



COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER: NOVEMBER 2016

In this issue: Some notes on Planning matters – complaints, enforcement and appeals; development of the Copythorne Play Area moves a step closer; re-start of the local investigations for potential Affordable Housing development and a Winter reminder regarding culverts, watercourses and ditches clearance.

The Parish Council Newsletter

Welcome to the November 2016 edition of the Parish Council Newsletter. A copy of the Newsletter will also be available on the Council's website early in November. In addition, some paper copies will be available from Bartley Post Office, Mace Store at Cadnam and the Courtesy Filling Station shop, Romsey Road.

Planning Matters – Complaints, Enforcement and Appeals

At the Council meeting on 25th October, it was clear from the exchanges between members of the community and Councillors that it might be useful to include in this Newsletter, a very short note regarding the processes and responsibilities related to Planning complaints, enforcement and appeals.

The Parish Council is not a Planning Authority. It has a role to offer a view, via specified criteria combined with local knowledge and engagement, on all relevant planning applications / matters within the Parish, to the Planning Authority. Most of the Parish of Copythorne is within the New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) planning control area.

However, the Parish Council can act as a conduit through to the NFNPA where Parishioners wish to raise a complaint about an identified potential Planning breach.

The NFNPA's adopted Local Enforcement Plan provides comprehensive information on how NFNPA will manage the enforcement of planning matters proactively and in a way appropriate to the New Forest National Park. Details on this can be found at:

<http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/info/20041/enforcement/109/enforcement>

There are some key points to note regarding the status of enforcement and control:

- *A breach of planning control is not a criminal offence (other than in a few limited circumstances) and so immediate legal action is not usually an option*

- *Enforcement action can only be taken where it is expedient to do so, which means action cannot be taken against a development which would probably have obtained planning permission had it been applied for in the normal way*
- *Government advice urges negotiation to try and resolve enforcement issues, other than in the most serious cases, before formal action is taken. This has implications for the length of time the process can take*
- *It is open to people to apply for planning permission retrospectively in an attempt to regularise unauthorised development."*

Where Parishioners identify a possible Planning breach, we would encourage you to get in touch with the Clerk to the Parish Council and notify her of the possible issue. The Clerk will then contact the NFNPA Enforcement Team, as soon as possible, to get them engaged.

Once the Clerk has done this, it is then in the hands of the NFNPA to decide how best to proceed and it will provide updates to the Parish Council as and when they occur.

Details of cases being formally monitored by the NFNPA Team, on a Parish by Parish basis, can be found on the following link (it might take time for a complaint to be formally identified on the web page below):

http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/downloads/file/463/enforcement_parish_list

The Copythorne Play Area moves a step closer!

At the Parish Council meeting on 25th October, Councillors received a presentation of a revised Business Plan, with recommendations, from the Friends of Copythorne Playground Group. This is an exciting plan to develop a new Play Area for children in the local community, in the Parish Hall grounds.

There have been several developments in respect of this exciting potential community project and the 'Friends Group', have been working hard to ensure that they have considered all aspects of the potential development. Notably, the Parish hall Committee has recently agreed to the allocation of

the land for the Play Area within the Parish Hall site, which was one of the key early decisions.

As well as receiving the Business Plan, there was one issue for consideration. This was to address how, once the initial fund raising and development work of the Friends Group and wider community had been completed, the Play Area would be managed and looked after.

Councillors voted to adopt the recommendation within the Business Plan that the Parish Council would take on the responsibility for the Play Area once established. This final decision was key to enabling the 'Friends' Group to move forward with confidence to the next stage of development – **fund raising!**

The target date for opening is spring 2018 and the target funding requirement is £50,000.00! So, there's a lot to do!!

The 'Friends' Group will shortly be arranging a community meeting at the Parish Hall, to provide information on and invite support for the development work. The meeting date will be announced shortly.

However, we are sure that the 'Friends' Group representatives would be more than pleased to hear from anyone who'd like to offer help, support fund-raising(!). Contact can be made with the Group on:

copythorneplayground@hotmail.com.

This really is an exciting project for the whole community and well done to the 'Friends' Group for all their hard work in getting it this far – now, let's all help to make it happen!

Affordable Housing

Parishioners will know that work was taking place on an investigation and consultation on whether or not there was potential for Affordable Housing to be developed within the Parish. A major Community Exhibition took place in the

Parish Hall in January this year, at which a very large number of Parishioners attended.

However, work stopped on the investigation and consultation process due to the possible impact of the, then, pending Housing Bill 2016 which was being discussed in Parliament, which could have an effect on the key criteria for any development, already agreed by the Parish Council.

The Housing Act 2016 is now published and the potential for that impact was not realised in the final draft.

Therefore, a report was presented to the Parish Council at the meeting on the 25th October to request approval for the Parish Council Affordable Housing Working Group, (AHWG), to re-start its work and commence development of a new programme for investigation and consultation on whether or not the potential for Affordable Housing in the Parish existed. Councillors approved the recommendation and the AHWG will bring a report to the December 2016 meeting of the Parish Council with a proposed programme for the investigation and consultation activities.

Finally....Preparing for winter

Before the winter really gets to us with its heavy rainfall, Parishioners are asked to undertake checks on any culverts, watercourses or ditches where they have riparian responsibilities. Particularly, at this time of year, when large quantities of leaves are falling and hedges have been trimmed alongside fields, there is the potential for blockages to occur which can later become a source of flooding.

Parishioners are also encouraged to report any potential blockages they spot in their travels around the Parish, to the Parish Council Clerk, so that we can undertake the necessary communications with the landowner.

Parish Council Meetings

The Council meets on the fourth Tuesdays of the month at 7.00 pm in the Copythorne Parish Hall (rear extension). Members of the public are very welcome to attend the meetings and speak on any matter of concern at the start. The dates of the next few meetings are:

Tuesday 22 nd November 2016	Full Council Meeting
Tuesday 13 th December 2016	Full Council Meeting
Tuesday 24 th January 2017	Full Council Meeting

*The Clerk to the Council, Margaret Weston, can be contacted by email at clerk@copythorne.org.uk by 'phone on: **023 8081 1573**, or by post at: **Woodlands, Fritham, Hampshire SO43 7HJ**. Website: www.copythorne.org.uk. Details of individual Parish Councillors, as well as information on District and County Councillors, can also be found on the Parish Website and on community notice board.