

**Spring
2014**



*The Annual
Report of
Wigginton
Parish Council*

The Chairman writes:

As a result of the responses to the questionnaire two years ago the new seating in the area once occupied by the Scout Hut has now been completed. Despite an attempt by vandals to remove one of the new bench and table combinations the sports field now provides leisure seating which will hopefully be enjoyed as the weather improves.

To provide some facilities of interest to older children and adults an outdoor table tennis is being installed near to the extra seating and an inauguration is planned for later in the year. We have been lucky to secure a grant to cover the table and installation. Meanwhile the Jubilee Wood is becoming established and making good progress. It is good to see how the children who took part in the planting of this maintain their interest in watching it grow.

The Annual Parish Meeting at 8p.m. on 14th May in the Village Hall at which all residents are welcome will again provide an opportunity for members of the Parish to question your council on any aspect of their work and to make suggestions or raise other matters of local interest.

Despite the disappointing response level, less than 20%, to the last survey of local wishes we are continuing to examine alternative methods of public communication and consultation.

Information about the Parish can be found at the Parish Council web-site, www.wiggintonhertspc.org.uk, and the 2 official notice boards (by the Village Hall and Sports Field) but increased use of the internet seems a practical, rapid and economical way of communication compared with previous hand-distributed questionnaires.

The promised registration of key community assets (Village Hall, Church, Chapel and The Greyhound) has been satisfactorily completed. This ensures that any proposal to change the ownership or use of the assets will lead to an option for the Parish to delay any change giving the community time to develop a bid to buy the asset.

Steve Cannon - Chairman 2013/14

The Open Space

The Sports Field

The Jubilee Wood seems to be making good progress in becoming established and is clearly valued and respected especially by children as an additional play area.

The Parish Council continue to fund the maintenance of the football pitch and surrounding open areas. The pitch has been in regular use by Berkhamsted Raiders CFC and they want to use it again for the next season. Occasional use is still possible, especially outside the football season, and enquiries should be made to the Parish Clerk.

The Children's Play Area

Maintenance and safety inspections of the installed equipment accounts for a significant share of the Parish's spending but is rewarded by frequent use of the facilities with the youngest children supervised by their parents.

The Recreation Ground

The on-going maintenance programme for this central facility off Vicarage Road covers the chestnut trees lining the area and the goal posts and periodic grounds maintenance.

Footpaths

The exceptionally wet weather in recent months has highlighted the need for repair and maintenance to keep the paths usable and safe. Work is being planned for the Ridgeway path within the Parish to try to deal with excessive mud and financial help is being provided by the Parish Paths Partnership and Dacorum Borough Council.

.....Continued

**The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on
Wednesday 14th May at 8.00pm
in the Large Hall of the Village Hall.
We hope you will be able to attend.**

**The Annual Meeting of the Village Hall Management
Committee will take place in the Small Hall at 7.30pm
on the same day.**



The Wigginton Oddy – Spring 2014

The Annual Report of Your Parish Council

The Open Space..continued

Wigginton Poors Allotment Charity

These allotments are located to the left of Chesham Rd by the chicane. The plots are available to members of the community for gardening use at annual rentals starting at just £22 p.a. Interested applicants should contact Claire Crouchley on 01442-863781

Notice Boards

The main notice board by the Village Hall has been refurbished and strengthened and similar work is planned for the Notice Board by the entrance to the Playing Field for this Spring. Here people can see items of local interest and other information about Parish activities

Planning and Built Environment

The Parish Council is consulted on all applications to Dacorum Borough Council seeking planning permission within our area and seeks to support those proposals that are consistent with conserving our privileged physical environment giving reasons for objection to those that threaten to damage or impair it.

The government's attempts to simplify the planning process and support a presumption in favour "sustainable development" continue. The principles are incorporated in the National Planning Policy Framework(NPPF) under which each local planning authority is required to develop a plan for its area. In our case this involved a revision of the existing Local Plan in particular covering housing, business and infrastructural development.

Dacorum's Core Strategy covering the period until 2031 has now, following a review by a DCLG inspector, been adopted by Dacorum Borough Council in September 2013. In terms of Housing a total of 430 new units p.a. has been adopted mainly affecting the area East of Hemel Hempstead this, together with Berkhamsted and larger towns, covers the overwhelming majority of expected new housing. Wigginton, together with other small villages within the AONB is to continue to be subject to "development restraint". Here any new development is to be small scale and affordable. Existing green belt areas are also confirmed and the importance of conservation is endorsed.

