



BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Biddenham Parish Council met on Wednesday 10th November 2016 in the upstairs room of the Pavilion. Present were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Peter Chase (chairman), Jon Gambold (also a Borough Councillor), Chris Gee, Krzys Osuch, Terry Platt, Francia Slade and Joe Warren. Councillor Alan Jacobs sent his apologies. Clerk Alison Southern and half a dozen or so members of the public were also present.

NEW VILLAGE WEB SITE

The new website has launched! As I mentioned last month, this is far more than just a revamp of the Parish Council's own site. It is also a new resource for any group in the village to use if they don't want to go to the effort and cost of doing their own site. Interest has already been shown by a number of groups in the village. Contact us if you think we could help you too.

DOVECOTE ROUNDABOUT

The favoured design of two tall pillars has been out with our preferred stonemason for costing. They're finding it hard to source two lengths of stone long enough (3 metres by 450mm square), so we are negotiating over whether to make the main part of each pillar out of two bits.

I mentioned this subject at the Biddenham Society AGM on November 6th. Whilst it was good to see a good number of people welcoming the idea, I have since asked the society's chairman Tony Wood to get an official view from his committee of whether they support the Parish Council's ideas for the roundabout. Our straw poll at the Biddenham Show showed significant support, and some helpful thoughts. See past Biddenham Loops for more details. If you would like to offer your opinion or input please send your views to the clerk. As this project firms up, we are nearing the point when serious money is going to get spent – although our firm commitment is to do so without any impact on council tax in the future. Do you support this?

THE COFFIN PATH

Our meeting came only a few days after the Borough Council met to decide on extensions to the Biddenham Conservation Area. Three extensions were proposed, one at Duck Mill Lane, one near Kings Corner and the other to incorporate the village pond. Originally, this last extension was supposed to also include the field containing the coffin path, next to the pond area. Objections led the Borough officers to withdraw this suggestion. However, thanks to letters sent by both ourselves and the Biddenham Society, and strenuous lobbying by our Borough Councillor Roger Rigby, the portfolio holder at Borough, Councillor Colleen Atkins, decide to recommend after all that the coffin path field be included in the Conservation Area (although as a compromise only the path and the land to its south). This recommendation was accepted.

I am delighted the Borough Council, including the Mayor, chose to take this decision. It shows that they, like us, value our heritage. It also shows that if we make our points in the right sort of way, we are listened to.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 11th January 2017. Do please come along if you have anything you'd like to raise.

In the meantime, all your Parish Councillors would like to thank you for your support in 2016, and wish you a very happy and joyous festive season.



Peter Chase

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