

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF  
THE PARISH OF SHERBOURNE  
HELD AT SHERBOURNE VILLAGE HALL  
ON MONDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2008 AT 7.30PM**

Present     Mrs Antoinette Gordon (Chairman)  
               Cllr Les Caborn (Warwickshire County Council)  
               Cllr John Murphy (Chairman Joint Parish Council)  
               Ms Gillian Friar (Warwick District Council)  
               Eleven Sherbourne electors

**Opening Remarks**

- 1        The Chairman welcomed those attending.
- 2        She stated there was an important issue to consider; that of Sherbourne having its own parish council. She gave a brief history of the desire by the village for this independence and cited examples of how the village had been disadvantaged by its membership of the joint parish council of Barford, Sherbourne and Wasperton.
- 3        She then introduced Ms Gillian Friar from Warwick District Council who had been invited to the meeting to brief electors on the mechanisms for creating a parish council.

**Sherbourne Parish Council**

- 4        Ms Friar explained that last year the power to create parish councils was devolved from the Secretary of State to district councils:
  - 4.1      Any parish with more than 150 registered electors could apply to the proper officer (Mr Chris Elliot, WDC) to form its own parish council.
  - 4.2      On receipt he would act upon the representation by setting up a working party (the WDC Regulatory Committee) to examine the proposal. The task of the working party was to confirm that the proposal had the support of the community and that it would be financially viable.
  - 4.3      A parish council must have a minimum of five councillors.
  - 4.4      A budget would have to drawn up to allow a precept to be levied.
  - 4.5      The timescale was for implementation at the elections in May 2011.
- 5        The first obstacle to this proposal was that with only 142 registered electors, Sherbourne failed the criterion at Minute 4.1. It was thought that some residents in Sherbourne were not yet registered to vote. Ms Friar undertook to provide the addresses of all registered electors in Sherbourne so that the occupants of those dwellings not listed could be invited to join the electoral roll.
- 6        There followed an interesting discussion about the composition and operation of parish councils which served to clarify what the proposal would achieve if successful.
- 7        The option of leaving the joint parish council and running Sherbourne with a parish meeting was mooted. Ms Friar did not have details to had but promised to forward them. Ostensibly however a parish meeting's limited powers and inability to raise funding made this a less attractive option.
- 8        Ms Friar left the meeting with the thanks of the Chairman.

## **Minutes**

- 9 The minutes of the annual meeting, held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2007 with minor alterations to the text for clarification without altering the minute were confirmed as a true record.
- 10 The meeting agreed to allow the minutes of the current meeting to be made public in draft.

## **Matters Arising**

- 11 Minute 21. Bins had now been distributed throughout the village.
- 12 Minute 27. Mr Smith Ryland had not closed a permissive path over his land as promised.

## **Report by Mrs Antoinette Gordon (Chairman)**

- 13 The text of Mrs Gordon's report is at Annex A.

## **Matters Arising**

- 14 The proliferation of signs on the Barford Bypass would be investigated.
- 15 The meeting agreed that there was no requirement to reinstate the public payphone in Sherbourne.
- 16 Efforts would continue to stem the rat-running through the village.

## **Police Matters**

- 17 No police representative was available for the meeting. Instead the written report at Annex B was submitted.

## **Report by Village Hall Committee**

- 18 The report by Mrs Peta Wilkinson is at Annex C.
- 19 She moved a vote of thanks to the Village Hall Committee and in particular to Gail Frost for the hard work in the past year.

## **Report from James Plaskitt MP**

- 20 Mr Plaskitt had been unable to attend the meeting but sent the commentary at Annex D which was read to the meeting.

## **Report from Cllr Les Caborn (Warwickshire County Council)**

- 21 Cllr Caborn spoke from the report at Annex E highlighting those points which were of particular relevance to Sherbourne.

## **Report by Cllr John Murphy (Chairman Joint Parish Council)**

- 22 Cllr Murphy's report is at Annex F to these minutes.

