

Musters and West Bridgford

FOCUS



Newsletter from Rushcliffe Liberal Democrats

Summer 2015

Your Woods – your walks

Council Plans and some Building Company Applications to build on land to the east and north of Sharphill Wood - expected to be considered in September. Questions remain:



- **Will the Wood and its wildlife survive? What gap before housing and what measures to protect?**
- **Will there be adequate play and sports provision for children and young people?**
- **Will the Primary School be operating early?**
- **Will Musters Road be open to cars from the estate?**
- **Will surface water & foul sewers impact downstream?**
- **What size is the environmental offset/parkland?**
- **What will be the impact on Melton Road? SEE INSIDE**

Post Offices, Trees & Woodland.

In March we put two motions to Council:

"Council supports the retention and development of post offices throughout the urban and rural communities and especially where there is no other access to financial services. Council resolves that the Leader should inform Post Office Ltd. of this support and to work with Post Office Ltd. to ensure that all Rushcliffe residents have reasonable access to at least the present level of post office provision."

"Council recognises the importance of trees and woodland in helping counteract climate change, alleviating flooding and providing benefits for recreation and mental health. Council asks Cabinet to investigate, in consultation with the relevant Scrutiny Committee, the possibility of a trees and woodlands policy."

Of course there are many facts behind these issues e.g. low tree cover: 1% Rushcliffe against 8% England average.

Want to know the reasons and what we said? Ask us - we can send that. We had cooperation from Green Councillors and achieved unanimous Council support.

Karrar Khan and Rod Jones were elected to represent Musters Ward again. Thanks to those who supported us in the May elections.

Rushcliffe Council decided to have fewer Councillors and larger wards. There are now 34 Conservatives, 4 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrats, 2 Greens and 2 Independents for Bingham.

"It has been an honour to serve you. Please contact us if we can assist. We can't solve all problems but we will do our best." "We called at the homes of all residents over the months. It was good to hear the views and concerns. Many residents told us they valued us as independent minded Councillors being so active in the area and informative."

Since being punished at the general election for being in coalition, Liberal Democrats have seen a surge in new members nationally (40%) and more locally. Some people are realising that liberal values are worth standing up for.

Rod Jones & Karrar Khan representing local issues

Planning and Sharphill News

Current Applications:

Wimpey's application (RBC Planning Ref: 14/02715/FUL) to build **280** houses on an area at the back of Rushcliffe School and adjacent to Edwalton Lodge Close. They propose a junction onto Melton Road incorporating the entrance to Edwalton Lodge Close. Surface drainage is a huge concern as is housing on what were to be football pitches. Friends of Sharphill Wood and the Sharphill Action Group have commented along with local residents.

Bovis's application (RBC Planning Ref: 14/01238/FUL) is for **388** dwellings on land to the north of the Wheatcrofts and east of the Wood. We remain concerned that this will reduce the green buffer zone for the wood. The intended Primary School is not shown as in this phase. *Bovis/Wells have not yet submitted plans for the middle bulk of the site up to the back of Boundary Road.*

Barratt & David Wilson Homes application (RBC Planning Ref: 15/00339/FUL) is for 271 dwellings to the east of Melton Road.

[Each of the plans include 30% affordable but not enough one bedroomed flats given the impact of the 'bedroom tax'.]

Speak now. We appreciate that some residents feel worn down by the topic. And we know more 'affordable' housing is needed.

However **this will be your last chance** to try to influence what happens. Please spend some time looking at the Council's supplementary/overall planning document – likely to be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 8th September. Please study the applications above, watch the agenda for Development Control, consider the views on the websites of Friends of Sharphill Woods and also the Sharphill Action Group.

As building will occur upon the side of Sharphill and is imminent we will continue to put forward positive views. We want to minimise the impact of building on the area, its wildlife and make this as pleasant a place as possible for existing residents of West Bridgford and future residents of this estate. Our views on each application are open and accessible on the Rushcliffe website [go to Planning Applications, click on simple search, then enter the reference number]. *Rod and Karrar.*

'Master Plans'

In Focus we told you that the 'developers', had ditched the 2009 detailed master plan and were making separate disjointed applications.

Council Officers drafted a supplementary planning document for what they call the Melton Road/ Edwalton site. This is in effect a 'masterplan' and specifies overall requirements. It includes indicative plans, access routes, phasing and contributions to community facilities. It includes building up to Musters and Boundary Roads. This went out for public consultation. We made many comments!

The document came to a working group of Councillors called the Local Development Framework. Cllr Rod Jones made many suggestions and comments. (List is available on request.)

The Officers and Developers plan only a 40 metre gap (instead of nearly 100 metres) between dwellings and the wood and the environmental offset/Community Park (grassland) has reduced from 30.5 hectares (when it was 1200 dwellings) to 10 hectares for 1500 dwellings! We think this is totally wrong and continue to say this.

We are told that a Primary School will not be funded at the outset but only after a certain number of properties are sold!

