

# LIGHTHORNE PARISH

## Annual Review 2002 COUNCIL

Please welcome two new councillors who have been co-opted in the past year: Cllr Josette Tait replaces James Drake-Lee and Cllr Eileen Lawrence replaces Martyn Ashford, both of whom have left the Parish. They both served our communities well and leave with our well-deserved thanks.

The work of parish councils is changing and this is especially true for your Council. Central government, having decided not to abolish parish councils, is now changing the legal framework that supports what we do. We have recently adopted a new code of conduct and, because we took an active part in the consultation, there have been no surprises and Members have supported the change. New training opportunities for our Clerk and Councillors will soon be available as a result of the National Training Strategy published by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). Finally, and despite our small size, we continue to position ourselves for *QUALITY* parish council status which will ensure that we have the right to be consulted in more areas.

However, there is an even bigger change that is likely to happen next year. When (and if) it goes ahead it will affect everyone in the Parish. There will be elections for the Parish Council next year as our 4-year term of office is ending, but *which* parish will you be voting for? The elections could well be for a new, smaller Parish of Lighthorne and for a new Parish of Lighthorne Heath. The boundary review officer appointed by Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) has put forward proposals which include this change and we fully expect them to be ratified.

Last year's annual review was well received so we have used a similar format this year. We have tried to be more clear about our **targets for the year ahead** and to show you how well we met **last year's targets**. Once again, we have provided a summary of our **finances** and the last page tells you how to **contact** us. There is also a section asking for your **feedback** on this report and more words about what might happen in the near **future** and how you can be a part of that.

This document, last year's report and the full minutes of the Council for the year gone by have all been made available on the world-wide-web at <http://www.lighthorneonline.com/PCHome.htm> (*although please be aware that the Council does not run this website*). All public documents of the Council are available from the Clerk, who also has copies of any planning applications that affect the Parish. If you wish to view these, please telephone to make an appointment first.

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### How did we do against **last year's targets**?

**Rights of Way:** The "Parish Paths Partnership" agreement with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) has been renewed for another year. Work during the year was interrupted because of the FMD outbreak, but we continue to improve the rights of way network within the Parish. Most of the recent work has been in the north of the Parish, between Lighthorne and the B4100.

The permissive path over farmland from Lighthorne to the sports ground is not yet a reality. There have been legal delays, but we shall continue to try to establish the path.

**Bus Shelter:** The new bus shelter was installed at the lay-by on the B4100 in Lighthorne Heath. Installation was 3 months later than hoped, due to problems with the contract to install the base. In

the end it was felt that best value would be obtained by having the shelter in place for the start of the new school year rather than by saving a few pounds.

**Traffic Calming:** There were no specific targets in this area, although we had hoped that WCC might replace some of the road signs in Lighthorne. This has not happened. The existing signs have at least been cleaned!

**Planning:** We received 36 applications to review during the year and we responded to all of them within the deadline set by SDC. We have had discussions with South Warwickshire Housing Association (SWHA) to try to ensure that any development in Lighthorne Heath is consistent with local needs. We put forward 18 responses to the District [Local Plan Review 1996-2011 – First deposit draft](#). We continue to monitor progress of the Aston Martin Lagonda (AML) development in order to minimise its impact on the electorate and we participate in consultation meetings with Ford (the parent company).

**Assets:** We continue to take a close interest in the difficulties of the Lighthorne Sports Association and have ensured that the facility remains available for use, at least for the moment. We succeeded in getting permission to fell the Willow tree which was damaging the Broadwell and it has now been replaced by a Common Ash, in line with SDC's conditions.

We have resolved all of the safety issues with the play equipment behind Lighthorne Village Hall. This required us to replace the senior swings and their associated safety matting, and to level the ground under the roundabout.

**New Village Greens:** We succeeded in getting WCC to accept that our application for three areas of land within Lighthorne Heath to be given Village Green status was valid. SDC, which owns the land, opposed us, but SDC's officers are now in discussions with us about a possible leasing arrangement. Whatever happens, we want to ensure that these areas are protected from development and are available for the enjoyment of the community.

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## What are our **targets for the year ahead**?

This year we are being much more specific about our targets for the coming year:

**Rights of Way:** Renew the "Parish Path Partnership" agreement with WCC to enable further improvements to footpaths and bridleways within the Parish. Negotiate the creation of a permissive path over farmland from Lighthorne to the sports ground.

