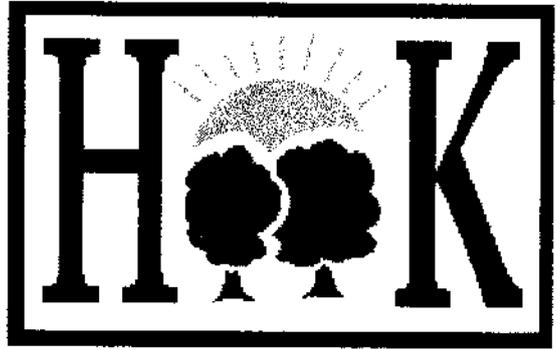


Hook Parish Council

Annual Report 1996-97



Chairman's report

Since I became Chairman many people have asked me, 'What does the Parish Council actually do?'. My first thoughts were to provide a list of over thirty tasks which are the responsibility of the Parish Council. Perhaps one day we will run a competition to see if anyone, apart from the Parish Clerk, can name them all.

But when it comes to major issues it seems to me to be very clear. On its own the Parish Council can achieve very little. Before it can take up a major project it is vital that they have the support of a large proportion of the village. In addition usually there has to be a group, or a group of individuals, who are willing to put the ground work in. When that happens then a partnership with the Parish Council and related bodies makes anything possible.

During the last year we have had several examples of this kind of partnership in action. Firstly, we have the new £300,000+ extension to the Community Hall, which will provide badly needed youth and leisure facilities for the village. This was very much a partnership project between Hart District Council, Hook Parish Council, Hampshire County Council and the prospective users. However, it was the efforts of the User Group which first showed we had a potentially viable project. Without their enthusiasm, nothing would have happened.

A second example of this partnership involves desire to find a solution to the petty crime, vandalism and anti social behaviour. For various reasons this was becoming more and more of a problem. Following liaison with local residents groups, the Police and other local authority bodies, the Parish Council published its Hook Village Security Strategy (HoVSS). The aim was severely to curtail the level of petty crime by means of a co-ordinated multi-agency

approach. We received strong support from the Police and residents, but slightly less enthusiastic support from some other agencies.

As a direct result of this initiative, in partnership with Hart District Council, we made a successful bid for a Home Office grant to install a Closed Circuit Television scheme for the village centre with 24 hour control room monitoring. The Parish Council intends to extend this to cover to include Hartletts Park followed by other areas of the village at a future date. We expect the cameras to be operational well before the end of the year.

Not all partnership arrangements have a guarantee of success, but that does not mean they are not worthwhile. The Hook Action Group (HAG), a partnership which also includes the villages of Rotherwick and Newnham, has been heavily involved with the discussions around the Hampshire County Structure and Hart District Local plans.

However the threat of further large scale housing development in Hook continues to loom. Pessimists will point out that there is not a green field around Hook where someone has not proposed some development or other. We, however, do not accept any further housing is inevitable and ask for your continued support.

Finally I would like to thank all those villagers who have protested against the closure of Odiham Cottage Hospital. At first the health authority claimed the move would save money and the same service could be provided from elsewhere. Under close examination, however, it became clear that no extra resources would be provided, leading to a significant service reduction, particularly regarding care of the elderly. Once again we ask for your continued support for the work of the action group. Nothing has yet been decided, so we still have everything to play for.

Tony Taylor



Money Matters

The Parish Council's share of the Community Charge for the year came to £138,000, which amounted to 93 pence per week for each property in the benchmark Council Tax Band D.

The money actually spent during the year can be analysed as follows:-

Running expenses (salaries, expenses, stationery, insurance, typing, utility costs)	£ 34,100
Youth facilities	£ 55,300
Loan repayments	£ 20,600
Gardening/ Park keeping	£ 24,900
Grants	£ 3,100
Precept	£138,000

Full audited accounts will be available for inspection after the end of the financial year.

Next year will see a heavy investment in the future of the village. In addition to the opening of the new Youth Centre, the provision of a new children's playground adjacent to Wellworth and the long awaited appeal against the Hart District local plan; we will see the arrival of CCTV in the village centre and Hartletts Park. None of these projects would be possible without sizeable contributions from the Parish.

The precept for 1996-97 has been set at £158,200. This charge is equivalent to £1.07 per week for each band D property. We believe this represents tremendous value for money.

Tony Taylor

Village Garden and Cemetery Committee



That the year has been a quiet one for the Village Garden and Cemetery Committee is due in no small measure to the efforts of Geoff Jones. For some years now, Geoff has been one of the village's unsung heroes - quietly and efficiently supervising all the burials that take place in the cemetery.

He has now decided to retire from the position. We offer him our thanks and best wishes for a well earned rest and welcome Frank Sopwith, who has taken up the post.

Jane Bonnin

Council Changeover

Steven Cook, who has been a Parish Councillor since 1995, has recently resigned for personal reasons. We thank him for his efforts and wish him well for the future.

