



Ashurst Wood Parish Council

Newsletter

January 2012



Affordable Housing: The Parish Council is pleased to announce that the Mid-Sussex District Council North area planning committee has approved the plans for Affordable Housing in Hammerwood Road. Construction is expected to begin next Spring/Summer 2012. Photograph reproduced with permission from East Grinstead Courier & Observer

A Message from the Chair

Later this year, construction will begin on 12 much-needed affordable homes for local people, following the approval of the planning application just before Christmas. I would like to thank everyone who has supported this scheme and hope that those who objected will eventually come to see how the houses benefit the whole village.

A number of residents suggested the idea of road safety stickers on wheely bins, after seeing them in other areas. We thought this was a great idea, but little did we know how complicated it would be to put into practice. Thanks to the hard work of our Clerk we have managed to agree a design with the Police, West Sussex County Council (responsible for signs on the highway) and Mid Sussex District Council (which owns the bins). Hopefully the stickers will be a gentle reminder to all of us to drive patiently and considerately around the village.

A reminder that volunteers are always needed to help with various activities and events around the village. In particular, we need help with planning an event to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee in June. We will also need volunteers to help with a review of the Village Plan and a new Neighbourhood Plan.

Jenny Forbes

VILLAGE PLAN UPDATE

Our village Plan was published in early 2007. The Steering Group met recently to review progress to date and its assessment will shortly be available on the Parish Council's website. The next stage will be to prepare a follow-up questionnaire, with a view to updating the Village Plan and combining it with a Neighbourhood Plan. Neighbourhood Plans are introduced by the Localism Act and are a new way for communities to decide the future of where they live and work for the next 20 years. They are produced after considerable public consultation and a local referendum. They then become statutory documents, and will be used in deciding planning applications and in seeking funding through developers' contributions or other sources. Volunteers will be needed to devise the questionnaire, distribute, collect and analyse completed forms and research and draft the Plan. Please contact the office or one of the Councillors if you would be willing to help.

PARISH COUNCILLOR SURGERIES

**Next Surgery will be held on Saturday
21st January 2012 9-10 am
(and subsequent 3rd Saturdays of the
month)**

**You can now meet Councillors once a
month for an informal chat at the Village
Centre. This is an opportunity to ask any
questions and raise any concerns about
Ashurst Wood and meet *your* Councillors
face to face.**

The Parish Council has sent the following response to the Draft Mid Sussex District Plan:

General

The Parish Council agrees with the strategic objectives of the Plan.

The Parish Council also welcomes the introduction of Neighbourhood Plans and the opportunity for greater community involvement they provide. The Parish Council hopes to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan but has concerns about the amount of work and cost involved, and considers it unlikely that a Neighbourhood Plan would be sufficiently advanced for any housing numbers to be included in the final District Plan.

Economic Development

The Parish Council agrees that the Plan should encourage local jobs and businesses and the use of town and village centres. However it must be recognised that many people do not live and work in the same place. Good transport links will remain a high priority for many of our residents, with particular concerns about congestion on the A22 and A264 and possible loss of bus services.

Housing Development

The overall housing figures set out in the Plan appear to be more realistic and achievable than those required by the South East Plan. The Parish Council is not in a position to comment on the merits of the Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy, but notes that there are currently no alternative sites should these proposals be undeliverable. Parishes and towns will be required to identify locations for the expected shortfall of 2,300 to 2,800 houses through Neighbourhood Plans, although it will be difficult, given the time constraints, for housing numbers to be available for confirmation in the final District Plan.

Development in the Countryside

The village of Ashurst Wood falls inside the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is also close to the Ashdown Forest.

The Parish Council supports the general principle of protecting and enhancing the countryside (DP7). However, as there is very little space for new development within the built up area boundary of the village, the identification of locations for any future housing may well necessitate either reconsideration of this boundary or making allocations within the area designated as countryside. Either of these options is likely to be controversial.

Ashurst Wood is very close to the neighbouring town of East Grinstead and the Parish Council agrees that it is very important to retain the separate identity of the village and to have a policy preventing coalescence of settlements (DP8).

Affordable Housing

The Parish Council supports the policy of 30% affordable housing provision on residential development of 4 dwellings and above (DP26).

Rural Exception Sites (DP27)

The rural exception site policy enables villages like Ashurst Wood to provide much-needed affordable housing for local people on small sites outside the built up area boundary. The Parish Council has been closely involved with two proposed schemes in the village, the second of which has now received planning permission.

The Parish Council knows from experience that it is difficult to find land that is both suitable and available for a rural exception site. It is therefore important that the policy is flexible enough to encourage landowners to put forward sites for affordable housing. Encouragement could include allowing them to nominate one or more of the homes for family or employees, provided they can demonstrate housing need and a local connection (as recommended in the Taylor Review: *Living Working Countryside*). Self-building of affordable homes on single-plot exception sites (as in Shropshire) should also come within the policy.

Saved Local Plan Policies

The Parish Council requests that the two Local Plan policies affecting Ashurst Wood be saved on adoption of the District Plan. Policy AW1 identifies two areas of Townscape Character. Policy AW2 allocates land at the industrial estate in Ivy Dene Lane for business use and places restrictions on redevelopment of the site.

Queen's Jubilee celebration.