Within these constraints the overwhelming majority of planning applications in our parish will continue to be for extension and renovation of existing property.

Your Council will continue to support proposals which improve the quality and amenity of existing properties, without significant environmental detriment, in conformity with the principles laid out in the Local Plan and the general approach recommended by Central Government of support for "sustainable development".

Planning and the Built Environment...continued

The Parish Council was consulted on thirty two planning applications during the past year (one of which was withdrawn by the applicant), compared to the twenty seven considered in the same period the previous year.

Many of the applications were in the "householder permission" category (FHA), to carry out work such as extensions, alterations or garages. The Parish Council either supported or made no objection to all such applications, eleven of which were subsequently granted, one was withdrawn by the applicant and the remainder are still under consideration by DBC at the time of writing.

Two applications supported by the Parish Council were of the type LDP (certificate of lawful use for development for proposed use or development i.e. where the applicant was asking DBC for a formal view on whether planning permission would be needed). DBC concluded that planning permission was not required for either of these. The Parish Council also supported an application for retention of fencing and gates already erected by the applicant; this was granted by DBC.

There were five applications for works to trees (TPO). The Parish Council's usual stance in these cases is to defer to the opinion of DBC's Woodlands Officer. Two of these applications were granted and two were refused, one is still under consideration.

Somewhat unusually there were seven applications involving fairly major works, erection of new structures or change of use. The Parish Council supported or made no comment on five of these, all of which were granted by DBC. Objection was made to a proposed demolition and construction of a new house, the outcome of which is as yet unknown. The Parish Council also objected to the construction of a completely new building on open countryside, planning permission for this was refused by DBC. (*see below*).

Occasionally proposals are received that seem designed to test the limits of this government recommended positive approach. One such application was considered in the past year proposing a new house on Geary's Hill in the centre of the village on open land claiming that as a "remote" property of revolutionary design and outstanding architectural merit, it should be permitted under new rules. Your Council and many residents objected and DBC eventually rejected this application as totally "inappropriate". The applicant may however appeal.

An alternative to Section 106 provision for affordable housing is being introduced by DCLG to obtain funding for infrastructural needs arising from new building via a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Of more likely impact on our planning work is a proposal, currently out for consultation to make conversion of existing farm buildings to residential use a Permitted Development not requiring separate planning permission.

Your Council seeks to support planning proposals that respect and recognise the need to conserve our privileged environment and remains vigilant to oppose any proposal that threatens this.

Transportation

Aircraft noise. The annual total number of flights remains well down on the 2008 peak, around 16% fewer, and we in the Tring/Wigginton area will be pleased to know that the proportion of Luton's departures passing overhead is now lower as a result of the growth of Eastern European carriers with their departures taking off to the east and, fortunately for us, keep on going.

Luton Airport.

The airport operator's planning application which suggested that flight numbers would increase by around 40% over 2008 numbers with all the environmental consequences that would bring, was nodded-through by Luton Borough councillors, the local Planning authority as well as the owners of the airport, just before Christmas. Now as the result of many requests from MPs and community pressure groups including your Council and the LLATVCC the DCLG has agreed that the application should be determined by the Planning Inspectorate after a full public inquiry. The operating company, now a partnership between AENA (a state-owned Spanish entity) and AXA may be finding itself in money-raising difficulties through another suspected hiccup in the Spanish government's scheme to privatise AENA.

Highways. Following public participation at our meeting in May on the subject of excess traffic speed through the village, a traffic survey was undertaken in July to establish a true record of road use. The survey lasted seven days and monitored traffic in both directions on Chesham Road at a point midway between the sports field and Wigginton Bottom. The data provided information on volume, speed and type of vehicle.

Traffic volume indicated, on average, about 2,500 movements daily, with fewer at the weekends. Over half were found to be exceeding the speed limit with a small number exceeding 56 mph. A report was sent to Hertfordshire CC and the local police who are stepping up speed monitoring in the village, as a result warnings and fines are being issued.

Herts County Council published a Speed Management Strategy draft in September for public consultation. This went into detail about 20 mph zones, where appropriate, and the subject of vehicle activated signs. The county's current policy however only contemplates funding of speed control signage in locations where fatal or serious injury accidents have already occurred.

