



- \* Ripley Primary School
- \* Planning Inquiry
- \* Ripley Village Hall
- \* Ripley Christmas Event
- \* The parish precept

## Ripley Primary School

Ongoing issues at the Primary School have been at the forefront of many parishioners' minds lately as work has gone on behind the scenes to secure its future. In October the Good Shepherd Trust concluded it would not be possible for it to sponsor Ripley C of E Primary School. The Regional Schools Commissioner is continuing to look for a sponsor. This is clearly disappointing, and the recent parish council meeting was well attended by interested parties seeking information on what was happening. The council offered both the Chairman of the Interim Executive Board and the Friends of the School space to enter comments for this newsletter.

Nigel Stirzaker, who represents the Friends of Ripley Primary, quoted the Ofsted report: "There have been too many 'sticking plaster' solutions and there is still no long-term sustainable plan for the school". The Chairman of the Interim Executive Board, Martin Digby, noted that: "Following the Ofsted inspection report last June, Mrs Chambers, the interim Headteacher, and her team have all been extremely busy at Ripley School. Mrs Chambers tells us that school improvement this half term has been based around putting in place the

foundations - systems and processes - to improve teaching and learning outcomes. How teachers plan and assess to meet the needs of the children has been a main focus."

Mrs Chambers has also focused on establishing baselines so that teachers can accurately measure pupil progress and ensure they are being provided with the best provision to meet their individual next steps." It is clear that past events have left concerned parents with feelings of uncertainty and the village community with a lack of information. Nigel said: "Parents were told that they can choose the school that they send their children to. This ability to choose was supposed to create a competitive environment and improve standards. Within the framework Surrey County Council were supposed to work with their schools to improve them, yet over a sustained period this [support] did not occur. Parents started to move their children to other schools and the [Ripley] school faced a downward spiral."

The decision is now out of the hands of SCC and the Diocese and rests with the Regional Schools' Commissioner. The RSC is duty bound to look at alternative solutions before moving towards a

consultation on the future of the school, which could result in the school closing, despite all the hard work of the Headteacher, the IEB, the staff and the children. The parish council hopes that the school's future can be assured and resolved as soon as possible. Martin went on to state that: "Everyone - teaching assistants, teachers and children - all now have a very clear understanding of what is expected of them. Impact can already be seen in the classrooms and in the children's work.

Surrey County Council has recently conducted a formal review of the school's progress this half term against the Ofsted Action Plan, and noted that rapid progress has been made already."

All the hard work now being carried out by Surrey County Council and the school's staff will hopefully prove that the school is offering a good education to its pupils. The school has the full support of the parish council and we hope that the all parties remain in dialogue with us. Young families in our community are very important to the life of the village.

**The Friends of Ripley C of E Primary School are holding a Village Forum on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> Nov at 5pm in the Village Hall**

# Ripley Village Hall

## THE NEW VILLAGE HALL

The Trustees of Ripley Village Hall, chaired by Gill Haig-Brown, have been working hard all summer on plans for the new hall. We revealed our initial drawings to the community at the Annual Parish Meeting and they were widely accepted and praised. Sadly however, the Planning Department at Guildford Borough Council weren't so keen (too "roofy" was the phrase!) and so that entailed an almost total re-design with our architect Brian Hendry. Several months later, we have completed all the plans and have just submitted them to GBC. Fingers crossed we meet with approval this time.

It is our aim to keep the existing hall open during the construction phase in order to maintain the bookings by our regular hall users, which forms an important part of our business plan going forward. The Trustees have consulted in some detail with near neighbours of the hall and also The Toby Cottage and also The Send and Ripley History Society, in the hope that we do not spring any surprises on anyone and that the plans do not meet with any opposition.

Earlier in the summer, a new Fundraising Committee was formed and is now run by volunteers, ably chaired by the human dynamo that is Clare Porter. Fantastic fundraising events have been hosted: we had over 100 participants at the Bingo Night and a further 60 at the Singalong Movie Night. Keep an eye on posters in the village and our website and Facebook page for

upcoming events including the Valentines Ball at the Talbot in February.

