

September 2013

Birdham Parish Council Newsletter

Birdham Harvest Festival 2-5pm, Sat 28th September in the field opposite the Church –look out for posters

Land bequeathed

After several years of negotiation with the solicitors the land bequeathed to Birdham Parish Council by the late Mr Adams was registered. There are restrictions and conditions on the use and maintenance of the land between Birdham Straight House and the playing field.

Tree planting

Trees generously donated to Birdham Primary School have reached a size now that they are ready to move out into the big, wide world. **Volunteers** are requested to help plant the trees in Birdham Parish during late October and **suggestions** are welcome on their location. We are sure there are places in and around the village where additional or replacement trees will be welcome, so please let us know those locations.

Results from the Questionnaire

Thank you to everyone who completed the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire. From 645 households we had 329 replies, which were analysed by Action in Rural Sussex. The NP team have seen a draft of the results and have started using your feedback to help develop objectives and policies.

As you can imagine there was a wide range of opinions so the challenge will be to draw up policies and proposals to meet the desires of the majority of residents. Several people were concerned this was their last chance to give their opinion or that they didn't have enough information about locations to make informed suggestions. Please be reassured the team will make sure the pros and cons of different options are explained and everyone will have more opportunities to comment.

Planning applications

Over the past year we have told you about several large planning applications in Birdham. The Parish Council has objected to all of these applications on a range of planning grounds. Several have now been decided by Chichester District Council Planning Committee.

The **Tawny Nursery** application (12/04147/OUT) was **rejected** by Planning Officers but the developer has appealed against the decision. We wait to find out when the appeal will be held. The District Council's position is detailed in the document 'CDC Statement', which you can find in the documents for this application on the CDC website.

The **Rowan Nursery** application (13/00284/FUL) was delayed but finally **approved** by the District Council Planning Committee. The developers have made efforts to improve drainage from the site although concerns remain about surface water and sewage.

The **Church Lane** application (12/04141/OUT) was **rejected** by the District Council Planning Committee against Planning Officer recommendation, after a long discussion and presentations from the Parish Council, residents and the Neighbourhood Plan. This is also likely to be appealed by the developer.

Birdham & Earnley Flood Prevention

The Birdham & Earnley Flood Prevention Group (FPG) was formed in May 2013 and has 10 members, covering Birdham Village, Bell Lane, Bookers Lane, Earnley Village and Almodington. We also have representatives from the Sidlesham Flood Action Group and the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group. We are affiliated to the National Flood Forum. The Group are focussing on a number of projects to improve surface water drainage in all the areas listed above. To achieve this we are working in partnership with other bodies: in particular, West Sussex County Council (in law, the Lead Local Flood Authority), Chichester District Council and the Environment Agency. However, in these days of partnership funding for improvement projects, it is also crucial to engage with as many local residents as possible.

A significant success to date has been the recent confirmation from the Environment Agency that the Bookers Lane flood relief channel will be built. This is major project costing something in the region of £500,000. The principal funder is the County Council, although residents also contributed £40,000. We are grateful for the unstinting support of the senior officers of the County Council as well as to our County & District Councillors.

The FPG are also looking at planning applications where these impact on flood risk, either for the proposed development itself or, more crucially, for neighbouring residents and those at risk further downstream. We have, for example, submitted a detailed letter to the Planning Inspector listing our objections to the Tawny Nurseries site appeal.

The FPG will be commenting upon West Sussex County Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, an important document which is available online and is currently up for consultation.

Finally, we are working on identifying maintenance issues for the existing network of rife, drainage channels and ditches to ensure that they are kept clear and that riparian owners are aware of their legal obligations. Again we have had some success in this area, although there is still much to do.

Robert Carey, Chair of the Birdham & Earnley Flood Prevention Group

New Homes Bonus

Chichester District Council has made available the first year's allocation of New Homes Bonus for bids from parishes that have received housing growth. Suitable projects could look to address an existing problem (perhaps exacerbated by new development) or simply identify the most popular project within the community. Parish Councils are encouraged to draw ideas from local residents and provide opportunities for suggestions to be put forward for consideration.

Birdham is entitled to bid for £391 as there was a net change of +1 dwelling from 2010 to 2013 (the period covered does not include Chaffinch Close or Old Common Close.) Please let us know what you think this money should be used for and we will discuss all suggestions in the September Parish Council meeting.

Who do I contact?

Parish Councillors:

Jane Finch (Chair) janefinch1@talktalk.net

Carolyn Cobbold (Vice-Chair) trcobbold@msn.com

Marion Barker marion.barker@talk21.com

Andy Grafham andy.grafham@gmail.com

Elizabeth Hamilton eabhamilton@yahoo.com

Daniel Ayton daniel.ayton@aytonlee.com

Gordon Churchill g.t.churchill@intelynx.net

Or write to or email the Parish Clerk (David Siggs)

 clerk@birdhamparishcouncil.org.uk

 28 Langdale Avenue, Chichester, PO19 8JQ

What's coming up?

All events are in Birdham Village Hall unless otherwise stated:

Tea Party 3pm 10th September, 8th October

History Group 7:30pm 23rd September

Macmillan Coffee Morning 10:30am 27th September

Quiz Night 19th October

Village Choir 6-7pm, Mondays (Church Room)

The next parish council meeting is
Monday 16th September 2013
at 7pm in the Village Hall.

Everyone is welcome and we would love to see you.