

PARISH MAGAZINE

Winter Edition 2014

STOKE MANDEVILLE PARISH COUNCIL

HS2 Update

It is some five months since our Petition for mitigation changes in Stoke Mandeville was submitted to the Select Committee at the House of Commons. The Committee started with Petitions from Birmingham and the broad assumption is that hearing Petitions from the north of the country will not finish until the new year. Therefore we have concluded that Petitioners from Buckinghamshire will not be invited to appear before spring or possibly later. Further delays could emerge because of the 2015 General Election.

At the beginning of September a further consultation was deposited by HS2 Ltd on Additional Provisions which includes taking additional land in a field opposite No. 30 Lower Road for a roundabout where the new "bypass" emerges into Lower Road. In addition for a small piece of additional land on Risborough Road. The Parish Council is petitioning against the proposed location of the roundabout and believes that the diverted road should be extended further towards Aylesbury emerging past the Belmore Centre, north of the business park and Stoke Mandeville Auto Centre which would reduce impacts on homes in Lower Road and on Hall End Farm, a property threatened by all alignments proposed to date.

HS2 Ltd are to look at the cumulative noise impacts in this respect and Bucks County Council are undertaking a study on potential impacts of the road diversion elsewhere. On 23rd September we met with representatives of HS2 Ltd to discuss any progress which might have been made with our case. It had not and we learned nothing further about any benefits to Stoke Mandeville. We still have concerns about limitations of noise barriers and landscaping proposed where the train crosses Risborough Road; the noise impacts on our schools; haulage routes through the village in and around Stoke Mandeville, especially the wide loads projected. With the National Trust, Aylesbury Town Council and Coldharbour PC we continue to press for a green tunnel along the route south west of Aylesbury, Hawkslade and Hartwell. We were advised by representatives of HS2 Ltd that the cost of a green "cut and cover" tunnel across this area would be prohibitive. However, we will constantly strive to achieve this. See our website for full report of the meeting and details of the Council's Petition to Parliament - www.stokemandevilleparishcouncil.org.uk

The Parish Council is keen to hear from residents of Stoke Mandeville who have submitted Petitions to the Select Committee against HS2 or are seeking compensation or mitigation. Please contact our Clerk through the usual channels with your reference number. Also if you are aware of any other resident who has taken this course of action.

Old Church Site

On 19th September some 300 people attended the opening day at the old church site of St. Mary's organised by Buckinghamshire Archaeology Society to draw attention to destruction of this

archaeological site and graveyard should HS2 go ahead. The Parish Council and the Stoke Mandeville Action Group have petitioned for the remains from burials and any artefacts which may be excavated to be treated with dignity and respect and to be placed in a purpose built vault in a landscaped area within the village. If you would like to visit this tranquil area, where there are snowdrops in abundance during the winter months, please ring 01296 613888 and ask the Clerk of the PC for a map showing the location or call in any morning at the Community Centre Parish Council office to collect.

Grass Cutting Devolved Services

Buckinghamshire County Council is encouraging Parish Councils within the county to take on responsibility for cutting roadside grass verges and general maintenance by joining with other Parish and Town Councils "cluster" to employ a contractor to undertake this work. Funding would initially come down from Transport for Bucks at the current cost but on a decreasing value which would in four years time have to be picked up by Parish resulting in a marginal cost based on a 'D' band property. In taking on this responsibility the Parish Council would set the specification controlling the number of cuts per year, choice of contractor and the quality specification for the service. The alternative would be to remain with BCC, which has no statutory duty to cut grass verges except where it affects the vision of road users. Experience shows that during the past summer months, residents have been unhappy with the service they have received. Any change will be implemented as from the beginning of April next year.

Resignation and Appointment of Councillors

Councillor Brian Tyndall who represented Stoke Grange ward resigned during August. We are grateful for the time and commitment Cllr Tyndall gave to his Parish Council duties, especially in campaigning for measures against car parking on residential roads opposite Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

At the October meeting we were pleased to welcome Mr. Richard Swinney as newly co-opted Parish Councillor for the village ward.

The Council is seeking two people to be co opted as Parish Councillors for the Stoke Leys and Stoke Grange Wards. You do not have to be a resident of those areas or have any specific qualifications or knowledge, just an interest in the community around you. Support and training is available. The current term of office is until the beginning of May 2015 but you would have the option to be re elected for the next four year period. The Council meets on the second Tuesday evening of the month and there are four Committees which are optional. For further details see our website or contact the Clerk on smparishcouncil@btconnect.com or telephone 613888. If you are interested and wish to discuss further, do not hesitate to contact the Chairman, Jenny Hunt, on hunt935@btinternet.com or ring 01296 613217.

Speeding

Speed checks by two Parish Councillors using specialist equipment along Station Road has recorded that currently there is no specific problem. We will continue to monitor the situation. The mobile vehicle activated sign will be moved between sites opposite the allotment entrance in Lower Road; at the lower end of Station Road; opposite Stoke House on Risborough Road and along Wendover

Road. Specialist holding plates will be inserted into the ground to ensure the equipment is secure. We are still looking for somebody with a sufficiently large truck or van who would be willing to move the sign between sites once every 4-6 weeks. Please contact the Clerk if you can help.

