

VILLAGE NEWS

SUMMER/AUTUMN 2008



A PATH ACROSS THE PARK?

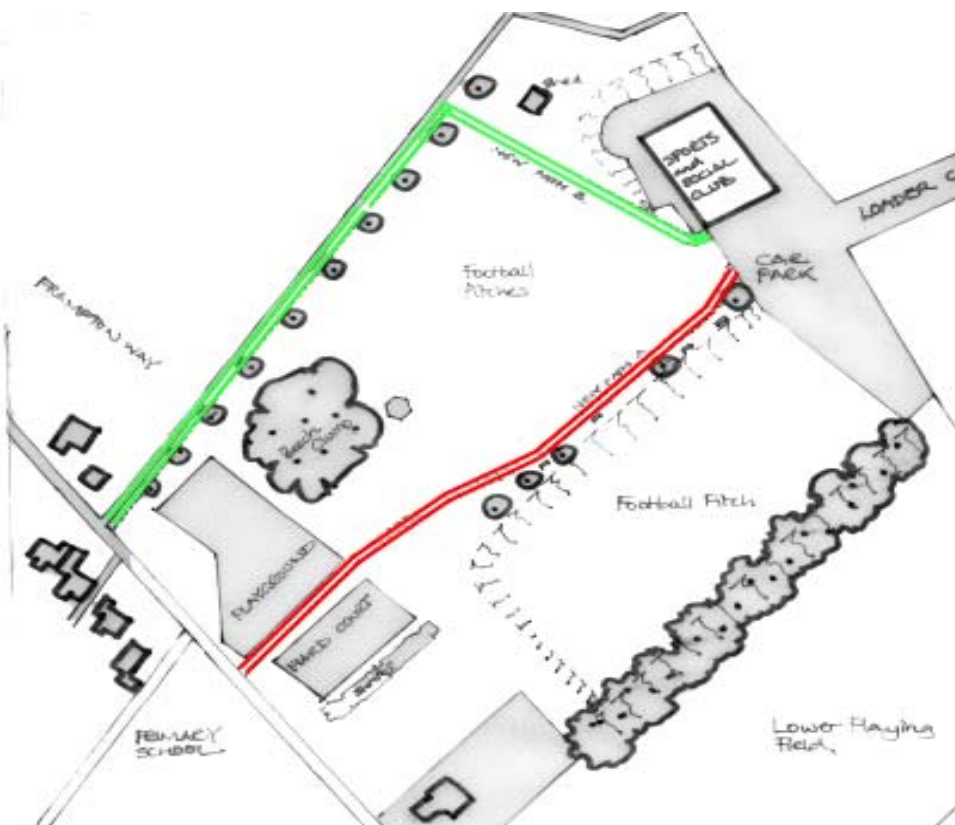
Back in the Winter 2005 issue, we asked for feedback about a proposal from the school for us to have a path laid across Eversley Park. At the time, the response was not in favour and the idea was dropped. We have now been asked again about this so, once more, we would like your views!

The proposed path will cross Eversley Park from the car-park at the end of Loader Close to the school playground. The main aim of this is to encourage parents to walk at least part of the way to school with their children and also to try and reduce the parking nightmare at the school, especially around Hinton Fields. Walking to school has been shown to improve alertness in pupils for the rest of the day, quite apart from the advantage of some added physical exercise for parents and pupils.

The siting of this path would be along the top of the bank, just below the two small football pitches and looking over the large one in the main park (see the map below). The suggested surface is **hoggin** (stones set in a clay base); this comes in various degrees of coarseness. We would not want large stones tracking onto the grass, causing problems for the mowers and for children playing.

As well as the school, the Worthys Football Club are in favour of this idea. It will make it easier to walk alongside the pitches up to the playground and on to the school, especially in wet weather.

What do you think? We are keen to find out - would you be for or against the idea or do you have any alternative suggestions? Please contact the Parish office (details on the back page) and let us know!



IN THIS ISSUE
A PATH ACROSS THE PARK?
OURS AT LAST!
AND THEN THERE WERE THREE...
WORK IN PROGRESS — PROJECTS UPDATE
ALL CHANGE!
USE IT OR LOSE IT

OURS AT LAST!

