

NEWSLETTER

It has been another busy year in the life of St Nicholas Hurst Parish Council. We were delighted to welcome a new Councillor, Miss Christine Lambert, who now takes the Parish Council to its full constitution of ten Members. Without the help of our Members, who undertake all of their roles voluntarily, we would not be able to achieve the best for our Parish.

Please always approach your local Councillors if you have any concerns, queries or suggestions regarding how the Parish is managed. In addition, our Clerk, Mrs Maria Bradshaw, is always happy to help and can be contacted either by e-mail (clerk@hurstpc.org.uk) or telephone (0118 9798914).



Also, please remember that all of our monthly Parish Council meetings are public meetings – you don't need to book a place – simply turn up. All details relating to meeting dates, along with agendas and minutes can be found on our website www.hurstpc.org.uk

Meet the Team



Pictured Top L-R: Wayne Smith (Chairman), Michael Holdstock, Mac Stephenson, Howard Larkin, Tony Mansfield (Vice Chairman), Ian Smith, Alastair Lyon.

Pictured Bottom L-R: Christine Lambert, Penny Curry, Diane Pilgrim.

St Nicholas Night

St Nicholas Night celebrations took place on the 2nd December 2018 and, as always, attracted huge numbers to the event. Our thanks, once again, goes to Haines Hill Estate for the kind donation of the fabulous Christmas tree, Chocoholics for supplying gorgeous children's goodie bags, the St Nicholas Singers who led the carols and the seasonal accompaniment provided by Waltham St Lawrence Band. All of this was washed down with mulled wine provided by The Green Man and mince pies! Without our supporters the event just wouldn't be possible each year.



Our Guest of Honour was Lara Redfern, Age 4, from St Nicholas Pre-School. Lara won the Parish Council Colouring Competition which all of the Hurst Pre School Children were invited to take part in. The Parish Council Chairman, who judged all of the entries, concluded that Lara's Christmas Tree picture was a true work of art and she was a very deserving winner. Lara assisted the Chairman with officially switching on the lights and declaring Christmas 2018 launched! Lara was also presented with an extra Christmas present by the Chairman. We were delighted to picture Lara on our Parish Council website along with her prize-winning entry.



Photo: The Wokingham Paper

Our supporters include: Haines Hill Estate
Chocoholics
Waltham St Lawrence Band
St Nicholas Singers
Waitrose and Partners
The Green Man Public House
Hurst Cricket Club

Our thanks goes to all of them!



Local Plan Update

Residents across Wokingham Borough are being urged to get involved and help plan future development in the area. To this end, a guide to the Local Plan was sent to all homes in the Borough before Christmas to explain what it involves and how people can take part in the consultation.

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) is putting together a new Local Plan, which will guide where development can and cannot take place across the Borough in the years to 2036. In doing this, the new Local Plan will build upon the existing strategy which looks to the year 2026. In that time, the Borough will have to accommodate somewhere between about 750 and about 850 homes a year – there is little choice in this, it is driven by Central Government – but there is a choice in where and how the homes are built and what infrastructure accompanies them.

A public consultation (LPU consultation: Homes for the Future) has been launched to seek views on where and how the homes can best be provided, and the location of employment land needed to support the local economy. The consultation includes details of all the land put forward by landowners for potential development and this is residents' opportunity to comment on these areas of land as well to suggest others. **It is available online and will be open until February 22nd 2019.**

The Borough Council needs to plan for this now because, without an up-to-date Local Plan, there is little protection against developers wanting to build in unsuitable places, such as those in the countryside or where infrastructure is not available and cannot be provided.

The number of homes needed in the Borough in the years from 2026 to 2036 must be set by a methodology determined by the Government. The total will vary because the methodology the Government requires local authorities to use, depends on population predictions that can change, but the current figure is between 750 and 850 homes per year.

As well as the online consultation, WBC is holding a series of drop-in events for people to meet officers and councillors to discuss the Local Plan. The nearest one for Hurst residents will take place as below:

Loddon Hall, Loddon Hall Road, Twyford: January 10th 2019, from 7pm to 9pm

The Parish Council Chairman, Wayne Smith, will be at this event helping to answer your questions. For full details of the Local Plan and consultation, please visit www.wokingham.gov.uk and search for 'Local Plan Update'.



New Grounds Maintenance Contractor

Following a competitive tendering exercise at the end of 2018, the Parish Council is delighted to introduce their new grounds maintenance contractor, SCS Landscape Services (SCS), who will be working with us from February 2019. SCS provide landscape services to a number of our neighbouring Parish Councils and we look forward to ensuring that, with their help, the Parish is maintained to the very high standards we have become accustomed to. Our sincere thanks goes to our outgoing contractor, Mr Ty Bolton, who has provided a fabulous service over the past eight years.

Community Asset Transfers

After many years of working with our colleagues at Wokingham Borough Council, in November 2018 three community assets were transferred from the Borough Council to the Parish Council. Sites located at the top of Church Hill, the allotments in Tape Lane and Martineau Green are now our responsibility and will be maintained and enhanced for the benefit of all.

Work has already begun in earnest on the site at Church Hill which we are working to transform in to a community orchard. Our contractor, SCS, has worked hard to level and treat the site, with further plans to erect new perimeter fencing and plant a selection of semi-mature trees. We hope this will become a well-used tranquil retreat.

Two benches, kindly donated by Hurst Show Committee, have already been placed in Martineau Green which will be the subject of extensive pruning and maintenance prior to the winter season.



