

LOXWOOD Parish Council ~ Newsletter ~

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on Tuesday 27th April at North Hall. A large number of villagers attended the meeting and were addressed by the Parish Council Chairman, Alison Sanderson as well as a number of other Parish Councillors, CDC Cllr John Andrews and PCSO Clair Gamlin.

The Chairman congratulated the village as a whole on its emergence as a more lively and inclusive place to live. She felt that this was due in large part to the activities of a number of groups, most especially The Loxwood Society, The North Hall Fundraisers and the Loxwood Community Gardens Initiative.

Cllr Sanderson went on to report on the ongoing activities of the PC, the most prominent of which remained the negotiations over changing the look of the parapets over the canal. (See later article)

The Chairman also reported on the handling of **planning applications**, most specifically the application to build 10 'affordable homes' on land next to the Surgery. She explained that the PC approached the matter on the basis that, if there was a proven need for more affordable homes in Loxwood, then the application would only be studied in terms of design and location. After discussion with the CD Rural Housing Enabling Officer and later the CD Planning Officer handling the application, it soon became clear that there was in fact no identifiable need for the proposed houses, which also had a knock on effect of making it invalid to

build on an exception site. Based on the evidence, the PC objected to the application as did CDC.

The roads in and around Loxwood were constantly being reported to WSC Highways, whether it was for potholes, mud on the road or blocked up gulleys.

The Chairman reminded people to report overgrown hedges to the Clerk giving the address.

Willets Way was to be cleared now that the issue of the diseased trees with TPO's was resolved. WACT would send a 'Clearance Team' along to do this for us. The site would then be handed over to the Loxwood Community Gardens Initiative. Cllr Scott Taylor would oversee the project.

The PC would repair the potholes in the **Sports Association car park** during this financial year.

The Speedwatch report was given by PCSO Gamlin who explained why it was not yet operational. WSC Highways had to agree to the sites proposed by the Police. She told the audience that in a recent visit to Loxwood, approximately 1 speeding motorist per minute was clocked between 4 and 4.30pm. The Speedwatch Initiative is being coordinated by Cllr Kersey. Anyone interested should contact her via the Clerk.

PCSO Gamlin also reported on the reduction in crime in the locality. She explained that a lot of cross boarder Police cooperation took place, given the vicinity of Loxwood to Surrey.

Cllr Sanderson commented on the superb fundraising efforts of **North Hall** Management Committee (NHMC) later reported on by the PC representative on the NHMC, Cllr Elizabeth Dugdale. Cllr Dugdale was resigning from her dual role and Cllr Sanderson thanked her for all her hard work in helping David Wellington in particular and the NHMC in general, in getting the whole extension and renovation project underway. Much of the credit for the initial finding of 'grants' was down to Cllr Dugdale's long hours of work and dedication. Fortunately Cllr Wendy Andrews has agreed to take on Cllr Dugdale's role as PC rep.

Cllr Sarah Lane went through the Financial Report explaining that the greatest financial commitment for the PC was North Hall. Savings of over £8,000 had been made in the last financial year. Reserves after committed expenditure were in the region of £69,000 which included balances earmarked for financial assistance with North Hall renovations. There would also be expenditure not yet finalised for repairing the Sports Association car park. For 2010/11 the budgeted expenditure was approximately £30,000 excluding North Hall and the car park and the precept had been set at slightly below this figure at £28,840.

Cllr Elizabeth Dugdale reported on the North Hall plans for the extension and renovation. She explained that due to financial constraints work would be carried out in two phases, the first being the extension. The current fund raising total stood at £159,000, much of which was through assistance by the PC, grants and a very generous £25,000 legacy. £9,000 had been raised through a series of fundraising initiatives, including the phenomenally popular Jazz Nights. More grant applications were in and new ones were being prepared. The plans by award winning architect Valerie Hinde were available to view.

Cllr Howard Thomas reported on the canal emphasising the need for all villagers to put aside their feelings that it was WACT's mess to sort out, and to support the fundraising initiatives. He pointed out that the design change was being carried out in order to satisfy Loxwood's ideas of how it should look, therefore we needed to help make it happen. (See later article)

CD Cllr John Andrews addressed the meeting and offered apologies for the none attendance of Ward Cllr Philippa Hardwick who was recovering from an operation on her ankle. He expressed his admiration for the initiative, determination and successful restructuring of Loxwood's infrastructure, so much of which was due to the contributions of the Parish Councillors and the activities of the local organisations which had improved the social life of Loxwood.

Cllr Andrews went on to point out that at District they had preserved the services for delivery in 2010/11 while achieving very substantial savings. The governance of the District was as open and democratically accountable as possible within the constraints of legislation of the last 10 years, including the publication by Officers and Members of a rolling 12 month program of works and decisions. Cllr Andrews intended to advise the PC on all matters arising at the earliest op-

portunity giving this community the greatest possible opportunity to influence matters. He believed the changes would rebalance decision making to recognise better the needs of our isolated rural community.

