

Compton & Shawford Parish Council Annual Review

April 2002

Chairman's Report

After the previous year of unprecedented activity and turmoil, this year has been relatively calm and orderly. Previous convenors stayed in post, apart from George Beckett who took over the Finance and Admin Committee. Regrettably Stuart Jennings had to resign in September. No election was called, so we co-opted Jude Vallis to the Council to represent the Martins Field/Atwoods Drove area, thereby filling the gap left by Ray Wilmshurst.

Notable events throughout the year have been:

- Bringing into use the new Children's playground on the Memorial Playing Fields
- Resubmission to the Lottery Board of a scaled down scheme for a replacement Pavilion on the Memorial Playing Fields. This has so far met with approval, a new planning permission has been gained and the next stage started
- The M3 Noise Campaign, aiming to speed up introduction of a quieter road surface
- Publication of a new Winchester District Local

Plan, change of planning rules and the contentious Urban Capacity Study

- A new code of conduct for Councillors. This is a government requirement throughout the country which is causing controversy notably over declaration of members' interests. If the declaration is not signed, and many elsewhere in the country say they will not sign, members will be legally barred from continuing as Councillors.
- Work is due to start on replacement of children's play equipment at the corner of Compton Street, as a result of an amazing £12,500.00 having been gained in grants.
- The National Audit Office audited last year's accounts without any queries, comments or suggestions for improvements for the next year. This is unprecedented and a tremendous achievement for our talented Clerk.

Clive Barham, our local policeman for seven years, left in June and has not been replaced. This area is served by various mobile officers based at Twyford Station.

There has still been no movement on three of the contentious planning issues outstanding from last year – Bushfield Camp, the Old Southdown School and Longacre. They have not gone away! With the

change of the planning goals, and the Government seeking to build ever more houses in existing built up areas, we have had the anomalous situation, twice now in our area, of an applicant hoping to build a new house on a garden plot being told that two houses are more likely to be approved than just one. With this in mind, **Steve Opacic**, Forward Planning Team Manager for Winchester City Council, and the Co-ordinator of the Urban Capacity Study has agreed to speak early at the Annual Parish Assembly, and outline the new planning policies at Winchester City Council. Come to hear his explanations and ask any questions.

All Councillors extend our grateful thanks for the hard and patient work done by Mike Langford, our Clerk. Now that he has got to grips with Local Government vagaries, he has transformed our office procedures, computerised virtually everything, and streamlined the way we

run our Council. His introduction of an accounting software package and complete understanding of it gives us up to date accounts, complete control over budgets and expenditure and absolutely no queries from the National Audit Office when all our books were presented for audit. We are so fortunate to have found such a dedicated and conscientious person who works far longer hours than he should on Parish business.

The next major event in the Parish will be the Jubilee Celebrations on the Memorial Playing Fields on Saturday 1 June 2002. These involve cricket, children's games etc, grand BBQ and Dance in a Marquee, and much more. Our thanks to Judy Harris and all the members of her organising committee. We hope that as many parishioners as possible will come and help make this a memorable event.

Nick Campbell-White

About this leaflet

We produced a review like this for distribution at the Annual Parish meetings in 1998, 1999 and 2000, but missed a year in 2001 while the new council was settling down.

In previous years all we had circulated were the minutes of the previous year's Annual Meeting - news that was by then up to two years old.

We received many favourable comments about this review so this year we are again circulating it to all households in the Parish with the agenda for the Annual Parish Assembly

Footpaths & Trees

A report by Tom Threlfall on his various Areas of responsibility

Footpaths - the Compton & Shawford (C&S) Parish Council has no budget for footpath maintenance, thus we have to rely entirely upon the benevolence of the Hampshire County Council (HCC), through the good offices of Mrs Liz Giles at the HCC's Netley office on 002380-455157. She tells me that her footpath repair kitty for the year to 5th April 02 is empty, having spent large sums on mending the Ichen Navigation Towpath, which is in Twyford parish. Thus some of C&S's paths are beginning to appear somewhat neglected, especially the track between Compton Lock and Compton Church via Goldfinch Cottage. Mrs Giles knows of these problems, anti they will be dealt with in due course, apparently. Local walkers David Ellis and Eric Seeley have been very helpful in telling me about fallen trees and blocked paths. The aim is to keep the paths open, rather than in mint condition.

