),
Village Hall Trustee

Lucy Bartley T: 700457

Neighbourhood Plan Review
Planning Committee
Traffic Management Plan
Winter Management Plan

Andy Burbridge T: 701902

Green Coordination Group
Planning Committee,
Youth Activities

Howard True T: 700150

Finance Committee
Major Emergency Plan
Planning Committee
Traffic Management Plan
Winter Management Plan

Martin Watson T: 07836 700923

Communications
Finance Committee
Green Coordination Group
New Pavilion Project/Pavilion Trustee Liaison
Planning Committee

Sophie Winship T: 700783

Community Speed Watch Coordinator
Planning Committee
Traffic Management Plan

Tim Worrall T: 700100

Communications
Major Emergency Plan
Planning Committee
Winter Management Plan

We are extremely grateful to Pete who agreed to re-stand as Chairman and was unanimously elected in May for another year. He is assisted by long-standing Councillor, Andrew Jackson.

Being Chairman is not just about presiding at meetings but involves considerably more volunteer time and work. We are indebted to you Pete for all that you do for our village.

How to contact your Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Louise Davies
Wisborough Green Parish Council
PO Box 255, Wisborough Green
Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 0WT
T: 01403 701102
E: clerk@wisboroughgreenpc.org

Alternatively, letters can be posted in the Parish Council letterbox at the Village Hall. Members can be contacted directly by telephone or by email through the Clerk.

***What's on in the village?
Check out the village website
www.wisboroughgreen.org***