

THE WOLDINGHAM ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



HELPING TO PROTECT THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF OUR VILLAGE

Spring 2017

Message from our Chairman

The Woldingham Association (WA) Council is made up of extremely busy people. Nevertheless they give freely of their time to help in the protection of the unique character of Woldingham and the surrounding Green Belt. There are three strands to the work of the WA: planning, community and the wider area, and the environment.

Planning has long been our main focus. This work involves reviewing and, where appropriate, commenting on individual planning applications and emerging planning policy documents, such as the Woldingham Neighbourhood Plan and the new Tandridge Local Plan.

With regards to individual planning applications, the new and improved Woldingham Association web-site now shows local planning applications and Planning Appeals as they are submitted. The purpose of publishing this information is so residents can comment on new planning applications and Appeals within the consultation time limit. The WA letters commenting on applications that have been sent to Tandridge District Council are also now published on the web-site.

The Woldingham Neighbourhood Plan is now in place and provides another set of planning policies to help protect the character of the Village. The Woldingham Neighbourhood Plan Examiner required that the downsizing policy be removed in order for the Woldingham Neighbourhood Plan to be adopted. This recommendation confirmed concerns raised by the Woldingham Association and by many residents regarding this policy. The Examiner also supported inclusion of the ½ acre minimum plot size, commenting that the Neighbourhood Plan is the "ideal" place for such a Woldingham-specific policy. The WA relied on extensive legal advice which supported removing the downsizing policy and inclusion of minimum plot size in the Woldingham Neighbourhood Plan.

Tandridge District Council is currently developing a new Local Plan and The WA Council continues to work

to ensure that the current boundaries of the Green Belt around Woldingham are retained.

In the category of community and wider area, the Association was pleased to support this year's Village Fete and were ready to support the Village Picnic which was unfortunately rained off. In addition, as with some thirty other Village representatives and organisations, our President, Lord Christopher laid a wreath at the Remembrance Day Service.

The Association has also been of some help to BT Open Reach in their installation of superfast broadband. We continue to monitor activities at Biggin Hill and Gatwick.

For the wider area and the environment, we also continue to support selected charities which have as their primary objectives the protection and wellbeing of Surrey villages such as ours; Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, (CPRE), Open Spaces Society, the Surrey Wildlife Trust and the Kent, Surrey Sussex Air Ambulance.

In other news, we were saddened to learn of the death last August of Richard Butcher, our long-serving former District Councillor. He will be remembered with great respect by many for his support and enduring hard work in maintaining the character of the Village and the surrounding Green Belt.

Turning to the future, we will continue to work to ensure the unique character of the village is protected, the existing Green Belt boundaries remain unchanged in the new Local Plan, continue support for selective local and wider community groups and charities, and use our new and improved web-site to keep residents informed about planning and other local activities.

We look forward to continue working with our new Parish Council and new Tandridge District Councillor, Keith Jecks, and also thank Councillor David Hodge for his work on our behalf at Surrey County Council.

We would also like to express thanks to our members for their ongoing support.

The WA continues to support village events

The WA was delighted to support the Garden Party held on Saturday 11 June 2016 at St. Paul's church grounds to celebrate HM The Queen's 90th birthday. The WA was particularly keen to support children learning about nature, a key aspect contributing to the unique character of Woldingham. The WA purchased 100 small nature inspired gifts to be given as prizes to children who completed a Royal challenge involving a series of 10 varied activities which together

comprised the Queen Bee Royal Challenge. Despite the unfortunate wet conditions, the event was well attended and many children participated in the Queen Bee Royal challenge enticed by the prizes and fun to be had. All proceeds of the event went to The Breck Foundation and St. Paul's Church. Altogether, the day was a great success and a welcomed opportunity for the WA to continue fulfilling a long history of supporting local village activities and events.

The WA aims

to promote and protect the unique character of our village and the surrounding Green Belt and to uphold the Gilford Covenants.



