CHAIRMAN’S CHAT

Looking back over previous Newsletters (in an attempt to obtain inspiration), I see that usually I commence my ‘Chat’ with a comment on the weather. How very typically British? So, not wishing to break with tradition, I am thrilled summer has finally arrived!

Our Annual Parish Meeting in April prompted many of you to attend to hear our guest speaker, John Hawkins, who gave an enlightened talk on the history of our parish. My Chairman’s Report updated the assembly on all the issues and duties with which we have been involved over the previous 12 months. The following month was the Annual Meeting when I was honoured to be re-elected as your chairman with Cllr Roly Errington as my vice chairman. Subsequently, Cllr Jim Spark was re-elected as the Planning Committee Chairman and Cllr Richard Loader has kindly agreed to offer his support as vice chairman of that committee. Other Councillors continue to share the load of voluntary duties and I would again extend my grateful thanks to them for their dedication and commitment. A special Thank You to our parish clerk, Natasha who invariably manages to progress matters single-handed and without prompting, not to mention keeping the chairman in check!

It is appropriate to reiterate previous advice given in the hope of reducing Crime in our parish. It seems that at any time of year sheds and outbuildings are a target for thieves, so please continue to be aware, ensure suitable and secure locks are fitted and improved outside lighting and even consider CCTV cameras. In the summer, there are other matters to consider:-

- In hot weather - it may be a chore but remember to lock all doors and windows even if absent from the house for a short period or even working in the garden.
- Holidays - don’t advertise your absence, especially on social media - it can be tracked!
- Caravans - If you normally leave your caravan in the front drive except when you take it on holiday, try swapping vans with neighbours on a regular basis so as to confuse a potential burglar.
- Walks on the Forest - don’t leave handbags or valuables in your car, even if out of sight or in your boot. Thieves often watch the car parks.
- Suspicious behaviour – the Police are always keen to receive a report if you suspect anyone of suspicious or anti-social behaviour, especially in our lay-bys and quiet spots in our rural villages – just telephone 101.

I really do commend you to open up and go onto the Parish Council website from time to time. The ‘What’s On’ section is very informative and the best way we have at the moment to let you know about events and activities going on in the Parish outside of our meetings’ updates, e.g. road closures for repairs, cycle events and even consultations which you may wish to comment on from a personal point of view, such as the A31 road problems, the Hampshire Waste Sites and the current Local Plan Review by NFDC (Logging on to the website may also encourage you to subscribe to this Newsletter by email!).

Please continue to send in your comments, input and feedback to ensure your Parish Council is doing what you, as residents, want us to do!

Councillor Lindsay Burtenshaw

Congratulations to Elaine Micklewright!
The Parish Council are delighted to add our congratulations to Elaine Micklewright of South Gorley who has been awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen’s 90th Birthday Honours List as founder and organiser of Bygone Days for the last 25 years, and for her many other charitable and voluntary services in the New Forest.

Parish Council Projects update
The main focus for the remainder of this financial year will be to improve the appearance of the lorry parking area opposite Ibsley Service Station. Natural England have approved in principle the creation of new but more discreet parking spaces so that works can be carried out to protect the conservation verges. Such works are likely to include the removal of old posts and rails and replacing these with the more attractive ‘ditch and bank’. We are currently carrying out surveys in order to prepare a specification and costings for the project.

Some time ago the new footpath bridge on FP703 (Ellingham Drove) was completed but not quite ticked off the list! - the old concrete footbridge over Dockens Water has yet to be removed for obvious H&S reasons. It is hoped this work can now be carried out over the next few months. Other important projects such as Parking in the Parish and new Footpath Information Leaflets are ‘work in progress’ but may take a little longer to come to fruition? The Information Leaflets present a challenge (as do many things!) but it would be good to include details of areas of historical interest and possibly some facts about our beautiful local parish churches and chapels. If you have any ideas on what you believe would be of interest to residents and visitors alike, let us know!