## **Other Matters**

- 23 The legality of using logs to define verge boundaries in Vicarage Lane was questioned.
- 24 There was a call for a survey of Sherbourne Brook to ascertain the effect on it of the recent construction works in the vicinity

## **Appointment of Representative to Sherbourne Village Hall Committee**

- 25 Mrs Peta Wilkinson was appointed

**Appointment of Chairman for 2008-9**

26 Mrs Antoinette Gordon was proposed and seconded, and in the absence of other nominations, elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

**Closure**

27 There being no other business the meeting was closed at 9:40pm.

## SHERBOURNE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - MONDAY 14 APRIL 2008. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

### PC Elections - 3 May 2007

- Cllrs Antoinette Gordon and Peta Wilkinson elected.
- Cllr Petra Johnston later co-opted.
- Thanks for attendance and valuable contributions.

### A46 Re-alignment

- Pre Inquiry meeting 15 January 2007 at Hilton Hotel.
- Tues 3 March 07- Public Inquiry opened, on Thurs 22 March adjourned for 6 weeks, reconvened 8 May, for one day.
- Fri 23 March - special meeting with Dessain and Warren (HA water expert) George Grima, Adrian Tallis and Antoinette Gordon, re flooding issues.

Sherbourne well represented at Public Inquiry by Boffins (Denis Wilson Partners, Arthur Amos Associates) and individuals took the stand; Adrian Tallis, Vaughan Rees, Robin Smith-Ryland, Petra Johnston, Carole Fidler, Antoinette Gordon; we were supported by the JPC, Jeremy Clay, Bishops Tachbrook PC, together with written submissions from virtually everybody in the Sherbourne

Site visits by Inspector - Tues 27 March and Thurs 17 May second site visit with marker posts.

Inspector's Report dated 29 June 2007, issued in Autumn, limited distribution, basically only two concessions offered - possible conservation of trees, location of bus stop.

Start of Works Exhibition in Village Hall 4 & 5 April 2008, construction period, to 2010; landscaping proposals need to be finalised and non-development of new link into A46 from Village again canvassed.

A letter sent to Mr Pizey on 4 April 2008 proposing setting up of Sherbourne Liaison Group.

Boffins ensured that Sherbourne was professionally represented, made a major and significant contribution to the Pub Inquiry. Possible continuance of Boffins in order to add strength to representation of Sherbourne concerning the major developments affecting us.

### Barford bypass

Length 2.1km, cost £10.38m-officially opened 14 May 2007, concrete structure intruding into the landscape, loss of many mature trees in Sherbourne, proliferation of road signs, turn into Barford dangerously difficult, increase in road noise affecting Sherbourne and Barford.

### Cycleway crossing on A429

- 17 Jan 2008 meeting with WCC - Lisa Jones (Transpt Planning & Christine Blanche (Design Servs) at Swan Street, with Cllr. Rob Mulgrue, to discuss route.
- Mon 4 Feb 08 (prior to Vill Hall AGM) display of large scale drawings and discussion.
- 5 Feb 08 Report compiled - crossing welcomed, but should be located nearer to bus pull-in.
- Sat 23 Feb 08 - A429 car crash, knocked over tel. box and road sign, WCC informed.
- 2 April 08 - letter from WCC, abandoning formal crossing as central refuge may make turning movements difficult for large vehicles, eg. milk tankers, alternative locations too costly.

**Telephone box** - views on possible re-instatement?

### Floods

Friday 20 July 2007, previously sandbags delivered and distributed from 26 Jan 07, but some properties flooded and deep flooding on A46 and Fulbrook Lane.

### Litter

- Village indebted for continued, vigilant litter picking, Village being seriously blighted by rubbish thrown from vehicles rat-running through the village particularly along Watery Lane also Vicarage Lane, as well as Fulbrook Lane. An on-going problem.