After months, if not years, of delay Church Green has now finally been transferred to the ownership of the parish as a village amenity. This means we are now responsible for the maintenance of the area and any plans for making it more attractive for all. To achieve this we have briefed a landscape architect to draw up plans which will then be available for public comment. Amongst the things we have asked to be included are:

- « the removal of the overgrown Thuja hedge. We asked for your comments on this a long time ago. Based on the feedback we received, we applied for and have been granted planning permission to get it removed
- « the installation of metal ‘estate’ railings similar to those in front of the Jubilee Hall along the London Road boundary and beside the churchyard. This will return the street scene to something like it was in the early 1900s as revealed by a photo in the local history group archives
- « advice on any replacement hedgerow planting
- « the installation of power and water supply for events like the village fete
- « a means of preventing travellers from accessing the Green
- « something to commemorate the work of the Vulcan Iron Foundry which formerly adjoined the site. A hydraulic ram has been suggested (scope for plenty of jokes here!) so if anyone knows the whereabouts of a Green and Carter Ram or wants to know what it is, please get in touch.
- « a possible ‘specimen’ tree for future generations to enjoy

Rest assured that no work will start until the end of the bird nesting season and the tree removal will not include the conifers behind the hedge or the diseased horse chestnuts which we hope may recover. If they don't, several disease resistant saplings have already been planted between them to fill the gaps if they have to be felled.

None of the cost of doing these works is being paid for from your Council Tax - it all comes from the fund that developers have to pay when their plans are approved.

We have carried out local consultation on the work we propose to do on Church Green and have had a good response. The work will start soon and we are looking forward to seeing it completed.

AND THEN THERE WERE THREE...

We were just being thanked for the new Abbots Worthy bus shelter (generously subsidised by the Upper Itchen Valley Society and Hampshire County Council) when two more bus stops appeared just along the road. To say that we were surprised by this would be an understatement.

It turned out that the extra bus stops had been requested by and paid for by Princes Mead School. Whilst it's preferable using public transport rather than cars to get children and staff to school, we question the siting of the stop on a bend where there is no footpath. We have been reassured that passengers can get on or off at either of the stops and if they use the one by Abbots Worthy House wall they can use the shelter.

Responsibility for the siting of bus stops lies with Hampshire County Council with whom we usually enjoy a good relationship but this time we seem to have had a failure of communication!

If you have any comments on this, please let us know.



WORK IN PROGRESS : ON-GOING PROJECTS

Web site: Work getting the site content has been finished and sent to the designer. We hope to launch the site in September. There have been a number of delays for technical reasons and we apologise for this.

Notice boards: We reviewed the use of boards around the village and removed any that were little used and which were in poor condition. We have replaced the boards in key sites with ones in the same style as the board at Tesco Express in Springvale Road. Apart from looking much better, these are constructed of man-made “timber” manufactured from recycled plastic. This means that they shouldn't rot or need painting. So as well as being greener, we will save money as we won't have to spend as much maintaining them. Each new board has a dedicated space for parish council notices. The rest of the space can be used for local advertisements. It would be very helpful if local groups could remove their notices once the event has passed.

Bus shelters: See the article on page 2 for an update on the Abbots Worthy bus shelter. The vandalised shelter near the King Charles pub has been re-sited as part of planning consent given to a development nearby and we are getting quotations for its repair.

Fryers Close: This has now been completed and new trees have been planted. Like many grass verges in the village, it has been looking quite overgrown recently. This maintenance of this and other areas is the responsibility of Winchester City Council, not the Parish Council, and we have complained to them about the lack of it.

Firs Crescent landscaping: The landscaping of the green area has finally been agreed upon, taking into account the views of local residents. This area is also owned by WCC who will look after it when work is completed.

Church Green: see the article on the previous page!

Playground equipment at Eversley Park and Fraser Road: We have received plenty of feedback from parents and children about the new equipment in Eversley Park and in Fraser Road. The equipment was changed to offer children some fresh and challenging play experiences and because some of the existing items were getting old and needed replacing on safety grounds (the play equipment is regularly inspected by RoSPA as are the designs of new equipment).