Compton Lock - Twyford Meads, The Twyford Meads Scheme is what those little brick walls and wooden bridges

to the East of Compton Lock are all about. It is an attempt to reproduce, mainly for demonstration purposes, the mostly 18th c. irrigation scheme which helped to produce good grazing for the cattle and thus Milk for the population from April to October. The scheme is being officially opened by a posse of Civic Dignitaries at 11am on 7th September next. It had a testing run at 11am on 13th April. Funds for the project have been obtained from the Lottery Fund by the persuasive Ian Soulsby of Twyford Parish Council. I was asked to be the link-person between Twyford and C&S Parish Councils, mostly because I live more or less on top of that particular job.

Parish Boundaries - whilst attempting to determine into whose patch some parts of the scheme fell, a puzzle with the Shawford/Twyford parish boundary came to light, There is apparently same discrepancy about the boundary line between Compton Lock and St Cross, between the pre-1982 (and M3) OS map and the post 1994 map. Our tireless Parish Clerk Mike Langford is taking that matter up with the Ordnance Survey, but if anyone recalls why and when the boundary was moved (if it was) at around the time the M3 was planted, that information would help to settle a bet with Chris Corcoran (Twyford's chairman)

about which PC has responsibility for the west bank of Compton lock. The waggered sum of Fifty Pence hangs upon a convincing explanation, please.

Tree Warden. Locally, I am he. I know very little about arboriculture, but I do know whom to ask when problems arise. He is Mr Michael Edwards, the Arboricultural Officer at the City Council's Chesil Street office, 848177. He will advise on Tree Preservation Orders and the like. He has pointed out that the taking of a saw or an axe to a preserved tree could now cost the mad axeman a fine of up to £25K, and get him a criminal record. Mr Edwards is always knowledgeable and helpful on tree topics.

Sustrans and the National Cycle Network - have been very quiet so far this year. There is a plan to dedicate one third (one lane) of the road width of Otterbourne Hill to be a cycle-track. At a local meeting of the Winchester Cycle Forum our Councillor Jean Millar (who commutes to her school by bicycle) was voted Local Cyclist of the Year.

Shawford Telephone Box - after the excitement of having Victor Meldrew run over just outside the box, and possibly due in part to the television coverage of that event, a nocturnal attempt was made last autumn to remove the box by attaching a

rope around it and using a vehicle to pull it over. The box was reduced to a large, cast-iron and mostly red Airfix kit, much of which was then stolen. The ever-patient BT has replaced it, after being persuaded by Mrs Gillian Webster - whom we therefore have to thank for the fine replacement box which has since been installed and which works well at present.

Tourism - C&S now has a link-person to the Winchester City Tourist Information and Accommodation Services. I am he and suggest you try 840500 and ask for Allison Woods, who has all such local information at her fingertips and will help you to find amusement for those unexpected Aussie rellies for the day.

If you need further and better particulars about any of the above, please either ask now or ring 712608.



Parish Hall & CASCA

Mike Matthews writes

This has been the first full year free of the building works which

typified the village hall refurbishment and extension project.... although we are certainly not yet free of inquisitorial feedback forms from the organisations which helped fund

the work! Some of them fear that we have let Shawford Parish Hall go to rack and ruin already but I do my best to reassure them that it was money well spent and that the complex

is thriving. And indeed it is with an ever-expanding range of custom and a growing inventory of useful props. The provision of a colour brochure - mimicked on the Village Website - and word of

Highways, Byways & Environment

Members of the Committee are Celia Simmons, Martin Bell and Jude Vallis.

Celia Simmons writes:

We have had a very busy year with many topics taking our attention, in particular Bus-shelters, Notice boards, Street Lighting, Waste disposal and the Shepherds Lane junction with School Road.

Notice boards



Two new notice boards were put up in October 2001 at Shawford and in Southdown Road. Each area of our parish now has a new notice board.

All old notice boards have been renovated. The four lockable boards now have the same locks and a key is available from parish councillors.

Waste Disposal

We are continuing to monitor the waste injection into farmland. The problem of Foot and Mouth has led to a temporary cessation of this problem.

Bus-shelters

New ones provided by Winchester City Council have been well received this year, especially by the school children on rainy days. There has been no vandalism this year.

Shepherds Lane

Following concerns about the Shepherds Lane junction with School Road, measures will be taken to improve the safety situation. However, this will not include

a change of priority. We are currently speaking with the Highways Engineers to decide what these safety measures will be.