**Warwick Rural West Safer Neighborhood Team April 2007-March 2008**

Much has happened since the introduction of the Government SNT initiative back in November 2006. Warwickshire Police now has thirty-three safer Neighborhood teams based over five Boroughs in Warwickshire, as well as district policing teams that provide 24/7 response. The area given to our team, known as the Warwick Rural West Safer Neighborhood team (WRW SNT), was the area formally covered by four dedicated Community Beat Officers (Constables) that being the Wards of:

**Bishops Tachbrook (PC Emma Matthews)**

**Hatton (PC Andy Rouse)**

**Lapworth (PC Ken Fowler)**

**Leek Wootton (PC Tom Quinlan)**

Upon formation, the WRW SNT consisted of one Sergeant, the four CBO Constables and two PCSO's. However, following an internal review, which Police Head Quarters called '150 Forward', we have now been reduced to one Sergeant (he covers two SNT's), two Constables and three PCSO's.

The team is presently made up of Sgt Manjith Johal, who also manages the Warwick Rural East SNT in Kenilworth, PC Leon Carter, PC Ken Fowler and PCSO's Lucy Hague, Paul Coleman and Nathan Parry-Hall. PC Tom Quinlan left the team in March and was replaced by PC Leon Carter. PC Carter is a very experienced PC and has worked for Warwickshire Police for just over 5 years. In that time he has mainly been a re-active constable and is looking forward to working on a Safer Neighborhood Team. The two new PCSO's Paul and Nathan have been with the team for just over two months now. Paul Coleman is the PCSO for the Hatton ward, Nathan Parry-Hall for the Bishops Tachbrook ward and Lucy Hague for the Lapworth ward.

Warwickshire Police as a whole has gone through a large amount of change in the past year with the implementation of the '150 Forward' program that has seen all the reactive officers at Warwick move over to Leamington. This now means that the whole of Warwick district is covered by reactive Police Officers who work out of Leamington Police Station. A new shift pattern has also been introduced which saw a large amount of change for officers when it was introduced in January 2008. Another possible change following on from the '150 Forward' recommendations maybe a shift pattern change for the WRW team. This is currently under discussion and the local Parish Councilors will be update when the team knows the new shift pattern

The Mobile Police Station visits have been altered from morning and mid day times to evening slots. This has been a huge success, with recorded visits up by 76%. Mobile Police Station are important to local community members because it maybe the only chance they get to speak to a member of their local Police team.

The Lapworth Police Post will be totally overhauled in April 2008, being redecorated inside and outside. Hatton Park has a Police post, which was re-furbished last year, and there is now a computer which host's full access to all of Warwickshire Police systems and there is also lockers available if officers wish to leave their radios over night on charge. Due to operational commitment the team cannot say exactly when an officer will be in the Police post.

In March, the Safer Neighborhoods Team saw their names being publicized in the local newspaper. The team now has a direct dial number for the office which is 01926 684397 and a voicemail number 4397. A voicemail can be left for the team by dialing 01926 410111 then entering when prompted 4397. This voicemail is checked regularly when the team is working and we aim to respond to messages within 72 hours of them being left.

The 'Week That Was' continues to go from strength to strength, with record numbers of recipients asking to have their e-mail added to the database. If anyone knows of anyone that may benefit receiving the 'week that was', please forward their e-mail address to the teams e-mail: [wrw.snt@warwickshire.police.uk](mailto:wrw.snt@warwickshire.police.uk) and they will be added to the database.

The PACT priorities have not changed since Sgt Johal took over from Sgt Holtby. The PACT priorities currently are:

- Inconsiderate parking: Rising Lane, Baddesley Clinton and Barford, High Street, Church Street and on the Wellesbourne Road
- Speeding: B4439 Hatton to Hockley Heath
- Nuisance youths: Bishops Tachbrook and Hampton Magna. High visibility patrols are being conducted especially in Hampton Magna and Bishops Tachbrook concerning the nuisance youths. And since having the two new PCSO's (Nathan and Paul) high visibility patrols are being conducted more frequently in the hot spot areas.

PACT priorities are extremely important to the team because we need to know what the public wants from the Police and the PACT meetings are a perfect opportunity for community members to express what they want and change a priority.

