
Compton & Shawford Parish Council

Annual Review

April 2007

Chairman's Report

The purpose of the Annual Review is to provide parishioners with an overview of issues affecting our parish and a review of the activities of the Parish Council over the last 12 months. I highlight the increasingly important role of Parish Councils, which is involving us in consultation with other areas of local, regional and national government.

Increased role of the Parish Council in public consultation

In October 2006, the government published the Local Government White Paper, a policy statement for proposed legislation with impacts for Parish Councils. This policy gives greater emphasis to the role that Parish Councils may play in "delivering better services

and representing the community's interests". We are already being asked to reply to consultation documents on various issues which affect the parish.

You may ask whether this "consultation" process is a "one way street". Is there a risk that the views expressed by consultees such as ourselves will be ignored? There are increasing signs that this is not the case:

- The criteria for permitting "back land" development in the final version of the Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006 reflect the views submitted by the Parish Council during the consultation process.
- The Parish Council was also consulted on the development of the South Winchester Park & Ride Scheme. Although we were initially presented with a "fait accompli" with the choice of the Bushfield Farm site, the public consultation process has since persuaded Hampshire County Council to go ahead with the Itchen Farm (Tarmac) site, between the Otterbourne Road and the M3 motorway.

Feedback from the Parish and the Parish Plan/Village Design Statement

Feedback and direction from parishioners are important and essential elements of an effective consultation process for the Parish Council. All too often this feedback is limited to contentious matters such as individual planning applications that have an immediate impact on a minority in the parish.

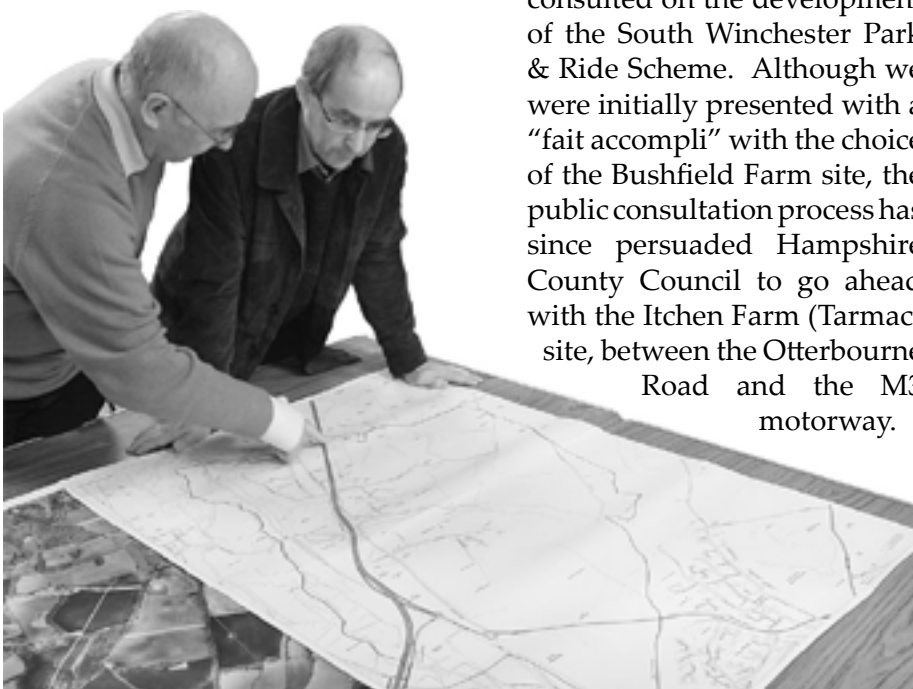
I am therefore delighted that the Parish Plan and Village Design Statement project has been launched in the last 12 months under the leadership of Dr. Peter Betts. This project is an independent exercise involving a detailed consultation with all parishioners on all aspects of the parish, including the facilities and services provided and the environment within the parish.

The output from the VDS project, once adopted, will help influence decisions by Winchester City Council on planning applications affecting the parish.

The Parish Plan will be a chance for people living here to let the Parish Council know what you would like us to focus on, and to help us set priorities for running the parish and doing what we can to provide new facilities.

Please take the trouble to find out about the Parish Plan and Village Design Statement projects

continued overleaf



by reading the leaflets that will be distributed and by coming to any workshops or any more Open Days that are arranged. The Parish Plan/Village Design Statement Committees still need helpers, so, if you have time, Peter Betts or Terry Wilson would love you to get involved. When the Parish Plan questionnaires are circulated later this year, please take the trouble to fill them in carefully. Everyone's views count: you can make a difference.

