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POPLEY MATTERS

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December 2004 to February 2005

Issue 38

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Closing date to submit articles etc. (18-02-05); Adverts (11-02-05)

Message From the Editor:- Seasons Greetings to all our readers from myself Jane Frankum and all our dedicated and wonderful volunteers especially those who deliver the magazine throughout Popley in all weathers. If there are anymore community minded people out there who could deliver some Popley Matters we would all be very grateful. Contact me on 819924 or Iris King on 411113.

The community Wardens have been very busy and on top of their normal work they have been organizing a grand time for Christmas on December 16 th with real reindeers and Santa coming to Popley if you look on page 1 you will see more details. Welcome Sarah who has come to replace Lesley.

I am sure if you read through this Popley Matters there will something going on that you may like to go or get involved with.

I have not heard about the pharmacy yet but as soon as we get any news I will let you know.

The Furniture Store has now opened and there are some fantastic bargains with special reduced prices if you are on benefit. See the article on page 14.

There is a report by Paul Harvey on page 16 when Paul, Mary Edwards (Chief Executive of Basingstoke Hospital) and I met in the Civic offices with Andrew Dyer Edward Hodgeson and Robbie Hall of Stagecoach to talk about route 5. We also talked about bus times and finding out when are the crucial times we need the buses for the staff to get to work and home again and peak times for hospital appointments.

I went to Marion Moore's memorial service as I have known Marion for many years and I know that many of you would have met Marion from her years as school secretary and working in St Gabriel's Church Bill Ind now Bishop of Truro came and took part and reminded us all of how Marion worked hard but never lost her sense of humour.

Once again Seasons Greetings and please watch out for each other and if you don't see your neighbour about , just knock and make sure they are OK. *Jane Frankum Editor*

To pass back ideas, comments, suggestions, articles or to offer help please write to:- Popley Matters, 405 Abbey Road, Basingstoke.RG24 9EL email:popley.matters@bopenworld.com The views in this publication are not necessarily the views of the Editorial Team. Or the members of the committee of Popley Forum/Matters.

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Letters to The Editor



Dear Editor; I expect you will have received many letters on the proposal to cut out the part of the route of bus number 5 that goes to the hospital. How can Stagecoach say people do not use it when I know many people do and I am one of them. How do Stagecoach count the numbers of passengers I have my bus pass, I get on the bus and the driver always smiles and says go on I have never seen anybody write or mark the fact that I am on the bus. The ticket machines are not in working order so often it could make your head spin, again the driver smiles raises his shoulders and says go on take a seat, again no acknowledgement that I and others are on the bus. The bus is not reliable often late and sometimes does not arrive at all. I know that you have written in Popley Matters that Stagecoach should talk to the people that own the big businesses and find out what times are best for instance my friend works in Sainsbury's and her shift is from six o'clock am but the bus does not start then. I worked in the hospital and as a non driver I use public transport a lot. I believe that the improvements to some bus stops is a joint effort with Stagecoach and the Council and I must admit that it is much easier to get onto the bus with the kerb being built higher and the bus is lower it used to be so hard sometimes to climb into the bus with shopping, children and a pushchair to deal with all in one go. My friend and I are going to find out how much it is to travel by taxi as we have been told it is cheaper to use a Taxi. What can we do so that we keep the number 5 in service?

Editor; *The most important thing is to use the bus it goes every fifteen minutes we will have to show that it is needed and the passengers will use it. There is a report of the public meeting held this month on page 16 and our meeting with Stagecoach and Mary Edwards who is the chief executive of North Hampshire Hospital. Mary pointed out that*

as the hospital is the biggest employer why is it that she has never been asked when the greatest need is for transport to get workers to work. As you will see by the report we felt we may have moved a step further and we can start to involve other companies and then we may come up with a much better service!

Dear Editor; I wanted to write and say how wonderful I think the Community Wardens are they are always so helpful and cheerful and nothing seems to be too much trouble. I am sorry that Lesley left but I will look forward to meeting the new warden soon. They just seem to be everywhere you look. They are so easy to talk to well just about anything. I am a grandmother and my grandchildren like the Wardens too they have played football with them and had Mocktails. Thank you Wardens.

Editor; *What can I say I agree wholeheartedly with you and many people stop me and say very much what you have said. We all work well together in the community on lots of different things and I see how much work is put in by all of them. The Christmas events should be really exciting and I hope people join in. There will be reindeer and lots of events going on for all the family.*

Editors Note We look forward to reading your letters on all sorts of subjects. We do not print your name or address if you wish us not to but of course we can not accept letters that are sent anonymously.

**Please send your letters to :
The Editor, Popley Matters,
405 Abbey Rd, Basingstoke.
RG24 9EL**

We do need your name and address but will not print them if you ask us not to.



Now that the leaves are gone from the trees and the chilly winds of winter have begun to blow, we find ourselves at the end of another year. For us at the Community Wardens office, it's a significant milestone. It's now a complete year since we have been in post, and

we can look back on some of the things that have been achieved.

Projects such as the football projects, Mocktails (a non-alcoholic bar for young people), and the Proud of Popley initiative are examples of how we have been able to engage with the community here to help make it an even safer and better place to live. With crime rates lower than they were 20 years ago, and some great projects on the horizon for the New Year, it's a very exciting time to live in the area. Minor incidents of litter, graffiti and fly-tipping still take place and we will continue to work closely with the community on improving this further.

If you haven't met us yet, please feel free to chat to us when we are out and about, and remember to drop into the Community Surgery at St Gabriel's Church the first Saturday of every month from 12.00 – 1.00pm. This will be in full swing by 8th January (not the 1st), followed by 5th February and so on. This gives a great opportunity for you to meet with the local Beat Officers, Community Wardens, and Elected Members, so please feel free to come along.

