



Widdersh Parish  
Council

# Widdersh Matters

The community magazine for the residents of Widdersh and Sindlesham

## Widdersh "Lights Up"



*Borough Mayor, Cllr Annette Drake, with the Widdersh Primary School choir*

Widdersh residents gathered on the Bearwood Recreation Ground on the Thursday before Christmas (20th December) to turn on the Parish Council's Christmas Lights. Over 160 adults and children attended and were entertained with carols and other Christmas songs by the choir from Widdersh Primary School under the leadership of Mr Howell.

The lights were switched on by Wokingham Borough Mayor,

Cllr Annette Drake, and this was followed by a firework display adding extra sparkle to the occasion. After the 'lighting up' those attending enjoyed mince pies and mulled wine or biscuits and soft drinks provided by Sainsbury's and members of the Rainbow Park Community Centre. A collection for the Mayor's charity, 'Building for the Future', raised over £70.

## Widdersh Village Fete – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2008

Please note the above date in your diaries! We will be holding a traditional summer fete on the Bearwood Recreation Ground with fun for all ages. There will be stalls, competitions, displays and activities throughout the afternoon with all the proceeds from the fete going to local charities. The fete is aimed at getting the Widdersh community together so we would like as many of you as possible to become involved.

We have already had interest from several local groups who are looking to be stall holders, but we still have lots of room for more. So, if you are part of a group that might like to run a stall or activity please contact the Clerk for further details. We also want local businesses to be part of the fete by running a stall, sponsoring an event or giving a prize (and of course getting some publicity in the process). Individual volunteers would be welcome as well: there will be jobs for everyone.

As we get closer to June 14<sup>th</sup> keep an eye on the parish notice boards where we will be advertising the competitions for the fete. Don't miss out on showing everyone your skills!

### Widdersh Village Fete "Midsummer Madness"

Please support this local event on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2008:

- **Local organisations:** run a stall or activity?
- **Local businesses:** sponsor an activity or give a prize?
- **Everyone:** offer to help and come along?

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### ENCLOSURE.

Consultation Survey

### Have your say...

An idea, a solution, an observation, a kindness, a triumph, a worry... Why not share your thoughts by attending a Parish Council Meeting or contacting the Parish Office?

### Widdersh Parish Council

Widdersh Community Centre  
New Road, Sindlesham,  
Wokingham RG41 5DU  
Phone: 0118 978 0244  
Email: clerk@widdersh.gov.uk

## Chairman's Update

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Welcome to the second edition of *Winnersh Matters*. Since launching the newsletter we've had lots of positive feedback. We've deliberately kept the newsletter short in the hope that it will encourage more people to read it so if we don't cover everything or you would like further explanation do let us know. We've also been asked for advertising space by some of our local businesses – if there's sufficient demand local advertising could provide a useful service for the community as well as helping to fund a slightly larger magazine. Please keep your feedback coming.

In the first edition of *Winnersh Matters* I said that we would be asking you to respond to a survey to help establish what residents want to see happen in Winnersh. The survey is enclosed – please take a few minutes to think about what you want for Winnersh, record your thoughts on the survey and return it to the parish council.

*John Southgate*

Winnersh Parish Council Chairman

## Committee Focus: Finance & General Purposes Committee

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The management functions of the F&GP Committee of Winnersh Parish Council cover three main areas: Finance, Employment and General.

Finance includes procedures for agreeing the annual budget, managing the budget and the accounts; and writing and observing its own financial regulations.

Employment covers the usual staff areas of recruitment, performance management, managing grievances, disciplinary issues, avoiding harassment, monitoring capability and absence management.