Street lighting. The option to hand over street lighting to HCC was considered but we decided to retain control, although there seems to be a mix of ownership of the existing street lights throughout the Parish. The maintenance and energy costs for the lighting network is an area of significant expense for the Parish

Signage. Lack of maintenance and cleaning of roadside signs by HCC incensed two councillors who took it upon themselves to survey, clean and repair most of the Parish signage.

Widening. A stretch of road just below the sports field was slightly widened and a new curb was installed. Hedgerow encroachment along the pathways in the village has been a concern and landowners have been asked to trim back to allow easy access for pedestrians.

Bus 387. We attended the local bus users AGM in February where we were told by HCC officers that the 387 service is secure for the foreseeable future.


Rural Wheels 207 service. A new timetable for the weekly service to Hemel Hempstead starts on Friday April 4th. Pick up from the village is at 9.30, leaving Hemel at 12.00.

Problems with parking outside Tesco's entrance were raised and will be taken up with the store.

Police and Crime Report.

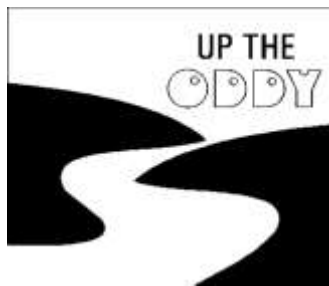
This report has been prepared by Lorraine Horsted, our Police Community Support Officer for Wigginton. Lorraine has been a PCSO for 9 years and has always worked in Tring. Lorraine is happy to be contacted: PCSO Lorraine Horsted 6641 lorraine.horsted@herts.pnn.police.uk Tring Police Station, 63 High Street, Tring, Herts, HP23 4AB Office: 01442 271 226.

In 2013 burglary rates for the village were 8, the same as in 2012. The church and the community centre were targeted a lot throughout 2013 and both covert operations (cameras, plain clothed patrols etc.) and overt operations (high visibility patrols and ANPR - Automatic Number Plate Reader - operations) were used by police to combat this. 2013 saw a rise in theft from vehicles from 4 to 6 compared with 2012. The main reason for this was that Smiths Coaches became a target for theft of fuel, as well as other items. They have now put in excellent security measures to combat this and, touch wood, all has been quiet since. Incidents of theft have reduced in 2013 to 8 when compared with 10 in 2012. There was no pattern or link to the theft. Reports ranged from theft of stable doors, to theft of coal from out-buildings and also theft of children's toys from gardens. Possession of cannabis, drink driving and assaults fall into the "Other" category which was reduced from 19 to 10 in 2013. These crimes although committed in Wigginton, did not necessarily affect the village or residents directly.

Following these five basic tips to combat burglary can really help to secure your home making it less appealing to thieves. THE TOP FIVE OPERATION GUARDIAN TIPS: 1. Make a habit of checking that ground floor windows and doors are closed and locked when you leave the house or go to bed. Upstairs windows should be locked when the house is unoccupied. PVCu doors must be locked by lifting the handle and using the key to ensure all the security features are in place. 2. Car and house keys should be kept out of sight in a safe place. Don't leave them on display on window sills, in porches, hallways or kitchens. 3. Secure your rear garden by shutting and locking any gates. Burglars can use garden tools to break in, so make sure you securely lock away any tools after use. 4. Why not be a good neighbour - if they are out, help deter burglars and give their home the lived-in look by putting away their emptied rubbish bins. You can also help by keeping a look out for unusual callers in your neighbourhood, and call the police if you see anyone acting suspiciously. Keep a pen and some paper handy. The car number you jot down may be just what the police need to catch a burglar. 5. Why not sign up to Neighbourhood Watch? Or sign up to: www.owl.co.uk, or call the police non-emergency number on  101. There is much more in-depth information on the police website about crime prevention, please visit www.herts.police.uk

The local Police team is aware of issues of speeding in the village and would like to reassure us all that they do take this matter seriously. As often as is possible they will be in the area with a laser gun or the Speed Indication Device (SID). There are outside factors that influence the use of both of these devices, weather and light being the main two. Rest assured that as the weather cheers up (NO MORE RAIN!!) and the day light hours get longer we will see more of the police in the village tackling this issue, especially at peak traffic times.

Lorraine will be at the Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 14th May at 8pm in the Village Hall and looks forward to meeting you all whilst on patrol, do say hello, and remember a cup of tea is always gratefully received!