I cannot help but mention our Christmas project. This will be taking place on the 16th December from 4pm – 8pm. There will be a procession with live reindeer and Father Christmas proceeding along Melrose Walk, followed by seasonal refreshments, involvement from most of the schools including performances of carols and pantomime, and a great Christmas Sing-along at Melrose Hall. Please come along on the evening and get in on the festivities, and let us know if you have a group that would like to get involved in the event by way of performance, fancy dress, decorations or food.

Please don't hesitate to contact the Community Wardens office on 01256 845508 if you have anything worrying you, and let us know if you have any ideas for making our community a greater place to live.

Best wishes and have a great festive season,
Stephen Bate Community Warden for Popley



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 Manager: Ginny Bloomfield

Popley Two Residents Association

This will be my last report from the Madeira Hall as we are moving into the empty Bermuda Hall where the old Doctors surgery was. The building has been refurbished to accommodate community activities. By the time you read this we should have moved but not yet fully operational. There must be people new to Popley who are not aware of our standing in the community. Our name does not suggest that we operated as a community agency.

In the beginning in 1975 we were known as a tenant association, changing to residents when we realized so many families were buying their own homes from the council. We have a proud record of all the activities we provided for young and old alike. There were regular playgroups, senior and junior youth groups, mothers and toddlers, over 50's group, St John ambulance cadets, Bingo, jumble sales, Christmas bazaars Christmas parties, summer outings and summer fetes that we held outside on the dunes behind our hall opposite the Barbican public house.

We were very successful with our entries into the decorated floats in the Basingstoke Carnival. I hope you will come to our public meeting in January (date to be announced) you will see a display of illustrations of some of our history. We have had some wonderful committees and have been as many as 26 committee members. Sadly times change, people change even our hall had to change due to legislation. Refurbishment due to asbestos problems reduced the internal area somewhat. We also lost the use of the dunes due to the area being landscaped which meant goodbye to all our outdoor activities. We were pleased when Marnel Explorers was set up which is the pre-school set up by Did Mallet and her wonderful staff.

The move into the new hall has opened up much more room and storage so we can have much more to offer agencies and public to hire out our facilities. We need however some new committee members and we are hoping that some younger people will come forward with new and fresh ideas to help with the running and success of this new hall. So come on you out there spend some quality time join in this exciting venture and help to keep the community spirit that Popley is so well known for.

Speaking personally I have enjoyed my contribution to our past history for almost thirty years, twenty-seven of them as Chairman and a short spell as secretary. Finally we will be called Bermuda Community Association and I hope we last at least as long, then many years more.

I close by wishing you all the compliments of the season

Ron Rowe Chair

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poplefields@hotmail.com

The last few months have again been very busy at the centre and this trend looks set to continue!

Youth Club: The Youth Club has continued to be bursting at the seams - **all we need is more adult volunteers to help out occasionally** and any equipment such as unwanted board games/playstations etc. in good condition suitable for the 8 years and above group to keep them occupied. So when you are making space for those new presents, please think of us as a suitable new home for your games etc..

Staff: We have recently recruited a new Centre Supervisor but we continue to look for weekend staff to help out at all our weekend functions. So if you are interested in some regular or 'as and when' hours mainly at weekends, please ring the centre for an application form. The work can be varied and interesting and we offer a very reasonable rate of pay.

Football Pitch: Our floodlit pitch is being well used this winter but we still have a couple of hours available for hire during the week, so if you want to get together for a casual one off kick around or you have a team wanting to do regular training, contact the centre to find out available time slots.

Linedancing: Silverwings Linedance Club meet at Popley Fields every Wednesday from 8 to 10pm. The club is not for beginners, but if you have some experience and want to get to the next level, why not come along and try it out. Ring Sue Jordan on 01256 321972 for more info.

Computer Courses: If you are interested in improving your computer skills or learning how to turn one on, daytime tutoring is available to attain City and Guilds Level 1,2 and 3 certificates. Call the centre and ask for Debbie for more information.

Popley Fields is a registered charity and is run by a small group of committed volunteers.

If anyone has some spare time they are willing to give for our New Years Eve Family Night we would love to hear from you!

We are also very keen to recruit some new volunteers who may be able to help oversee the management of the centre over the next few exciting months and years as it develops.

If you are able to spare a small amount of time, or would like to find out more about what is involved in helping to foster community spirit in Popley, please contact Mark Head at Popley Fields.

Diaries from The Old Codger

Well I have had it on good authority that the man with the white beard is due soon. shops in the town have all the enticing displays to catch the sweet little ones eyes, saying "can I have that for Christmas" mum or dad "let's go in here I want to show you some thing".

The teenage girls follow after their mothers, if it is expensive they want it!

boys want it if it's fast, can fit a console and needs joy sticks and buttons to press. Then! Yes there is a big then!! Calls her in doors "i just want to go in town, are you coming?"

hang on there are these the same words I heard last year? They were but like a fool i tag along Christmas shopping. Don't get me wrong I love Christmas, but! It's just the wife dragging me around that I protest about.

My daughter in law has got the right idea she sits at her computer and her Christmas shopping is done.

Then you don't mind going to town sitting having a coffee and watching as every one humps bags of presents around. I have just come out of my dream, its cold, it's wet and her in doors is in another shop, the thing that gets me is when she says wait there I won't be long. You can't get a coffee unless you queue for ages and then you have to find somewhere to sit. Yes, I have heard that one before, so I sit out side as she is off like a rabbit. Thirty minutes later she reappears, no bags; I ask the immortal question "what did you buy?" "oh nothing I just wanted to look around". The rain now has got down inside my top and is running down my back, it is very uncomfortable as it reaches the bottom of my trousers and is running out like a drain pipe. But this is all the fun of Christmas shopping; it's an adventure it's only once a year and I do love it really.