There was a meeting before Christmas to discuss possible plans for Ashurst Wood to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee later in the year. Perhaps because this was too near Christmas not many people came along. If you are interested in the village having an event—which could be fairly informal—not on the same scale as the Summer Fair— contact Councillor David Loveday or the Parish Office.

IF YOU USE THE BUSES PLEASE READ ON AS IMPORTANT CHANGES ARE BEING PROPOSED TO OUR SERVICES.

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) is reducing bus subsidies by £2 million. To help WSCC decide about where to make savings they need to know more about how you use the routes under review.

As far as Ashurst Wood is concerned these are shown below, with the Parish Council's interpretation of how they would probably affect village services:

270 (East Grinstead – Haywards Heath): Withdrawal of service on Sundays & Public Holidays

This would mean no service to Princess Royal Hospital on these days, and Ashurst Wood would only have the three 2-hourly 291 Tunbridge Wells/Crawley buses.

391 (Crawley – East Grinstead): Withdrawal of evening service

No detail given but this would probably at least mean withdrawal of the 19:35, 21:22 and 23:22 journeys from EG station to Ashurst Wood, and the 22:00 from Ashurst Wood to Crawley (there would then be no bus from EG station after 18:35).

Ashurst Wood Parish Council has already commented in detail on these proposals see Parish Council website.

IF THE CHANGES WILL AFFECT YOU THEN COMPLETE THE SURVEY AT: <http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=16856>

THE CLOSING DATE IS 17th JANUARY 2012.

YOUR COMMENTS COULD MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

CHRISTMAS MARKET

Thank you to all the organisations, stall holders and businesses who helped make the Christmas Market a Success.

Allan Martin Meats, Foreman's Carpets, The East Grinstead Hire Centre, the Three Crowns and Graham Keenor were all very generous in their support. A special mention of course to Santa for finding time in his busy schedule to spend time in Ashurst Wood. The event was made particularly festive by the carols sung by children from the Primary School- so thanks again to the staff, children and parents for their time and effort.

There will be a debrief meeting early in February and if you would like to come along or make a comment please contact the Council or one of the organisations concerned.

PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Public Services

Chairman: Jonathan Samways

Planning

Chairman: Don Sinclair

Finance & Administration

Chairman: Brian Phillips

PARISH CLERK

Clerk : Susan Wellerd

Assistant: Rebecca Roberts

St Dunstan's Church Chapel Lane

Ashurst Wood RH19 3QT

01342 823770

Email; Clerk@ashurstwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk

Or assistant@ashurstwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS ARE:

Jenny Forbes (Chair)	822879
Brian Phillips (Vice-Chair)	824154
Ian Arnott	822555
Margaret Bussell	823253
Karen Lindsay	824831
David Loveday	824658
Jonathan Samways	322226
Don Sinclair	824317
Derek Wailes	07747 006670

Parish Office:

Behind St Dunstan's Church

Office hours; Monday Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday mornings (except on the Thursday when the Parish News is printed)

www.ashurstwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk

Ashurst Wood Community Pre-school

CAR BOOT & TABLETOP SALE

Saturday 21st January, 12-3pm

Ashurst Wood Village Centre, 20-24 Maypole Road, RH19 3QN

Cars £10, Vans £12, Inside table £12. Pitches limited so booking is essential. Call Katie on 826916.

Stallholder entry 11am.

Refreshments and home-made cakes.

No unauthorised food and drink sellers. Sorry there is no customer parking on site but the Primary School car park is available.

Entry fee £1. All proceeds go towards Pre-School running costs.

Gourmet Charity Dinner

A six course French Gourmet Dinner and Live Acoustic Music

Saturday 28th Jan, 7pm, The Three Crowns, Ashurst Wood, RH19 3TJ. Tickets £10 ~ Booking essential.

Contact Dawn or Ian (01342) 410963

Proceeds to be shared between The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity & Ashurst Wood Community Pre-School Development Fund

THE NATURALLY GREEN SHOW

➤ **Interesting ways of saving money the natural way**

➤ **Stands range from health to energy saving**

Sunday 29th Jan, Free entry from 10.30-4pm. East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead, RH19 3LT.

For more info, contact Lesley 07547 767417

Tea, coffee and cakes on sale – all proceeds to Ashurst Wood Community Pre-School Development Fund – raising money to build a new Pre-School building in 2012/2013.

ASHURST WOOD YOUTH CLUB NEWS

The Club re-opened on 30th November with a BBQ. There has also been a Christmas Party and a session with a media pod. This term there is to be a film night and sessions on film making. There will also be some cooking—so come along and find out more.

The Club is looking to buy new equipment and Luke, the new worker will be finding out what the members of the club would like to do at club nights in the future.

The Club meets every Wednesday in term time from 7-9pm at John Pears and anyone from Ashurst Wood in years 7 upwards is welcome to come along. We are a friendly group with young workers and helpers.

We are looking for a table tennis table for the club— if you can help please contact the Parish Council.

ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

Date for your diary, the 2012 Village Meeting will be held on 17th April at 7.30pm in the Village Centre. If you only come to one meeting in 2012 come to this one!

STICKERS FOR WHEELIE BINS

As reported in the local paper:

“Stop Speeding” Stickers for people living in Woods Hill Lane, School Lane, Hammerwood Road and Maypole Road are now available from the Parish Council Office. Two stickers can be provided for each landfill and recycle bin.

Do call in or telephone if you would like a set of these.