Speeding and Traffic Monitoring



The Parish Council continues with its Traffic Monitoring project using its own Vehicle Data Recorder to record the traffic behaviour on our roads in relation to speed. This provides the Thames Valley Police Traffic Management Team with data from which appropriate speed enforcement action can be taken. The main roads within the Parish which are regularly monitored are Forest Road, the A321 at various sites along the road, Lodge Road, Davis Street, Hinton Road, School Road and some minor roads where residents have raised particular concerns about speeding traffic and where there is available support structure to enable equipment installation.

Although the average speed of traffic in relation to the posted speed limit is often close to the limit, the data extracted by the Parish Council which is sent to the Police is carefully analysed to show the number of vehicles which are exceeding the speed limit by an unacceptable margin - an example of this is the result of the survey undertaken recently in School Road. The average speed of the total number of vehicles during a 24-hour, 7-day, period was 30 mph but when the data was analysed it revealed that 680 vehicles per day were exceeding 31 mph and a total of 60 per day exceeded 41 mph. It is this information which will result in appropriate Police enforcement action.

In addition to the traffic monitoring, a new Community Speed Watch project is being actioned. A team of volunteers is being assembled which will use a Sentinel speed indicating device, being purchased by the Parish Council, which will video record timed details of vehicle speed and vehicle registration number. This information will be submitted to the Police.

Church Hill Petition

To tackle parishioners concerns regarding speeding traffic on Church Hill, particularly around the dangerous chicane outside The Castle Inn, Councillor Stephenson took the lead producing a petition to present to WBC. The petition sought to get the speed limit reduced on this stretch of road and, after attaining nearly 500 signatures including that of Theresa May's, Councillor Stephenson presented our case to Borough Members at Shute End. In December 2018, WBC installed traffic monitoring strips on Church Hill to collect volumetric and speed data. Whilst the Parish Council awaits the outcome of both the petition and the monitoring, we continue to work actively in conjunction with our police colleagues to monitor speeding within the Parish. Officers have been out and about undertaking speed enforcement on both the A321 and Lodge Road resulting in a number of speeding tickets being issued.

The combination of these Parish Council run projects, in conjunction with Thames Valley Police, is part of our ongoing endeavor to encourage drivers travelling on our roads to adhere to the posted speed limit.

Pond Maintenance

As the focal point of the Village, we work hard to maintain the village pond and surrounding area. This can be difficult as trees are mature and overhanging and the lack of rain over our unusually hot Summer did not help water levels in the pond. That said, it did allow us to undertake some significant cutting back work and the pond is now in much better shape. As the pond slowly refills, we are hoping to add a new duck house by the end of January 2019.



Donation to St Nicholas CE Primary School

The Parish Council was delighted to support the Parish Primary School with a donation to help them undertake outside cleaning work to the frontage of the school buildings. Monies specifically ringfenced for community facilities were used to complete this work and in addition, fascias and soffits which needed repair were painted. Miss McGrail, the Head teacher of the school, was delighted and wrote to Members stating:

"I am very grateful to you all for agreeing the funding of this very important work.

The upkeep and maintenance of the interior and exterior of the school is of great importance. We are proud of our school – especially since the extensive building works that were completed in 2011.

However, current funding constraints have resulted in our rolling programme of cleaning, painting and general maintenance being cut to a bare minimum. The Health and Safety and Safeguarding of children, staff and visitors now dictates what MUST be spent in response to specific issues rather than an ability to ensure the buildings are continually maintained to the highest standards inside and out.

I believe the exterior of the school would now benefit greatly from receiving a professional clean. I am really grateful to receive your backing. From my Governors, staff, parents and children – a very big thank for your support and generosity."



Planning Update

The Parish Council continues to comment on all planning applications which relate to Hurst. Each and every application is considered by Members and our comments agreed before submission to WBC. Most recently determined applications are detailed below, including the Parish Council's response and WBC's determination:

Application	Details	Parish response	WBC determination
182433	Land East of Davis Way – Full application for the proposed erection of additional stables on an existing equestrian site and demolition of existing store.	Object	Approved
182579	Broadacre Place, Broadcommon Road – Full planning application for the proposed installation of an all-weather exercise track for use by polo ponies.	Object	Approved
181920	St Nicholas Farmhouse, Dunt Lane – Full planning application for the proposed conversion of the existing barn to create a two-storey dwelling.	No adverse comments	Refused
182055	Four Acres, Dunt Lane – Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey side extension to link two existing buildings.	No adverse comments	Refused
182201	15 Martineau Lane – Householder application for the proposed erection of single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory.	No adverse comments	Approved
182150	2 Elliotts Green Cottages, Broadcommon Road – Householder application for the proposed erection of a two-storey front, side and rear extension to dwelling.	No adverse comments	Approved
182169	Warren House Inn, Forest Road – Full application for the proposed erection of a single storey side extension to existing building.	No adverse comments	Approved
181963	Orchard Wick House, Davis Street – Householder application for the proposed erection of single storey side extension to dwelling following the demolition of existing garage plus erection of a new car port.	Object	Approved
181267	1 Elliotts Green Cottages, Broadcommon Road – Householder application for the proposed erection of two storey side extension to dwelling following the demolition of the existing garage and store plus internal alterations.	Object	Refused
182019	Three Oaks, School Road – Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension, single storey front extension, single storey side/rear extension and part single storey front extension, new front porch and extension of existing garage plus internal alterations.	No adverse comments	Approved