

NEWS FROM DORSET COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARGARET PHIPPS

The following are notes on issues which I have been dealing with recently. If anyone wants further information, please feel free to contact me.

Good news on funding secured to protect Stourbanks in Conifer Close from flooding

During winter 2013/14 the ground floor of one Stourbanks block was flooded, while a second block came very close to being inundated. The 4 properties in the southern block which did flood, were eligible for Government funding specifically to contribute towards flood alleviation works. However the northern block which was not actually flooded, was not eligible. I have been working very hard with the County Council Member of the Wessex Flood Committee and the Environment Agency, and we have succeeded in obtaining match funding of an additional £20,000 for the second block to contribute towards flood protection works for them as well. A flood wall around block 1 is already complete, and the wall around block 2 is under construction. I am absolutely delighted that residents of Conifer Close can now look forward to winters with greater confidence, feeling safe from flooding.

Update on local roads

Marlow Drive Roundabout – during the summer it is intended to carry out some works in this roundabout area to make it safer. The County Council has identified that some vehicles travelling along Hurn Road tend to go straight across the roundabout without slowing down, which makes it difficult for other vehicles to exit from Marlow Drive and St. Catherine's Way, which can also be dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians. There are plans to slightly increase the size of the central triangles on the approach roads to the roundabout, and also paint a hatched area around the existing roundabout, plus additional safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists. The aim is to encourage traffic to slow down as it approaches the roundabout.

The A338, Hurn Roundabout and future transport schemes – I wrote a detailed article about A338 maintenance and Hurn Roundabout for the February 2015 newsletter which can be found under "latest updates" on the website. The current situation with the planned A338 maintenance works is still that they will commence in September 2015.

I thought it might be helpful to give you some idea of planned road schemes for the area, and their possible timetable, which will of course depend on funding:

A338 maintenance Blackwater to Ashley Heath – Winter 2015/16; Hurn Roundabout – 2016/17; Chapel Gate Roundabout – 2016/17; Blackwater Interchange – 2017/18; Longham Mini Roundabouts – 2017/18; A338 widening between Cooper Dean and Blackwater – 2018/19.

New school provision

As the Dorset County Councillor for this area, I recently attended a meeting with County Council Officers to discuss a proposed new school. Resident Groups who had already expressed an interest in being involved also attended. Notes of that meeting are on the WCRA website. Please feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss any issue raised in those notes.

Superfast Broadband

I am told that at the moment the majority of properties in West Christchurch (with the exception of Hurn) are able to access fibre broadband. However, there are still a few clusters of properties which need connecting. The map at:

<http://mapping.dorsetforyou.com/superfast/availability/map>

gives a broad overview of areas to be covered for the basic service of 2-24 Mbps, based on postcode data. For those still to be connected, work is due to start this year and continue through next year. You can check with your provider what is available at your property, and if superfast is not available yet, then register for local information at:

<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/broadband/keep-informed>

Navitus Bay Wind Farm

I have attended 5 of the Public Inquiry Issue Specific hearings between November 2014 and January 2015, and taken an active part in some of the discussions. The Inquiry has now closed. The next step is that the Inspectors will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State by 11th June and a decision to approve or refuse the application will be made by 11th September 2015.

Cllr. Margaret Phipps

"Commons", Dorset County Council

Tel: 01202 478266

E mail: mphipps@fillybrookfarm.co.uk