

SHERFIELD-ON-LODDON PARISH COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT 2006/7

Meetings

Between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007, we held 56 meetings:

- 12 Parish Council
- 7 Finance and General Purposes Committee
- 7 Leisure Facilities Committee
- 17 Planning Committee
- 6 Village Green Committee
- 4 Burial Ground Working Party
- 1 Allotment Holders Meeting
- 1 Annual Parish Meeting
- 1 Meeting with Greenway residents

During the year, the Parish Council has ...

- Contributed to steering group to form Sherfield Park Community Association.
- Received reports from Police and Neighbourhood Watch.
- Monitored safety on the village green, via monthly reports from the litter warden.
- Carried out weekly checks of the play area.
- Taken on an annual contract with a pest control company, rat control on the allotments.
- Requested parking survey, Bow Drive – pilot scheme to be introduced by the Borough.
- Detected metal posts beneath the football ground and arranged for their removal .
- Received approximately 30 County and Borough documents for consultation.
- Revisited the issue of glass recycling.
- Improved pathway surface between Reading Road and Northfield Road with Borough grant assistance.
- Arranged for the installation of another two swing barriers.
- Requested removal of “Dom Esch” references from village signs.
- Removed a dead horse chestnut tree, Bramley Road.
- Requested visit by Sparsholt College to comment on the future of the horse chestnut avenue.
- Taken part in compiling Local List held by Borough Council.
- Reviewed financial regulations.
- Discussed unsatisfactory roadworks at Breach Lane with Highway authority.
- Contacted County Council expressing concern following cut in 44 bus service to Sherfield village.
- Proposed the renaming of Wildmoor Villas to “Rectory Gardens”, Breach Lane.
- Evicted travellers from Village Green.

Ongoing/outstanding projects

- BMX track. Advice was sought from the Borough’s H & S adviser and a suggested scheme is under consideration.
- Review of traffic calming.
- Burial ground extension.
- Replacement pavilion.
- Solution to the problem of potholes along Greenway.
- Concrete waste collection area, allotments; Borough funding is expected this autumn.

6 Village Green Committee meetings: This is an Advisory Committee of the Parish Council, which makes recommendations on the upkeep of the Green to the Parish Council, eg, ditch work, re-planting, pond clearance, repairs to bridges. Simon Hennessey has continued as Chairman throughout the year and he will present a report on the work of the Committee later in the meeting.

Annual allotment holders meeting: Tracy Lander-Sims is the contact for issues regarding the allotments. The Borough hopes to provide funding later this year for the installation of a permanent waste collection area for the allotments. Skips will continue to be provided in the meantime. During the year, the agreement was reviewed with regard to the keeping of hens, and numbered posts were installed alongside allotment plots.

17 Planning meetings: Chairman - Bruce Batting.

Forty nine applications were considered during the year (18 more than last year) and 3 objections were lodged by the Parish Council: (a) German Road development of 271 houses/6 commercial units/70 bed nursing home, (b) Revision of Master Plan for Sherfield Park/Taylor's Farm by Croudace and (c) Variation of a Section 52 Legal Agreement to allow use of land for residential development, Wheelers Court.

The Borough objected to the German Road proposals but we learnt recently that in spite of the Government Inspector's recommendation to uphold the Borough's decision, the Secretary of State intends to approve the development. We wait to see whether any further action will be taken by the Borough's legal department.

The Borough supported the Parish Council's views and rejected Croudace's plan to remove a distributor road / re-site the community hall at Sherfield Park. A decision on the Wheeler's Court application is awaited.

7 Finance and General Purposes Committee: Chairman - Ivan Gosden. The Committee's remit includes reviewing recommendations of the Village Green and Leisure Facilities Committees, considering quotations and drafting the precept. Our precept has increased from £23,965 to £32,179 in 2007/8. This is a large percentage increase, necessary to accommodate the increase in maintenance charges for open spaces plus the borrowing costs to purchase our new burial ground. However, with an increased parish population, the net result is an increase of £6.50 per annum for a band D property, or 54p per month.

The Parish Council has been in receipt of Section 106 money for open space/play equipment during the year, and it is hoped that this will be put towards new surfacing between the very popular basketgoals, much-needed surfacing below the cableway and BMX track improvements.

7 Leisure Facilities Committee: Chairman - Sandy Johnston. The Committee discusses issues relating to play area, tennis courts, football and cricket grounds/pavilions and allotments. The Committee meets approximately every two months.

In addition, to these meetings, Councillors attend Country Watch meetings to keep abreast of the Local Plan issue, regular meetings of the Chineham Incinerator Liaison Panel, Sherfield Park Community Association, Community Safety Forum, SPISE, CPRE and the Basingstoke District Association of Parish and Town Councils.

Burial Ground Working Party: The working party completed its discussions and the Parish Council intends to purchase a plot of agricultural land measuring 170m x 10m, adjacent to St Leonard's churchyard. Planning permission is currently being sought for change of use of the land.

Thank you

We are most grateful to our local beat officer WPC Jewell, the Village Green Volunteers, our auditor David Hitchins, to Phil Cole, our Litter Warden, who does an excellent job at keeping our village clean and tidy and also to Geraldine House-Barklie, our Tree Warden who advises on tree work within the parish, particularly within the Conservation Area. Members of the WI continue to tend our planters along Reading Road for which we are grateful. Thanks, too, must go to our local contractors who we use on a regular basis; Barry and Roy Bulpitt, Mike Barnes, Ben Stoopman, Mark Stewart and Joe Bate.