



Elvetham Heath Matters...

Message from Marilyn

On pages 2 & 3 of this publication you will find a consultation document from Hart District Council (HDC).

The Parish Council recently asked HDC to increase the number of councillors for Elvetham Heath Parish Council (EHPC) from 5 to 7. It has become evident that we do not have enough members for a Parish of this size to carry out the work that is required. HDC agreed to carry out a Community Governance Review by means of a public consultation.

I would therefore encourage you to take part in the consultation so that we may increase our numbers thereby giving us the opportunity to do more for our community.

Councillors are unpaid volunteers so the additional numbers would have no cost implication.

Road Adoptions

Road adoptions remain foremost on our agenda and after 12 years Elvetham Heath Way should finally be adopted by the end of 2013. Obviously some remedial work will be required but huge progress is being made since the Parish Council called meetings between HCC and the developer. Another 4 or 5 roads have also been adopted last month and once Elvetham Heath Way is adopted we will concentrate our efforts on other developer areas and push for their roads to be adopted by HCC.

Summer Events on the Green

The summer began with our Village Fete on yet another windy day in June. However the weather was kind and the heavy rain held off right until the end. This year the event was organised for the first time by a group of residents with the support of the Parish Council. Thank you to those who gave up their time to provide a great day out for all our residents.

In complete contrast, The Elvetham Heath Car Show was blessed with a scorching hot day. This was the tenth anniversary of this very popular event, which as usual, was very well attended. Again, this event is run by residents of Elvetham Heath for the enjoyment of many. The proceeds from the raffle were shared between Shooting Star CHASE Children's Hospice and Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice.

News in Brief



Considerate Parking

We know that we have asked before, but please can we remind you to park with consideration for others. In lots of roads, access for emergency vehicles would be difficult and footpaths are being blocked. Our local Police monitor roads on Elvetham Heath and do issue fines to cars causing obstruction. Please think of others around you, and try to use your allocated parking and/or garage.

Football Pitch Casual Use

We hope that those of you who enjoy a kick-around with a football have noticed that we installed some football goals in Turners' Way. This recreation area is for casual use by local residents. Organised games and training of football club teams of any sort are not permitted. This whole area should be available at all times for our residents to go and enjoy without the worry of being in the way of teams who are training and have an area coned off. If you see groups of people doing this, please tell us as it is not allowed in this area.

Key Centre Garden

Work is almost finished on planting our new garden outside the front of The Key Centre. It will take a while to mature and we hope that this flower garden will eventually provide a pleasant place for people to sit once the benches are installed.

Your councillors are: Marilyn Robson Keith Manning Emma Watmore Nicky Bond George Brown
Parish Clerk: Jan Hyatt

Parish Office: The Key Centre Elvetham Heath Fleet Hampshire GU51 1HA
clerk@elvethamheath.org.uk 01252 819204 www.elvethamheath.org.uk



Increasing Parish Council Numbers

Your views are wanted on proposed changes to Elvetham Heath Parish Council

What's happening?

Elvetham Heath Parish Council (EHPC) has requested that Hart District Council (HDC) increase the number of parish councillors on EHPC to 7 from the current figure of 5 with effect from May 2014.

Hart has the power to make this change but before it makes a decision it must consult the electorate for their views. The consultation will run for 2 months and the decision on whether to increase the number of councillors will be taken this Autumn. This article forms the main part of the consultation.

There is no right or wrong number of councillors for a parish council. Below is a list of arguments for and against making the change. The list aims to give you an understanding of the main arguments but it is not intended to be a complete list of all the issues. You may have a different view and that is why the consultation is important and why we encourage you to let us know what you think.