Dr Peter Betts and Councillor Keith Wood, the portfolio holder for Planning and Transport at Winchester City Council, will be our guest speakers at the Annual Parish Assembly on 25th April. Peter will tell us about progress on the Parish Plan and Village Design Statement, and we hope that Keith can explain how these projects can complement and influence planning decisions made by WCC affecting us.

The costs of maintaining a parish council

The increasing consultations and responsibilities of a parish council are costing more time and money, especially for smaller councils such as us.

The costs of the Parish Council and the services we provide are met by a precept which is part of your council tax bill. For 2007/8, the Parish Council receives £22.67-£68.00 per household – a reduction of 1.6% compared with 2006/07. The proportion of this

which goes on administrative costs continues to rise.

New Parish Councillors wanted

In May 2008, all nine seats on our Parish Council will be up for election. Several of the present councillors, after years of long and sterling service to our community, have said that they will not be standing again.

The continued success of the Parish Council in representing the interests of the community depends on:

- The Parish Council continuing to provide "value for money"; and
- The willingness of parishioners to serve as Parish Councillors.

I would be delighted to hear from anyone who is interested in finding out more about what the Parish Council does and what's involved in being a Parish Councillor. Please get in touch with the parish clerk or me, or talk to one of the other councillors.

On your behalf, I would like to thank all of my fellow councillors and other members of the



Magic at the Open Days

community who have supported the work of the Parish Council over the last 12 months.

Finally, I look forward to welcoming you to the Annual Parish Assembly on April 25th at 7.30 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

*Jeremy Dolphin, Chairman
Compton & Shawford Parish Council*

Do you take the Parish Magazine?

It's your best source of information about events run by local clubs, societies, the church and the Parish Council.

Contact Barry Nicholson on 712201 to arrange a subscription (£6 a year).

Parish Council Powers

The 1997 Local Government & Rating Act gave Parish Councils powers to organise or contribute to car pooling schemes, local transport, traffic calming and crime enforcement. Currently we cannot reclaim money from the City or County Councils when we organise such

schemes for ourselves rather than asking them to do it.

The full list of council powers is summarised on the Parish Council web site. It covers playing fields, lighting, villages halls, burial grounds, as well as historic powers such as provision of public wash houses.

This is over and above the powers

granted under Section 137 of the 1972 Local Government Act which allowed a local council to spend in any one financial year up to £3.50 (£5.64 for 2007/8) 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.

Highways and Byways

This committee has yet again dealt with a multiplicity of issues during the last 12 months.

Spring Clean will happen during the week of the Parish Assembly, and it is hoped that we will have another good result.



Victoria Jubilee Memorial

The restoration of the Victorian Memorial is now complete, and we have arranged for the surrounding area to be maintained by a gardener for the moment, until there is a consensus regarding the final solution. In addition, all of the notice boards and benches have been renovated. The annual

Shawford Down

Shawford Down may well have its horned visitors by the time you read this report. I am assured that the fences will eventually be screened by growth from behind and below. The number of access gates is very satisfactory. There was a small encampment by travellers during the year, who grazed their horses at the bottom of the down. It must be said that they left no mess behind at all, when they went, except a ring of scorched turf, and some tyre tracks. Would that all the other visitors who come to the area treated it with such respect.

Manure

I have had to write many reports on the subject of manure of different kinds during the year, from both horse and dog. We have purchased dog notices for various resident associations, for them to use where appropriate, and have had occasion to erect our own notice along what became known to the school children as horse-



poo alley! This is the pathway from Hurdle way to Compton Street – much used by the children and also by horse riders. If the riders stick to the verges there is no conflict of interest, but unfortunately, some have taken to riding illegally down the footpath, with



the expected result. This creates real problems for the Mums and children, and I would like to use this space to ask the riders, who are locals, to be more considerate. It costs money to have this path cleaned to enable its use by the children.

Vandalism

I am sorry to report an increase of petty vandalism in the parish over this last year, involving spray cans, breakages, fire, and damage to one of our war memorials. As we have reported in the parish magazine, the Parish Council has a zero tolerance of vandalism, and will report anyone to the police if they are caught in the act.

