

HAMBLEDON PARISH ASSEMBLY 2010 – CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

Finance

For the third year running, the precept has not been increased, despite an anticipated 10 per cent cut in the compensatory grant (Waverley's contribution towards the maintenance of the village's open spaces). There have been no cuts in the grants which the Parish Council makes to village organisations.

Planning

Since the last Parish Assembly the Parish Council has reviewed 26 planning applications. Of these Waverley Borough Council approved 18 and refused seven.

The application for Nutbourne Brickworks, a major development within the green belt which would have to be refused unless special circumstances can be proved, remains pending. The Parish Council has sought villagers' views via a series of public meetings and, given the importance of this large and historically important site, has negotiated a covenant with the developers. This restricts buildings on the site to a single house plus ancillary buildings; requires the estate to be kept intact; ensures that future owners will be bound by a similar covenant; and states that all existing buildings on the site are to be demolished within a year of the covenant taking effect. With the covenant in place, the Parish Council has felt able to support the application and now awaits the Waverley Officers' report.

Publication of the Localism Bill is an indication of the increased role which communities will be expected to play in determining local issues; and this adds to the importance of Hambledon having its own Village Design Statement. Leon West, a chartered surveyor living in the village, has agreed to make a start on its preparation, with a survey of external design and housing features, after which wider community input will be sought.

The Parish Council has continued to input to the development of Waverley's Local Development Framework. It appreciates being involved and particularly appreciates the help and support that the village receives from its Waverley Borough Councillors, Liz Cable and Adam Taylor-Smith, and from its Surrey County Councillor, Andrew Povey.

Housing needs survey

A further survey was commissioned in September 2010. It was carried out by Surrey Community Action (SCA) and funded by English Rural Housing. All households received a questionnaire; 35 per cent were returned; and 72 per cent of the respondents favoured a further project. What was almost more encouraging was that both figures well exceed the national average. The Parish Council is now working with Waverley, SCA and English Rural to see if a potential site for another small mixed scheme of affordable housing can be identified.

Roads

Following the severe snow last December, and thanks to Stewart Payne's initiative, various remedial measures have been put in place. Surrey County Council (SCC) is unable to provide salt bins additional to those at Roundals Lane and the top of Church Lane or to guarantee any clearance of minor roads. The Parish Council has therefore purchased a further bin, located at the top of Woodlands Road, plus a salt supply. It has also arranged for SCC to provide Peter Knight of Burgate Farm with a snow blade which he can attach to his tractor.

SCC first sought views on keeping HGVs off unsuitable roads in the county in June 1974. The Parish Council has been doing battle ever since to get them removed from village lanes.

Largely thanks to concerted action by Derek Miler and Stewart Payne, particularly in the past three years, "unsuitable for HGVs" signs were eventually installed at Lane End and the Hydestile Crossroads on 30 October 2010.

Potholes and blocked gullies and ditches remain on-going problems. The Parish Council has therefore decided that Tim Coleman should be helped to purchase a small digger to enable him to do more ditch clearance. Dr Povey has contributed £1,000 from his Surrey County Councillor's allowance and the Parish Council will contribute a further £1,000.

Southern Water

The scheme that connects additional parts of the village to mains drainage was completed last summer.

Village maintenance

Tim Coleman has continued his good work and the annual village clean-up on Saturday is an opportunity for everyone to play a part in keeping Hambledon litter-free.

Waverley Community Transport (Hoppa)

For the second year the Parish Council has continued its financial support for this valuable service..

Smith's Charity grant

The 2010 grant was maintained at the last two years' level and, as usual, was divided between eligible individuals and the Hambledon Almshouses.

Councillors

Jane Caie resigned in August 2010 after six years' service and two other Councillors have decided not to put their names forward for election in May.

Ron Vickery has been a Parish Councillor since May 1976, his 35 years of service since the Parish Council came into being in 1884 having been beaten only by Charles Denny (45 years from 1912 - 1957) and George Edwards (47 years from 1886 - 1933). He has been an unrivalled expert on maintenance (particularly drains and gullies) as well as a Trustee of the Village Hall, a Trustee of the Almshouses and the Parish Council's representative on the PCC. He has served on the Parish Council's planning committee since its inception in 2000

Derek Miller has served since May 1995. As editor of the Parish Magazine from 1998 to 2010, he created its present format - a financially self-supporting village magazine with a 250-plus readership. He organised the traffic calming survey in 1999 which eventually led to the introduction of speed limits and the exclusion of HGVs through the village. He contributed to the preparation and production of the Parish Plan (published in 2003) and, following Hambledon's success in the Surrey Village of the Year competition in 2009, was appointed (and remains) a judge for subsequent competitions.

In conclusion, and on behalf of the whole village, may I thank my fellow Councillors, and particularly Ron and Derek, for their support. Our thanks are also due to our hardworking Clerk. And, as always, I should like to express my appreciation of the effort which so many people in Hambledon put into so many of its activities. It is that help and enthusiasm that creates and maintains our vibrant and sustainable community.