Cllr Sanderson thanked all for attending and put out a plea for a **new Parish Councillor**. Cllr David Townsend was resigning due to work commitments and Cllr Sanderson asked for anyone interested to contact the Clerk. She reminded everyone of the ability of CDC to close the PC down if it did not maintain its full membership.

LOXWOOD SOCIETY

Much of the Society's activity, in recent weeks, has been working with the Parish Council on the scheme to improve the look of the Canal Bridge parapets. The Society was successful in obtaining a grant from the Chichester Community Action fund and is now actively involved with the 'Buy a Brick' scheme. We are pleased that at long last a planning application has been submitted by the Canal Trust for a change of parapets design. Future fund raising plans include tapping other grant sources as well as events which it is hoped will get residents support.

The Society assisted residents in Farm Close and Willets Way in understanding the planning issues associated with the now refused proposal to build affordable homes next to the surgery.

The Society is pleased that the village fete on 5th June is receiving considerably more effort and imagination this year and again hopes it will be well supported by local people.

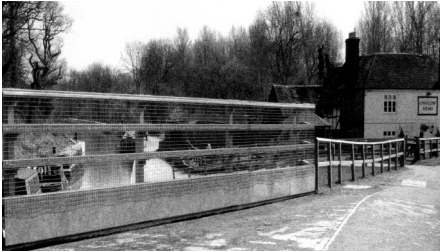
Please put 24th June in your diaries and come to the Society's AGM and BBQ at North Hall. As usual there will be a licensed bar and some great food.

Don't forget: Loxwood Fete on Saturday June 5th

Please contact Len Milsom if you can help: 752032 or milsom@waitrose.com

LOXWOOD CANAL PARAPETS - UPDATE

FROM THIS



TO THIS



Loxwood Canal Parapets Fundraising Scheme needs your help

When the current galvanised steel parapets were revealed, the vast majority of local residents were horrified and over 700 signed a petition to show their unhappiness. Members of the Parish Council and Loxwood Society formed The Loxwood Bridge Committee (LBC) in order to see why things had gone so disastrously wrong and, more importantly, see how they could be put right.

Why did it all go wrong? Was it all WACT's fault?

No, a number of factors and agencies all played their part. New Government guidelines over Health & Safety in relation to bridges and bridge parapets were introduced just as the design of the canal bridge parapets was being finalised. WACT had to agree any design with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) (Highways) whose engineering consultants suggested an 'off the shelf' parapets package which would fit the new criteria. WACT did not question the advice and went ahead. Unfortunately, no one looked at the small print until the LBC got involved.

What happened next?

Since WACT had omitted to consult CDC on the changed parapet design, the planning permission was retracted. A new application was required which would respect the local vernacular and have the support of the village.

What did LBC discover?

The LBC discovered that the parapets erected by WACT are, in fact, high impact

barriers suitable for vehicle containment over a motorway where vehicles are travelling at speeds of 70 miles per hour. As the speed limit is 30 through Loxwood there is no need for such high impact containment.

The bridge was built to 1.8m in order to prevent horses and riders potentially falling over the top. The LBC discovered that the regulations of the British Horse Society do not require such a height therefore the parapets could be reduced to 1.4m. The Government requirements specifically allow for designs to be re-worked, subject to a safety assessment, in order for them to fit in with the location. The current parapets clearly do not.

The LBC met with WSCC (Highways) and obtained agreement that the LBC's interpretation of the Government Regulations was correct and a new, more appropriate design for the parapets could be acceptable.

Working with WACT

The LBC discussed its findings with WACT and eventually came to an agreement that something had to be done. Two options were proposed:

1. Reduce the height of the existing steel parapets and paint them green.
2. Replace the steel parapets with a 1m high brick wall with a light rail above to total height 1.4m.

Option 1 is obviously cheaper and less time consuming and was WACT's preferred option. Option 2 was the preferred option of the Parish Council and the LBC.

In early 2010 the LBC visited senior people in the planning department and although they could not give any ruling until an application had been submitted, they believed they might be unable to refuse Option 1. Hence it became imperative to find a way of getting WACT to agree to create the brick parapets the village wanted. Agreement was finally reached that WACT would go with option 2 provided some help was given to raise the additional funds to pay for the change.

Will the new design be safe?

Yes, the design will still have to satisfy the relevant safety requirements; however, the actual position of the parapets will be considered as well as the potential speeds and vehicle impact rather than a one size fits all policy.

What happens now?