At the time of going to press we are hopeful that changes may be made:

- to the Councils Plan to require both play and sports provision on site for both children and young people,
- to improve the plans for surface water,
- so that Severn Trent wake up to their previous statements that the sewer capacities downstream in West Bridgford will be beyond capacity with all the properties planned,
- that the much reduced County Council Highways Department will be thorough in assessing and advising on traffic implications.

Your West Bridgford Focus Team – working locally

Working for Local Interests

The Arena is closed and contractors have started. We are informed that efforts have meant that many clubs and users have been accommodated at other venues during the closure.

Rushcliffe Leisure Centre will remain open until such time as the new Arena is available, which is expected to be January 2017. Rushcliffe will then close. Hopefully the outdoor pitches will continue to be available for community use.

To accommodate the increased footfall at Rushcliffe Leisure Centre in the interim period, one of the squash courts is becoming a temporary gym. There is also a planning application (ref 15/01543/FUL) to increase car parking provision temporarily.

The revamped Arena will include a swimming pool, 6 lane indoor bowls, gyms, foldable squash courts and a café etc. It will contain the Council meeting room and all officers based at the Civic Centre will move there into open plan offices.



Just who owns Britain?

Large tracts of Britain and large properties are anonymously held in the hands of tax haven shell companies. Since 1999, some 97,500 properties have been acquired in this way. Many owners cannot be identified. Those known include: many foreign businessmen, Russians, the owner of the Daily Mail; and some other 'Lords' owning large estates in Oxfordshire, Cotswolds. Despite benefitting from EU farming funds, these people have put 490,000 acres into offshore trusts.

Does it have to be this way? Cameron has promised plans to reveal the ultimate owners of British Companies. Will he? And will he do the same for who owns so much of Britain via tax havens?



In 2013 the Mayor opened Sharphill Woods as a Nature Reserve and Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

Rushcliffe Befriends supports older people who are isolated or lonely to be more involved in their communities through the assistance of a Volunteer Befriender. They aim to provide company and encouragement maybe to join a social group and to enjoy a greater level of independence. Could this be the sort of help you're looking for? OR Do you have a bit of spare time to join our brilliant bunch of volunteers? To find out more: contact Holly Furlong Waite, Rushcliffe Befriends Coordinator Tel: 0115 9699060 or email befriends@rushcliffecvs.org.uk

Driving Licence Renewals for those aged 70 and over. Police advise using the government website when getting driving licence renewals which is routine at age 70. Beware of scams which advertise getting a licence for a fee.

Police report more break-ins to sheds and continued thefts of bikes using bolt croppers on chain locks. D locks are recommended.

Building Control Service for Rushcliffe is proud of their prompt responses to questions and proposals. Contact them on 0333 003 8132 (same rate as local calls).

Will you stand up for your community?

Join our West Bridgford Focus group. Every little help is appreciated.

Only Your Focus Team keep in touch all year

We issue Focus three times each year to keep residents informed about what we do and what we stand for. We provide community news emails to those who ask to see them.

Community Grants. So far we have supported the groups who meet at the Methodist Church to purchase a Kurling set. Friends Together and other groups are finding this a good activity



Drivers wanted for Voluntary Transport Scheme

Do you enjoy driving and meeting people?
Have you got a few hours to spare most weeks? If so:
Rushcliffe Voluntary Transport

Scheme needs you. The scheme helps people (registered passengers) with no alternative means of transport to get to dentist, doctors, opticians, shopping etc. Often these are older people with disabilities. Expenses are paid and insurance is provided. You have to complete details and have checks made.

For details/ explore what is involved: contact Council of Voluntary Service Transport Team on 0115 969 9060 between 9.0-12.30 weekdays.

Keeping the ruling group on their toes.

This year we asked formal questions to Cabinet members:

Karrar Khan: "How would you ensure that previous mistakes as occurred by allowing selective vehicles through the Nuthall Bus gate can be avoided for the next stage in Council's plan for the Musters Road bus and emergency vehicle access to the dwellings on Sharphill?"

Rod Jones: "Can Cllr D Mason inform us whether the average pollution levels for 2014 are less or greater than 2013 given that last year NO2 pollution and particulate levels, around the Nottingham Knight Island and the area around Trent Bridge and Stragglethorpe junctions were above acceptable levels and identified as such by the local press which described Nottingham has the second worst place for air pollution in England."

You can see the evasive answers on page 15 of the minutes which are part of papers on 21 May Council. Or ask us if you want a copy.

Missing out?
Since our last newsletter we have sent out **SIX Community News emails with up-to-date information about local events, police alerts and local issues. If you are interested to sample these contact cllr.rjones@rushcliffe.gov.uk.**



Contact us with views or help:

Rod Jones 0115 914 6616
Karrar Khan 0115 914 6758
cllr.rjones@rushcliffe.gov.uk
cllr.kkhan@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Contact us about any local issues affecting you

Name

Address.....

Phone.....Email.....@.....

I would like to help to deliver leaflets/ I would like further information on the Lib Dems.
I would like to join the Lib Dems and/or make a donation to help the local party

Please return to: Rushcliffe Liberal Democrats, c/o Nethergreen House, 9 The Green, Ruddington, NG11 6DY or contact either Councillor.

For a Fairer Society and Stronger Economy