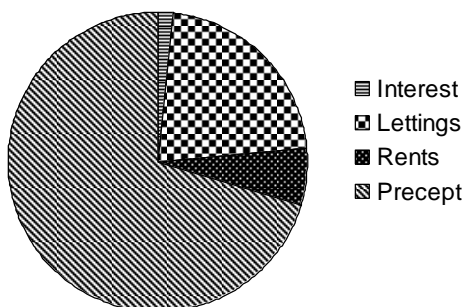
The General area covers risk assessment and management, health and safety, equal opportunities, data protection, freedom of information issues, document management, procedures for calling and recording meetings, and Council correspondence. Other matters not covered by Planning, or Recreation and Amenities, end up under the General heading of F&GP, for example the Standards Board for England.

## Parish Council Annual Budget

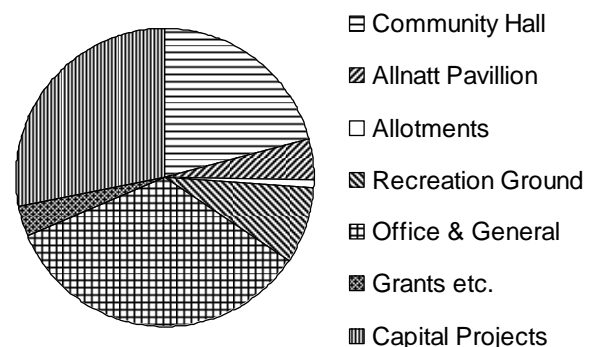
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F&GP sets the annual budget in accordance with local government guidelines. Each committee considers what projects it wishes to undertake in the forthcoming financial year and informs F&GP of changes to their revenue budgets and regular expenditure throughout the year. F&GP reviews the forecasts for the current year, and adjusts the figures for the next year accordingly. It reviews the proposals from other committees, and recommends a total budget to full Council, considering the resources available and the implications for the Parish Precept. The Parish Precept is calculated from the expected expenditure divided by the number of council tax-paying households in the Parish. The increasing numbers of households in the Parish, and careful financial management has allowed the Council to keep the Parish Precept level for three years running.

This year, the Parish Council is expecting an income of £142,756 made up as follows:



Expenditure is expected to be £164,856 made up as follows:



The precept for the coming year, based on a Band D property, will increase 1.7% to £26.97. This will be included in the Council Tax householders pay to Wokingham Borough Council.



*Arbor Meadows on a crisp February morning*

## Improving facilities at "Arbor Meadows"

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In the last edition of *Winnersh Matters* we announced the intention to use "developer contributions" from new housing developments to improve leisure facilities in Arbor Meadows. This prompted two questions in particular:

❶ Where is Arbor Meadows? It refers to the public open space to the North of Arbor Lane/Sherwood Grange, adjoining the motorway, and running from the eastern end of Winnersh Triangle to Robinhood Lane (including "Bluebell Meadows"). Perhaps this name is rather confusing? – *Winnersh Meadows* has been suggested as an alternative.

❷ What kind of leisure facilities? The question is currently open – no decisions have been made. However it will **not** be a 'leisure centre' or other building as this land is a protected public open space and cannot be built on. Also it is generally agreed that existing uses as a walking area and general open recreational space need to be maintained.

An open meeting to generate ideas for what is most wanted was held in January and now a Working Group has been formed with representatives from the Borough and Parish Councils and the Winnersh Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG), who were instrumental in initiating the project. The Parish Council is keen to see some improvements quickly and backs the idea of a first phase to improve access (with better paths, signs, seats and bins) in parallel with further consultation on other improvements. Ideas put forward include various activities for younger people, landscaping/environmental improvements and a "Trim Trail" exercise circuit for use by all ages.

The enclosed survey questionnaire includes a question about plans for Arbor Meadows, so if you have an opinion, please complete the survey and share your thoughts and ideas with us.

## Local Heroes

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*Your guides to cyber space!*

*Penny Bradshaw, Business and Community Manager at Forest School.  
Ben Davis on the left and Calum Chamberlain with the tie.*

Did you know that a Cyber Café has been set up at the Rainbow Community Centre?

