

September 2012

# Birdham Parish Council Newsletter



## Creating a Neighbourhood Plan

### **Birdham needs your help**

To create a Neighbourhood Plan (which will determine what Birdham looks like in the future) we need Steering Group members (the committee) and also Focus group members to do research (Environmental; Transport & Accessibility; Social & Community; Economy & Business). We need people from all across the community both in terms of where they live and in their skills, knowledge and views. We have some volunteers from the 60 attendees at the open meeting held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> September and will hold the first meeting to get started in the next week or so.

We still need more people so if you want to be part of this important initiative please send your details to the clerk and Chairman as soon as possible. More information is available on the web-site or paper copies can be provided on request.

Birdham Parish Council is working with other parish councils to highlight the negative effects of development across the Manhood Peninsula. We feel the total impact on our creaking infrastructure of many 'small' developments is not being taken into account when applications are considered by the district council or when changes to the infrastructure are discussed.

## Flooding

June 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 was a day like no other in Birdham and certainly outside the experience of all the residents we spoke to. Flooding following unprecedented rainfall affected most parts of the parish, with residents in Bell Lane and Sidlesham Lane having to evacuate their properties, while those in Greenacres were only able to leave on foot.

Drainage has long been a problem in our area, compounded by poor maintenance of the land drainage system. Ditches exist for a reason, either to act as a 'tank' that will slowly drain into the soil; or as a channel along which water will flow, often ultimately to the sea. Development and neglect have resulted in gaps in this system.

While the parish council works to engage with the Environment Agency, District Council, County Council and, where relevant, with developers and neighbouring parish councils, you too can make a difference. The excellent work carried out by residents to map the drainage system as it is has been passed to the county but we are also interested to hear where the flooding reached on June 11<sup>th</sup>. Some riparian owners have started work on their ditches already (see p2 for more about ditches).

## Children's Fair

The children's Fair on the playing field was popular again and took advantage of some nice weather during the Olympics. The change in location seemed more acceptable to residents as well. Let us know what you thought.

## Village Fete

The fete was re-scheduled for Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> September following the flooding of the playing field back in July. If you receive this before the event we hope to see you there and if you are reading this after the event we hope you had a great time!

## Travellers

Sometime between 9 and 9:30pm on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> August Travellers moved uninvited onto the playing field in Birdham. On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> August the clerk, following the process advised by the district council, served a Notice of Eviction. This was ignored. On Monday 20<sup>th</sup> August the clerk applied to the County Court for an Immediate Possession Order, which was granted on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August and served that day. The Travellers left the field later that afternoon.

Grateful thanks go to Mrs Geary and members of her family who cleared much of the general litter from the field before the district council clean-up crew arrived on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> August and dealt with the other waste. Many thanks to all the other residents who offered help with the clear-up.

Improvements to the security of the playing field will be discussed at the next parish council meeting.

## Ditches

If you have a ditch or culvert (pipe in place of a ditch) on your property you are a 'riparian owner' and must exercise a duty of care in maintaining the drainage system. That doesn't mean pulling all the plants out of a ditch but it might mean clearing silt (very fine particles) or other obstruction. It isn't always clear who owns the ditch – you may think your land ends at the hedge but in fact the ditch on the other side may also be your responsibility. This is called the 'hedge and ditch presumption'. Bear in mind that you cannot make any alterations to the drainage system, such as blocking a ditch to create a pool or filling it in, without consent. The Lead Authority in this case is West Sussex County Council.

If you would like to read previous minutes of Council Meetings, where there are more details on many of these topics, please look on our website

[www.birdham.org.uk](http://www.birdham.org.uk)

## Co-option of Councillors

The council in Birdham consists of 9 councillors in total. Two councillors have resigned this year so we are co-opting councillors. While the clerk has had some interest from residents we have not yet been able (at the time of writing) to fill the vacancies. If you think you might be interested please contact the clerk for an information pack. This voluntary role can be very rewarding, especially at times of change, and it isn't all about planning applications!

## Youth Matters

According to the Office of National Statistics, nearly a quarter of our national population is made up of people under the age of eighteen. Despite all the bad press the vast majority of young people are social, not anti-social. The parish council has been approached by a community minded young person for help in creating 'community' opportunities for young people and families with young children. Councillors are working to develop knowledge in this area so if you have experience of youth work or have ideas for community based events aimed at these groups e.g. a junior football team, please contact the Chairman by email or via the clerk.