Ellingham & Ringwood Agricultural Show

Saturday 13 August 2016
We will have Stand L4 at the show again this year – come and talk to your elected Councillors about issues that affect you and how we can serve you best. We will once again be promoting our wonderful local enterprises with a prize draw. Bring along the draw ticket attached to this newsletter or collect a ticket at our stand if you get the news electronically.

We are also pleased to announce:

Parish Photo Competition on ‘Village Life’
The Parish Council always have a stand at the Ellingham & Ringwood Agricultural Show, and we try and have a theme each year. For 2016 we are holding a photo competition, the theme is ‘Village Life’.

We are looking for entries with subjects like flooding, pony drifts, Bygone Days would be perfect. The photos do not have to be recent, you might want to enter a shot you took a while ago that shows old-style farming, buildings now gone or changed, whatever you feel might be of interest to other residents of the parish...they must be your photos though. There are just two classes, the under 12 years of age and the over 12 years of age. There will be prizes, Bubbly, Chocolates.

Digital images can be emailed to the Parish Clerk, Natasha Mackenzie ehiparishcouncil@gmail.com, make sure you include your name, class entered ie. under 12 or over 12.

Post entries to: Natasha Mackenzie, Parish Clerk, Gorran House, 6 Butlers Lane, Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 1UB

Annual allocation of Grant funds
The members of the Parish Council consider applications for grant funding from individuals and local organisations at the meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 18th October in Ibsley Village Hall. There are still funds available in the Dodington Charitable Trust for education of children and young adults. All applications should be sent to the Clerk.
Animal Accidents and Speeding in Linwood
Local commoner Richard Deacon has been welcomed twice to Parish Council meetings in 2016 to raise his grave concerns regarding vehicles speeding along the Linwood to Lyndhurst Road, which has sadly resulted in the death or injury of a number of forest livestock and several accidents with cars losing control. Richard had also made appropriate presentments to the Verderers Court.
He is campaigning regarding several important issues:-

- Requesting urgent reinstatement of old missing signage, and some new signage, to alert motorists that there may be forest livestock on the road (unbelievably at present, this road can be joined from the M27 at Jct 1 where it becomes the A31, and not see a single sign advising of depastured stock). This road is becoming a rat-run for motorists wishing to leave the busy and congested A31 and can see traffic levels of up to 700 vehicles per hour travelling from east to west when the A31 is busy;
- For the community of Linwood to have ‘Linwood’ signage at each end of the village, to alert motorists they are entering a community, and to encourage a reduction in speed;
- A reduction in the speed limit from 40 to 30 miles an hour, making it a safer community for visitors to the two popular forest pubs, the popular Red Shoot Camping Park and Deers Leap Caravan Park, and visitors to the two Forestry Commission car parks, Broomy and Appleslade.

The Parish Council are supportive in trying to find solutions to some of these problems and, as a first step, we are working closely with our County Councillor, Edward Heron and the Hampshire Highways department to try and find ways to improve signage without ‘littering’

Fires in the open
It is the time of year when the BBQ parties are in full swing. Many people cook their food and then retire indoors if the evening is chilly. Please consider where you set up your BBQ because if it is too near to a hedge or if the bag of charcoal is left underneath this can cause a serious fire.

Plans to expand residential area of Ringwood
You may have seen articles in the local press about the District Council’s possible plans to build on some of the green field space around Ringwood.
Certainly New Forest District Council, in line with government initiatives, has identified a potential housing need over the next 20 years of an additional 6-700 new homes per annum within the New Forest District (outside the National Park). They have further identified 3 sites around Ringwood to try and meet these requirements and specific to our parish is the area to the south of Snails Lane where 130 houses are proposed.
New Forest District Council has launched a Local Plan Review to allow residents an opportunity to comment on these proposals. The Parish Council plan to make a response but we wish to encourage all residents to have their say and share their views with us. The nine week consultation starts on 15th July until 16th September at www.newforest.gov.uk/localplan2016. Alternatively, complete the survey via the link Greenfield Building on the parish council website www.ehipc.co.uk.