At least most shopping centres are under cover these days, thank God for Festival Place. Hang on! What is that she has seen

A sale starts today in this shop and before I say n— she is off!!

all of you keep well, have a good Christmas. Keep our accident department at the hospital free by not drinking and driving they deserve a Christmas full of cheer and not having to comfort relatives.

Hang on she is back, we are going home I will hide next year when she says lets just!!!!!!!

have a good new year.

The Old Codger

Christmas

... is a special time of the year, a time when we remember that God sent His Son Jesus into the world to save us from our sins.

This Christmas, why not join us in our celebration.

We meet on Sundays
from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon in
Popley Fields Community Centre
Carpenters Down

phone: Graham and Barbara on (01256) 363692

eMail: information@basingstoke-new-t.freeseve.co.uk



web: www.basingstoke-new-t.freeseve.co.uk

Isaiah 9 ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **NIV**



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Season Greetings from your Councillors it has been a very busy time all through the summer, but at last many of the issues we have been fighting are being done, but there is still lots to do. Some of the successes are: together we have saved the route five and it will continue until July the rest is up to us all to show that the route including the hospital stop is being used, we can make sure that for instance when we use "day tickets" that the driver marks it down, one of the arguments was that as the drivers don't often do this it is not showing up on their system and if a ticket machine is not working there is a method of writing out a ticket and still paying and it is then counted. I have been assured that they have now bought nine new machines!

The garage area in Jersey and Guernsey were covered in graffiti and after a street surgery by Jane and Andy and a petition they were cleaned. Marlowe garages have been an eyesore for a long time now and with the insistence of your Councillors and two visits together with Sentinel they have now agreed to repossess all the garages that are "inappropriately" being used and demolish the front row of eight we will monitor it along with our community wardens contact Andy on 436985, wardens on 845508 or Jane on 819924

Longfellow Parade is to have a safe path through the centre the council only own a small part but after complaints that residents have told me where people have tripped and fallen, one elderly lady hurt herself quite badly, the council have agreed to do the tarmac path, even if Longfellow Parade is removed and the area regenerated it will take some time, I believe it is worth it so that no one else is injured. We are at the draft of a plan being ready and we should be consulting with the residents in the area to see what you think of them and to see what ideas you may have for the area around Longfellow Parade to carry on with the improvements already started.

Abbey Road (among others) should be getting yellow lines where parking has caused accidents they will be where the yellow planning application notices were with some minor changes after consulting with residents that live near them. It was good to be involved and to see how working together we can all come to a good solution.

There has been a survey on repainting white lines as a guidance for parking I think most of us at one time or another have seen cars parked so badly that the car takes up two spaces the idea has now been taken up by Councillors in other wards it wont solve the parking problem but it will at least make room for cars to park more safely.

I spent four hours with Dev, Nayna and their solicitor in front of a panel of three people (all pharmacists or retired) and gave a good argument for a pharmacy license and the petition signed by 1750 people and numerous letters. There were professional representatives from Lloyds; Boots and Numark pharmacies, who all spoke against us having a pharmacy in Abbey Road shops. We will not get a decision for a few weeks yet but we will let you all know as soon as we hear anything. The panel will make their recommendation and it then goes up to Harrigate for a final decision.

The Labour team all went to the Mayors firework display and enjoyed it very much, it was also good to see and speak to so many of you there, and the best part is that it raises thousands of pounds for the mayor's charities.

I have been to so many meetings at the last count 114 since the last Popley Matters and that does not include private visits to residents they must be double that figure I enjoy being able to help people but I do get frustrated about how long things take sometimes but it is better to wait a short while if it means we get it right.

Jane Frankum Borough and County Councillor.

XMAS MESSAGE FROM MAGNOLIA COURT

On the First Wednesday of every month Magnolia Court in Popley Way, hold a Community Drop In for Information and Advice, to help and can provide information on a wide range of topics. The Pension Service, Age Concern, Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Wardens, Local Councillors, and a Housing Association Representative all attend. On the 8th December we are holding a Christmas Community Drop In with free Teas and Mince Pies for anyone who would like to come and join us, between 2.00 - 3.00pm.

On behalf of all the Residents of Magnolia Court I would like to thank the Community of Popley for the support you have given us for our Golden Oldies Fair held on the 11th September, to the Community Wardens and our local Councillors Jane Frankum and Paul Frankum for all their good work they do for Popley and may let it continue. We wish everyone in Popley a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Hello My name is Jayne Fowler and I have recently been employed by Basingstoke Consortium Ltd which operates out of offices at John Hunt of Everest School.

We are a non profit making organisation funded by the Government and we work to create links and partnerships between education and businesses in our area.

Primarily, we arrange work experience opportunities for all students in secondary schools in Basingstoke. We are constantly striving to put together good quality work placements with conscientious and cooperative companies that can share their wealth of experience with our students. This is not always an easy task and we are constantly looking for introductions to variuos different enterprises, that can offer a two week unpaid work experience place for a 14/15 year old, between February and July each year. We liaise between the school and the company to ensure the smooth running of this operation and the success rate is considerable.

We would ask anyone who reads this article, to either offer a work placement within your company, or pass this article to someone they know that could.

We want the students of Popley and all other students in Basingstoke to learn about their environment and aspire to a career future here when they leave school/college. Please help by telephoning us on 01256 840710

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Safer Christmas Campaign

To help reduce crime this Christmas, Hampshire Constabulary will be launching a campaign to raise people's awareness of how they can lessen their chances of becoming victims of crime over the festive period. The Safer Christmas campaign, which forms part of the force's Creating Safer Communities programme, will provide easy to follow crime prevention tips covering a wide range of issues, including burglary, street robbery, binge drinking and car crime.