Kindest regards,

Sgt Manjith Johal, PC Ken Fowler, PC Leon Carter, PCSO Lucy Hague, PCSO Paul Coleman & PCSO Nathan Parry-Hall.

## VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE REPORT

Prepared for Annual Parish Meeting Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Dear Friends

I am delighted to say that much has been achieved by the community in general and the village Hall Committee in the last year. The focus of our efforts was creating a greater sense of community whilst raising funds for the development of our hall and surrounding amenities.

With the help and enthusiasm of the committee members and the tireless efforts of Gail we have done the following:

### 1. Surveyed the village

Asking for ideas about social events and ways to support community development. We had over 30 responses and people generated a huge amount of Ideas. This Included the addition of things like exercise classes, barn dancing, line dancing and horticultural talks.

### 2. Developed a comprehensive programme of events

This Includes musical evenings, coffee mornings, wine tasting and presentations of local interest We hope that people will continue to support these events as they are both sociable and Interesting.

### 3. Village Fete 20 September 2008

The village is joining forces with the Church to design and run a fabulous fete with a Victorian theme. David tong has kindly agreed to allow us to hold the fete at his lovely home which is a perfect setting. A planning committee has been convened which Is chaired by Gail and meets regularly. Various members of the village are helping to organise food, signage, stalls and entertainment etc. If you would like to become involved watch for the regular Sherbourne newsletters which will keep you in touch with who is doing what and how they can be contacted.

The next meeting Is going to held on 26 April In the village hall at 730pm

### 4. Village Hall lettings

We have, through Gail's efforts, managed to secure many more lettings this year with the Village Hall being utilised for a range of local and more widespread activities. This includes an Art Group, Local Authority presentations, JPC meetings and others. I is great to see the hall being utilised and very positive that we are gaining more funds to renovate the hall.

### 5. Repairs to the Village Hall

We are talking to Robin [Smith-Ryland] and various contractors about how we can repair the roof such that It allows us to undertake works to Improve the inside of the building and the lavatories. We are hopeful that these will result In the roof being mended, which will allow us to Improve the interior substantially.

### 6. Local History

Ted Scrannage is keen to hear from anyone interested In working with him, or hearing the results of, his explorations Into the history of the village. He wants to establish the structure of the twin villages of Sherbourne and Fulbrook from pre Norman times and follow their histories through the centuries until the disappearance of Fuibrook around the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

He would like to collect and disseminate as much as possible In the way of data and Information and provide an opportunity for any Interested villages to take part in regular educational and social meetings.

Ted feels that we may be able to gain Investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund which enables communities to celebrate, look after and learn more about their diverse heritages. They fund the entire cost of carrying out any research, data collection and dissemination up to a madnarm of £50k. He is confident that our village Is well qualified to obtain a substantial grant providing that it is shown that

the community is enthusiastic and receptive to the idea.

Please get in touch with Ted if you would like to support him in this very worthwhile endeavour.

Many thanks and best wishes

Peta



**Commentary by James Plaskitt MP**

Thank you for writing to me about the Planning Reform Bill. I have read your comments about this important matter with interest and would like to respond to some of the points you have made.

There is a clear need for reform of the planning process-the current system is very slow, bureaucratic, complicated and cumbersome. Decisions on planning of major infrastructure projects currently involve multiple applications to different bodies under several Acts of Parliament. The UK must implement the national infrastructure necessary for the twenty-first century; upgrading our railway network, building renewable energy power stations, and improving our port facilities. It currently takes far too long to meet these challenges, with public inquiries tending to debate national policy rather than the local impact of project. The complexity of the process prevents many people from having their views heard adequately, which is why I believe this new Bill will improve public participation in the planning process.

This Bill will enable national infrastructure projects to form part of a nationwide debate on the type of projects the country needs, while allowing individual planning inquiries to be conducted at a local level within this framework. The current system favours those who are well coordinated and resourced to influence the application process-for example professional lobby bodies who regularly access the planning process. However for local communities, who may only become involved occasionally, the process is extremely difficult to comprehend. That is why it is necessary to simplify the process, so that local communities have a fair chance of understanding and influencing it.