M3 Noise

The members of the Committee are Ann Bailey (County Councillor), Charlotte Bailey (City Councillor), Celia Simmons (Compton & Shawford Parish Council) and Peter Walford (Otterbourne Parish Council).

We have been working as a co-operative with Otterbourne Parish Council. We meet on a regular basis and have had two very productive meetings with our MP Mark Oaten. Our first public meeting, held on November 8th 2001, showed a true reflection of the

concern of local parishioners with more than 350 people attending and many more not able to get in. Our thanks to Otterbourne Village Hall Committee for hosting this meeting.

The parish councils have funded newsletters, where we were able to give answers to the questions raised at the



meeting. The newsletter was delivered to every household. We would like to remind everyone to keep writing to the Minister of Transport. We'll keep you informed of future developments.

CASCA (cont)

mouth seem at the moment to be enough to attract new hirers. Income from lettings is now regularly exceeding general running costs and providing enough both to put money aside for long term maintenance and to cover one or two unanticipated major repair jobs such as the installation of a cooker hood in the kitchen be-

fore our super-efficient cooker finished cooking all the cupboard units. Currently the Caretaker's cottage has priority for maintenance since it was not included in the main project and urgently needs attention. CASCA has enjoyed sponsoring two significant cultural evenings in the Shawford Hall during the year: the visit last Summer by the Bartlett High School Choir from Illinois and Proteus Theatre's '3 Musket-

eers' in January. There is great potential for hosting more such events thanks to the versatility of the portable staging and sound and lighting systems.

Away from the Hall CASCA has helped with fund raising for new Playground equipment and lent a hand running the combined Church and School Fete during the year.



Playing Fields



Mary Shaw writes:

The highlight of the year was the completion of the Children's Play Area on the Memorial Playing Field. It has been a great success and enjoyed by Children, Parents and Grandparents.

Having completed Phase 1 of the overall project, we then set to work on funding Phase 2, this to be located in the Compton Village Play Area. Happily, funds are now in place. I would like to thank Mike Langford who has been very supportive to me in "getting there".

After consultation with local families as to the content of the Compton Village Play Area, work on this Phase 2 will start in April/May, thereby keeping my promise, which I made at the Annual Parish Meeting last year.

The Playing Fields are looking good. We

have an excellent contractor who cuts the grass fortnightly throughout the season.

The rough areas on the northern boundary of the Memorial Playing Field have been cleared and are being re-seeded.

The Millennium Trees planted last year are flourishing on both the Memorial Playing Field and the School Field.

The acquisition by the Council of Dog Bins at the Memorial Playing Field has been of im-



mense benefit to the Parish and particularly the Sports Club. When, as a result of the Foot and Mouth outbreak, all the footpaths were closed, many people exercised their dogs on the field. The result was that the Dog Bins were extensively used.

At the Compton Village Play Area, the boundaries are being cleared - this is long overdue. We plan to fill in the holes and re-turf the "goal mouths" as the local boys really enjoy their football.

A request has been made for a "Basket Ball" facility. We are following this up and will need to raise funds for this project.

All the benches in the Playing Fields are to be painted this year.

The two existing Tennis Courts are to be resurfaced this year - this will raise their height by 9 to 12 inches. The Tennis Club proposes to landscape the boundaries of the adjacent resident's gardens. The position of the proposed third Tennis Court has been marked out. Eventual landscaping of this together with the question of drainage is being monitored to protect the neighbours.

The Cricket Club has asked for practice cricket nets to be established. A location for these, on the Memorial Playing Field, has yet to be agreed.

New Pavilion Project

Adrian Walmsley writes:

Thanks to Paul Murray and his committee great progress has been made this year. If all goes well we should have celebrated the opening of the new pavilion before next year's Annual Assembly.

Background: Two years ago, when this review was last published, the previous Parish Council had almost completed preparation of a lottery grant application for a pavilion, car park and tennis court. The project costs were then estimated at £365,000 of which we would have been looking to Sport England for about £221,500. The Parish Council had committed £88,000 to that project, of which about £14,000 had already been spent.

Bearing in mind the number of people who voted at the May 2000 council elections for a smaller project, the new Parish Council decided to re-evaluate the whole scheme.

New Scheme: After a number of public sub-committee meetings a consensus emerged for a smaller, block built, timber-clad building on the eastern boundary of the field with the car park on the "Reclaimed Land". We are extremely grateful to Paul Murray who agreed to chair an all-party committee, under the auspices of the Parish Council, to see the newly agreed design through to completion.