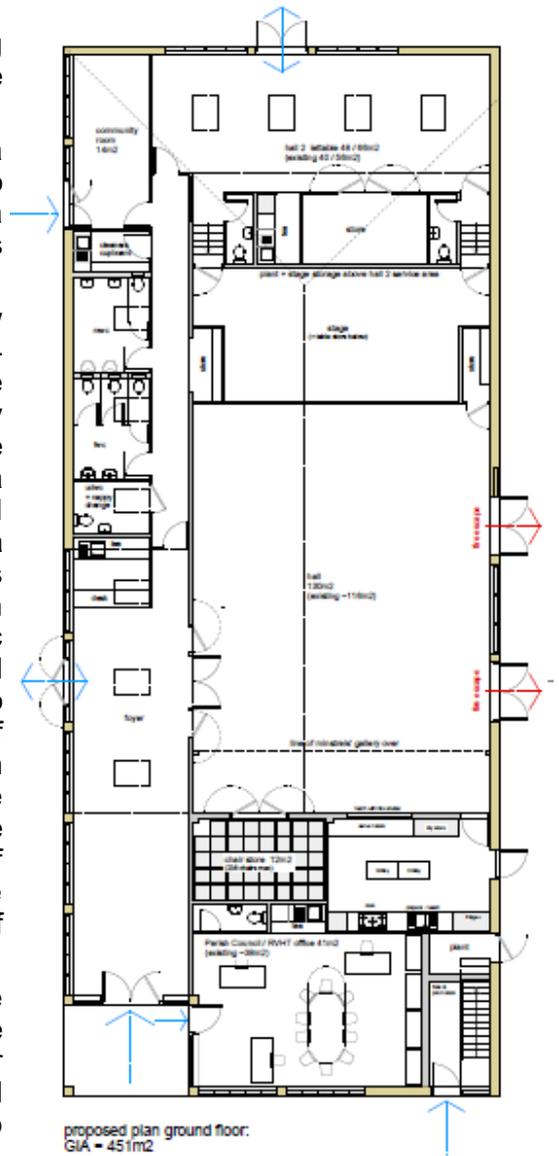
In addition we have the Buy a Brick campaign about to launch and we will have a stall at the Ripley Christmas Fair.

Obviously the cost of a new hall (in the region of £1.4 million) is not going to be raised by community fundraising alone and so the Trustees have requested a grant from the Parish Council for £500,000. There are a significant number of hurdles to overcome before this loan may be granted by the Public Works and Loan Board and the Parish Council has to apply to the Secretary of State for approval. In essence, this means that we will only be allowed to take out this loan on your behalf if it is clear that it is affordable and in the best interests of the community.

To raise the further very large amount of money, the Trustees will be applying for fund-matching grants and "jigsaw funding" with the help of Surrey Community Action.

It is also our intention to go knocking on the door of Guildford Borough Council for a substantial cash input. We rather feel that Ripley deserves a bit of a help, given that GBC first highlighted our need for a new hall in their first draft of the infamous Local Plan in 2013. Our aim remains to start building work in Summer 2018.

There is a set of drawings of the



new hall available to view in the Parish Office, as well as a set in the main entrance of the Village Hall. Please attend the Trustee meetings (dates advertised on the RVH website and on the village notice boards) if you have any questions or would like any clarification. The Trustees would also welcome assistance from any additional volunteers with legal or building/surveying skills.



## Former Wisley Airfield Planning Inquiry

Well, how do you sum up a million+ spoken words uttered and several trees worth of printed paper distributed over the 5 weeks of the appeal inquiry itself? Suffice to say that the Wisley Properties QC took 5+ hours to read out his closing statement which was 160 pages long!

The Inquiry was basically an adversarial affair with their high powered team of legal eagles and 7 top flight technical experts putting, very forcefully, the development side of the case, up against a collection of 7 different Rule 6 main opponents. They were hypothetically led in their opposition by Guildford Borough Council and their QC but, in essence, their sole grounds to oppose came down to inappropriate use of the Greenbelt. This Janus-like approach was considered a bit rich as they will attempt to remove this land from the Green Belt in 18 months and get 2100 homes built on it.

The genuine opposition came from Wisley Action Group (WAG)/Ockham Parish Council, who fielded several

expert witnesses and also had a top Queen's Counsel in tow, East and West Horsleys, with both witnesses and legal Council, and Highways England with legal Counsel. (HE are currently opposing the proposed Burnt Common spurs ). Wisley RHS were linked in with WAG and the remaining opposition were Ripley Parish Council, Cobham Conservation Society and Mr and Mrs Paton, all of whom represented themselves and made a fine job of voicing the views of the local population at large. As to the eventual outcome? Well the Inspector, a wily and attentive man, will deliver his recommendations around January to the Minister of State for Local Government and he will make the final call. The best we can hope for is a temporary reprieve so that we will end up fighting GBC and their updated Local Plan in a year or so. Then the gloves really will come off!