Top tips to stay safe this Christmas

- If you're going away for Christmas, make sure your home looks occupied by using time-switches on lights, radios and other appliances. Get a friend or neighbour to collect your post and draw your curtains to make your home look lived in, over the Christmas period.
- If you buy new items for Christmas like DVD players or video recorders, don't leave the empty boxes near the bins as an advertisement.
- Crowds increase at Christmas - make sure handbags and wallets are carried securely. Don't carry large amounts of cash and keep cheque cards and cheque books separate.
- When celebrating this Christmas, don't drink too much and ruin your night. Drink a few soft drinks to pace your drinking and to avoid a hangover the next morning.
- Don't leave any Christmas presents or shopping on display when you park your car, if it's not there, then it can't be stolen.

For further crime prevention advice and information email
media.services@hampshire.pnn.police.uk



Christmas at St Gabriel's

We warmly invite you to join us to celebrate the reason for the season!
St Gabriel's is your parish church in Tewkesbury Close, off Popley Way.

Advent Service

Sunday 28th November at 10.30 a.m.

Christingle for all the family

Sunday 12th Dec at 5 p.m.

Nativity Service

Sunday 19th Dec at 10.30 a.m.

Carols by Candlelight

a service of Nine Lessons and Carols
Sunday 19th December at 6 p.m.

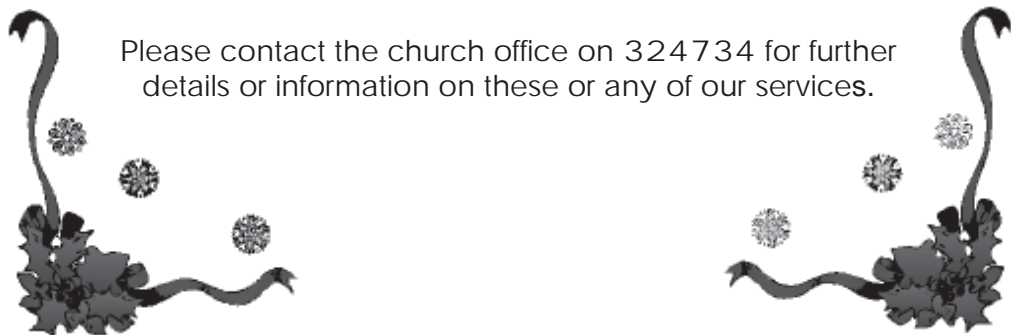
Midnight Communion

Christmas Eve at 11.30 p.m.

Christmas Celebrations

A Service for all the Family
Christmas Day at 10.00 a.m.

Please contact the church office on 324734 for further details or information on these or any of our services.



Basingstoke
and Deane



Come along to one of our workshops and have a go at making something for Christmas.

Christmas Crackers, Cards and Gift Tags

All of the workshops are free and last for approximately two hours.

Melrose Hall, Popley

Wednesday 1st December, 9:30 - 11:30am

Popley Fields Community Centre

Wednesday 1st December, 12:30 - 2:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd, Winklebury

Friday 3rd December, 9:30 - 11:30am

The Ridgeway Community Centre, Buckskin

Tuesday 7th December, 9:30 - 11:30am

For further information call **Ann Wharton**, Community Learning Officer, Learning & Skills Unit, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council on (01256) 845485 or just come along!



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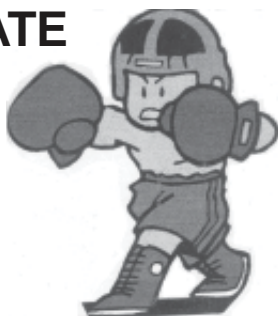
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Tuesday & Thursday
Popley Fields
Community Centre



The Popley Partnership met on Wednesday 6 October at the John Hunt of Everest School.

The Partnership is very well represented by local Councillors, Hampshire County Council, residents, local agencies, Sentinel Housing Group, the Police and Community Wardens.

At this meeting we discussed progress on the Popley Project. This is one of a number of projects that the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) has identified which will be looking at the key issues that the local community has told us needs action. Currently the Project is gathering data together from a variety of community surveys carried out over the past few years and from national statistic databases with the intention of then prioritising work that can be jointly funded and managed by partner organisations.

There will be a lot more information on this over the next year and residents will be asked to become involved in this project as it develops.

We received an update from Hampshire County Council on the progress being made on the North of Popley Redevelopment and the County have promised to keep residents fully informed on their work. The Partnership was very keen to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to know what is happening.

We are currently reviewing the Popley Community Consultation Residents' Action Plan from 2001 to make sure that the actions are being progressed. The Partnership will be looking at this in greater detail at our next meeting.

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'Age Concern Basingstoke' would like to open an additional Activity Centre in the Popley area. In order to do this we need some willing volunteers who can give some time each week.

Advice, support and guidance are provided along with any training needed. The role is rewarding and fun!!

Contact Beverley Jones, Community Services Officer at Age Concern on 01256 423874 for further information.'

Letters from Members of Junction 6

Hi my name is Marcella and I go to Junction 6, our local youth arts centre, I am writing to inform you about some of our recent activities. We are going to the New Forest for a scary sleepover on Saturday 20th of November. We will be doing various activities, such as holding big hairy scary spiders. All the people who are going are raising some money for children in need.

We wanted to help children less fortunate than ourselves so we decided to send them gifts for Christmas as they are not going to get any otherwise. We sent 5 shoeboxes of gifts as part of the Samaritans Purse appeal.

We would really love you to put a bit about us in the local people so that they realise that some young people like to do things to help others!

