

Annual Parish Meeting Newsletter 2021

The Annual Parish Meeting (APM) will be held on the 19th April at 7.30pm. Because of the restrictions this will have to be a virtual meeting by Zoom. The link for the meeting is:

<https://zoom.us/j/91267575090?pwd=V3k0TkJsaUVFY29UYXo0Nm5aOGltUT09>

Meeting ID: 912 6757 5090

Passcode: 738000

This will also be on the village website.

The APM is an opportunity for parishioners to have their say on the activities of the parish council and make suggestions of future projects that could be undertaken. There will be an online presentation of our activities following which parishioners will be invited to give their comments, so please do come along. However if you are unable to attend your comments are most welcome. Please email them to clerk@northluffenham.org.uk.

The past year has been a busy one with a number of issues coming together and it is pleasing that the parish council has been assisted by a number of residents in dealing with these issues.

Local Plan (LP)

Most of you will know by now that the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) was not accepted by Rutland County Council (RCC) at a recent meeting. The HIF, to fund the infrastructure for the proposed 2,215 houses at St. George's Barracks (SGB), was considered necessary for the development to proceed. It would seem that those on the County Council in favour of the development expected the HIF to be accepted and as a consequence there is no Plan B. There is to be a County Council meeting on the 4th May when discussions on the development of SGB will be deliberated and perhaps the future direction of the LP decided upon.

The rejection of the HIF did not just occur by chance as over the past three years your parish councillors and local residents, along with other local parishes, have asked questions, made deputations and responded to the consultation on the LP by making representations.

Underlying these has been the opposition to the scale of development at SGB and the lack of meaningful discussion with local communities.

Rejection of the HIF is not the end and NLPC will join with other parishes and organisations to significantly influence any development at SGB.

The other issue concerning SGB was the parking of a large number of HGVs and coaches for which there was not the required planning permission. A retrospective planning application was submitted but at a RCC planning meeting in December 2020 was rejected and the

vehicles have now left. Again a NL parish councillor and resident, along with representatives from Edith Weston, asked questions and very likely helped in the decision.

In the above issues we have been well supported by our county councillors who have worked behind the scenes and spoken forcefully at the RCC meetings.

Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

The NP has been initiated by NLPC and is being formulated by a group of parish councillors and residents. It sets out the vision, objectives and planning policies to ensure the parish maintains its uniqueness over the period 2022 to 2037 and that sustainable growth and development, particularly in the SGB area of the parish, will comply with design codes and master planning as mandated in the NP. The policies in the NP will hold legal weight and will be applied to any planning applications submitted within the Parish boundary.

Policies are at the core of a Neighbourhood Plan. NLPC will circulate the draft policies to the parish for comments before submitting a final version to RCC and independent inspection. Once made, the North Luffenham Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory development plan, together with the adopted Rutland Local Plan. The policies, design codes and master planning are being developed with the help of professional advisors and NLPC has obtained grants for their services thus avoiding any increase in the precept.

Community Centre (CC)

Refurbishment of the CC has now taken place and the management of the CC has now been adopted by NLPC. This has been made possible by the Working Group, set up in 2019, who negotiated with RCC and the school as to how this could be achieved and NLPC would like to thank that group for their hard work in sorting out the complex issues.

In previous surveys of residents the CC has been criticised for its dowdy appearance and underuse. The refurbishment has made a big difference and the CC Committee will promote it as an attractive venue, when circumstances allow, for meetings, societies and social events.

Full Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)

Two years ago NLPC signed up to a Government initiative of local full fibre network and as a result the CC was recently connected with full fibre to the premises (FTTP). The infrastructure has been laid in the village to enable FTTP and hopefully it won't be too long before householders can arrange a connection into their property

The Oval and Field Gardens

In surveys and representations made to NLPC parishioners have requested areas of The Oval to have wildflowers and seeds have been bought for the triangular area adjacent to Church St.; this should soon prove to be a good habitat for hedgehogs, food sources for birds, as

well as helping the bees . At the western edge of The Oval from behind the pavilion there will be an area of rewilding with a narrow strip mown through the centre which should attract the owls as it makes it easier for them to hunt for food. Daffodils were planted last year along the line of the trees on the west side and although not yet a golden host are a welcome sight. In addition more nesting boxes have been put into a number of trees.

Further play equipment was installed with the monies from the Community Infrastructure Levy resulting from the Rosewood development and is in good use.

Regular maintenance continues with the trees being inspected at regular intervals.

The woodland walk is proving popular but there have been comments that part of the walk along Edith Weston Rd. detracts from its enjoyment. Plans are well advanced to route the walk along the field side of the hedge adjacent to Edith Weston Rd. and an exit through a gate by the junction of Pinfold Lane and Edith Weston Rd. will be established.

Benches

For parishioners of both North and South Luffenham a circular walk along The Settings, Glebe Rd, North Luffenham and Moor Lane has been popular and even more so with the lockdowns. South Luffenham Parish Council has suggested a joint venture with NLPC to provide benches at intervals along the route so that the less able can have a rest and enjoy the views. RCC have been contacted to establish what permission may be required and if agreed a fund will be set up to which parishioners from North and South Luffenham will be able to contribute.

Resilience Planning

NLPC applied for equipment to help with any urgent problem that may arise such as a road being blocked and last year £600 worth of equipment was delivered. It proved useful when there was a flood at the Moor Lane bridge and flood signs were put in place.

Bonfire

It is to be hoped that the annual bonfire and firework display can take place this year but this obviously depends on what restrictions, hopefully none, are in place at the time.

Covid-19

At the start of the first lockdown NLPC met with the North Luffenham Good Neighbour Scheme (NLGNS) to help those shielding or vulnerable. The main help required was collection and delivery of medications and some food deliveries. A number of volunteers came forward (NLPC is very grateful to those volunteers) and the scheme worked well but with restrictions easing the demand is much less. NLGNS can still be contacted for help: 07825 697841 or nlgns2020@gmail.com.

Parish Clerk

John Willoughby, our Parish Clerk, is stepping down after a number of years in the role. NLPC is very grateful for all his work for the council. He has kept the finances in very good order and guided the council on difficult issues. He will be missed and NLPC wishes him all the best.

Tim Smith Chair of North Luffenham Parish Council