## Youth Groups

There are youth groups in Birdham covering different ages and interests:

- Rainbows and Brownies** - held in the village hall (Rachel 07980 699386)
- Tower Group** – two sessions held in the village hall for years 4& 5 and years 6+. Other sessions in the church room (Alistair 01243 511373)
- Birdham & W Wittering Scouts** in the Scout Hut (Raymond 01243 673098)
- Stirland's Cricket Club** various teams U12 to U16 (Mike 07780 492306)

If you know of any others that would like a mention please let us know and we will put them into our next newsletter.

## Development in Birdham

**Tate Place:** This development near the petrol station was approved several years ago (BI/07/03486/FUL) but the developer went into liquidation leaving the site an eyesore. You may have noticed some changes recently as the new developers, Oakford Homes, have re-commenced the build.

**Long Meadow:** This development on the Birdham Straight was also approved some time ago (BI/07/05640/FUL) but work started in earnest this year after the site was acquired by Bellway Homes. The parish council was recently asked to comment on the developer's proposal for a road name. Following requests from residents in Longmeadow Gardens that the name should not include 'Longmeadow' the councillors proposed some alternatives. The site was originally part of Birdham Common before it was enclosed in 1793 and the name chosen was 'Old Common Close'.

**Crooked Lane:** During the June Parish Council meeting the Chairman opened the meeting for residents to speak about a proposed development of 15 affordable (social rented) homes on the field off Crooked Lane. A report from the rural enabling officer had detailed a large number of potential sites around Birdham but only a small number were considered by planners to be suitable.

**Church Lane:** An exhibition was held in Birdham Village Hall by developers Seaward Homes for residents to comment on their proposals for a development in Church Lane. With recent flooding on people's minds the drainage expert was closely questioned and with traffic always a hot topic the transport expert also came in for some challenging questions. Residents were also invited to submit written comments.

## What do you want to see here?

We're using the newsletter to inform you about things we think you ought to know. Please let us know if there's something else you want to see – contact any of the councillors if you have suggestions – as we are working hard to improve communication to suit everybody's preferences.

## Village Hall

**Make room in wardrobes and cupboards, earn some extra cash and support your local village hall!**

**Nearly New Sale  
Birdham Village Hall  
Saturday October 6th  
11am to 2pm  
Entrance 50p**

*Items to be dropped off 7pm to 9pm  
Friday October 5th OR  
9am to 10:15 am Saturday October 6<sup>th</sup>*

All items in good condition welcome. Please label clothes with the size and the price you want to charge. You will receive half of that price and the remainder will go to village hall funds. Some items can be collected... call Jan on 512339  
All unsold items can be collected on the day of the sale between 4pm and 5pm. Payments for items sold will also be made during this time.

**Welcome to the new Headteacher at Birdham Primary School Mr Mark McCadden and to the new vicar Reverend Jonathan Swindells.**



## Who do I contact?

### Parish Councillors:

**Jane Finch** (Chair) [jane Finch1@talktalk.net](mailto:jane Finch1@talktalk.net)  
**Carolyn Cobbold** (Vice-Chair) [trcobbold@msn.com](mailto:trcobbold@msn.com)  
**Marion Barker** [marion.barker@talk21.com](mailto:marion.barker@talk21.com)  
**Andy Grafham** [andy.grafham@gmail.com](mailto:andy.grafham@gmail.com)  
**Sheila Leach** [sheilamleach16@gmail.com](mailto:sheilamleach16@gmail.com)  
**Angela Parks** [camping@ellscottpark.co.uk](mailto:camping@ellscottpark.co.uk)  
**Roger Tilbury** [rogertilbury539@btinternet.com](mailto:rogertilbury539@btinternet.com)  
Or write to or email the Parish Clerk (David Siggs)  
 [clerk@birdhamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@birdhamparishcouncil.org.uk)  
 28 Langdale Avenue, Chichester, PO19 8JQ

The Neighbourhood Specialist Police Team responsible for Birdham is:  
PCSO Rose Bainbridge **07881 754535**  
[rosemary.bainbridge@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:rosemary.bainbridge@sussex.pnn.police.uk) and  
PCSO Ollie Broad **07825 735399**  
[oliver.j.broad@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:oliver.j.broad@sussex.pnn.police.uk)

If a crime is being committed dial 999.  
If you have information about a crime or an incident which is no longer happening dial **101** (from a landline) or **0845 60 70 999**. Or you can call Crime Stoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111**

If you and your household would prefer to receive this **newsletter by email** in the future please send your name, address and email address with your request for an email copy to [clerk@birdhamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@birdhamparishcouncil.org.uk) with "**Newsletter**" in the subject line.

## What's coming up?

Car Boot Sale - Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September  
History Group - Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October (7.30pm at the church); Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November (7pm at the County Records Office)

The next parish council meeting is **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2012** at 7pm in the Village Hall. Everyone is welcome and we would love to see you.

(Meetings are every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in the month except August)