WACT has started off the Fund with what it would have cost them to carry out option 1, and now the joint task is to find the rest of the money (approximately £27,000).

So far we have secured a grant of £5,000 from the Chichester District Community Action Chest and are looking into other options.

Why should you help?

There is no obligation on you to help if you do not wish to, however, we all wanted the parapets to be altered and we all have to live with the look of them if they're not. WACT did not want, nor could it afford to change the parapets. However, because the management committee came to realise how much this meant to Loxwood residents, it changed the initial decision. However, there remains the risk that if we don't raise enough money, the planning department at CDC could force WACT to revert to Option 1 as they will not agree to an open ended timescale on achieving compliance with the revised planning permission

As part of the coordinated effort WACT is also actively fundraising to help make it happen.

As a further gesture to the Loxwood community, WACT is sending a team of volunteers to clear the scrubland at Willets Way.

How can you help?

There will be a series of fundraising events taking place, all of which will be advertised. 2 canal trips are planned. A 'Strawberries & Cream Tea' afternoon cruise on the 22nd July and a nautical themed Quiz night & BBQ on the 31st of July.

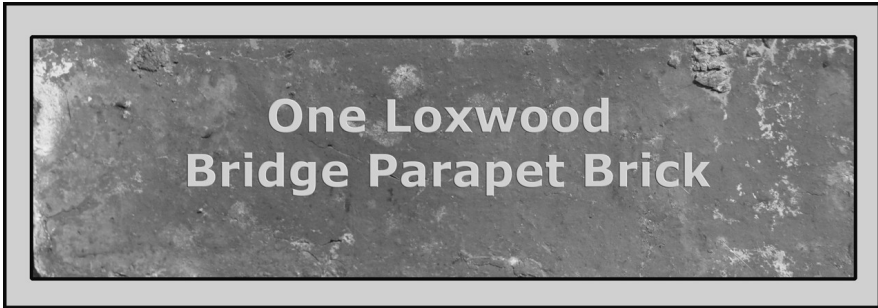
A 'Buy a Brick Scheme' has been launched and has already raised nearly £1,000. Other ideas will come on line later.

WACT has established a ring-fenced 'Railings Fund' which means that any money donated for this cause cannot be spent on any other project. Having the Fund run by WACT also means that donations can benefit from reimbursement under the Gift Aid Scheme, and any works are not subject to VAT.

If you wish to participate in the fundraising in any way, or to donate, please contact: Len Milsom (Co-Chair Loxwood Society): Tel: 01403 752032, or email: milsom@waitrose.com

LOXWOOD CANAL PARAPETS 'BUY A BRICK' FUNDRAISING SCHEME

Buy 1 brick for £5 or 5 bricks for £20!



I enclose £_____ for _____ bricks to be registered in my name or I
enclose a cheque for £_____ for _____ bricks.

Please make your cheque payable to The Wey & Arun Canal Trust, and
return to: Len Milsom (Co-Chair Loxwood Society), Arunwood, High
Street, Loxwood RH14 0RD.

(If you are a UK taxpayer please send the Gift Aid form with your donation.)

I am a UK taxpayer and ask that this and any future donations be treated
as a Gift Aid donation to recover tax I have paid.

Signed : _____

Date : _____

Name : _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

LOXWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

It is said that the speed of change in modern society is so rapid that 80% of the jobs that will exist in ten years' time are not yet in existence! That's quite some challenge for any school, trying to figure out which skills and attributes our children might require when they enter the work place. So, it's important that, as a primary school, we concentrate not just on the core subjects of Maths, English and Science and the three 'r's, but also on providing the children with as broad an experience as we can. This is partly achieved through our new curriculum which aims to be more creative and empowering, helping children to learn how to learn. We place great emphasis on helping the children to think independently and to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

We are also very proud of our extensive after-school activity programme which includes a huge range of pursuits ranging from golf to first aid, and from drama to religious studies. This programme delivers some tremendous outcomes considering the relatively small size of the School.

The school football team won the Horsham and District 7-a-side tournament this year and went on to represent the area at County level. They came second, losing out only on goal difference from the opportunity to go to the National Finals.

The school Netball team won the Horsham and District tournament and went on to represent the area at County level. They did exceptionally well, finishing in 8th place throughout East and West Sussex.

Our First Aid teams came first and second in the West Sussex and Kent competition and are going through to the National Finals later this year.

The Road Safety team represented Horsham and District at County level, coming a very creditable 7th at the finals held in Crawley earlier this year.

If you would like the opportunity to see more of the School, please feel free to call us and we would be only too delighted to show you around,

MINI WORLD CUP— LOXWOOD SPORTS CLUB

Ben Polhill head of Sport and Physical Activity for Chichester District Council brought his team of coaches from Chichester College, as well as his colleague Sara Ball, to Loxwood for a "Mini World Cup" between Easebourne and Plaistow

Schools by kind permission of the Loxwood Sports Club. Loxwood School had a pre-arranged session in Horsham.