FOR the change	AGAINST the change
EHPC was formed in 2009 and it was always likely that the number of councillors would need reviewing after the council had become established.	At the inaugural parish elections in 2010 only 4 candidates stood for the 5 vacancies. If there is no demand from electors to stand as councillors it could be said that there is little reason to increase the size of the council.
EHPC have requested the increase. It finds as it has only the legal minimum 5 members, who then have to attend all meetings, it cannot introduce a system of committees which would assist the more efficient management of the increasing workload of the council.	3 councillors have resigned since 2010 and despite posting notices encouraging electors to request an election to fill the vacancies none were received. Each vacancy has therefore been filled by co-opting an unelected individual to be a councillor.
EHPC employs 8 staff, has a budget of £200,000, runs the Key Centre, 5 play parks, 2 sport pitches, 3 tennis courts, 1 sports pavilion, a village green and 12 open spaces including parks, walks and paths. The workload on the councillors is becoming hard to manage.	Councils that co-opt new councillors without an election will over time lose accountability to the electorate. All 5 councillors on EHPC have been chosen without any contested election. An enlarged EHPC could struggle to attract sufficient councillors to trigger elections leading to issues of accountability.
Elvetham Heath is a mid-sized parish. In the district there are 4 other parishes of a similar size. (3000 – 4250 electorate). Those parishes have between 8 and 12 councillors. Apart from EHPC the largest council with just 5 councillors has 700 electors. This may suggest that the number of councillors on EHPC is smaller than would be expected.	2 of the mid-sized parishes with more councillors have not had any recent contested ordinary elections. This means that fewer people stood for election than were vacancies. This could suggest that the best number of councillors for a mid size council is somewhat less than 8.
EHPC has an elector to councillor ratio of 692:1 which is the third highest in the district, beaten only by the two largest parishes of Fleet and Yateley. The other mid size parishes have ratios that range between 350:1 and 429:1 The more electors that each councillor has to represent potentially reduces the time that each councillor can devote to an individual. A high workload could lead to difficulties in recruiting and retaining councillors	

FOR the change	AGAINST the change
There are future projects that are being undertaken by EHPC including setting up allotments, converting the sports pavilion to a scout/guide centre. More councillors could mean these projects may be progressed more rapidly.	
There will be no increase in costs as EHPC councillors do not receive an allowance or payment for their duties.	

How to respond

You can write with your comments or ideas to Elections, Hart District Council, FREEPOST PHQ16, Fleet, GU51 4BR or email them to elections@hart.gov.uk with ELVETHAMCONSULTATION as the title of your email. The consultation will close on the **Wednesday 9th October 2013.**

What happens next?

The results of the consultation will be published in the next issue of the parish newsletter and will be used by Hart District Council to inform its decision as to whether to make the changes to your parish.



Grounds Maintenance

The Parish Council are continuing discussions with Hart District Council (HDC) and Hampshire County Council (HCC) with regard to taking over the highway verge maintenance.

The verges on Elvetham Heath are very high maintenance and over the last couple of summers we have felt that they are not being maintained properly. There was clear support at our annual residents' evening for the Parish to take them over and officers from HDC & HCC also seem keen. However, this is uncharted territory for HCC to deal directly with a Parish Council, but we are hopeful that we will achieve a good result.

Community Defibrillator

Our community defibrillator is now in place. Situated in a heated cabinet that has been paid for by the Parish Council, it is fixed to an outside wall of The Key Centre. A defibrillator is a life-saving machine that gives the heart an electric shock in some cases of cardiac arrest. This is called defibrillation and can save lives. When someone has a cardiac arrest, defibrillation needs to be prompt. For every minute that passes without defibrillation, chances of survival decrease by 14 per cent. Research shows that applying a controlled shock within five minutes of collapse provides the best possible chances of survival.

Fleet Community Responders kindly arranged donation of the machine and the Parish Council wanted to ensure it was always accessible in a public place on Elvetham Heath, and so paid for the heated outdoor cabinet. Anybody in the nearby area, whether at Morrisons, the pub, in The Key Centre, at the tennis courts or on the village green, can ring 999 to ask for the PIN to release the machine from its cabinet and use it. The machine is designed to be used by the public, with no medical training and talks through what the user should do until help arrives. This early intervention could be crucial.



Artwork

As the walls in The Key Centre looked quite bare, we decided to ask you via our Annual Residents' Evening, social media channels and our page in the Elvetham Heath Directory, to submit photographs of scenery or architecture from around Elvetham Heath. We wanted to choose some to be printed onto canvases that will be displayed in the building. We have chosen six that are in the process of being printed. Thank you to everybody who responded. We had a lot of excellent images to choose from!