Roads

We have two areas of difficulty remaining, as far as roadways are concerned. One is the entrance to the Malms Road, which has been badly damaged by heavy vehicles, during the building of the flats, and the other is the lack of cycle paths on the approach to the Bushfield Roundabout. However, I am assured that this issue will be dealt with when the Park and Ride proposals are finalised. We will keep on about it.

*Tricia Caffyn
Convenor*

Playing Fields



The play equipment in both play areas remains in excellent condition and continues to give enjoyment to the children. It is inspected every year by the local authority to check safety standards. All the benches have been cleaned and treated with preservative. The boundaries have been cleared and the trees crown lifted.

Memorial playing fields. The old

entrance has been fenced off and the area around the third tennis court landscaped. The area to the north of the machine shed has been reclaimed giving another grass area for games.

My thanks to Jim Kimber our groundsman who keeps our playing fields looking great.

The village playground is used daily by the playgroup.

I await new ideas from the Village Plan project to improve the play and sporting facilities in the village. We do have £60,000 in the open space fund which will help us achieve new ideas.

Mary Shaw

Playing Fields Committee Convenor

Parish Hall

The Hall has had another good year with no major problems; letting income has been very good and the demand for the Hall from both outside and within the village has been strong.

We expect to generate a reasonable surplus to cover the usual maintenance costs and possibly allow a small surplus to be put to reserves. A report on the long term funding needs of the Hall was commissioned last year and this indicates the financial requirements to adequately fund the long term maintenance needs of the Hall.

This does require a healthy surplus to be built up to allow for these funding needs.

John Griffith

CASCA Chairman

When I first joined the Parish Council some 12 years ago I was tasked with minding the Parish's network of footpaths. Since then various other homeless waifs such as Compton Lock, Tree Warden, and Tourism have joined my portfolio.

There is a small annual budget for that portfolio, but that has never yet had to be tapped, since it is always possible to persuade some more copiously funded department of the City or County councils to take over major expenditures and then take the credit for their successful conclusion.

A recent example was the large tree which fell into Compton Lock last February, on our side of the parish boundary unfortunately. The well-funded Department of the Environment (whose responsibility includes the Itchen Navigation) kindly offered to

TREES AND FOOTPATHS

Being Tom Threlfall's report for the 2007 Compton & Shawford Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting

manage that problem and has tidied the smaller parts of the tree, but is still deciding what to do with the heavier bits.

To do nothing seems to be the favoured option; the tree does not obstruct traffic on the Navigation, since there is no such traffic, so the DOE obviously feels no great urgency expensively to clear it for solely aesthetic reasons

On the Tree Warden front it is my habit when there are problems to enlist the help of the City Council's Arboricultural Officer Michael Edwards, particularly in matters which concern the law or inter-neighbour relations, since Michael seems to know his stuff in these areas. The law is also important in the proposal to

graze highland cattle on Shawford Down. Keeping the cattle grazing on the parts of the Down which need it may well require the use of fences, but the fencing of public open spaces requires an

act of Parliament, which may be expensive to obtain. One can see possible £-problems in this area.

The Tourism side is covered by the City Council's frequent leafletting on local attractions, and local households keen to join the Bed & Breakfast round seem to manage to get themselves into the relevant guidebooks without significant help from the Parish Council. I see that in the coming year I am bound for the "Facilities Management Committee", and look forward to the new challenges which that may offer, whatever the title may mean.

*Tom Threlfall, Hollowforth
Bridge Lane, tel. 712608.*

Your Parish Plan

After the Parish Council Annual Assembly in April 2006, a Parish Plan Committee was established after a Public meeting in May. There are 14 members of the committee, including two Parish Councillors, representing all quarters of the Parish. We have started consulting widely within the Parish and plan to publish our Parish Plan and Village Design Statement in 2008.

The Parish Plan will cover the demographics of our population and their views on the present facilities for sport and leisure, village amenities and transport, local law and order and the environment, issues about Parish communication and local businesses, health and community services, and the needs of children and young people.

Questionnaire

Every household will be invited to express their views of the present situation and give ideas on how the Parish might develop over the next decade.

Monthly meetings have been held to work on a questionnaire to be delivered later this year to all households in the Parish. We also gave a presentation at the CASCA Village Christmas party

Open Days

We held two Open Days in March this year in the Scout Hut and Parish Hall. 143 parishioners came and gave us lots of comments and feedback (see box for a partial summary) which we will use in creating the questionnaire to be sent later to all households.

The final Parish Plan document will guide the policies of the Parish Council in the coming years and will sit alongside the Village Design Statement.