Yours Faithfully Marcella White

Hi this is Robyn Sutton and Helen Kiddy we are 14 and 13 years old, we are members at Junction Six at John Hunt which is our youth club. We wanted to let you know about some of the activities we do, these include the following:

Scary sleepover

On Saturday we are going down to New Forest on a scary sleepover, we are going to do an activity which involves stroking a tarantula, which we are fundraising money for Children in Need. The money we raise will be going to 'Party for Pudsey'. There is also a Murder Mystery Dinner and Scary films.
Shoe box appeal

Last Wednesday we collected small gifts for children in less fortunate countries. These are for children who have never experienced Christmas so we sent them Christmas presents in shoe boxes.

Don't like it change it

To tie in for local democracy week we did several different activities arguing, debating and exploring issues relevant to us.

Plans for the future

We have many things planned for the future these include, a project called Express involving, dancing and drumming. Also a winter festival where we are going to do six weeks of singing lessons which will lead us to doing a concert in the woods. As well as all this we hope to have drama lessons, photography and human beat box.

If you would like more information then please call Bianca on 01256 334883

We feel that you should get in contact with us because we really love coming along to Junction Six every Wednesday and joining in with all the activities.

Yours sincerely Robyn and Helen

Longfellow Parade Update

By now almost everyone in Popley will have heard that options for the redevelopment of Longfellow Parade are being explored. In support of this Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and Sentinel Housing Group have jointly appointed architect Kenn Scadden Associates to review a number of options.

Discussions to date have centred around options to alleviate key social issues in Longfellow Parade, parking, road layout, access to Longfellow Parade and the need to take into account the retail units, open space and garages in any examination of layout and design. It was concluded from work to date that the redevelopment of Longfellow Parade and adjacent areas may be necessary to effectively address the range of issues and to modernise the design and layout. However, any option will need to be affordable, viable and deliverable and above all else acceptable to the community.

Residents of Longfellow Parade will be consulted at every possible stage of the project. At the moment the architect is drafting indicative options to report back this Autumn. We anticipate that an action plan incorporating the preferred options will then be put together and consultation will commence with residents in the local community.

There will be opportunities throughout this process for residents to consider presented options and to make comments and suggestions.

Any events will be advertised nearer the time.

As part of our approach to ensure real involvement for the community, Sentinel will be arranging for a number of community representatives to receive training in the general principles of urban design and layout. Currently we envisage that there will be around 5 places available for the design training sessions. Any persons who wish to become involved at this level, please register their interest with Sentinel's Regeneration Liaison Officers, Hannah Tomlin or Sara Petherick on 0800 195 5515, stating any previous experience, if applicable. It would be helpful if persons interested in this role be nominated by neighbours in order that we can determine the representation of persons.

Subject to the schemes viability, funding availability, and acceptance by all stakeholders, Sentinel Housing Group are hoping to submit a planning application for the selected outcome some time in the summer of 2005.

Please contact Paul Richards at Sentinel Housing on 0800 195 5515 if you have any queries.



Lynda Payne in 1950
living in the old army camp
at Popley, I have lived in popley
from 1948-53 & 1969-2004
it will soon be forty years
and it only seems like yesterday



Colin Jeffery in 1958
over looking Morning Dell
on Colin's left was
the old army camp

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Dear Editor, Thank you Jane Frankum for Popley Matters; because it does, it's been my home twice.

Dear Jane

Popley really Matters to me.

It was where I played when I was only three.

The huts are gone the steps are too.

So I would like to share these old memories with you.

On the other side of Popley way I used to go to white ditch dell, and morning dell with my mum and dad. Later I used to cycle from South Ham, past the old west ham swimming pool, then go along swing swang lane to both dell's for picnic's with my aunty. We lived in a wooden hut on bricks, the army camp was close by. Me and a couple of my friends used to go in the canteen some times and get some chips, there was also a mushroom farm. I also remember the fields were like a red carpet with poppies. There was a big water tower, I would climb half way up it, and I never reached the top I was too scared. Dad had about a dozen chickens, they all had their own names, one of them would try to peck me every time I got near it. After they had all gone I went into the hutch to play and accidentally knocked my head on a ball of money spiders. I was covered in them, they said it was the nasty chicken having the last laugh!!! So you can see Popley really does matter to me even now I'm way past the age of three.

Lynda

Marnel Junior School

It has been a very busy Autumn Term, with a bit of upheaval earlier on due to the rebuilding of the classrooms, which finished at half term. The new classrooms are looking GREAT, a massive improvement on the old ones.

We also upgraded our ICT suite, now we have PC's instead of Acorn computers and this will benefit the pupils enormously as many of them use PC's at home. The new classrooms each have a computer bay and we have printers on each floor. The old computers were donated to a charity which supplies computers to African Children.

We are very pleased to report our SAT results were up this year by 33 points, thanks to a lot of hard work by staff and pupils.

We have also just set up our school council: the pupils are very enthusiastic about taking ownership on decisions which affect them within the school such as what equipment should be used at play times.

Tuesday October 19th saw Andy McCormick come into the school as part of Local Democracy Week to talk about the Council, and he left with a few cases from pupils as a result!

Looking ahead to Xmas we have a packed schedule. We hope to see you at our Xmas concerts and are on the lookout for parents and governors to help out with the Xmas panto trip to the Anvil.

Diary Dates: December:- 6th 7th 1.30pm 8th 6pm Christmas Concert Thursday 9th 6pm 14th 1.30pm Yr 3 and 4 Xmas party Yr 5 and 6 at St Gabriels 15th 12pm Xmas Dinner 15th 1.30pm Yr 3 and 4 at St Gabriels 15th 1.30pm Yr 5 and 6 Disco 16th 2pm Xmas panto trip to the Anvil

Chineham Park Primary School

It has been a busy Autumn Term at school. The swimming program at Queen Mary's College for Years 5 and 6 was very successful, the program continues for Years 2/3/4, in January 2005, then years 1 and 2 in March 2005. Transport costs are supported by parental contributions and fundraising events.