This Bill will provide every person with a right to be heard. For the first time, developers will be required to consult local communities, and other key stakeholders such as charitable bodies, before they submit an application. Environmental impact assessments will also become a statutory obligation. and the government will provide additional funding for hard to reach groups to have their say in the process.

Public inquiries for planning applications currently take a very long time. For local people wishing to make their voice heard, this often means taking a long time off work. extensive travel to the inquiry and paying for expensive barristers to represent them. We are proposing to make the inquiry process much easier: inquiries will be shorter, more focused on the direct local impact rather than national policy, and people will be able to represent themselves.

The Bill will help to clarify and improve parliamentary accountability of the planning process. Under the current system, appeals and inquiries are quasi-judicial, with Ministers having little say over the outcome. In deciding on planning applications the two major factors to consider are national need and local impact -clearly there will be times when these two concerns are in conflict. However this Bill will make the accountability for such decisions fairer. The Bill proposes that the Government sets a broad national framework, aimed at providing coherent and long-term guidance based on need. But it wouldn't be right for parliament to take the decisions as there could be a tendency to favour national policy. That is why this Bill establishes an independent Infrastructure Planning Commission, composed of experts to rule on the planning application process. The IPC will consider both the broad national planning strategy set by parliament and the local concerns represented in the consultation and inquiry stages. It will then be able to make impartial and informed decisions on a case by case basis.

If we are serious about tackling the big challenges the UK faces, such as climate change, we need to introduce these reforms to our planning system. The world's climate cannot wait while important projects such as wind farms, better public transportation, carbon capture and storage power stations and eco-towns are held up in bureaucratic inquiries for many years.

I hope you will agree that the Planning Reform Bill is the best way to enable us to meet these challenges, while at the same time increasing public participation and access to the process.

Thank you for making me aware of your concerns on this matter, and I would be happy to receive any further comments in writing.

## REPORT FROM WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Our Vision:

Working in Partnership to put Customers first; Improve Services and Lead Communities.

### Our Priorities:

Raising levels of Educational Attainment Caring for Older People

Pursuing a Sustainable Environment

### Children, Young People and Families:

- Primary schools: Very impressive Key Stage 2 results. 84% of pupils gained level 4 or above in English; in Maths 79% reached level 4 or above compared to the national average of 77%; and in Science 90% of pupils achieved level 4 or above compared to 87% nationally. Snitterfield Primary School, and Bishopston Primary School in Stratford-upon-Avon achieved particularly good results, along with a number of others in different areas of the County.
- Ofsted: Warwickshire has been rated as a 'good' children's services authority by Ofsted. The report said that attainment was continuing to improve in all key stages, and praised the Council for its partnership working and commitment to the Every Child Matters outcomes: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.
- The County Music Service has received a prestigious diploma from the National Music Council for their extensive work across the County.
- Funding: Still one of the worst Councils for education funding, but despite this we have achieved excellent results.
- Schools Funding Formula: We are fighting to obtain fair and equitable schools funding. After the production of a formula that we weren't completely happy with, we have decided to go back to the drawing board to ensure a fair deal for Warwickshire schools.

### Adult, Health and Community Services:

- CSCI Adult social care services inspection: WCC was awarded a 2\* rating. This is quite a leap and shows strong improvement.
- Supporting People: AHCS has recently undergone a Supporting People inspection and early indications suggest feedback will be very positive.
- Home care and independent living: We are working to increase the number of older people who can live independently in the community, via schemes such as warden controlled housing.
- Libraries: We have delivered 5 new mobile library vans, and have increased provision of IT within libraries and on mobile libraries. This has increased access and is strongly linked to the customer access agenda.

### Customer Access:

- One stops shops were unveiled across the County, and Kenilworth one stop shop celebrated its first very successful year. The brand behind the shops, Warwickshire Direct was awarded the top accolade in the 'e-Government excellence: Shared Services' category of the prestigious e-Government National Awards.
- Three kiosks have been delivered in Rugby, providing customers with information on, and a range of options for, accessing Council facilities.