The Wigginton Oddy

Spring 2014



Financial Matters

This piece is written before the end of our financial year (March 31st) and before the Parish Council accounts have been finalised. However Wigginton Parish Council's income figures are largely confirmed and the projected expenditure costs given here will be very close to actual year-end figures.

Copies of the unaudited accounts will be available at the Annual Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 14th May 2014. Once audited, the accounts will be displayed on the Parish notice board for 14 days and available to view for 20 days.

WPC has essentially three main components of income. Firstly a Concurrent Services Grant from Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) of £6,450, representing 36% of our budgeted income, which has been kept constant for the last 4 years. Secondly help from DBC towards the costs of our Village Warden (£638) and thirdly the monies we raise from the households in the village, the Precept (£8,945) which is 51% of our total income. This year we raised an additional £625 of unbudgeted income from use of the car park by Chiltern Hundred Cycle sportive group and of the football pitch by Berkhamsted Raiders CFC. Additionally we successfully applied for a Parish Paths Partnership grant of £1,000 for repairs to local footpaths. Therefore our income for the financial year ending 31st March 2014 will be £17,691.

Projected expenditure for the financial year ending March 31st 2014 is expected to come in at around £16,689 – approximately £370 below our budget for the year. Our expenditure on maintaining and improving our 'Open Spaces', particularly the sports field and recreation ground at £5,577 was our largest cost (33%). This includes a grant from WPC of £450 towards the cost of maintaining the Churchyard. The costs of Street Lighting in the village continue to rise and this year we expect to spend £2,446 which is nearly 15% of our total budget – WPC continue to review these costs on an ongoing basis for potential savings.

WPC earmarked money last financial year for picnic tables and benches which were installed near the sports field footpath this last summer. The Wigginton History Society Jubilee photo which we also supported is expected to be put up in the village hall shortly. Additionally we successfully applied for a grant from Dacorum Community Safety Partnership who, together with DBC, will fund an outdoor Table Tennis table for the Sports field. These tables were suggested in our recent parish survey and have been very successful in many London parks. Installation should take place in late Spring.

Work is underway to refurbish the steps leading to footpath 12 from Hemp Lane. The budgeted costs of £1,000 will be met from our Parish Paths Partnership grant. WPC has also repaired and refurbished the Parish Council notice board outside the Village Hall and is looking to replace the one at the entrance to the Sports field.

Other items of expenditure are expected to come in under budget, with a saving of over £260 in the combined costs of administration and audit, salaries, and the cost of the village warden.

The year-end reserves for end 2013/14 are expected to be boosted by modest savings achieved this financial year and are projected to be approximately £11,400 at year end, which represents 66% of our anticipated annual expenditure for next year. These have now been built back to a reasonable level after they were substantially depleted in 2011/12 by the £10,000 we had to put aside to demolish the vandalised pavilion.

The Parish Council has agreed an expenditure budget of £17,171 for the next financial year 2014/15. The combined salary, administration/audit and village warden budgets will be reduced for next year. The Open Spaces budget has also been decreased but is expected to remain our largest item of expenditure (36%). Street Lighting is the only 2014/15 budget showing a substantial increase over last year.

WPC have requested a Concurrent Services grant from DBC of £6,450 for the financial year 2014/15 and a contribution of £646 towards the village warden costs. We have agreed to set a Precept of £9,048 for 2014/15, which we estimate at this stage will represent an annual charge of £13.15 for an average 'Band D' property in the village.

Wigginton Parish Council 2013-2014

Chairman	Steve Cannon
Planning	David Davies
Budget and finance	Andrew Smith
Footpaths	Glen Adams
Leisure & Recreation	Steve Walker
Communication/Police Liaison	Debbie Meech
Education/health/highways	Mike Siveyer

(Responsibilities may be reallocated at the May meeting)

Parish Clerk Claire Crouchley (01442 863781)

email wpc@crouchleyp.freeserve.co.uk

Village Warden Mike Sear

----- Useful Links -----

Wigginton PC web site www.wiggintonhertspc.org.uk

Dacorum BC web site www.dacorum.gov.uk

Village Information: www.wiggintonvillage.co.uk

Wigginton Pools Allotment Charity - Enquiries about the Charity and the availability of allotments and related matters to Mrs Crouchley - see above.

Hardings Wood Charity manages almost six hectares of mixed woodland with an entrance off Crawleys Lane. The Charity's web site is www.hardingswood.org.uk.