Poetry Day on 7th October was a great success and the children enjoyed a visit from the Alton Town Crier.

National Film Week on October 12th saw the pre-school and years 1 and 2 going on a free outing to the Vue cinema to see "Piglet's Big Movie"

Local Democracy Week on October 18th saw children from years 3 and 4 participate in a bulb planting at the new garden in Keats/Milton Close with Cllr Andrew McCormick. The pictures appeared in the Gazette.

We are very big on sport here at Chineham Park, with at least 2 hours a week devoted to sport. We have local partnerships starting up including:

Tag Rugby: coaching from 12th November-16th December.

Wella & Bison Hockey Partnership. Players' visit was on November 16th.

Southampton FC will be doing free training sessions with years 3-6 every Wednesday morning starting in the New Year.

Diary Dates: December 2nd 6-9pm: Buy a song for Xmas 7th/8th 2pm Xmas play: "Off to Bethlehem" also 8th at 6pm 10th 11.45 Xmas Lunch Friday 10th 6-9pm Family Disco 16th 4-7pm Carol Concert at St Gabriels Church

Look out for our choir at Festival Place this Christmas, we have been invited to 2 events. This year we are raising money for The Autistic Society and Marie Curie.



WHATS ON AT MELROSE HALL

| | | |
|------------------|---|---|
| MONDAY | MORNING 9.30 - 12PM COFFEE MORNING | AFTERNOON 1PM-3PM FREE COMPUTER COURSE |
| TUESDAY | 10am-12pm Play2gether (Young parents Group) Free! | 2PM - 4PM BINGO 4PM PETITE SCHOOL OF DANCE |
| WEDNESDAY | 9.30 - 11.30 PARENT & TODDLER GROUP | 12PM - 2PM OASIS LUNCH CLUB 4.15PM ONWARDS CHARITY AUCTION |
| THURSDAY | 9.30-12PM COFFEE MORNING | 7PM SALE STARTS 7PM WEIGHT WATCHERS |
| FRIDAY | 9.30-2.30PM LODDON ALLIANCE | 6.30PM YOUTH CLUB |
| SATURDAY | 9.30 - 12.30 PETITE | SCHOOL OF DANCE |
| SUNDAY | 11AM MELROSE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP | 6.30PM MELROSE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP |

We also hire out our hall for private hire, children's or adult party's Weddings, meetings etc. Please call 01256 420676 for information on booking.

Debra Dainton is leaving on December 19th we will all miss her thank you for all your dedicated work from everyone of us at Melrose Hall, good luck in your new job.

Don't forget the Wednesday Auction there are hundreds of bargains Popleys own Bargain Hunt every Wednesday bidding starts at 7pm viewing from 4:15pm closed from December 17th open again on the 8th January

Sunday Outdoor Boot Sales at John Hunt Community School the boot sale will run throughout 2005

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FURNITURE PROJECT OPENS IN BASINGSTOKE

Basingstoke's own furniture project, the Community Furniture Project (Basingstoke) launched at the beginning of October, collecting donated furniture, household goods and electrical appliances to sell at discounted prices to people living on a low income, receiving a pension or on State Benefits. Examples include sofas from £30, fridges from £20 and so on.

Phelim O'Hagan, Manager at the Project, says *"We have been operating in Newbury for the last six years and are now open in Basingstoke – encouraging furniture and appliance re-use, minimising waste and helping people improve their quality of life."*

The Community Furniture Project (Basingstoke) is open from Monday to Friday every week at its warehouse at Joule Road in Houndmills, Basingstoke. The Project also offers a low cost delivery service to get your furniture home.

All upholstered furniture complies with safety requirements and all electrical appliances are tested in the Project's own workshop before they are sold.

The Community Furniture Project (Basingstoke) is operated by a registered charity, and has been financially supported by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, and the National Lottery funded Community Recycling and Economic Development (CRED) Programme Fund.

For details of how to donate, buy or volunteer ring 01256 320700, or e-mail enquiries@cfpbasingstoke.org.

For further information, please contact Phelim O'Hagan at The Community Furniture Project (Basingstoke), on 01256 320700, email phelim@cfpbasingstoke.org

The Newbury Community Resource Centre
Charity No. 1082243. Company Registration No. 3998851

Christmas Sucks!

By the time you read this the Christmas shopping frenzy will be well under way. The retailers are out to get you – or least to get your money! So they will resort to every sales and marketing trick in the book to draw you into their shops and make you flip out the plastic. Which is okay, I guess, if you can afford it or you're not planning to be around to pick up the tab. But if you are, and you can't really afford it then Christmas really sucks. You see the adverts tell us that if our children go without this toy or that electronic game; if we don't buy this fragrance or that piece of jewellery for our partners; if we don't have this mobile phone or that flat screen TV or computer then ultimately we have failed to join the human race! We're failed parents, partners, and people; sad individual's without a life!! Get real!

So often we lose sight of the true nature and values of the Christmas season because of the stress and disharmony caused by overspending, overeating, over drinking and over indulging relatives who we never see from year to the next but descend like a cloud of misery over us to share our good cheer!

This year my wife and I have decided to opt out of the feeding frenzy that disguises Christmas and donate some money to charity instead; it's not that easy though. Standing in Festival Place waiting for the Christmas lights to come on (once, twice, third time lucky) it really felt festive and I was tempted to JUST have a look round. Fortunately it was a temptation I managed to control (perhaps I'll save it for the sales!).