The WA supports

Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)

London Green Belt Council

Surrey Wildlife Trust

The Downlands Management Project

Flightpath (an alliance of residents groups opposed to the further development of Biggin Hill Airport)

The Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign

Open Spaces Society

Biggin Hill Airport

Regarding the installation and completion of the new GPS system, Will Curtis, the Managing Director at Biggin Hill Airport has advised us that following a stakeholder consultation this Summer they have made some changes to the proposed procedure. The CAA has asked that they consult again on the revised programme, and this process will be starting shortly. However, he confirms that the detail of the new GPS approach in the Woldingham area is unchanged from the consultation that was published earlier this year and that aircraft using the new GPS approach will avoid Woldingham altogether. They expect the final pack to go to the CAA in February with implementation to occur in Q2 of 2017, with the exact timing in the hands of the CAA.

In connection with the business traffic (jet/turboprop) movements off runway 03, he commented that there had been no marked change in overall numbers of movements year on year although there have perhaps been more than usual in our direction due to the prevalence of Northerly and Easterly winds. However, this still amounts to the potential for an average overflight of around one a day by Biggin Hill business traffic. In fact only a few of these will have crossed Woldingham (although all are entitled to do so if the aircraft commander deems it necessary) so they do not see this as exceptional in terms of traffic volumes this year.

Breaking the numbers down by month, jet/turboprop movements to runway 03 in 2016 were as follows:

January	0
February	52
March	100
April	55
May	123
June	45
July	9
August	48
September	12
October	112
November	74
Total	630 (YTD)

In response to a query regarding what appears to be an increase in regular airline traffic passing overhead including some quite late flights well past 23.00 hours, he commented that Heathrow did seem to be routing more low level traffic over our area. He was not sure of the reason but that it was perhaps connected with the frequency of Easterly winds this year. If you wish to track the culprits www.flightradar24.com is a good website.

Useful telephone numbers

Surrey Highways Issues:
0300 200 1003

Biggin Hill Aircraft Noise:
01959 578 580

Tandridge District Council:
01883 722000

Non-Emergency Police:
101

Chalk pit/Oxted Quarry Update

The Chalkpit has resumed operations. As of this writing (early Feb 2017) the Review of Operating Conditions being conducted by Surrey County Council is still underway. We have written to Surrey County Council regarding the number of lorries, routing and hours of operation. The quarry

lorries are not supposed to go up Chalkpit Lane, so please either get in touch via the web-site or contact Surrey County Council directly if you see quarry lorries travelling up/down Chalkpit. We will publish updates on our web-site, www.woldinghamassociation.co.uk.

The new Tandridge District Council Local Plan

Tandridge District Council has embarked on the process of re-writing the existing Core Strategy which sets out the strategic planning policies for all of Tandridge. Strategic policies include where and how many new houses should be built in Tandridge over the next twenty years.

The first Local Plan consultation happened in late 2015 on the Issues and Approaches. A second consultation happened in late 2016 on possible Sites for new development. Four sites in Woldingham were on that list, but none went forward due to Tandridge Council classifying them as either unsuitable or unavailable. Another site in Woldingham was put forward in late 2016, and this has now been classed as unavailable with the help of the Woldingham Association. We remain "on alert" because new sites can be submitted at any time.

Our representations to Tandridge Council on the Local Plan have focused on protecting the Green Belt around Woldingham by explaining why the Green Belt land fulfills more Green Belt purposes than Tandridge District Council has assessed. We have also explained that Woldingham is not a sustainable location for development due to lack of local services and employment, limited infrastructure and

reliance on the car. This has always been the case in previous Local Plans, which has allowed the character of Woldingham and the surrounding Green Belt to be preserved for current and future generations.

There are numerous Green Belt sites in Warlingham, Caterham and Oxted and throughout Tandridge and so there remains considerable uncertainty about the future of the Green Belt in Tandridge. We will continue to publish our consultation responses on www.woldinghamassociation.co.uk. Please get in touch via the web-site if you have any questions about the emerging Local Plan.