Although the playground in Fraser Road has plenty to offer small children, we realise now that Eversley Park does not since the removal of the cradle swings. As a result of your feedback we ordered a new cradle swing and a slide for under 5s—these will be in place by the time this newsletter is published. The existing slide with its scrambling net will remain in place. It cannot be modified to provide a ladder as suggested but its design has been subjected to tests and has been approved for older children. We hope that these additional items for smaller children will prove as popular as the other new ones.

It has been suggested that we have a few more benches and maybe plant some shade trees in Eversley Park alongside the play area so that adults can sit and chat within sight of their children. The R&A committee are currently looking into this.

Exercise equipment for older people: We have been asked to provide some equipment for older people. After all, we spend a lot on providing facilities for youngsters so why not on older folk?! We are currently investigating this and are in the process of obtaining details from suppliers (we have to have comparative quotes). We are also considering possible locations. The challenge for us is to ensure that we spend money wisely and install equipment that will be regularly used and by the people for whom it is intended. For example, it would be impossible for older people to have exclusive use of such equipment when it may become an attractive area for younger people to ‘hang out’ in the evenings. If you have any experience of using such equipment or you have any knowledge of related health and safety matters, please let us know.

Benches: A lot of the benches around the village are in a poor state and we have a rolling programme of replacing or refurbishing them. Quite a few have been done recently and are looking so much better - we hope you agree! The rest will be done over time.

ALL CHANGE!

Well, OK, maybe not quite all! We've had a few changes in the parish council recently - some councillors have left and new ones taken some of their places.

Cllrs. Nick Culhane and Derek Brockway have both resigned. Derek was a councillor for over 4 years and has done some tremendously valuable work for the PC, including finishing the Village Design Statement and producing some of the information leaflets featured in previous newsletters. Nick was a more recent recruit but brought a wealth of knowledge about the workings of local government to our meetings. We thank them both for their contributions and wish them well.

Cllr. Robert Johnston resigned both as chairman and parish councillor. He will continue his association with the PC as he was re-elected to WCC as city councillor in May. With over 10 years' service to the PC, we thank him for his considerable involvement and look forward to working with him in his WCC role.

We have three new recruits on the PC - Cllrs. Sarah White, Derek Smithers and Ian Gordon. We would like to extend a warm welcome to them all and look forward to working with them.

Our new chairman is Cllr. Peter Warrener. Peter has been a parish councillor for more than 10 years and has a wide range of interests and experience. You can often see him around the village behind the wheel of his London bus - please give him a wave!

Peter is supported by councillors Liz James (vice-chairman of the PC and chairman of the Planning committee), Rosemary Sign (chairman of the R&A committee), Dawn-Marie Cox, Ian Gordon, Jim Marshall, Neil Pidduck, Derek Smithers, Denis Welstead, Sarah White and by our clerks Barbara Fairbrother and Colin Arnett.

We still have 2 vacancies to fill - if you would like to join us, please contact the Parish office for further details.

USE IT OR LOSE IT

Concern has been expressed to the parish council about our apparent lack of support for Springvale Pharmacy. As many of you will know, Tesco have once more applied for permission to have a dispensary in the Winnall store and this could seriously affect this valuable resource for the village. Unfortunately, as a parish council, there is not a lot we can do. Hampshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) will make the decision and will have to consider the application in respect of the whole district, not just Kings Worthy. The PCT has deferred making this decision for now.

The parish council is fully supportive of the pharmacy - the planning committee supported the application for the business when it came up before us and that's not something we do very often! It does provide a very valuable resource for the village and needs the support of all of us. So how can you help?

Do you get repeat prescriptions from the doctor? If you do, you could get them sent direct to Springvale Pharmacy. It's only a short car trip or a walk for many of us and there's a bus stop right opposite as well. If you use it regularly, Eric will get to know you and will get a much more personal service than you will do in a bigger store. He will be able to keep a good stock of your regular medicines which means you're less likely to have to go back to get items that weren't in stock when you handed your prescription in.

Similarly, other village resources are under threat, for example the post offices. Although both were relieved in the recent series of PO closures, it's not the end of the matter. It's pretty clear what we all need to do - **USE IT OR LOSE IT!**

KINGS WORTHY PARISH COUNCIL

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