

## FORMATION OF NEW PARISH COUNCIL ON SHERFIELD PARK

In considering the merits of forming our own Parish Council it is worth reflecting on our specific situation here on Sherfield Park. We currently reside in the ward of Chineham and the Parish of Sherfield on Loddon. This in many ways is the worst of both worlds as both our neighbouring villages have long established communities with largely mature residents and do not readily relate to our predominantly younger population and the needs and aspirations of our residents. However, the major reasons for wishing to create our own Parish council are principally ones of financial benefit, the ability to represent ourselves, to have an independent voice on issues that affect us and to be directly accountable to our residents for the sustainable maintenance of the development and improvements in the quality of life on Sherfield Park.

The major benefits of Sherfield Park Residents having their own Parish Council are;

1. The current population of Sherfield Park represents some 50% of the total population of Sherfield on Loddon and by 2014 when the development is completed the total population will be in the region of 2300 residents or approximately 55% of the total population of Sherfield on Loddon. The revenues collected by council tax from our residents which currently contribute to the council Precept are paid directly by BDBC to the Sherfield on Loddon Parish council to be used for the needs of the whole parish. It should be noted that despite the fact that for over 7 years we have progressively contributed to the councils funding through council tax to date the residents of Sherfield Park have received little financial benefit from their council tax contributions. By having our own Parish council we will receive our own precept directly from BDBC and will be able to direct this financial support exclusively for the benefit of the residents of Sherfield Park.
2. All Parish councillors would be residents of Sherfield Park and elected by residents and would thus be directly accountable to the residents for the performance of the council.
3. By having our own Parish Council we will be a legal body that will need to be consulted on issues that may affect the health, wellbeing and quality of life of our residents.
4. Since 2005 Croudace Homes Ltd have been progressively constructing the infrastructure and homes on the development. During this time they have maintained the site in terms of grass cutting, hedge and tree maintenance together with street cleaning and generally keeping the development looking smart. In 2014 /15 they will have completed the development and depart. Arrangements will be needed to be put in place to ensure that the appearance of the development continues to be of the standard we have come to expect. By having our own Parish council we will be responsible for the developments' upkeep by both ensuring that the services provided by the Borough/County Councils are undertaken and being able to directly employ contractors to undertake tasks not provided by others.
5. The Community Centre will continue to be the centre of activities on the development. To ensure that it is able to respond to the future needs of the community will require the ability to seek financial support. By having our own Parish Council we will be able to respond directly to support the needs of the Centre.

At the SPCA committee meeting held on 27 March the committee unanimously voted to seek formal support from the Parish Council for the formation of a new Parish Council on Sherfield Park be submitted to the Borough Council.

The Parish Council plans to discuss the proposal at the forthcoming Annual Parish Meeting to be held in the Sherfield on Loddon Village Hall on Friday May 17 beginning at 7.30pm. **Please come along to express your views.**

If you would like to help and support our plans or have any questions please contact me on [david.leivesley@sky.com](mailto:david.leivesley@sky.com)

David Leivesley