



BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

The most recent **Parish Council Meeting** was held on Wednesday 14th November 2018 in the upstairs room of the Pavilion. Present were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Peter Chase (Chairman), Jon Gambold, Chris Gee, Alan Jacobs, Terry Platt, Francia Slade and Joe Warren. Clerk Lyn Lyman, Borough Councillor Roger Rigby and about ten members of the public were also present. Councillor Krzys Osuch sent his apologies.

TOMMY

Have you noticed our new chap, Tommy? If you were part of the huge turnout for this year's ceremony of remembrance at the war memorial, then surely you will. For he is the outline of the soldier that now stands in front of the memorial, head down, holding his rifle. I hadn't really expected the effect he creates to be so ethereal, but you only see him as the light catches his outline. At night, that seems particularly effective. It's as if to say "I am here, but not here; you only see me for a moment, but really I am gone". Very poignant.

Many weighty matters are put before the Parish Council, and in Tommy's case the question has been asked how long should he be on display? It was quickly agreed that he should disappear at the same time the poppy wreaths are removed from the memorial. Traditionally, this is at Easter. I thought that a surprisingly long time, but it seems appropriate given how spring suggests life renewed (and being made of plastic, the wreaths do last). A concrete base is going to be made for Tommy – something Councillor Gambold is going to sort out (he always seems to know the right people).

So Tommy will stand guard until April. We have a safe place for him to spend the summer months. Then he'll be back next November.

HOUSES WEST OF GOLD LANE

Mere days after the last meeting we were informed the Borough Council would be making their decision about the outline planning application for 250 houses on the land west of Gold Lane on October 29th. As you may have heard, that decision was an outright rejection of the proposal. The developer's pleaded for time to negotiate changes which (in their view) might make it acceptable, but these cut no ice.

Thank you to all who wrote in; the tally of 599 objections leant enormous weight to the argument that the separation of Biddenham from Bromham is extremely important. Even though the capacity of local schools and roads were also of great concern, it was this separation of our villages, over all else, that swayed the decision.

42 MAIN ROAD (LAVENDER LODGE)

Further to my words last month about the unsightly fence alongside Lavender Lodge on Main Road, Mr Newton, who owns the fence and land behind it, has kindly agreed to replace it with a proper hedge of mixed holly and yew tree bushes. He is doing this at his own expense. The hedge will be allowed to grow to the same height as the fence, i.e. about two metres, and will undoubtedly improve the visual appearance of this part of the village centre.

I also wrote last month about the planning application Mr Newton has made to build a house behind the fence. Some felt I spoke favourably of this application, and indeed Mr Newton has taken trouble to consult the Borough Council at length about what might make his application acceptable. Since then, however, the Borough's Tree Officer has written of her deep concerns that the construction of the house may damage or even kill several, substantial trees on the plot, or that a future house owner might lop bits off them to get more light. These trees are very mature, and an important part of our village's central scene. It was no surprise, therefore, that as the Parish Council we decided to object to this application.

Please note, however, that Mr Newton has undertaken to install the hedge to replace the fence regardless of the outcome of his proposed development.

OUR NEXT MEETING

We meet every second Wednesday of most months (but December isn't one of them) at the Pavilion in Deep Spinney, and very much welcome hearing from residents. There is a public "open session" near the start for anyone wanting to say something. Please come along and let us know anything that's concerning you about our village, or just come and listen. The next meeting is on Wednesday 9th January.

Peter Chase
Chairman