### Achievements 2007

- One stop shops were opened in Whitnash and Atherstone, with a further shop planned for Southam.

### Modernisation Programme:

- Providing value for money: Strategic Directors have led a robust budget process based on the principles of delivering on our priorities whilst ensuring we offer efficient services and good value for money for our communities. As a result of this, the Conservative group recently announced a budget resolution delivering £6.197 million of savings, a low 3.9% council tax increase, and investment in services that matter to the people of Warwickshire as are included in our priorities, such as reducing the risk of flooding, ensuring the provision of services for older people, and improving prospects for our young people (this is subject to approval of Council in February).

- Resources: A recent inspection awarded WCC a 4\* rating for use of resources, the highest mark possible. This indicates that we are one of the best Councils for use of resources in the country.
- Partnerships: Developing strong partnership arrangements, such as through the LAA where we are currently negotiating the new LAA. Through CSW sub-regional forum, the sub-region has gained a strong voice in the creation of the Regional Spatial Strategy, and this work is ongoing. We are also working to develop more partnership working at a local, sub-regional and regional level, particularly in economic matters. We have also continued to develop our partnership arrangements with the Police and Health Service, and I am keen to build on this next year. With localities being developed, our working with various partners is set to be strengthened further, both through the area committees and new arrangements being put in place.
- Discussions are continuing to be held between Conservative Members and MPs with the Directors of Coventry Airport, ensuring that the County's voice is heard on issues such as planning, and so that we can work together in boosting economic development opportunities. Similar action has been taken on other issues, including the development of Stoneleigh Park and options for the Peugeot site.

#### **Environment:**

- Highways: An extra £400,000 is proposed to be spent on highways next year, and we also propose to deliver more money locally to reduce the risk of flooding by clearing gutters and gullies.
- Waste and recycling: There is more to be done in this area, and it will be an important feature of the County Council's work for years to come. Recently, Cabinet agreed for a statutory joint committee for waste to be set up. This will allow all waste authorities in the County to meet the challenges they face.
- Speeding: The Village Speed Limit Review saw changes to speed limits in villages including Lighthorne Heath, Fillongley, Stoneleigh, Kineton, Stretton on Dunsmore, and Harborough Magna. Others are planned for next year.
- Connect2: The Connect2 project, strongly supported by the administration, has received over £1 million in funding from the Big Lottery Fund: The People's £50 million contest. WCC held a large scale communications campaign encouraging people to vote for the scheme, which will see the disused Kenilworth - Berkswell railway line converted into a leisure route, a positive reward for the success of the campaign.
- Biomass boiler: In December, Council agreed for a Biomass boiler to be installed at Kingsbury Water Park. The boiler will utilise wood chippings, a renewable source of energy which will reduce the Council's carbon footprint.
- The controlling group are supporting all friendly initiatives at whatever level.

#### **Economy:**

- The Nuneaton & Bedworth Masterplan continues to develop, with Cabinet agreeing to the co-location of two colleges in the centre of the town earlier this year.
- Stratford: There has been a strong commitment from WCC to the World Class Stratford project, and following a joint bid from SDC and WCC almost £5 million has been secured from AWM towards a set of five projects. Also contributed to the production of an Urban Design Framework that provides a blueprint for the future development of the town.
- Business Improvement District status has been obtained for Rugby Town Centre, delivering £5 million over the BID period. Plans are also being pursued for Timothy Road Bridge Stratford, and in Warwick and Coleshill.
- The Market Towns initiative is progressing, resulting in improvements for many market towns in the County.