The three heroes pictured here have assisted staff and volunteers at the Rainbow Community Centre to establish a Cyber Café for the use of all Winnersh residents. There is now no excuse to claim that you are a stranger to the joys of surfing the net. You can receive expert advice from a number of volunteers from the Forest School and put the world's stock of information at your fingertips.

Incidentally, while you are at the Community Centre call in at the café and, on your first visit, claim a free bacon roll and a cup of tea or coffee.

## Winnersh Civic Awards

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### Nominate your Local Hero

Who would you like to nominate as a 'Local Hero'? Let us know who you consider has contributed to the Winnersh community and made a difference so that we can share good news and reward the unsung heroes who make everyone's life a bit easier.

Your nomination should include your name and contact details, those of the nominee and a description of why that person or local organisation deserve recognition and be sent to the Parish Clerk by 15<sup>th</sup> April.

Presentations are made at the Annual Parish Meeting, scheduled this year for Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May.

## Useful Contacts

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### Thames Valley Police

For urgent matters dial 999 - anything else dial 0845 8 505 505  
Local police: Sgt Tim Woolford, PCs Marc Robinson & Simon Pink  
PCSO's: Wayne Plowright and Shelly Townsend

### Community Wardens

Emma LeRoy Emma.LeRoy@wokingham.gov.uk  
Lesley McCambridge Lesley.McCambridge@wokingham.gov.uk  
or phone 0118 974398

### Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator Thames Valley Police

Christine Seal – Christine.Seal@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk  
Crime Stoppers 0800 555 111

### Winnersh NAG (Neighbourhood Action Group)

Email: Winnersh.nag@talktalk.net  
Website: www.seeds.org.uk/winnersh.nag

### WRAP (Winnersh Residents for Action on Planning)

Email WRAP@talktalk.net  
Website www.seeds.org.uk/wrap

Sainsbury's shopping trolley hot line: 0800 316 1241

## Council Meetings

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### Winnersh Parish Council

meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month (except August), commencing at 7.45 pm in the John Grobler Room at the Winnersh Community Centre on Mole Road, Sindlesham.

There is a Public Session near the beginning of the meeting when residents can ask questions and express their views. You will be welcome to attend.

If you have issues that concern **Wokingham Borough Council** you can attend one of their meetings at Shute End in Wokingham on the last Thursday of the month at 8.00 pm.

Why not hire our hall, bar or other rooms for your group, family or company event?

### **WINNERSH COMMUNITY CENTRE HALL** offers:

- licensed bar
- capacity for 190 people (150 for seated meal)
- kitchen facility
- facilities for disabled
- professional catering available
- car parking
- a beautiful setting

The John Grobler Room, the Allnatt Pavilion and (at suitable times) the bar alone can be hired for smaller events. Contact the Parish Clerk on 0118 978 0244 for details and availability.

## Winnersh Floods

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During the early part of March, weather warnings reminded all of us of the floods that occurred last year. Although residents in the west of Winnersh, towards the Showcase Cinema, suffered from the largest area of flooding, July 2007 was a disaster for the residents of Sylvester Close, in the north of the village. The Emm Brook burst its banks, flooding their homes to a depth of several feet and even now some are still living in caravans whilst their houses are made habitable again. For a couple of days last July the village could not be accessed from Reading Road, adding yet more motoring misery. In the south the drainage system on the M4 failed, resulting in Grasmere Close being flooded and Churchill Drive becoming a tributary of the Loddon. Whilst serious flooding was mostly caused by a combination of rising water levels in rivers, streams and the water table together with exceptionally high rainfall that ditches and drains could not handle, a number of residents also reported the backing up of foul drains and the flooding of gardens because the sewage drain infrastructure became overwhelmed.

If you are still concerned about the possibility of your home being flooded, seek advice from the Borough Council and Thames Water. If an emergency should arise, contact Thames Water on 0845 9200 800