Costs: As we were given to understand that our chances of a successful lottery application would be increased if we kept our request below £100,000, the committee decided to ask Sport England for £90,000. The Parish Council voted unanimously to contribute £100,000 to the new project out of overall costs estimated initially at £230,000. The new scheme excludes the costs of the new tennis court. It



omits the upper room, which would have provided scope for snooker, table tennis, and a tea/meeting room. The equipment store, which would have been underneath the changing rooms, will now be a separate prefabricated building about the size of a triple garage.

This time last year, Paul Murray reported that the lottery application had just been submitted. In July 2001 we were given the green light by Sport England to proceed to the next stage. Since then, Paul's committee has been working through an action plan drawn up by Sport England.

Updated project estimates received in December 2001 showed an increase to £271,500. As some of the increase was due to design changes requested by Sport England, we are hoping that Sport England will meet most of the extra sum required. This leaves about £18,000 to be raised by Paul's committee. Thanks to the generosity of local people we are almost there. **Current Status:** We have just

heard that our planning application has been passed although at the time of writing a legal agreement still has to be signed. The next stage is to prepare the detailed design documents and obtain quotes from builders. Only when the quotes are in will we be sure of the costings. At that point we will look to Sport England to confirm the grant. Because of the procedure changes required by Sport England, our target of having the building complete by October 2002 is a little tight, but we are still on track to complete soon after that.

The whole village owes a vote of thanks to Paul Murray and his committee for all their hard work on the project and the fundraising, to Bill Everton our project manager, and to Ken Staunton and his team much of whose work on the earlier document was carried through into the final lottery application.

Watch the Parish Magazine for regular status reports.

The Parish Magazine

The Parish Magazine is a church publication - published by the Parochial Church Council.

As many of you may already know, rather than publish a sep-

arate Parish Council newsletter, the Parish Council makes a financial contribution to the Parish Magazine in return for which the magazine carries reports of Parish Council meetings as well as other information of public interest from the Parish Council and

Planning

Jean Millar writes

Our committee for the last year has remained the same...Mary Shaw, Tom Threlfall and myself. We were helped with planning policy developments by Martin Bell, George Beckett and Nick Campbell-White and have worked with City Cllr Charlotte Bailey both on the emerging Plan and on site visits.

There have been 44 applications since April 2001 including 8 tree applications and 6 for telephone communication masts. A total of 7 were refused - including the "change of use from residential to private medicine" for the Mission Hall.

Redevelopment of The Malms is still under discussion with WCC since the developer found major problems with foundations and the roof indicating that just altering the building would be extremely difficult.

A new system of record keeping for all the planning applications and decisions coming to the Parish Council has been instigated by our excellent clerk. Thank you Mike. It will now be easy to extract information from this electronic file.

A list of planning applications and decisions can be found on the City Council's web site at <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/applications/>

Aware that WCC are efficiently alerting all neighbouring properties whenever an application is submitted your Parish Council has discontinued doing so. We try to make sure the residents association in that area is aware, particularly when anything contentious is raised.

We must all continue to show keen interest in the Urban District Study which has caused much debate already.

The WCC handling of the application to develop the site behind "Highdown" will give us an insight into how the document will be used.

The PC sent in objection again- as happened for all previous applications - but have received acknowledgement of it pointing out "With regard to sites that have previously been refused permission and possibly had appeals dismissed, you need to realise that there has been a major shift in Government policy in the last two years, prompted by PPG3. The Local Plan and the Urban Capacity Study seek to respond to these changes. Therefore, the policies against which a previous application/appeal may have been refused or dismissed may no longer be relevant."

other bodies.

If you are not receiving a copy and would like to - contact Barry Nicholson on 712201. The annual subscription is £5.

We are very grateful to the editor, Veronica Bliss, who has taken over so ably from Mike Eyre and built upon the already

excellent quality publication which Mike had established.

Please remember that the editorship, like so many other community activities, is a voluntary task, and try to make her job easier by submitting your contributions in good time.



Public sessions at Council meetings

Our Parish Council meetings - first Tuesdays at 7:15pm - are open to public attendance, as they have to be by law.

Although the law does not give the public the right to speak, we decided in 1998 to have a formal public question session near the start of every meeting.

If you want to ask for any subject to be placed on the agenda, please give at least a week's notice.

Council committee meetings are now also held in public. Watch the noticeboards for times and dates or talk to the committee convenor. The convenors' names will be published in the Parish Magazine after the May Parish Council meeting at which all committees have to be reappointed.

