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Hilperton Update

Winter 2015

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Cllr. Ernie Clark.

Your Independent
Wiltshire councillor.

Experience Competence Energy Action Results

Dear Resident,

**'Interesting' times ahead
both moneywise and for
parishes.**

As I write this, the budget setting process for the 2016 -17 financial year is underway. The Conservative leader of Wiltshire Council (Baroness Jane Scott) will surely not insist on a zero council tax increase again. The cuts which have been made over the last year have been savage and seem to have done nothing for social coherence in the county - quite the opposite in fact.

Whether or not WC increases its precept, the certainty is that parish councils will be expected to 'take up the slack' by providing services currently controlled by Wiltshire Council. Quite how far this process will go no one knows at the moment but things might get clearer as the budget process moves through its various stages.

I am due to attend the next Local Government Association annual conference in Bournemouth and it will be interesting to hear the opinion of government ministers on finance for local authorities.

Ernie.

St. Stephen's Place

The new Odeon cinema has now settled into its place in the town without the traffic gridlock predicted by some doubters of the scheme.

Just a reminder that, if you are planning to visit the complex please remember that you can use the car park at County Hall after 6.00 pm during the week or any time at the weekend and it's FREE!

RUH 'Hopper' service

One of the meanest cuts proposed by the administration at County Hall is to the RUH 'Hopper' service. They tried to axe the service earlier this year but a campaign by residents forced them to delay the cut. The service is safe only until the end of March 2016.

WC is now conducting one of its infamous 'consultation' exercises (remember the green bin 'consultation' farce?) which is available until the 27th November.

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshire-hopper-survey will get you there on-line. Copies are also available on the Hopper or you can ask for a

hard copy by phoning 0345 456 0100.

Nearly 15,000 people a year use the service!

SHLAA sites

This acronym stands for Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and is a process whereby landowners can 'offer' their land to WC for possible future housing.

Hilperton is, not surprisingly, surrounded by SHLAA sites as the value of the land allocated for housing development can make a farmer a multi-millionaire overnight.

Pressure for new housing in west Wiltshire will continue to grow and Hilperton will not be immune from this process. However, there is a way to ensure that development takes place where local people would prefer it, not where the spatial planners at WC and the likes of Persimmon want it.

That process is through a Neighbourhood Plan. Please see the next page for details of how you can get involved.

Ernie Clark, your local councillor.
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Elizabeth Way (the Hilperton Relief Road)

More than ten years after it was granted planning permission, the road has finally opened to traffic.

The battle to keep the speed limit at the agreed 40mph was a long one which, ultimately, was lost. Myself and the Wiltshire Councillor for Trowbridge Paxcroft Division (together with the parish council, the town council, the Mead School, the police and others) fought as hard as we could, even having the 50mph decision 'called in' for review by the WC Overview & Scrutiny Committee - all to no avail.

The planned pedestrian crossings at either end of the road also 'disappeared' but Persimmon has had to lodge £60k with WC in case they are found to be needed later.

Persimmon has also had to set aside a miserly £11k towards traffic calming and the parish council has also allocated money in its budget.

When traffic flow/patterns have settled down WC will conduct a traffic survey through the village to ascertain how much traffic continues to use the 'old' road and what speed it travels at. Suggestions will then be made for the appropriate type and location of traffic calming or, perhaps, closing one or more roads.

Neighbourhood Plan

The parish council has agreed to fund the process to get a Neighbourhood Plan adopted.

This will include topics such as roads & transport, housing & leisure, schools & healthcare, environment, local amenities, and business.

The public meeting will be held at the Village Hall, Whaddon Lane at 8.00pm on Thursday 26th November.

Apologies if you have received this too late to attend. Please contact me for up to date details.

**For up to date news on local issues,
or to register for my e-newsletter,
please visit**

www.ernieclark.org.uk

Paxcroft Mead tree works

Wiltshire Council has started a three month project to manage vegetation on council owned land on Paxcroft Mead. This will involve the removal of a number of trees as well as the management of the size of others.

The work is being carried out mainly due to the increasing number of subsidence claims made against the council. The work will focus on areas where damage is most likely to occur; the aim being to reduce the likelihood of future damage to property.

The work is being undertaken by Conservation Contractors on

behalf of Wiltshire Council.

Trees and shrubs adjacent to fences and properties will be removed as will high water usage species and other species deemed inappropriate for their location. In some cases vegetation will be reduced to 1.5m with the intention that once it has re-grown it will be managed as a hedgerow.

The estate has been broken down to three areas and the specifications are tailored to each block.

If you have any questions or comments please email trees@wiltshire.gov.uk

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