Peter Betts

Village Design Statement

The Village Design Statement (VDS) is an advisory document setting out clear and simple guidance for the design of all the development in the parish, based on our local character and distinctiveness. It will not prevent change, but it can help to ensure that new development is in harmony with the setting and makes a contribution to the immediate environment.

It will be developed so that the final edition can be accepted by Winchester City Council as a supplementary planning document. This means that the VDS will have to be consulted when any development or buildings are proposed in the parish. It therefore becomes an important document in the planning process.

It must be demonstrated that the VDS is developed, researched, written and edited by local people. It must reflect the representative view of the parish by the involvement of a wide cross section of residents. It will describe our visual character and desirable features.

A VDS sub committee has been formed, which sits alongside the Parish Plan Committee. As our parish is relatively complex, it is intended to create four broad divisions i.e. Compton Village, Shawford, Compton Down

and Southdown. There are also outlying areas which need to be included in the plan. We have team leaders for each division but we need volunteers to help produce the information for each section, which involves reviewing the parish to capture its character and distinctive features. We'll also need photographs as a record of key features.

Following the open days held in March, we plan to hold two workshops led by Phil Turner of Planning Aid South, to outline the next steps. Phil has considerable experience of helping people produce Village Design Statements and will show us what we need to do. He will then help us developing the information we need and guide us towards the final document for submission to Winchester City Council.

Subject to confirmation, we plan to hold the workshops in the village on May 19th and June 23rd 2007. The outline plan is to complete the draft VDS by December 2007, with adoption following consultation and representations in July 2008.

Terry Wilson

Open Day feedback

Likes

rural nature,
friendship and community spirit,
low density housing,
good transport access,

Dislikes

motorway noise,
inappropriate infilling,
parking chaos
speeding on our side roads
and Otterbourne Road.

Improvements needed

a shop, possibly a mobile or farm shop,
control of housing development,
parking arrangements
traffic calming.

Your VDS needs you. It must be produced by a wide cross section of people. Please contact the VDS subcommittee to volunteer your help. Contacts are:

Terry Wilson – Chairman VDS sub committee - 714451
Richard Skipper, Southdown – 713179
Hilary Carter, Compton Down – 712119
Simon Theobalds, Shawford – 712801
Carol Chaplin-Rogers, Southdown – 712084

Planning

A year ago, the government's Planning Policy Guidance PPG3, was still in force, with its blanket requirement for 30 dwellings per hectare (dph). In old money, that's 12 dwellings per acre.

PPS3

In December 2006, PPG3 was replaced by Planning Policy Statement PPS3, which allows local planning authorities - in our case the City Council - to set different density targets for different character areas, although the overall average density still has to work out at 30 dph.

Thanks to PPS3 and possibly also to a change in guidance to planning officers as a result of the change in leadership of the City Council following the May 2006 elections, people who want to put a house in their garden are no longer being leant on by the planners to cram as many onto their plot as possible.

New Local Plan

The new local plan was formally adopted by the City Council in July 2006. In it, Compton Down and Southdown are designated as H3 policy areas; the rest of our parish falls under the heading of "villages and settlements in the designated countryside outside the settlement policy boundaries of Policy H.3" for which Policy H.4 recognises that "there may be some scope for limited infilling."

Compton Street was designated a Conservation Area in 1989 but this did not prevent the highly out of character development at



Parish Council Planning Policy

The parish council accepts the inevitability of modest development in our parish along the lines described in the Urban Capacity Study.

The council will strive to obtain the maximum positive influence with the planning bodies over the longer term.

To this end the council should adopt a reasoned and consistent policy towards new developments.

Within those constraints the parish council will specifically oppose developments that do not reflect and preserve the character of the area.

We also recognise that we are a low sustainability area with minimal infrastructure.

The parish council will oppose any increases to the current policy boundaries within the parish.

Beechcroft (above).

Statement of Community Involvement

The Government's Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all Local Planning Authorities to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), to set out how they will involve their community in the new local plan process, called the Local Development Framework, which will replace existing Local Plans. Winchester City Council adopted its SCI in January 2007.

Are you planning an extension to your property, or a new building in your garden? Under the SCI, you are expected to consult with your neighbours before submitting your application.

Compton Down Local Area Design Statement

The LADS, as revised following public consultation, was adopted by WCC at their cabinet meeting on 17 January as a Supplementary Planning Document. The version on the

WCC website is unfortunately still the consultation draft.