Thanks for your continued support and be assured we can still win this one.

## The Parish Precept 2018-19

All local authorities are currently facing increased pressure on their finances. Funding from central government has been slashed and, as a result, services are being devolved to local councils. It is highly unlikely that the County Council will continue to cut grass verges or be able to keep Public Rights of Way open. Guildford Borough Council has already passed responsibility for the public loos on The Green onto the parish council, and local councils everywhere are preparing for the loss of grants and funding.

The recent Planning Inquiry has pointed out to us the need to keep a 'war chest' available. The spectre of

development on our surrounding Green Belt isn't going to go away and we need to be prepared to fight future battles. The parish council also needs to meet the conditions set out by the Department for Communities and Local Government in order to borrow £500,000 to help kickstart the new Village Hall project.

With all of these items to finance, the parish council needs to raise the precept. For a Band D property, the increase in your precept will be up to approximately £35 per annum and the overall contribution will be comparable to the precepts in Petworth or Chiddingfold, for example

This is not a decision to be undertaken lightly and the council has carefully calculated its budget in order to keep any rise to an absolute minimum.

We always welcome residents' input, comments and questions, and would like to hear from parishioners ahead of agreeing the budget for 2018-19. Parish Councillors will be on hand at the Village Hall's upcoming open day (date tbc) to answer questions about the precept. We would like to hear your views by 31st December 2017. Please also contact the Clerk for further information and to sign up to receive the Ripley Parish Council e-noticeboard for updates.

Thank you to all who have come and supported our fundraising events. So far we have raised over £2000 which is fantastic.

We're very excited to let you know that Ripley Village Hall has been selected to participate in the Big Give Christmas Challenge 2017, the UK's largest match funding campaign. Last year, thanks to generous supporters like you the campaign raised over £7.2 million for participating charities.

We will be raising money for our village hall rebuild. Donations to this project will be matched for 7 days from 12pm on 28th November, #GivingTuesday.

### What happens during the Christmas Challenge?

Donations made to our project via [www.theBigGive.org.uk](http://www.theBigGive.org.uk) will be doubled during the campaign. If you would like to support our work this year, we highly recommend doing so during the Christmas Challenge when your donation will be doubled and make even more of a difference to us.

We also have a Buy a Brick campaign which we are launching now. Please sign up to our monthly Newsletter from our website [www.ripleyvillagehall.org.uk](http://www.ripleyvillagehall.org.uk) and follow us on Social Media to see our events and progress.



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Nigel Stirzaker*

### Message from Cllr Julie Iles

Having recently been elected County Councillor for the Horsleys Division, I have been working with parish councils on local matters. These include residents' concerns about vehicles mounting the pavement in Newark Lane, securing repairs to road surfaces (Ockham Road North close to the war memorial as the latest example) and representing parents' concerns about the future of Ripley Church of England School to the Interim Executive Board and the Schools Commissioning Officer.

I send out a monthly bulletin which gives local updates - please email [contact@julieiles.uk](mailto:contact@julieiles.uk) if you would like to receive a copy.

**The cost of producing this edition has been kindly covered by local Estate Agents Wills & Smerdon**



Free entry

# Ripley Christmas Fair

Sunday 3rd December

food, gifts & festivities

12 - 4pm

Ripley High Street.

## Christmas Fair Raffle

22 Fantastic Prizes!

Only £1 per ticket  
Prizes include:

Meal for two at The Clock House Restaurant  
Meal for two at Mike's Supper Club  
Plus a bottle of wine from The Anchor  
Gift from Richardsons  
Voucher from VII Beauty  
Gift from Jo Downs Glass  
Voucher from Pinnock's  
£50 gift voucher from Cellar Wines  
Hamper from Ripley Farmers Market  
10lb turkey from Conisbees butchers  
Hamper from Ripley Farm Shop  
Case of wine from Ripley Travel Club  
Gift from Nest  
Jewellery from JvH Design  
Brandy from Ripley British Legion  
Whisky from Ripley Bonfire Committee  
Guitar lesson from Ripley Guitars  
Pet treats from Ripley Veterinary Surgery  
Family ticket for 4 from Ripley Pantomime  
Voucher from The Talbot  
Magnum of Champagne from Trinity Engineering  
Office Chair from Surrey Office Supplies



The Grand Draw will be held at 4.00pm outside The Clock House at the Christmas Fair on 3rd December.