Anyway, what am I burbling about? Well just this really. I remember in the mid 1990's after being made redundant from my job in IT, with very little cash in the bank, two younger children and Christmas looming large on the horizon my stress levels were running riot. In the end we decided to allocate just £5 each for presents. We bought a small Christmas tree and for decorations I went to the local wood and came back with an armful of holly and ivy and pine cones.

It was one of our best family Christmas's ever. There was a very real sense of quiet and peace around the house, much like the peace of that 'Silent Night, Holy Night'. The house was filled with the scent of pine and candles and though it was a little sparse under the Christmas tree we were able to really enjoy the spirit of the season with family and friends. You see what really matters is not all the tinsel and toys but people and sharing our lives with them for that's truly a gift that never wears out.

I hope that you and your families and friends will at some point over the Christmas period find time to stop and sense the peace of Jesus the Christ child who came as a gift from God, a gift that has withstood the test of time and for many is still waiting to be unwrapped. I hope to have the opportunity of meeting you at one of our many Christmas services at St Gabriel's but in the meantime may I wish you all the peace of Christ for this season and the New Year.

Warm regards

Your vicar, Arthur Botham

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Councillor Paul Harvey and County Councillor Jane Frankum have met with Stagecoach Managing Director Andrew Dyer, as well as Mary Edwards Chief Executive of North Hampshire Hospital Trust to discuss the proposed cutback of bus line No5. This meeting was arranged as a response to the large turnout of over 100 people at Oakridge Hall for All at a public meeting to ask direct answers of Stagecoach on the proposed cutback of Line 5 to the hospital.

I have challenged Stagecoach to change its decision, as this is not the first time that local services have been lost. Since my challenge, and working with County Councillor Jane Frankum, the County Council have stepped into to subsidise the route to continue until July 2005, we have won a short reprieve.

Stagecoach argue that not enough people use this service, but many workers at the hospital use the route. Many pensioners and older people use the bus to access the hospital because they have no other means of transport. Many families of patients use Line 5 because they can access the hospital easily.

The decision to axe the service will now place incredible pressure on local charities to take up the demand and enable local people deserted by their only local bus service to get to the hospital. To cut the route by just one stop, and the most important stop, is a decision that flies in the face of the needs of the local community.

The cost of travelling to the hospital from Oakridge or Popley will be significantly increased by forcing people to travel into the town centre to change buses. Not only will the journey be made more difficult for those with health problems whose only means of accessing the hospital is by bus, but older people, mothers and children, indeed everybody, will have to pay considerably more.

The local Council Tax Payers subsidise Stagecoach in Basingstoke to the sum of £95,000 from Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council and in excess of half a million pounds from the County Council. Stagecoach has a complete monopoly and has ensured that no serious competition can operate in Basingstoke.

Paul Harvey said;

"I have been clear with Stagecoach, the residents of Oakridge and Popley want the company to keep Line 5 as it is. It is not sustainable that the County Council should use Tax Payers money to keep the route open. Stagecoach have a public service responsibility to deliver a decent bus service for our community, and I will keep the pressure on them until they accept their duty to Oakridge and Popley residents."

"Meeting Andrew Dyer and Mary Edwards has resulted in discussions about possible solutions to ensure that a bus service to the hospital is retained. These negotiations are only just beginning, but our intervention, and public pressure has brought Stagecoach to the table. I want to thank everyone who has expressed their opinion, and encourage you all to keep on writing to the newspapers, and voicing your concerns."

The latest position is that the bus service has been increased in frequency and is secure until July 05. We have to ensure that the needs of hospital workers, residents and all those who need access to the hospital are considered, there is an opportunity between now and July to prove to Stagecoach that the service is needed by our community. I will keep all residents up to date with the latest discussions and news.



North Popley and John Hunt of Everest School – Update

Christmas Greetings! By the time you read this the detailed planning consent for the replacement school and associated spine road should hopefully be in place. This provides the required “green light” to allow this ambitious project to get to the next stage.

Over the next 6-8 months it is intended that there will be phased programme of site investigations to support the development of the design of the school and road and the initial construction contracts to allow the main school contract to be let mid-2005. An indicative programme for these is identified below:

November/December 2004 Phase 1 archaeology on Wellfield Farm

**January – June 2005 Phase 2 archaeology rest of site
Ground condition survey works**

**January 2005 Temporary servicing arrangements/
diversions**

February/March 2005 Part of ridgeline structural planting

**April/May 2005 Phase 1 of spine road and Chineham Lane
junction improvement.**

**June 2005 Programmed commencement of main school
project and phase 2 of spine road.**

From the New Year we shall be still using Popley Matters, as well as focussed mailshots and a proposed “Popley Development” magazine and website to provide further updates and information on the progress of this exciting project.

Until then

Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

**Louise Hague
North Popley – Project Manager**

Popley Conservation Volunteers

Popley Ponds...Popley's best-kept secret.



In the last issue I wrote that the ponds had a population of over 1,000 Great Crested Newts. Readers will be aware that David Wilson homes have been on site on the fields next to the ponds and have erected newt fences. They were originally given 60 days to find any newts in the fields and relocate them before they could start any work. After 60 days, they had found over 3,000 newts in their traps, with no sign of the numbers abating. So an extension was

granted until the beginning of December when the cold weather kicks in and newts go into hibernation. To date, over 4,000 newts have been found, 4 times the original estimate.

The heavy autumn rains have meant the ponds have filled up quite a lot. The header and footer ponds have re-appeared and the main pond is looking absolutely magnificent (see above), provided you are prepared to squelch your way down there as it gets a bit muddy this time of year.

October 31st saw a group of eight of us clear out a load of nettles, thistles, brambles, and other nasty bits of undergrowth near the Tobago Close fence.