**Highways:** Continue to lobby WCC to make improvements and press for speed reductions on the B4100. Press for signs in Lighthorne to be replaced (in so far as this is consistent with the conservation area status of much of the village).

**Planning:** Respond to all planning notifications within the specified response time. Monitor progress of the AML development to minimise impact on the electorate. Participate in meetings with Ford (AML's parent company), SWHA and others to promote the needs of our communities.

**Assets:** *(Please note that, for historical reasons, all the assets of the Council are **within the village of Lighthorne only**.)* Maintain Pound Well and the Broadwell and take appropriate action to protect the listed structure of the Broadwell head. Continue to maintain Baker's Hill as a wildlife refuge and as a visual amenity. Maintain and protect the registered Village Greens. Maintain the play equipment (behind the Village Hall) to the national safety standard. Maintain the street lighting, passing on all reports of failures within 24 hours. Take appropriate action to retain the sports facilities for future generations.

**New Village Greens:** Continue the process to protect the three areas of land at Lighthorne Heath.

**Central Government, Region, County and District:** Monitor and, where appropriate, respond to consultation documents to ensure that our parish is well represented at all levels.

**Parish Split:** Promote the split and prepare for a smooth transition to the new arrangements.

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## Summary of Finances

District Audit passed the accounts for 2000/01 without qualification. The Audit Commission has introduced a new “lighter touch” audit process for 2001/02. Arrangements for viewing the accounts will be posted on notice boards as usual. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact the Treasurer or talk to any of your Parish Councillors (see the last page for details).

Lighthorne Parish Council’s precept for 2001/02 amounted to £23.05 for a band D household. The draft accounts show how it was spent:

Our income (from the precept - Council Tax): £10,600

We spent:

Administration	£3,200
Use of Lighthorne Village Hall as a Post Office	£529
Insurance	£1,325
Electricity	£486
Repairs / Maintenance	£1,931
Grants / Donations	£449
Sports Association	£290
Improvements to Lighthorne Play Area	£2,195
Bus Shelter at Lighthorne Heath	£2,474
	<u>£12,879</u>

Overspend: £2,279

Last year there was an underspend of £2,800 which was allocated to the bus shelter, the expenditure for which occurred this year.

In January, Council approved an increase of 3.8% for next year (2002/03) to £11,000 or £23.75 for a band D household. This is the first increase in 4 years and is well below the rate of inflation. The Assets, Contracts and Finance Working Group of the Council has also started to look at how the funds might be divided if the splitting of the Parish is approved.

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## Consultation and Feedback

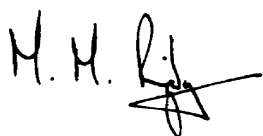
Last year’s request for feedback resulted in only one response, but that isn’t going to stop us asking for more! This time we would like you to help us to build up the list of targets. Please let us know:

- What targets you would like to see added to the list.
- If you think any of the current targets should be reworded. How?
- What targets, if any, should be removed from the list.
- If there any other changes that could be made to this document to enable us to better communicate with you. What would you like to see?
- If you have any other suggestions as to how the Council could improve the way it works.

Send us your comments and views. Write to the Clerk to the Council, e-mail the Chairman, or talk to any of your Parish Councillors (see the last page for details).

## The Future

If it goes ahead, as we hope it will, the splitting of the Parish is going to be the most obvious big change in the year ahead. May 2003 is likely to see elections for two new parish councils, so by the time we publish next year's annual review the targets for the year ahead will most probably be stated separately for each of the new parishes. But the current members won't necessarily be in a position to commit to them individually. There will be a need for more people to put themselves forward for election as councillors for these new parishes and we expect there will be a need for a greater total number of councillors than we currently have. The present Council feels it is strong, with active Members from both communities working for the benefit of the whole Parish. With the new training initiatives this is a great time to stand as a councillor. If you think you could take on the job please start thinking about that now. Find out more: talk to us, come to our meetings, have your say and get involved. Be a part of local democracy in action!



Cllr Mike Rigby, Chairman.  
17 April 2002.

## Contacts

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SDC's website is at <http://www.stratford.gov.uk/> The Parish Council's section of the Lighthorne website is at <http://www.lighthorneonline.com/PCHome.htm>

If this format does not meet your needs, please contact us.