

Little Gaddesden Parish Council LGPC Newsletter

MARCH 2011

From Your Parish Councillors

TRAFFIC: PUBLIC MEETING TO REVIEW TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY & PROPOSALS MAY 16

The question of traffic speeds and traffic management in the village continues to energise people. There has been renewed controversy as the recent speed strip survey on The Green has led County Council officials to recommend no change to the 40 mph limit along The Green—in the face of strong representations from Parish Councillors and some residents to the contrary.

The Parish Council's policy has been to encourage uniform speed limits throughout the village allied to speed monitoring and enforcement with the support of the Police use of mobile Speed Indicator Devices (SID's). The forthcoming introduction of new gateway signs to the village with enhanced emphasis on

speed signage is also being pursued as a supplement to that strategy.

However, some village residents want to go further and to introduce physical traffic calming measures along Ringshall Road

In order to judge the public mood for more active traffic calming measures, especially on the stretch of Ringshall Road between the Village Shop and up to Deer Leap Manor where volumes of traffic are highest, the Parish Council intends to invite the public, Police and County Councillor David Lloyd to a public discussion of the traffic situation **at the Annual Council Meeting on May 16th in the Village Hall** so

that a policy reflective of the public mood can be confirmed. All those interested will have the opportunity to put their views. To frame the discussion the following are the options.

Option 1: pursue current policy to reduce and monitor speed limits and introduce new gateway signs **PLUS**

Option 2
Vehicle Activated Speed and & Hazard signage;

Option 3
Permanent or Mobile Speed

Indicator Devices;

Option 4
Community Speed Watch Scheme with Volunteers;

Option 5
Physical Traffic Calming Measures along Ringshall Road including variously Chicanes, Pinch Points, Round Top or Flat Top Humps, Cushion Humps or Rumble Strips. All would be subject to funding from public sources.

The Parish Council will issue a discussion document detailing these options before May 16th.

POLICE-BERKHAMSTED STATION TO BE SOLD

Hertfordshire's Policing Plan for 2011-14 is to be launched on 28 March. If the government's proposals progress as expected all police authorities will be replaced by Police and Crime Commissioners in May 2012. In the meantime the 2011-12 county budget is proposing the closure of four stations and the rationalisation of front office services at the remainder saving nearly £1m. The Front Office at Berkhamsted is to be closed and the site sold. Hemel will remain open as a 'station of operational importance' with a front office service Tuesday

to Saturday. Tring remains open without a front office service. No community should expect to see a drop in the number of police officers and PCSO's allocated to their local policing as a result of the changes. The closure proposals seek to recognise the fact that people increasingly choose to use alternative measures to contact the police and that use of front office facilities is lower than it has ever been. There will be the same number of officers PCSO's and Specials on the ground and there is no change to response targets.



LOCAL CRIME: CAT OUT OF THE BAG!

Official crime statistics for the wider rural area have identified our locality as one of generally low crime. They have been used to support a deployment of limited police resources to other areas. However the recent profiling of the Ward (see back page) has let the cat out of the bag. All crime in Ashridge Ward grew by over 10.4% between Quarters 1&2 09/10 and 10/11

(Hertfordshire Constabulary) compared with only 0.5% elsewhere in Dacorum. Criminal damage has indeed fallen but 'non dwelling' Burglary has soared by nearly 138% confirming the perception that the area is a 'hot spot' of minor criminal activity. Parish Councillors continue to liaise with the Police to secure better local recognition of the situation.

**Calling Dacorum Borough Council? Dial 01442 228000
Say the name of the person you want e.g. Housing
John Smith and you will automatically be put through!**

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THE LOCALISM BILL—NEW PLANNING POWERS TO BE GIVEN TO PARISH COUNCILS

The Localism Bill was published just before Christmas. If passed it represents a radical shift in power from District Councils to Parishes. At the January PC meeting DBC Councillor Nick Tyler urged Little Gaddesden Parish Council to 'get on the front foot' in anticipation of the likely forthcoming changes in the planning regime. Although the Bill has yet to become law there are at least 4 powers that will fundamentally change the role of Parish Councils.

Power 1 Planning Powers To Move

Instead of being the poor relation of planning committees and merely consulted (and usually ignored) on planning decisions, Parishes will become plan makers and decision takers. Parishes will have the right to produce

Neighbourhood Development Plans which will identify where new building should be located, what local infrastructure will be needed to support them and what classes of development are discouraged. The Plan will have to pass a local referendum. If a majority vote in favour, the local authority will be duty bound to take the plan into consideration when considering planning applications.

Power 2 Bottom Up Development

Any Parish Council which produces a Neighbourhood Development Plan will be able to make a Neighbourhood Development Order that automatically grants planning permission for specific developments. When decided on by the PC and voted favourably on in a referendum, then

the NDO will be passed. If a scheme is brought forward by the Parish Council itself it may seek an NDO giving it a community right to build (e.g. homes or public facilities). This will help deliver community-led site-specific schemes.

Power 3 Developers On the Back Foot

The Bill requires developers to comprehensively consult local communities before producing plans for significant developments and submitting planning applications. They will have to show they have taken the local community view into account. Failure to reflect what local people want from development would result in refusal of planning permission.

Power 4 Local Referendums

The Localism Bill aims to give local people a voice on important issues by giving them the right to hold a referendum on any matter that the community wants. This referendum must be held if a minimum of 5% of the local electorate sign a petition. Following the referendum the local authority must consider the steps it proposes to take and publish its decision and reasons and go on record with its intentions.

So if our community wants a 30mph speed limit along the Village Green and holds a referendum accordingly, then Hertfordshire CC traffic managers will not be able to simply brush the local community view aside as they are currently doing.

SPOTLIGHT ON ASHRIDGE WARD—DID YOU KNOW?

Dacorum Council has profiled Ashridge using Office of National Statistics research. The Ward has a population of around 2750. It is the richest in Dacorum and among the richest 6% of Wards in the

entire country. With 98% describing themselves as White it is the least ethnically diverse in the Borough. 77% of the Ward describe themselves as Christian, 15% of no religious denomination. The

Ward ranks as the highest in self employment in the Borough with the average size of business less than 6 employees. Of those in employment 50 per cent describe themselves as senior managerial and professional. Unemployment is 0.5%. 20% of the population are of retirement age. Average life expectancy is just under 85 years. People in Ashridge can expect to live nearly 8 years longer than in central Hemel Hempstead. The proportion of residents with a limiting long term illness is

11% compared with a national average of 18%. Adult obesity is 19% compared with 23% in the Borough.

COUNCILLORS' CONTACTS

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ROYAL TEA PARTY

WHEN

Friday 29th April 3-5pm

WHERE

On the Village Sports Field

WHAT

Tea; Silver Band; Prince & Princess Fancy Dress Competition; Children's Entertainer; Royal Cup Cakes!

TICKETS

Louise Archer - 842397
 Village Store 842448

BRING YOUR OWN

Picnic; Rug; Chairs; Brolly!