On the web

Most of the documents referenced here can be found on the City Council's website fairly easily. Look for PPS3 on the website of DCLG, the successor to ODPM.

The City Council publishes a weekly list of planning applications on its website. Although it is not required to do so, the City Council also writes "neighbour notification" letters to residents.

In connection with the Four Dell Farm concrete crusher, we discovered that a radius of 50m is used for such notifications, not nearly enough in this case.

We are thinking about email communication with interested parishioners: would it help to be notified about planning applications by email?

*Adrian Walmsley
Vice Chairman & Planning Convenor*





Major developments in 2006/7

Compton Down

The cut-off point, based on earlier appeal decisions related to sub-standard junctions with the main road, was reached. Subsequent planning applications for new dwellings are being rejected on traffic grounds. This will be tested at the appeal over the Erdely decision.

Compton Street

Permission was granted for demolition of Martins Close house and replacement with 2 large detached houses

and two semis, despite representations about sustainability and traffic.

Construction traffic at Beechcroft has disrupted the school and bus services.

Shawford

Permission granted for a 5 bed house in the garden of Red Lane House: the first development on "the island" for some years.

The self-storage facility near the station is now in operation.

Littlestowe, Southdown Road

Permission was granted for two detached and two semis in addition to the existing house; new access onto

Otterbourne Road.

Otterbourne Road

Infilling continues with the huf-type house and new application for a pair of semis at 4 The Dell.

Ballakitch, Highways Road

Decision is pending on replacement of Ballakitch (near Charwood Vale - above) with a terrace of four dwellings.

Four Dell Farm

The application for a concrete recycling facility raises serious concerns about countryside policy, noise, traffic, visual amenity and atmospheric pollution.

Planning: lessons learned

You need facts

If individuals or the Parish Council wish to support, or object to, a planning application, they should quote specific planning policy in support of their arguments. The members of the WCC planning committee know that if they reject an application without valid policy reasons, they are likely to lose an appeal and have costs awarded against them. Such costs feed back into our Council Tax bills.

Numbers also help

Some planning matters come down to opinion: for example whether a certain development is "in character" or not. In such cases it helps to back up our arguments with a good turnout of affected neighbours at the WCC Development Control Committee meeting.

Hardly any locals turned up at the December 2004 DCC meeting to determine Beechcroft. The then Mayor, who was on the committee, said that she thought the development would positively enhance Compton Street. The application was permitted and we are left with what almost everyone agrees is an eyesore.

Actions can backfire

Local protests may have contributed to the rejection of the initial application at Longacre for 3 dwellings. If we hadn't been saved by the traffic issue, there could now be 17 dwellings on the site. Invocation of Planning Enforcement Officers at Longacre a year ago resulted in an extra dwelling on the site.

In an attempt to oppose the addition of two large detached houses and a pair of semis at Littlestowe, inadequate sight lines were cited. To improve the sight lines, the roadside hedges had to be trimmed so severely as to cause a loss of privacy to a neighbouring property; the application was permitted anyway.

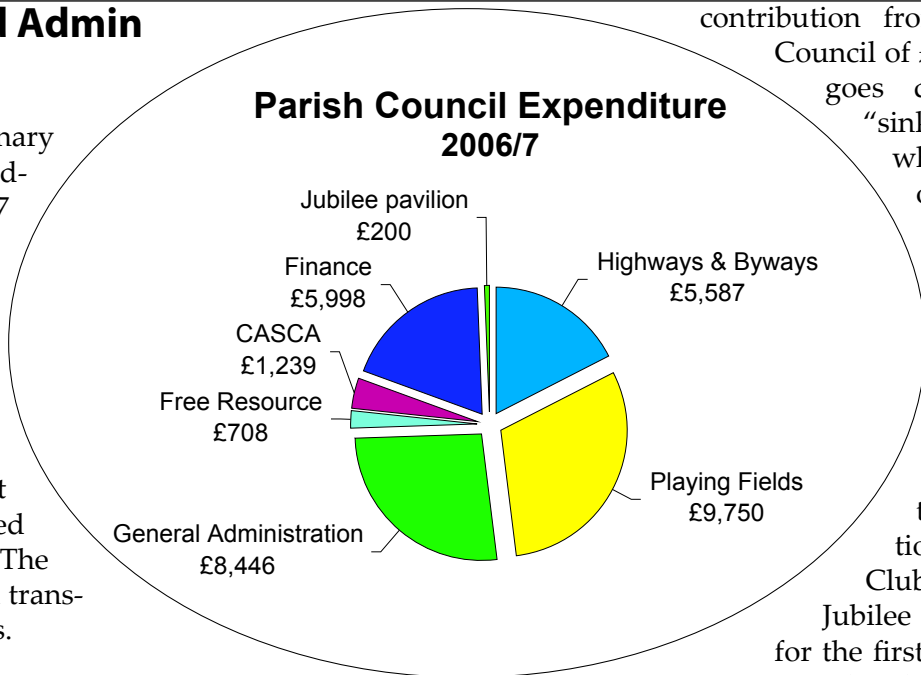
The Development Control Committee can make surprising decisions