**Join us at the
Village Hall on
19th April
7.00 for 7.30pm.
Our Guest Speaker
is from
Surrey Wildlife Trust
followed by
our AGM**

Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)

The Campaign to Protect Rural England is one of a number of organisations with which the Woldingham Association maintains informal links. The CPRE works to ensure that the countryside is protected for now and future generations. The CPRE also works to maintain "dark skies", which are something local residents currently enjoy due to the absence of street lighting in Woldingham. These "dark

skies" are another contributor to the rural character of Woldingham and the surrounding countryside. They are increasingly rare inside the M25.

The Tandridge branch of the CPRE has recently appointed a new chairman who has organised events to increase local membership and raise concerns about the threats to the Tandridge Green Belt. We will continue to publicise these activities on www.woldinghamassociation.co.uk.

What interests you?

WA projects make use of a wide variety of skills and knowledge and we welcome individuals with an enthusiasm for protecting Woldingham.

Are you interested in the environment, roads, woodlands, planning?



You can help

by contributing some of your time and expertise to work on a WA project.

Individual projects bring together people with a variety of interests, knowledge, talents and skills for a period of time to achieve a specific objective.

Contact.....

The WA Council

The Lord Christopher CBE
Geoffrey King (Chairman)
Rita Berry (Co. Secretary)
Sue Edwards
Julia Eziashi (Co-opted)
Gina Miscovich (Co-opted)
Tony Potter
David Shelley
Jane Torrance (Treasurer)



Contact us

By e-mail:
info@TheWA.co.uk

Internet:
www.woldinghamassociation.co.uk

or by writing to the address below:

The Woldingham Association
c/o The Hermitage
Park View Road
Woldingham
CR3 7DJ

Superfast Broadband Update

The £20 million investment by Surrey County Council (SCC) in 2012 to provide Superfast broadband to premises in Surrey that were without commercial fibre came to an end in March 2016. 96% of all Surrey residents are now able to access fibre download speeds of 15mbps or above and this is anticipated to increase to 97% by 2018 due to additional commercial deployment plans. Currently, for technical reasons, about 15,300 premises, including some in Woldingham are not included in any further commercial rollout plans by the Service Providers (BT, Virgin Media and others).

SCC has now requested BT to model possible options for as many of these 15,300 premises as possible within the programme's cost constraints and limited available funding. Once it is known which postcodes will benefit from any additional deployment, information will be uploaded to the www.superfastsurrey.org.uk site.

If residents wish to check which structure serves their home, they can visit <https://www.dslchecker.bt.com/>.

Alternatives: Residents and businesses can: investigate satellite, wireless or mobile services which may provide improved speeds; investigate installing a dedicated fibre service; register interest in a fibre connection with Virgin Media. at <https://cablemystreet.virginmedia.com/> a mechanism for assessing where there is sufficient demand to justify private investment; or coordinate and help self-fund a community initiative such as with BT's Community Fibre Partnership - <http://www.communityfibre.bt.com/>

The Government has also taken steps to try to improve broadband provision. For more information, please see <http://superfastsurrey.org.uk/revised-better-broadband-subsidy-scheme/> and <http://superfastsurrey.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Superfast-Surrey-eNewsletter-September-2016.pdf>

Questions you ask



Answers you need

Q Why are The WA planning recommendations sometimes different from other bodies?

A While our main role is to protect and preserve the unique character of our village and the surrounding Green Belt for future generations, any comments on planning applications must be governed by relevant planning policy and site history. It is not unusual for different bodies to interpret planning policies differently.

Let us know

Do you have a particular local environmental concern? If so contact us: Phone: 652615 or email: info@TheWA.co.uk

Q Does The WA look at every planning application? If so, why are not all commented on?

A Yes, we do but we only comment on those we believe contravene national and/or local planning policy.

Q Why aren't Minutes of Meetings published on The WA website?

A The WA is a limited company, not a public body and as such there is no legal requirement to publish Minutes of Directors meetings.

Designed by Sue Edwards. Printed by The New Ink Printing Co Ltd

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