In an attempt to prevent speeding along Risborough and Lower Roads we are seeking to have the speed limit where this is 40mph reduced to 30mph from Old Risborough Road to the traffic island in Lower Road. Some 15,000 vehicles a day travel along Risborough Road (A4010) which is the main highway between High Wycombe and Milton Keynes. Although the Highway Authority is willing to undertake the work, the cost would fall to the Parish Council for which we are currently seeking grants as the cost could not be met from our current budget.

Street Lights

There are a total of 240 street lights in the village and Stoke Leys belonging to the Parish Council and cost approximately £12,000 p.a. to operate and maintain. Safety checks have to be undertaken every five years which has recently been carried out and it has been identified that thirty three of those lights need to be replaced. We have taken professional advice and engaged with Parish Councils already making the change and as a result are looking at the options of either fluorescent or LED lighting as alternatives. Both have benefits over the lighting currently in use but we need to ensure that whatever is provided meets the requirements of being acceptable to road users, pedestrians and residential areas, reduces the carbon footprint, is versatile, reduces the cost of our electricity bills, reduces maintenance costs and has longevity. Your feedback would be helpful.

Community Assets Right to Bid

The Government's Localism Bill gives communities the opportunity to identify assets of community value and have them registered and when they are put up for sale, more time to raise finance and prepare a bid for them. Currently only eligible community groups, local parish councils Parish Councils or local neighbourhood planning forums and charities are able to nominate assets of community value. The Parish Council is therefore submitting nominations for the following to be registered :-

The Bell Public House & Restaurant, Lower Road
The Woolpack Public House & Restaurant Risborough Road
The Bull Public House Risborough Road
The Sports and Social Club Lower Road
The Post Office & Shop Station Road
The Supermarket, Barley Close, Hawkslade

Neighbourhood Plan

A working group has been established to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and has started its work by collecting evidence to produce a "fact" pack for the four wards in the parish to produce a positive document for future growth of the area. The Plan is subject to examination by the Planning Inspectorate after wide consultation with the local residents by whom it must be led and if successful used for determining of planning applications.

In the summer edition of this magazine we appealed for residents to come forward to work with us and be involved. The work is not onerous, no special skills are required, only knowledge of the area in which you live. The work is led by Councillor Marcus Rogers who would be pleased to hear from you. Please ring our Clerk on 613888 for further details or email smparishcouncil@btconnect.com. We need to develop a Plan together in order to influence future development in our Parish and where this will take place. AVDC has started on the Aylesbury Vale Local Plan in which we are identified as a larger villager with amenities. As well as this our proximity to Aylesbury Town makes us especially vulnerable to widespread development.

Firework Display & Bonfire Night

Saturday evening 1st November saw an exceptional crowd on the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field for the annual firework display organised by the Stoke Mandeville Village Community Association. As always this was a splendid display enjoyed by a huge crowd with many attractions for children and BBQ manned by a volunteer crew. Our grateful thanks to Steve Ezra, Chairman of the Association, and his team, as well the many volunteers for once again rising to the occasion enjoyed by all. This is the main fund raising event for the Association which maintains the Community Centre and funds the many improvements which have been made.

In Brief

- New notice boards have been placed at the end of Kynaston Avenue and in Dalesford Road.
- Repairs have been put in hand at the aerial runway on the playing field. Adults have been seen using this. The equipment is not meant for small children who are unable to balance themselves on the seat and safely use the equipment. It is not meant to be used for those over 16 years of age and causes considerable damage which is expensive to repair and comes from your taxes.
- Replacement nets and fencing have been provided at the tennis courts
- The flower bed on the green by the school will be replanted. We now use contractors at a cost of £385 each change over.
- Contracts have been offered for clearing of vegetation and cutting back hedging in the burial ground at Swallow Lane.
- Work is being put in hand to cut the hedging and cut back trees at the playing field.
- The gulleys in Lower Road have been cleared in order to reduce the risk of flooding during the winter months.

DECISIONS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

The following decisions on planning applications have been made by the Local Planning Authority on applications already considered by the Parish Council but not all are as per our recommendation.

Permitted Development

- Erection of Four Industrial Units – Manor Farm, Lower Road.
- Provision of New External Access Side Door - Community Centre, Eskdale Road
- First floor side and rear extension. - 29 Ligo Avenue Stoke Mandeville
- Single storey side and rear extension - 41 Kingsland Road Aylesbury
- Removal of existing conservatory and erection of replacement conservatory to rear - Fleet Cottage, 2 Risborough Road

- Subdivision of plot and conversion of the garage into a self contained dwelling including new porch and front dormer - 2 Risborough Road
- Single storey rear extension including replacement of existing conservatory roof – 22 Brudenell Drive
- Installation of four lighting columns and erection of palisade fencing - Unit 5 and 6 Triangle Business Park Quilters Way Stoke Mandeville –
- Erection of Electricity Line Pole - Land North Of Stoke Grove Farm Risborough

Jenny Hunt
Chairman
Stoke Mandeville Parish Council

November 2014