



BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

This month's **Parish Council Meeting** was held on Wednesday 14th October 2015 in the upstairs meeting room of the Pavilion. Councillors Graham Bates, Peter Chase (Chairman), Jon Gambold, Alan Jacobs, Krzys Osuch, Terry Platt and Francia Slade were present; two members of the public attended, together with Borough Councillor Roger Rigby and the Clerk to the Parish Council, Alison Southern. Councillor Anna Crowther sent her 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.

Housing developments north of Bromham Road

Following last month's presentation from the housing developers of the new developments north of Bromham Road, we were pleased to hear from Councillor Platt that the broad design for the new houses backing on to Windmill Hill had been amended. The new design is reportedly more satisfactory, with larger gardens backing on to existing properties, and denser housing moved further into the centre of the new development.

A member of the public present asked whether we might consider constructing some sort of feature on the Deep Spinney roundabout, similar to those in Kempston (the metal sheep!) and Great Denham. This is an interesting idea, but needs some inspired thinking if we're to do something relevant, maintainable and affordable. If you think you have an idea for us to consider, please send Alison Southern, our clerk, an email at clerk@biddenham-pc.org.uk.

The Village Sign

The new village sign will be unveiled at 11am on Saturday November 7th. Make a note in your diary now if you'd like to celebrate this with us and members of the Biddenham Society, and see for yourself the new pictorial designs of the sign. I'm very grateful to Tony Wood of the Biddenham Society for making the arrangements. I also hope the Village Pond working party, who will be busy tending the pond's environs that morning, don't mind us clashing with them – indeed they would of course be welcome to briefly "down tools" and join us for a mid-morning break!

Remembrance Sunday

Arrangements are also well in hand for this year's Act of Remembrance at the village war memorial. This will be the day after the village sign unveiling on Sunday November 8th at 10.45am. Alison, our clerk, is arranging with Bedford Borough Council for permission to shut Main Road during the ceremony – so no traffic (no matter how local) will be able to pass the memorial during the closure. We are honoured this year to have the daughter of one of the fallen whose name appears on our memorial in attendance. The lady is coming all the way from Taunton, and we will ensure she is made welcome.

Local Development Plan for 2021 to 2032

We all know there is huge pressure from central government to build more houses. Bedford Borough already has a plan which lasts up to 2020, but is now starting a consultation with all of us about where more would be built between 2021 and 2032. As far as Biddenham goes, you might very well ask where there's any land left where you *could* build houses (if you consider that all the space north of Bromham Road is already accounted for). The answer may lie to the west of our village, between Gold Lane and the bypass, which is a scary thought. The Borough Council are holding a roadshow consultation event at Bromham Village Hall on Monday October 26th from 2pm to 9pm. Do go along if you want to learn more, and/or to make your views known.

Other Local Matters

Still no more news about the "acoustic" fencing on the revised Deep Spinney roundabout, nor on traffic calming. We are by no means giving up on these, but the wheels of the Borough Council seem to move ever more slowly due to cuts and a backlog from the summer.

The Pavilion now has two brand-new disabled parking signs, prominently positioned in front of the relevant parking bays. We have no way to police whether people respect these, and it was a shame to see that someone had parked their Chelsea tractor in one of them even while we were having our meeting! Shame on anyone who misuses them.

In many places throughout the village our beautiful and verdant front gardens are nevertheless causing a bit of bother for people using footpaths which pass in front of people's homes. Walking as I was along Darlow Drive recently, many shrubs were bursting well beyond reasonable bounds, to encroach on the footpath. Councillor Jacobs raised a more serious case of the same thing along the north side of Bromham Road from the pedestrian crossing near Deep Spinney and a good way towards the roundabout. I appeal to anyone who may be contributing to this issue to please rein in their exuberant, bushy frontages! If you don't do it yourselves, the Borough Council will come and do it anyway – without consultation – and then send you a bill. Better by far, though, for us to literally keep our own houses in order.

That's all this time. Do please contact any of us if you think we can help with any local matters. As I mentioned at the start, we're still one short on the council – so please get in touch if you'd like to get involved by becoming a councillor.



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Peter Chase

Chairman