This is to give the recently-planted shrubs near the fence a better chance to grow a better chance to grow. It's amazing how much rubbish we keep pulling from the ponds site, some of which has been there for years and years.

By the time you read this we will have had our hedge-planting session on November 28th at Popley Fields with youths from the Popley Fields Youth Club. We hope to get some good coverage in the local press and get some good news stories printed about Popley (for a change).

Our AGM is on January 18th at Popley Fields. This is a great opportunity to come along and find out more about what we do and what our future plans are for looking after Popley Ponds, Basing Woods, the land behind the Health Centre, and any other wild bits still left in Popley.

Anyone who is interested in joining us or who wants to find out more about us can contact our Chairman Cliff Goodall on Basingstoke 356035 or e-mail him on kliff2@aol.com Andy McCormick



Popley Conservation Volunteers is a voluntary organisation set up by Popley residents to clean up Popley and preserve its wild habitats. We meet every last Sunday of the month at 10am in Tobago Close next to Popley Ponds for task duties and every 3rd Tuesday at 7.30pm in Popley Fields.

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Popley Advice and Information Drop In

(Formerly Community Surgery)

We are changing our meeting place for the Community Surgery on the first Saturday of the month we will be in St Gabriels Church and it will be renamed Popley Advice and Information Drop In it will start on January 8th then first Saturday every month at 12 to 1pm. You can drop in just to say hello or to ask advice on just about any subject. Police Oakfern and Councillors will be there. There is also a further meeting every first Wednesday of the month in Magnolia Court with Pensions and Benefit, Citizens Advice Bureau and Age Concern along with myself as your County Councilor if you have any problems or need information just drop in, there is no appointment needed, confidentiality is assured. It has been three years since I started doing a community surgery as a new fresh idea of reaching people and making it easier to get help or advice, I have been informed that other areas in England have started doing the same, it is great to hear that it is achieving the goals we set out all that time ago Phone me on 819924 or 07974098131 for more details or if you have any concerns.

Jane Frankum County and Borough Councillor.



POPLEY FORUM, TUES 21ST September, POPLEY FIELDS CENTRE

We had 23 residents turn out to the Popley Forum, which talked about the new Fire Stationing Proposals for Popley Fields, and a regular update from the Community Wardens.

Fire Engine Stationing Proposals for Popley Fields

Mark Rayner, Lead Officer, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service

We have one Fire Station at West Ham to serve the whole of Basingstoke.

We have had planning permission for a second station next to Carpenters Down the A33 since 1976. Since the 2002 fire dispute, the role of the fire service has been reviewed and more community activities have been promoted, including fire prevention. This has called into question the need for a conventional fire station and Mark has been looking at alternatives. The Popley Fields Community Centre presents an ideal solution. Hampshire Fire and Rescue will be looking to station an engine at Popley Fields during the busiest period from 3pm to 11pm, 7 days a week.

2000 letters were sent out to residents in September inviting comments from local residents on the plan. This is a new idea and Popley has been chosen to pilot it. The fire service will be offering free safety consultations to residents on how to prevent fires in your home and smoke alarms free and available.

Mark then took some questions from the floor.

New John Hunt School

Louise Haige, Planning Officer, Hampshire County Council

Louise came to take us up on an offer to come back on a regular basis and report progress on the new school. We do have some news to report since the last meeting of 19th May, when we were in negotiations with the Council.

1. We now have outline planning consent as of 10th June.

2. Funding for the replacement school is secured – this is fantastic news!

Hampshire County Council (HCC) has underwritten funding and has given a commitment to go ahead with the school the North Popley development. This is a heavy financial commitment to the tune of £40m.

Hampshire County Council have also been consulting with local residents. A detailed planning application has been submitted for the school and spine road. The planning application is set to go before committee at Winchester on the 24th November for approval (HCC is the planning authority, not Basingstoke). Detailed planning consent allows HCC to tender for school and road building contracts.

HCC will then issue a final notice for transfer of the school. Assuming no comments to the negative are received, a formal green light could be given before Christmas 2004. Residents also saw a model of the school – the first time a model has appeared in public.

Community Wardens Report

Nicky Hutchens

Nicky explained what the Wardens have been up to over the summer. They have been doing summer holiday work, getting involved in lots of summer projects with young people. Steve especially has been getting stuck in and has even been seen involved in dancing events. The football program goes from strength to strength. The wardens are engaging on average 60 youths a week with their community football program.

It was announced that Lesley Batchelor was soon to be leaving us and so Popley would get a new warden. Lesley is going into her dream job working for the youth offending team and she still wants to remain involved in teenage and other community events.

The Wardens have extremely good working relations with the beat officers Matt and Paul and they meet daily.

We have noticed quite an increase in fly tipping on the estates. Offenders face huge fines on prosecution. Some of the things we are seeing dumped are extremely dangerous.

The community wardens have also been working closely with dog wardens and have had 2 successful prosecutions of dog owners following up on cases.

There have also been problems reported with anti-social behaviour especially near some of the shops. There is no quick fix for this problem. We can move them on but the same pattern of behaviour occurs every evening somewhere else, getting rid of the problem is all about education and finding young people activities which take them off the street.

The Community Wardens have got permission to use buses free of charge and are now using them for a reassuring presence, especially in the evenings.

The Wardens' shifts will change to their winter pattern. In the summer they work 8am – 10pm but in winter they will finish no later than 9pm – this is for the wardens protection as they have no powers of arrest.

Oakridge Community Wardens have been engaging local youth in an education program about building sites, including a play about a youth who ends up in a wheelchair. There were problems prior to the program with youngsters getting on the Oakridge Regeneration building sites, since the program there have been no problems with youths on-site.

Questions were then taken from the floor.

Date and venue of next meeting: To Be Arranged: will be published in a forthcoming issue of Popley Matters.