Council reports

Minutes of meetings, as most other Council paperwork, are public documents and open to inspection by arrangement with the clerk.

We publish summaries of all our meetings in the Parish Magazine, the Hampshire Chronicle and on our web pages at <http://compton.parish.hants.gov.uk> or <http://shawford.parish.hants.gov.uk>

Finance convenor's report

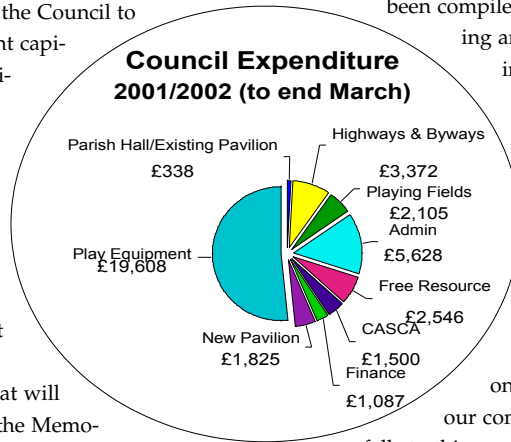
George Beckett writes:

The Council continues to operate its budget on a tightly controlled basis, allowing us to provide our services at a modest cost to residents while being able, through many years of similar care, to commit the Council to a significant capital expenditure in the Jubilee Pavilion Project. Indeed, oversight of this project and the changes that will follow on the Memorial Playing Fields has been a major part of this committee's work during the last year. Negotiating fair and workable agreements with the Sports Club and Tennis Club so that the new facilities are properly maintained and well used, along with a desire to obtain a fair financial return for the Parish property, has led to some long and sometimes heated discussion. The Parish Council, through this committee, is also careful to balance the needs of the field users against the quite proper concerns of neighbouring residents.

As the 'administration' committee we have made some changes in the running of parish council meetings in an effort to make them more

'public friendly'. Hopefully, parishioners attending meetings will have noticed an improvement in atmosphere.

With the able and willing assistance of the Parish Clerk, an 'Asset Register' has, for the first time,

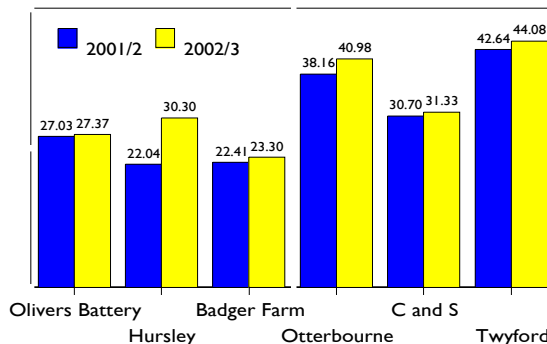


been compiled recording and collating with the deeds all property held by the Council on behalf of our community. It falls to this committee to

deal with the seemingly endless stream of directives, instructions, rules, guidance and advice coming from Central Government. Most significant of these has been the new members' code of conduct. The council formally adopted the code on 2nd April and members must now make written public declarations of interests. This imposition may make it more difficult in future to find volunteers for this unpaid local service, which is a shame.

This year's budget resulted in a precept increase of approximately 2% for 2002/2003, bringing a Band D property charge of £31.33.

Precept per Band D property



Parish Council Powers

The 1997 Local Government & Rating Act gives Parish Councils powers to organise or contribute to car pooling schemes, local transport, traffic calming and crime enforcement.

This is over and above the powers granted under Section 137 of the 1972 Local Government Act under which a local council can spend in any one financial year up to £3.50 per elector on anything for which it has no express power, provided that the expenditure is for the direct benefit of the parish, or some or all of its inhabitants.

The full list of council powers is summarised on the Parish Council web site.

In a December 2001 white paper entitled "Strong Local Leadership - Quality Public Services" (see <http://www.local-regions.detr.gov.uk/sll/>) the government announced its intention to increase the £3.50 expenditure limit (which has been unchanged for years) to £5, indexed annually. The white paper also proposes to remove the "double taxation" element where, for example, a parish council undertakes street lighting expenditure although the city (or county) council is already collecting council tax for the same purpose. There is no indication when this legislation will be enacted.

Published by
Compton & Shawford Parish Council
1 Meadowcroft Close,
Otterbourne, Winchester,
Hampshire SO21 2HD
Mike Langford, Clerk
Prepared for the Annual Parish Assembly
24 April 2002