Playgrounds

We have set up meetings with several suppliers to begin the process of redesigning the central play area near to The Key Centre. This area needs to provide recreational facilities for all age groups and we will be applying for funding to help with the cost of this project as play equipment is very expensive. Once a supplier is chosen and plans drawn up, we will have a period of consultation which will include asking the children for their comments. Any feedback already given to us will be considered in this process. The timescale is a little unknown at the moment, but we will keep you informed with progress.

All of our playgrounds are inspected weekly, however we really would appreciate if you could report any problems that you see whilst visiting any of them. This can be done via our website and using the 'report a fault' facility. www.elvethamheath.org.uk

Pavilion

Over the past few months we have been working in partnership with Fleet Lions Club to convert our unused sports pavilion into a home for the 100th Elvetham Heath Scouts group. Thanks to the outstanding work and commitment by the Lions the building should be completed ready for the scouts to move in for the new term starting in September. This partnership with some additional help from Scout leaders, parents and Councillors shows what can be achieved when a community works together. The end result means that hundreds of children from Elvetham Heath will benefit from a permanent home for the scouts for years to come. We are sure many residents will be pleased that a use has been found for this building.



Allotments



We now have planning permission for the allotments in an area near Tunworth Close. There will be twenty created, with one being used by the charity Minding the Garden. We have a significant number of residents on our waiting list and are now deciding on the fairest way of allocating the nineteen available spaces. This is likely to be through a public lottery draw, but we will confirm to those on the list in the near future. If you haven't already put your name forward, the cut-off date for being included in the initial list is Monday 30th September 2013. Please contact the Clerk for your details to be added. clerk@elvethamheath.org.uk

Work will start soon to create the allotments and car park and we hope that it will be completed by the end of the year.

and Finally...



Facilities For Hire

We are responsible for managing The Key Centre, the tennis courts on Elvetham Heath and an enclosed junior football pitch, all of which are available for hire.

The Key Centre

In The Key Centre, we have a large hall (18m x 10m) and this can be hired for exercise classes, discos, barn dances, quiz nights, birthday parties and even christening and wedding celebrations! For children’s parties you can use our large bouncy castle free of charge. We have easy to book slots on our website for children’s parties at weekends and it costs £79.95 for two and a half hours in our main hall or £59.95 in the Heath & Village Rooms. Both options have the use of the kitchen, although our bouncy castle can only be used in the Hall. The Heath & Village Rooms are big enough to hold meetings and smaller activity classes in the evenings and at weekends.

Tennis Courts

We have three tennis courts which can be floodlit and these are available for £5 per court per hour. If you wish to use the floodlights, it costs £5 per hour extra. You can book online on our website. The tennis booking system will ask you to create a password and then you can make your booking. This needs to be done at least four hours before playing.

Enclosed Junior Football Pitch

This can be hired for £15 per hour for junior football or other events where you would like to keep people in a large open space that is secure. We have even had a big water fight that had been arranged by a local children’s group!



Your Local Authorities - Who Does What

Parish Council The Key Centre The Key GU51 1HA Tel: 01252 819204 Email: clerk@elvethamheath.org.uk	The Key Centre The Key car park Turner’s Way car park Recreational facilities – play areas, pitches Outdoor green space except nature reserve and ponds
Hart District Council Civic Offices Harlington Way Fleet GU51 4AE Tel: 01252 622122	Refuse collection Street cleaning Fly tipping Housing Parking matters (except The Key & Turner’s Way car parks) District leisure facilities Licensing Tree preservation orders Planning matters Watercourse maintenance Community Safety Initiative Grass verge maintenance Elvetham Heath nature reserve Council Tax
Hampshire County Council Based at Hook Compound for local highways matters Tel: 08456 035633 All other depts based in Winchester Tel: 01962 841841	Highways including gritting and signage Street lighting Public rights of way Education and learning Libraries Consumer advice and protection Social care Community transport