



West Horndon Village News

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www.westhorndonparishcouncil.org.uk

West Horndon's Neighbourhood Plan: *Power to the People!*

By Cllr Chris Hart

The Localism Act 2011 has helped to give Local Communities a greater say over local development. This is achieved through the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Whilst the number of houses West Horndon are required to accommodate under the Local Development Plan is, to an extent, out of our control, a Neighbourhood Plan allows us, the residents of West Horndon, to influence the nature of that development - where it occurs, what it looks like and the amenities / infrastructure we would like with that development, for instance.

A Neighbourhood Plan will take roughly two years to complete, however once complete, it will become a legal part of the planning process - any planning applications within West Horndon will need to be considered against the Neighbourhood Plan.

West Horndon Parish Council recently voted in favour of developing a Neighbourhood Plan, and as part of the process we will be consulting with West Horndon residents several times over the next two years. Whilst the general view from the village, and from the Parish Council, was that we would all prefer no development, in reality it is inevitable that there will be some development here, and the Neighbourhood Plan will allow all of you to influence how that development occurs, what it looks like and ultimately how it benefits all of us.

We are right at the very start of this process today; however this note is intended to give you all a heads-up that we'll be looking to engage with you in the near future and to get you thinking about some of the things you would like to see in the village over the next 15 years.

Further information on the process will be provided in future updates through the West Horndon Newsletter, website and Facebook page, however for those wanting more details, we recommend looking at the Neighbourhood Plan Guide at <http://locality.org.uk/resources/neighbourhood-planning-roadmap-guide/>

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the West Horndon Planning Group (Councillors Kathy Turner, Chris Hart and Colin Foan via email, telephone or through the Parish Clerk).

West Horndon to Go Dark

Essex County Council are continuing to roll out their night-time "lights out" scheme and Brentwood to include West Horndon is in the next phase due to commence 9th March.

All street lights in West Horndon, with the exception of the public footpath Station Rd/Cadogan Ave and the lights to the junction of Station/Thorndon/Chafford, will be switched-off between midnight and 5.00 a.m.

Despite objections from the Parish Council regarding the poor lighting we already have coupled with the disgraceful state of the pavements, this "money-saving" exercise is to go ahead!

St Francis Hospice Thank You for Christmas Donation



By Cllr Sue Lister

Another successful Tree Lighting event was held for Christmas enjoyed by everyone who came along. A big thank you to Mrs

Richardson and the children from the school for their singing which makes the day and a big thank you to Norman Page 2013 Citizen Award Winner for "switching" on the lights.

The event was again very well attended and thanks to everyone's generosity £386.00 was raised and presented to St Francis Hospice this year's chosen charity. The hospice has sent us a very nice letter and their donation certificate is shown. For your diaries, this year's date has already been set Sunday 7th December (put this in your diary now) and we have already received a very generous offer from some residents to supply all the mulled wine!!





Flood Management Position

By Cllr Colin Foan

Although the area needs to be considered as a whole it is easier to consider many of the problems if it is broken down into the following sections:

1. A127 & the north of the Parish
2. Childerditch Lane & the Wolseley Industrial park
3. Western side of Thorndon Avenue
4. Eastern side of Thorndon Avenue
5. A128 & old Tilbury Road
6. Railway & south of the Parish

1. A127 & the north of the Parish – The A127 runs to the north of the Parish. In normal circumstances water drains from the Thorndon Country Park under the road by means of a series of culverts. Essex County Council has confirmed that maintenance undertaken to at least one of the culverts resulted in its diameter being reduced as it was just relined when maintenance was required. This is likely to contribute to the cause of the A127 flooding at the

Halfway House Junction. While on one hand this is a cause for concern the fact that following heavy rain water gets held up on the A127 will reduce this coming through the drainage system and thus reduce the risk of flooding in the village.

2. Childerditch Lane & the Wolseley Industrial Park - This area has drainage ditches on both sides of Childerditch Lane. The one to the west is overgrown but from reports by the landowning farmer a drainage system he installed to the adjacent fields has rendered this redundant. Given the heights of the banks, water from the road will not drain into this western ditch. The ditch to the east of the lane once again takes water from north of the A127 down towards culverts under the railway. These ditches are in general in a poor state of maintenance and it remains unclear where they are supposed to pass under the railway line. I can find little or no evidence that any work has been undertaken in the last year and recent heavy rain has again resulted in flooding.



