



BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

This month's **Parish Council Meeting** was held on Wednesday 8th July 2015 in the upstairs meeting room of the Pavilion. Councillors Peter Chase (Chairman), Anna Crowther, Jon Gambold, Terry Platt and Francia Slade were present; a number of members of the public attended together with the Clerk to the Parish Council, Alison Southern. Councillor Graham Bates, Krzys Osuch and Alan Jacobs sent their apologies.

As previously mentioned, we have a vacancy on the council. If you'd like to get involved in this, the lowest tier of government in the land – ensuring the interests of Biddenham and its residents are represented and protected – then please get in touch.

Although there were no new matters raised by members of the public this month, we had a busy agenda including matters raised at previous meetings. **The first item, however, was how to respond to an invitation from Olly Martins, the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, to have a meeting to discuss policing priorities in the area. Although we appreciate this is an important matter, our view was that such a meeting would work better and be a more efficient use of time if it amalgamated the representatives of several Parish councils. The Town and Parish Council Network is holding a meeting in September which we are suggesting Mr Martins attends. We'll ensure Biddenham is represented at this.**

Footpaths

We are fortunate that Chris Hayden Jones acts in an informal capacity to monitor and report on the condition of footpaths in and around the village. He asked me a few weeks ago if he might report to us at this meeting, and he duly attended to do so.

The story is that several footpaths on the west side of Biddenham need attention, and Chris has taken this up with the relevant Borough council officer. Improvements should be apparent within a few weeks. The Friends of Biddenham Pond continue to look after the path in their locale, which we much appreciate. A gate nearby has had its day, and in order that it's replaced like-for-like with a wooden article (not a regulation Borough council metal one) Chris asked if we would fund this. We agreed in principle, subject to quotations obtained.

Footpaths on the east side of the village between us, Queens Park and Great Denham are also reportedly in need of some serious maintenance; Chris agreed to review these and escalate matters with the Borough.

Deep Spinney Roundabout

Following last month's representations about the enlarged Deep Spinney roundabout's acoustic fencing, we heard from our Borough Councillors Jon Gambold and Roger Rigby that the Borough are still reviewing what to do. Apparently, senior Borough officers were as surprised as the rest of us to see it erected. However, it was apparently done because the amount of land owned by the Borough on which to place something which would deaden noise for nearby residents is an extremely narrow strip between the road and the land owned by the housing developer – a fence seemed the only answer. We will keep you posted on how things develop.

On a related point, concern was raised that despite its larger size there are fewer lanes for traffic as it arrives at the roundabout than used to be the case. We can only now wait and see how well it works, as we are well beyond the design stage. I'm sure that, once in full operation, the Borough will assess how well it's working and be open to adjustments if felt necessary.

Whilst on the subject of roads and traffic, you'll perhaps have seen that the Borough have renewed white lines and "Slow" signs in Gold Lane, Church End and thereabouts. This does not mean we are done yet with trying to persuade the powers that be that more measures are needed. For example, the signage for the schools in Biddenham Turn is minimal, and we want to encourage cars to be driven more slowly there. It was agreed that some "Slow" signs and school warning triangles actually on the road would be a good idea. More white centre/edging lines in Gold Lane are needed too. Jon Gambold and I will continue to press for more action in this respect.

Pavilion Parking

We noted that some people are parking in the disabled bays at the Pavilion even though they don't have a disabled blue badge. These bays are there for a reason, and needed by those who have mobility difficulties. If you have anything to do with an event at the Pavilion, please be a good citizen and check that people do not park inconsiderately.

Housing Developments north of Bromham Road

You may have seen the hoarding on Bromham Road that's gone up about the new houses to be built there. In all, 205 houses are due to be built on the Harpur Trust playing fields next to town (this plot of land is actually in Queen's Park, not Biddenham) and 495 between the Deep Spinney roundabout and the golf course. Both these developments are now going to be built by Bovis and Linden Homes. At this stage they are keen to set out their plans and get our feedback – and to this end they're organising a local public exhibition. Watch out for publicity on village notice boards about when and where this will be – hopefully by the end of August. We plan to ask the companies involved to attend our Parish council meeting in September, for them to hear our views.



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It had been suggested at an earlier meeting that the larger development, and ultimately the one to be built on the golf course, might all be called **St James**, after Biddenham's church. We are consulting with the church about this, and would welcome anyone else's thoughts. Builders love to label their developments, and we are keen to offer something proactively and which existing residents support – before we end up with something awful or ill-informed like “North Denham” or “Bromham Fields”!

DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council is on **Wednesday 9th September 2015 in the upstairs room of The Pavilion at 7.30pm**, all are welcome. Questions from the public will be taken at 7.30pm and the rest of the meeting will follow at 7.45pm.

Peter Chase, Chairman