The tournament knitted together a competition in a supportive environment so that all enjoyed their time.

Loxwood Society members James Dore, Graham Moore and Jean Lightman cooked a locally sourced BBO meal. John Murray very kindly delivered, lent, and collected the BBO.

LOXWOOD COMMUNITY GARDENS INITIATIVE

Since our last update, things have moved ahead at quite a pace. Our Community Orchard at North Hall has now been planted with some quite rare and unusual varieties of Sussex apples. We are now ensuring that they are well looked after and will be watered and mulched during the summer months. The mulch has been kindly donated by Crown Tree Services. We have managed not only to have staked and protected with tree guards but with the help of our Low Weald Countryside Ranger, Pauline, we have managed to erect a fence around all the new plantings as well as protecting the newly coppiced hazel trees. Hopefully, this will keep the deer at bay.

On Saturday 8 May, we resurveyed the site to monitor any changes including what new plants have appeared. This will be a yearly event to provide information for not only us but also for the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre at the Sussex Wildlife Trust, who keep a record of all this information.

On Friday 16 April over 40 people enjoyed a Cheese and Wine evening which included a presentation on how the Initiative started, what progress has been made to date and what our future plans are for North Hall woodland area and the Willetts Way scrubland. This presentation was followed by a talk entitled 'Garden Treasures to Inspire' by Simon Thornton Wood, Director of Science and Education, RHS Wisley, and a great supporter of the initiative.

This evening gave people the opportunity to become Members of this growing Initiative. We would welcome as many new members as possible and our membership fees are designed to cover our basic running costs i.e. Public Liability In-

urance and Personal Accident Insurance. £10 per family for annual membership and £5 for a single person. If you would like further details or would just like to join please contact Graham Moore on 01403 751722 or email ginamoore@btopenworld.com

LOXWOOD LUNCHEON CLUB

Are you new to Loxwood? Would you like to make new friends????

The Loxwood Luncheon Club is aimed at village people of all ages, enabling them to get together and enjoy a delicious home cooked lunch at a very reasonable cost. New members are always welcome.

The dates for the next lunches during the summer months are 28 June, and 26 July. There is no lunch in August.

If you would like further information, please ring Gina Moore on 01403 751722.

WILLETS WAY

Thanks to a team of 21 volunteers from WACT, the land is now ready for the Loxwood Community Gardens Initiative to take over!



Wednesday 12 May—am



Wednesday 12th May—pm

North Hall Latest

Work due to start in the autumn!

Sufficient funds are already in place to begin work on the extension.

Fund raising continues for the refurbishment.

Please contact: Peter Winney 752377 or woodvale@dsl.pipex.com

YOUR PARISH COUNCIL

There are currently 8 **Members of the Parish Council**: Alison Sanderson (Chairman), Charlie Whitmarsh (Vice-Chairman), Wendy Andrews, Elizabeth Dugdale, Ann Kersey, Sarah Lane, Scott Taylor, Howard Thomas.

The **Parish Clerk** is Jenny Hartley. 88, Rusper Road, Horsham RH12 4BN, e-mail: loxwood@pcouncil.co.uk If you wish to contact the Parish Council, please address all correspondence, whether letter or e-mail, to the Parish Clerk.

Parish Council minutes and agendas are available from the Clerk, preferably by e-mail, or on the Loxwood village website: www.loxwood.org

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Chichester District Council: East Pallant House, 1 East Pallant, Chichester, PO19 1TY. Tel: 01243 785166. **Website**: www.chichester.gov.uk

West Sussex County Council: County Hall, West Street, Chichester, PO19 1RQ. Tel: 01243 777100. **Website**: www.westsussex.gov.uk
24-hour information line: 0845 758 1232.

Countryside services, footpaths, bridleways: 01243 777620.

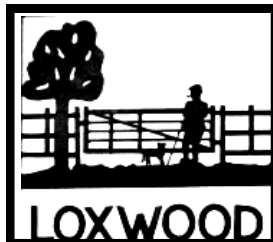
Highways repairs and maintenance, pavements, grass cutting: 01243 642105.

Police: emergencies: 999, non-emergencies: 0845 60 70 999.
Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111.

Newsletter articles: any local clubs or societies who would like to publicise their activities, or individuals wishing to submit articles for the Newsletter should contact the Parish Clerk:

loxwood@pcouncil.co.uk We reserve the right to edit material, and we cannot accept political mate-

Advertising: any business wishing to advertise in the Newsletter should contact the Parish Clerk by email:
loxwood@pcouncil.co.uk



rials. Business wishing to advertise should contact the Parish