3. Western side of Thorndon Avenue - There is a ditch behind the houses on the western side of Thorndon Avenue. This runs from the A127 (taking water that has passed under the road) behind all the houses and enters a culvert which is designed to take water under the Petresfield Way estate, Station Road and the Lombards Chase estate and finally under the railway to exit into a “river” system which is maintained by the Environment Agency. The ditch behind the properties in Thorndon Avenue is poorly maintained and has a large amount of vegetation growing in it as well as debris that would appear to have been discarded by the owners of properties. Linda Golding and I, along with an official from Essex County Council inspected this on 22nd March 2013. However, the entrance to the culvert was still blocked on the morning of 24th December. The heavy rain of that morning caused flooding and water entered the Church. During this incident some of the Church parishioners climbed into the field and pulled some of the debris away

from the entrance to the culvert. The flood water rushed into the culvert and in about 30 minutes most of the surface water had subsided. In my view this confirms that had the ditch and culvert been properly maintained the flooding would not have occurred. Essex County Council have been unable to identify the riparian land owner who is responsible for maintenance of the ditch and culvert entrance as the land registry shows this land to have no registered owner it is in effect “orphaned” . My understanding is that in these circumstances ultimately the maintenance responsibility reverts to the statutory flood authority – Essex County Council. However the legal situation is highly complex in this case and is still in the process of being resolved. I am told that ECC have not undertaken any work through lack of finance at this time.

4. Eastern side of Thorndon Avenue - There is a drainage ditch which runs from the A127 across a field to behind the back of the primary school. At this point it diverts to the east running north of the park and a field before diverting south passing through a culvert under Station Road and finally another culvert under the railway. The system to the north of Station Road is still poorly maintained. The ditches are blocked by debris including old tyres as well as large amounts of vegetation including established trees. The two land owners involved have been issued with statutory notices to maintain these ditches by 14th February 2014. The ditch to the south of Station Road has been cleaned by the land owner and it is in good condition.

5. A128 & old Tilbury Road – Essex Highways Department have undertaken work to clear the highways drains. I have been and inspected this area following the recent heavy rain and I have not seen any evidence that water is not being cleared adequately by the drains.

6. Railway & south of the Parish - There are several culverts which run under the railway. These are on land owned by Network Rail which is the body responsible for their maintenance. Some are visible from public land and these appear to be over-grown and blocked with debris. However, Network Rail has undertaken detailed examination of all the culverts. They state that although they are in need of maintenance work they do not consider them to be urgent and they are scheduled for work during 2015.

As we go to print, regrettably we must report that works remain incomplete despite assurances from the relevant parties. This Parish Council is now insisting that ECC take enforcement action, carry out the works themselves and sue those responsible for recovery of the costs.

The time has come for action, too much time has passed, too many excuses have been given, action is what we want!



Community Volunteers

By Cllr Anthony Crowley

As part of the “self-help” required these days to get things done in and around the village, we would like to create a team of Community Volunteers. Funding cuts from Central Government, filtering down through County and Borough Councils means that whether we like it or not we are going to have to do more to help ourselves! The Parish Council wants to initiate a team of all age groups that are willing to help out around the village when needed. We may set up a community litter pick, planting in the park, speedwatch, ditch clearing and so on but also we will look to call on our volunteers in times of emergency such as flooding and power cuts. A “street warden” to check that an elderly neighbour is okay and not just assume as many of us do.

The Parish Council over the next few months will be developing an Emergency Response Plan to major incidents and will be meeting with the utility companies and other stakeholders but a team of volunteers will be needed to implement the plan. Investing in pumps, generators and other emergency equipment will all be part of the process but our Community Volunteers will be the main asset. Sign up and be part of the team.

Cycle Club & Film Nights

By Cllr Anthony Crowley

Our funding has now arrived from the Borough Council and so it will be full steam ahead to get the cycle club and film nights up and running. For the film nights, we will be looking to put on 4 films throughout the year and will try our best to cater for all age groups and tastes! Please do contact us with your film suggestions.



We hope we will have the cycle club ready for our first ride in March and then continue with a monthly cycle ride thereafter. It is important that you register your interest so that we can assess the number of guides required.

Contact us by email whpc.parishclerk@gmail.com or the Parish telephone on **07905-416941**.

These are two community events that with your support could be a lot of fun!

Parish Council on Facebook

The Parish Council has now set up its own dedicated Facebook page so for those who have access please “like” us. We will be posted news updates and relevant items on this page as well as the Parish Council’s webpage.

C2C Q&A

By Cllr Kathy Turner

Scott Walker attended the January parish meeting and very kindly held a question & answer session. A final decision will be announced later this year on who has won the next franchise. There are currently 5 interested parties. A new “smart-card” is being trialled, similar to TfL’s Oyster card and if successful could be rolled-out across the network, sadly at this time it will not interlink with the Oyster card. Following much lobbying by us a feasibility study is now underway for a dedicated pedestrian walkway at the station. If approved, Scott was hopeful that works could start this financial year!

Highways Update

At the recent Brentwood/Essex highways committee meeting, approval was given for crash protection barriers to be installed outside the under 5’s playground at the village hall. Also approved was an improved dedicated “crossing” island to be installed on the A128 adjacent to Dunton Hills Farm, to afford safer crossing of the road by the students travelling to the Thurrock colleges. Disappointingly, the requested bus shelter was not on the agenda so though it will be a little safer to cross the road you will still get wet while you wait for the bus! Sadly there has been no progress on speed reduction measures for Station Road.