#### **Community Protection:**

- Fire and Rescue: The recommendations of the Morphew Review have been put on hold pending outcomes of investigations into the fire at Atherstone-on-Stour in November, which are being undertaken by both the police and the Fire and Rescue service. In the wake of the fire, the Council launched the Firefighters' Families Fund, which has so far raised almost £400,000. A new campaign, "one hour four lives" was launched on 13th December, asking people to give an hour's salary for the long-term support of the firefighters' families.
- The Warwickshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team have won the Highfliers Care Services Improvement Practice Award for Information Sharing - Joining Health and Social Care (a national award). The award recognises the efforts of the team to inform people of the risks of alcohol misuse.

**Performance:**

- PWC: In the Price Waterhouse Coopers Benchmarking Club, Warwickshire County Council has been judged as third best County Council in the country. This is a very good result for the County and bodes well for the CPA next year.
- The Peer Review that was recently carried out indicates that WCC is a good county with the potential to become excellent.

**Audit Commission Report, 2007:**

Warwickshire County Council is improving well :

The Council has delivered improving outcomes in its three priority areas together with good improvement across services. Investment in modernising Adult Services is still at a relatively early stage but is delivering better support services and more choice for older people. The prospects for improvement are now 'promising', reflecting a clear vision, strong leadership and increased capacity. Education attainment is above the national average with good progress with reducing inequalities in attainment and improving outcomes for vulnerable children. The Council is making progress in pursuing a sustainable environment but it is not yet clear what impact this is having in delivering its carbon emissions target. Overall performance and improvement are above average with comparatively low levels of spend. The Council has developed stronger plans for the future. It is better placed to modernise Adult Social Care and has a clear pathway for delivering its waste strategy. The new ways of working programme is supporting an increased pace in improving access to services and better corporate working. Strengthened financial processes and strong leadership has improved the Council's capacity for change.

### **Annual Report of Chairman of Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton Joint Parish Council**

2007-2008 has again been a busy year – 9 routine JPC meetings, numerous Planning meetings, 2 Special Meetings, numerous Working Party or subcommittee meetings and the three Parish Meetings.

The year began with parish council elections, adding two new and extra councillors for Barford – Cllr Mrs Dulcie Cobb and Cllr Alan Rhead, who was also elected as a District Councillor. Cllrs Mrs Petra Johnstone (nee Smith-Ryland) and Mrs Peta Wilkinson were elected without a poll for Sherbourne and all are already playing a very active role in JPC activities.

**Barford Shop and PO** – The shop and Post Office projects have moved forward at a pace during the year, focusing initially on feasibility, location and design and moving on to fundraising and legal matters. During the year there have been extensive negotiations with Robin Smith-Ryland in order to secure relaxation of the restrictive covenants on the Barford village green and all this has now moved on to the point where construction is actually under way and the shop is hoped to open in the autumn. Doubts are currently resting over the future of the Post Office elements of the project due to the closure review which will remove many outlets from the system.

**Barford Bypass** has settled into use and has brought important relief to the village. There are still outstanding matters which we are struggling to get resolved but we will continue to pursue these. The northern entrance to the village seems to provide most problem and continues to catch out the unaware who fail to slow and signal early enough and are then often harassed by following traffic, and this is an aspect that we will be drawing yet again to the county's attention.

A small number of properties are apparently severely adversely impacted by noise from the new road and levels are apparently significantly in excess of those predicted. This is a civil matter and must be pursued by individuals as parish and district councils have no powers to act formally in these matters. Extra planting has also been provided to shield one property which is adversely suffering from lights from vehicles on the road.

**A46 Sherbourne Bypass** – The proposals to improve the Longbridge J15 area with an A46 bypass were approved after the Public Inquiry despite strong objections being made by the JPC. The scheme is progressing at this very time. Many aspects of the scheme have been designed to minimise disruption during the build period but there will be disruptions and delays including closure of the B4463 for six months from the end of 2008 and a weekend closure of the A46 Warwick Bypass for demolition of the Budbrooke Bridge. However, despite all the ensuing inconvenience we may look forward to improved traffic flows and hopefully the gridlock we often endure will become less frequent in the future. The JPC has repeatedly asked for a review of the speed limit on the A429 as it passes through all three parishes and have suggested a 50mph limit would be appropriate – The A and B roads Speed Review was conducted this year and we were disappointed that once again we were being overlooked, despite the fact that there appears to be a move towards more general speed control, often by signage alone. We have made a forceful comment upon this and the matter is now being reconsidered and we are hopeful that we may still get a speed reduction which will benefit all three parishes.