At their meeting on 5 October 2006, the DCC permitted an application for a development of 14 dwellings on the site of the former Royal Observer Corps HQ in Winchester.

Despite English Heritage saying that the derelict ROC building was beyond repair, the DCC refused permission to demolish it, which made the development impossible.

Finance and Admin Committee

The preliminary figures for expenditure in 2006-07 are shown in the pie chart. There was a surplus, principally due to some delays in completing budgeted items, and projects that were completed below budget. The surplus has been transferred to reserves.



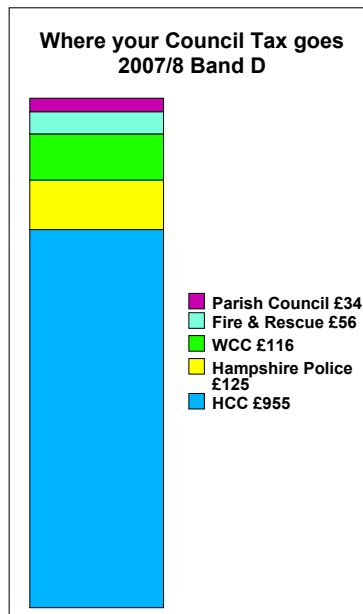
contribution from the Parish Council of £1000pa which goes directly to a "sinking fund" which may only be used for major repairs to the building. As CASCA prospers, there should be scope for reducing this contribution. The Sports Club lease the Jubilee Pavilion and for the first 5 years (since

For next year, we have budgeted for a small increase in total expenditure (1.9%), but because of the increase in the number of dwellings in the Parish, this actually means a reduction of 1.6% in our part of your Council Tax bill.

It is our aim eventually to reach a "cost neutral" position with respect to the running and maintenance of our 2 major assets (the Parish Hall and the Jubilee Pavilion). CASCA administer the Parish Hall and currently receive a

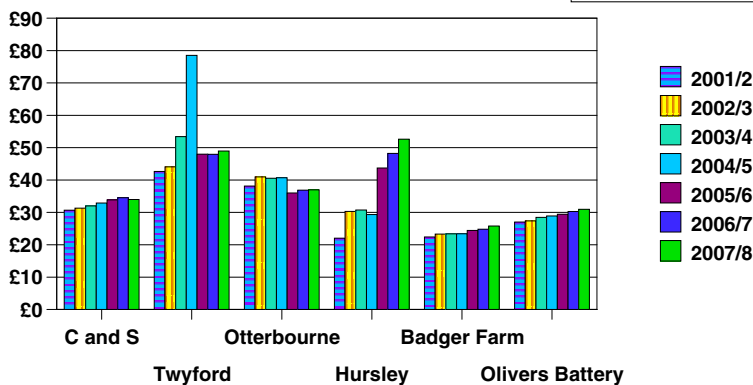
Jan 2003), they have the benefit of the payment of a nominal amount for the lease while they are building-up the facilities and bar trade. We are currently determining the long-term requirements for a sinking fund to cover the cost of potential future maintenance and repairs.

We are making progress, although somewhat slowly, with the registration of land owned by the Parish. The rightful ownership of some small areas of land has been difficult to establish but it is hoped that the registration process will be achieved during the course of next year.



Our procedures have been reviewed with respect to the Freedom of Information Act, the Financial Regulations (to be followed by Parish Councillors) and the Fire Regulations (applicable to the Parish Hall and the Jubilee Pavilion). Also,

Precept per Band D property vs our neighbours since 2001



for next year, our Organisational Structure has been revised to reduce the number of Committees and simplify procedures.

I would like to thank Mike Langford and my fellow councillors for their continued help and guidance during my first year as Convenor for this committee.

John Richardson