

Parish Council News By JANE WALKER

Lovell Road/ Station Road junction

For a long time the Parish Council and Lincroft have been lobbying for both a safe way to cross Lovell Road and for traffic calming to slow down the increasing amount of traffic that is now using this route as a link between the A6 and the A428. The result has been that the County Council has now agreed to install a number of measures designed to help both of these problems.

At the junction of Lovell Road and Station Road there is to be a speed table with a mini roundabout and just beyond the junction, towards Bromham, will be a zebra crossing. There will be railings at the pedestrian exits from Lincroft onto Station Road and improved crossings at Reynes Drive, High Street and Pavenham Road. By the time this newsletter comes out I hope that most of it will be installed as it is hoped to finish the work in the school holidays. I appreciate that not everyone likes traffic calming of this type but we have to do something to make the crossing safer for children going to school and residents of the Lovell Homes going to the doctors. Thanks also go to last year's Traffic Survey Team who added weight to this argument with their separate reports of the dangers of crossing the road here.

The secondary purpose of this traffic calming is to try and make the route so difficult for through traffic that they find another route. Unfortunately this also makes it difficult for village users. However, with the A6/A428 link at Sainsbury's looking a long way off and the residents of Lovell Road suffering increasing traffic at unacceptable speeds it is hoped that this will help to alleviate the situation.

Bedford Western by-pass

Now that the Bedford western by-pass is ready to start, County, Borough and Parish councillors from Biddenham, Great Denham, Bromham and Oakley have met together to form an action group to campaign for an early solution to the problems that we see occurring in our villages once the by-pass is complete. We have already had meetings with the road designers, construction team managers and high level council officers and we will continue with further meetings in the autumn to try and ensure that measures are put in place to alleviate these problems before they occur.

Bus shelters

The new bus shelters have finally been installed on Lovell Road and the High Street. We intend to budget for a new bus shelter every year and we will continue with this design for all new shelters. Whilst not being as rural as the wooden/brick versions, they are see through and not fully enclosed so we are able to include a seat which we previously had to take out of the enclosed versions due to vandalism.

Police Community Safety Officer

Our previous PCSO, Rob Bonforte, was head-hunted by Santa Pod race track to serve as a travelling PCSO around all of the North Beds villages. The Parish Council would like to thank him for everything that he has done in the village. He certainly had a good relationship with the young people and the cases of petty vandalism and nuisance have reduced dramatically since he has been in the village. We have now been allocated a new PCSO, Ian Mott, and he is working closely with the Clapham PCSO Louise, who shares an office with him at the Old School.

Football play area – Village green

The Parish Council has now agreed on a supplier for the refurbishment of the football area on the village green. The new goals will incorporate a basketball ring and are the same as those that many people will have seen on the Folly estate at Clapham (they can be seen from the slip road at the Clapham end of the by-pass as you join the road going towards Bedford). Ours will not be orange and purple however, but predominantly green with white goalposts. They will also incorporate a cricket stumps panel.

At the request of Grenidge Way residents we will be moving the location of the football area more into the middle of the green so that it is as far away from houses as possible. The area will be smaller than it is currently and it will be tarmac for all year round use. The contracts for its construction will be awarded at the September Parish Council meeting but if you have any questions or comments before then, please ring Jane Walker on 824530 or email:

jane@janewalker.co.uk

Grass cutting

The Parish Council would like to apologise for the state of the grass verges in the village earlier this summer. Unfortunately the speed of grass growth due to the unusual weather conditions took us by surprise. Generally during the summer months we reduce the frequency of the cuts because the grass doesn't grow as quickly as in the spring and autumn. This year, however, we have found in common with other villages locally that the grass has not slowed down but has seemed to grow faster than usual. We have now taken the decision that we will increase the frequency of cuts and maintain this through to the end of October. Although this will cost us more, we know that residents like to see the verges neat and cared for.

Linch Furlong community site

We were lucky enough to be awarded a BBC breathing spaces award to allow us to develop this area on Pavenham road into a peaceful wildlife area for the whole village to enjoy. We hope to recruit as many volunteers as possible to start work on the site in the autumn. We will need to plant trees, prepare otter holts, build bat and bird boxes and plant wild flowers. We have planned an activity day for Saturday 22nd September when the professionals will be there to help and direct us. The uniformed groups have already offered to help and we hope to get both schools involved too. We need as many adults as possible to make this into a beautiful area for the whole community. Please give as much or as little time as you have so that we can enhance and preserve the beauty of this river meadow as an amenity for the village.

County Council News

Quarrying in North Beds

There has been a lot of concern in the village at the proposals from local landowners that land in and around Oakley should be made available for sand and aggregate quarrying. The County Council was required to consider all applications and recommend an update to its existing sand and gravel extraction policy. A change in this policy, which currently recommends against any such extraction in the Upper Ouse valley, would mean that the landowners would be able to seek planning permission to quarry for minerals on their land. Local councillors and residents have worked hard to ensure that the recommendation going forward to the Council executive is that the existing policy should stand. We will know in September whether we have been successful in this. Everyone who submitted a written or email comment to the County Council during the consultation period will be individually advised of the decision.

Funding for village groups

In order for councillors to help small local projects, the County Council has budgeted for each County Councillor to have an amount of money, which they are able to spend in their areas. I have £2500 to spend on local charities and village groups. If you have a project that would benefit from this money please contact me on 825531 or email jane.walker@bedscc.gov.uk and I will send you a simple form to fill in so that you can give me the details of your request.

Jane Walker