We are happy to welcome in his place Allen Saltmarsh, who will have taken up the vacant seat by the time you read this. Allen, who lives in Ravenscroft, is already well known to members of the Parish Council, as he has given us the benefit of his advice on a number of occasions. It will be good to have him on our side of the table, for a change!

Jane Bonnin

Amenities Committee

This time last year, we reported about several projects which were about to get off the ground. One was the extension of the Community Hall, the other was the release of land adjacent to Wellworths for the new children's playground.

As many of you will know, the extension of the Community hall has now been completed. New purpose-built youth facilities are in place, as are extra changing rooms. Now the Community has to put them to full use.

The Parish Council has taken possession of all the open land adjacent to Wellworth. With the help of local residents, the Amenity Committee will be putting together a plan for the new children's playground. We anticipate that work will start on the new playground within twelve months.



Hook on the Web

The net-surfers amongst you may like to know that Hook Parish Council now has its own set of web pages. We only have a few pages at present - we would like to hear from you what sort of information you would like us to make publicly available over the Internet. Our pages can be found on

<http://hook.parish.hants.gov.uk>

We are the first parish in Hart to have published on the web - joining Hampshire County Council on

<http://www.hants.gov.uk>

and Hart District Council on

<http://www.c2000.com/hartdc>

We have a large amount of space available on our site (thanks to Hampshire County Council), and would be happy to display pages for any village organisations who are interested. One or two have already expressed an interest. Please ring me on 763287 if you would like to know more.

Other issues which the Amenity Committee have in hand include the security arrangements for the car park at the Community Hall. Our final decision on appropriate arrangements will depend upon the separate provisions the Parish Council will be making on the provision of closed circuit TV at the Hall.

We are also considering the possibility of a new Bus shelter in London Road, in particular outside Geffery's House. Sensibly, we have postponed any decision due to the uncertainty surrounding bus services in Hook.

The Amenity Committee expects to be busy over the next twelve months, not least with the matters mentioned above. Thoughts about improvements to the Elizabeth Hall may be moved forward, as could be the provision of other facilities in Hook.

Paul Edmonds

Those who look to Basingstoke for facilities may also be interested to know that Grapevine, the Basingstoke information service is also now available on the web, at

<http://www.grapevine.org.uk>

It gives details of what's on at the theatre and cinema, train and bus times and a lot more (all right, I declare an interest - I run it!)

Jane Bonnin

Don't miss the
**Annual
Village Meeting**
Wednesday April 30th
8.00pm Elizabeth Hall.

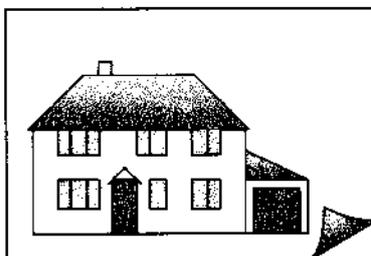
- it's got to be more interesting than
the pre-election TV schedules!

Planning Committee

The Planning Committee of the Parish Council does not itself make decisions on planning applications - that is the role of the District Council. It does, however, comment upon applications received by the District Council and tries to reflect and protect the interests of the whole village community. If you make any comment to the District Council on any planning application, please send a copy to the Parish Clerk, so that the Planning Committee may be aware of your views.

The Planning Committee also liaises with the District Council to ensure that all development has sought and received the appropriate permission and that any conditions imposed are fully complied with.

The past year has not been a busy year for applications, but there has been continuing action on both the Hampshire County Structure Plan and the Hart District Local Plan. The Structure Plan sets out key, strategic policies as a framework for local planning by District Councils, including how many new houses they



must accommodate. The Local Plan then specifies where development will be allowed. It has been proposed that 200 houses should be allocated to Hook, but this could change if, following the Structure Plan Examination in Public, Hampshire is required to provide even more houses.

The Parish Council will oppose any increase in the number of houses allocated to Hook as vigorously as the original allocation was, and still is, being opposed.

Turning to previous major applications, work has at last started on the Tesco supermarket. This should be finished by the late summer and will bring with it the added bonus of traffic calming in Station Road. Perhaps this will finally discourage heavy lorries from using the centre of the village and obstructing and damaging the pavements by parking on them!

The Planning Committee meets fortnightly on alternate Wednesdays in the small hall at the Community Hall - do come along if you want to hear what is being proposed for your village.

Janet Deller

Parish Council Personnel to May 1997

Clerk	David Deadman	16 Bellmeadow Road	762237
Members:-			
Chairman:	Tony Taylor	45 Middle Mead	762925
Vice-Chairman:	Peter Jennions	Cedar Court, Reading Road	762178
Chairman of Amenities Committee:	Paul Edmonds	Woodside, Elms Road	764486
Chairman of Planning Committee:	Janet Deller	9 Chalky Copse	764132
	Jane Bonnin	Church Path Cottage, Newnham Road	763287
	David Burke	41 Goose Green	762776
	Michael Clark	31 Oaktree Drive	766409
	Peter Moore	69 Middle Mead	764467
	Tony Warner	7 Four Acre Coppice	764168
(until February 1997)	Steven Cook		

Parish Council Office: 768573 (24 hour Answerphone)

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