Parish Precept to Rise

By Cllr Anthony Crowley

At the January Parish Council meeting, next year’s budget was agreed and the difficult decision was taken to increase the Parish Precept. The precept will rise from April to 96p per week. This is a significant increase which some will find it hard to understand given the current difficult financial climate. Nevertheless, it is the same financial climate that means that the grant the PC receives from the Borough is dramatically being reduced from a peak of near £19,000 to the current £9,000 and a forecast £1,000 in the next few years. The PC must budget and plan for this accordingly. A decision has also been taken to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, as mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter, and this will allow us to “influence” any proposed development to take place in the village! Sadly this plan does not come cheap, with various studies to be undertaken and outside consultants utilised, meaning the cost to put this together will run into the tens of £0,000’s.

WEST HORNDON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

PCSO DEBBIE POWIS's BEAT SURGERY / DROP-IN SESSION - TUESDAY 18th MARCH

Prior to Debbie going into hospital last year for an operation on her ear, she asked me to arrange another of her beat surgery/drop-in sessions. Although she is not yet back on duty I am reliably informed that she will be by March. So with the aid of one of her colleagues a date for such a meeting has been sorted this will be on Tuesday 18th March between 10.00 am/noon downstairs in the Village Hall. If you want to discuss a problem or just have a chat, do pop in and see us.

CRIME FIGURES FOR WEST HORNDON - As I mentioned previously, the police are planning to introduce a new system for getting out crime figures. This was originally due to commence late October, was put back to February but has now been postponed until April (no year specified!). When in force I should receive an e-mail every fortnight giving me figures for W.H. Presently though I am still relying on residents passing on crime information to me as I receive no information whatsoever from the Police. Saturday 30th November 2013 - Station Road - there was an attempted burglary but their dogs raised the alarm and the burglars ran off - the dogs saved the day. Monday 13th January - Dunmow Gardens - two bungalows, next door to each other, were entered sometime during the daytime. Thursday 23rd January - The number plates from a white van parked overnight in Thorndon Avenue were stolen. I have received no information of any other incidents. However, although burglary is coming down in the Brentwood area, car theft is on the increase - the thieves are mainly after the catalytic converters.

TELEPHONE SCAM - Although these have been around for sometime I recently received details of a very expensive scam involving area code 0809 - 0284 - 0876 from the U.K. The caller asks you to call back immediately as they have something important to tell you re a family member, a wonderful prize you have won, etc. These calls are originating from the Dominican Republic and if you return their call you will be charged a minimum rate of £1,500.00 per minute.

BOGUS TELEPHONE CALLS - I am presently receiving more than usual of these calls. Some purport to be from the police including the fraud squad, post office, councils and various organisations. Their only reason for calling you is to get you to impart confidential/private information or to get you out of your home on some pretext leaving the place empty for them to enter. Recently I had one from the U.S.A. and before that one from Italy asking for my opinion on Italian food. Please just replace the receiver and do not bother even given them the time of day.

SECURITY - With the introduction of B.S.T. in March and the hope that the weather improves and we can once again get out in our gardens, I would remind all residents not to forget to close and lock your door while working on your gardens.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS - POLICE - PLEASE TRY FIRST FOR ALL ENQUIRIES - 101

This is a non-emergency manned telephone number available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This does not replace the emergency 999 number - if there is a serious crime, incident, serious risk of injury or damage you should dial 999.

PCSO Debbie Powis/Neighbourhood Policing Team - direct dial 01277 266896 - mobile 07896 871008.

You can also e-mail PCSO Deborah Powis on: deborah.powis@essex.pnn.police.uk

Brentwood Police Station 01277 262212 or dial 101 and ask for Brentwood. Real emergencies only 999.

Doctors Surgery

Appointments can now be booked on line the first three will be kept until 8.00 a.m. and if they are not taken they will be given out to anybody who rings in mornings only.

To obtain your password please talk to Tracy or Sharon at the surgery on 01277 811770.

WH Friendship Club

The club meets every Friday afternoon at the village hall from 2.00-4.00p.m. We play cards, scrabble, rummikub or just meet for a friendly chat. There are several visits to local restaurants' arranged and we have visiting entertainers three times a year. Quizzes are also very popular together with Chinese auctions!

Why not come along meet with us or call to find out more about this friendly and valuable village group. **Contact Christine on 01277 810306 or 07802-447074.**

SPRING FORWARD

SATURDAY 29th / SUNDAY 30th MARCH



It is that time of year when we all go around our homes and car putting the clocks forward by one hour. Well those of us who are not completely digital anyway.

W.I. - Forthcoming Events

March 19th @ 8.00 p.m.

A look at Nelson with speaker Ian Kirby

April 16th @ 8.00 p.m.

Fascinating Headwear by Jan Curtis

We welcome all ladies to any of our meetings for more information please ring

Pat on 01277 811296

The next edition covers June/July/August if you have anything you want included please advise the Parish Clerk on whpc.pariishclerk@gmail.com or drop it into Tony Crowley at 2 Cadogan by the beginning of May. Thank you.