**Barford Parish Plan** –. The original BPP Committee continues to monitor and report on the implementation progress, but progress is slow. At last we are seeing some signs that the higher authorities are beginning to look more favourably on our proposals but there is still, despite all the rhetoric, a reluctance to accept bottom-up government and grass-roots input. Old paradigms are being discarded and obstructions are being displaced – a slow process but we will continue to press for response.

**Play areas** are under constant review – checked at least weekly by a Parish Councillor. The skateboard area continues to generate comment. The new spray produced minimal improvement and one of the ramps has now been boxed in. Despite expert predictions this has made little difference to sound readings but complaints have reduced, at present but no doubt better weather will tell us the real result.

New play equipment will be provided on Barford Village Green as part of the shop project and the older equipment removed will be relocated at the Playing Fields to provide a wider range of activities there.

Graffiti at the Playing Fields was becoming excessive and unpleasant and a major campaign was initiated to remove it using specialist equipment and materials provided via the Probation Service. The results whilst not perfect were most welcome and to date the problem has not recurred to any great degree.

**Dog Fouling** – This remains a constant problem and although much less than in years past is still causing concern. There are strict rules and severe fines for offenders and the Dog wardens promise zero-tolerance. Dog mess bins are available at the Playing Fields and near the Scout Hut so there is little excuse. Persistent offenders are clearly not listening so it may be that names need to be passed on to improve matters.

**Police Matters** –The safer neighbourhood Initiative has now been with us for more than a year. Despite assurances of ongoing stability we have suffered continual changes of personnel and latterly a significant reduction in man-power; currently reduced to a sergeant, two PCs and four PCSOs when fully staffed. Rota patterns have been changed to give greater coverage of the day Although actual presence in our villages remains small given greater priorities in other parts of their “patch”. The mobile Police station now calls regularly in our villages and times of attendance are posted well in advance on the notice boards.

**Sherbourne and Wasperton village halls** have again been supported by JPC grants - £1250 Sherbourne and £1370 Wasperton – members have again recognized more active management and fund raising taking place in the smaller villages, to make their halls more viable, and Barford waived its claim to JPC funding in the light of good occupancy and reserves

The JPC also gave grant support towards maintenance of each of the three churchyards.

**Allotments** –Most are in good productive use and the water supply to all parts of the allotments has been fully implemented.

**Bus shelters** – shelters throughout our parishes have been reviewed and the older brick-built ones have been found in need of significant renovation. Detailed specifications have been drawn up and contractors will be implementing repairs in the near future.

#### **On Planning specifically:**

**Oldhams’** site is now well progressed with nearly all the market homes sold, all the original rental Affordable Homes taken and some of the shared-equity Affordable Homes being converted to rental status. We had a stressful time when WDC failed to deal with the Affordable Homes allocations according to the s.106 agreement which we had negotiated and various worthy people were initially denied access to the properties. After much debate a temporary “work-around” was agreed and largely addressed the shortfall. However, it is still not working as it was intended and we will be pressing firmly for the WDC Allocation Policy to be changed and for s.106 agreements to have greater precedents in such schemes.

**Proposals at 20 Wellesbourne Road** Yet another application, two backfill bungalows, has been made and refused at WDC. The site remains vacant and neglected and we await further developments – hopefully a return to single household occupation.

**Land surrounding Barford House** still remains a matter of interest although there has been little public activity this year. The JPC refrained from comment on previous informal proposals for fear of prejudicing its position in the event of an actual application on the site, but we believe that a new approach may be made, by a new interested party, in the near future.

All councillors have attended many meetings and served their electors well, working as a strong team with James Johnson our Clerk/RFO. Many thanks to all for their input.

JVM  
25/03/2008