Latchmore Brook Restoration Scheme
The High Level Stewardship’s (HLS) planning application has now been submitted to the NPA, reference 16/00571 and the documents can be viewed on their website www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/planning.

Events at Blashford Lakes this summer.
Please pick up a Blashford Lakes “What’s On?” from any number of local distribution points, from the nature reserve itself or online: http://goo.gl/Y900Dp
There is plenty for everyone and all ages; guided bird walks, a fortnightly “Healthy Walk” (11am every second and fourth Wednesday of the month) bat ecology courses, family wild play days, children’s school holiday activity days. You name it, if it is outdoors, seasonal and wildlife related we are probably doing it, or something like it! We look forward to welcoming you here. Jim Day, Education Officer, Blashford

Affordable Housing Project update
In the Spring Newsletter, we reported a temporary abandoning of this project as we felt the information on ‘the way forward’ needed a rethink in order to encourage residents to learn about and, hopefully support the principles of affordable or rural housing in our area. We have now set up a small sub-committee and I propose that it looks into the priorities and objectives of the overall project and set them out in a report to the Parish Council at their next meeting.

It seems an appropriate time now to reconsider Affordable Housing in our parish. Notwithstanding the NFDC Local Plan Review, where such housing would usually be included in any major development (details of the consultation overleaf), there is still a proven need for a more rural type of scheme available to those with local connections to our parish. HARAH also have a new working development partner in Hampshire Village Homes whom we hope will provide new initiatives to the project. Above all, The Parish Council, together with the majority of local people are supportive to a new scheme in principle, so we look forward to working together to meet this important objective. Cllr Lindsay Burtenshaw

Sat Nav Issues in Linwood
Just occasionally we are able to report a good outcome! Some time ago, residents expressed concerns whereby satellite navigation devices sent unsuspecting drivers down a private unmade road to reach their destination.
We have worked together with those residents and brought some pressure to bear on the Forestry Commission who have kindly agreed to install signage to deter drivers from one route and encourage them via the main roads!
Furthermore, it seems that Royal Mail are not averse to ‘changing a postcode’ so in the due passage of time, Sat Nav guidance should produce the best route for all concerned. Cllr Lindsay Burtenshaw

Garden waste in the ‘Forest’
When clipping and pruning this summer, please ensure all garden waste is disposed of safely and not left where forest livestock can nibble at it. No garden debris should be dumped on the Forest. When clipping close to watercourses and ditches, this must be picked up and disposed of carefully, otherwise when the rains come in the autumn, debris dams can be quick to build up and easily impede the flow of water, resulting in contributing to flooding.

Car Parks in our parish
Recent works to protect the oak trees’ roots at Newtown Lane have resulted in frustration for some residents wishing to drive to the commons to exercise themselves &/or their dogs.
For those wishing to access the commons by car, there are designated car parking facilities with wonderful walks at the following locations:-

- Rockford sandpit (National Trust) for Footpaths 708, 716, 712, 715 and many more on the common
- Moyles Court ford (Parish Council) for FPs 36 & 739
- The Forestry Commission’s car parks at Broomy Walk for Milkham Inclosure, Appleslade Inclosure and the High Corner in Linwood FP726 or even head a little further east for plentiful parking at Linford Bottom.

Ibsley Past and Present on Aug 6th and 7th
At Ibsley Village Hall a collection of interesting memorabilia will be on show. With no Bygone days this year this should interest those keen on Village history events.

EHIPC Newsletter - Electronically
If you would like to get your newsletter by email rather than post, please let the clerk know - it saves us (and you!) a little bit of postage cost each time. Your email details are safe with us and we ONLY use them to send out the newsletter - we don't do junk mail!