
LIGHTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL Annual Review 2004

Welcome to our fourth annual review. This edition will be the last one issued by the current Lighthorne Parish Council because...

It's happening!

The Secretary of State has accepted the outcome of Stratford-on-Avon District Council's (SDC's) review of civil parish boundaries. He has approved the recommendation that the existing Parish of Lighthorne be split into two new parishes. One will be known as Lighthorne Heath Parish, the other will continue to be known as Lighthorne Parish. (So as not to confuse you, this review will refer to the *old* and the *new* Lighthorne Parishes. The *old* one means where we were *before* the split. The *new* one means the smaller parish that exists *after* the split.)

The split formally takes place on 1 April 2004. It's not an April Fool's joke, it's just that this date is always chosen for these things because it's the start of our financial year. There will be elections for both of the new parish councils. Any poll will take place as usual on the same day as other polls. This year that will mean Thursday 10 June 2004. Between 1 April and 14 June there will be a temporary arrangement whereby the existing parish councillors will serve on *both* of the new parish councils.

Generally, if you have voted in Lighthorne Heath Village Hall in the past (or the Primary School in earlier years) you will continue to vote there; you will be voting for Lighthorne Heath Parish Council and you will be living in Lighthorne Heath Parish. If you vote in Lighthorne Village Hall then you will live in the new Lighthorne Parish and you will be voting for the new Lighthorne Parish Council.

SDC's review also recommended other small revisions to the boundary of the Parish, caused by such things as the realignment of the

Fosseway. The most significant would be that we would welcome the occupiers of two additional properties into Lighthorne Parish, both of which are currently in Moreton Morrell Parish. These recommendations await the Boundary Committee's review of District Ward and County Division boundaries and these are not expected to be implemented until later this year, after the elections.

What will the change mean for me?

The old Lighthorne Parish Council had seven councillors representing roughly 960 electors. Each of the new parish councils will have five councillors. Lighthorne Parish will have roughly 420 electors and Lighthorne Heath Parish 540. This means that you will see new names on the ballot paper this year (if enough people stand for election) and new faces on your council. Lighthorne Heath Parish Council will also have a new Clerk. The Clerk to the old Lighthorne Parish Council has indicated that she is willing to continue as Clerk to the new Lighthorne Parish Council and to act as the financial officer (treasurer) too.

The two new councils will want to hold their meetings on different days. This is so that our District and County Council representatives can attend meetings of both the new councils. You might even want to consider watching out for details of the annual meeting of your new council (after the elections) and going along to see who's been elected and who they choose as their chairman.

Please watch out for details of the first parish meetings for the new parishes too. Parish meetings are not parish council meetings, they are meetings of electors. While they are usually called by the chairman of the parish council, these are meetings where you can ask the council what their plans are for the future. You can even propose your own motions for

debate and voting, so you can have a direct influence on Council thinking.

We hope that you will feel that, whichever parish you will be in, your new parish council will be more representative of you, its electorate, and will be better able to concentrate on those things that you feel are important to your community. You can help by talking to your new councillors and helping them to understand your problems and needs, and by sharing your vision of the future of your community. You could help even more by volunteering your time towards any little jobs that need doing. The most effective parish councils are those where the community gets involved with what the council does, and where the council listens to what the community wants. Don't be silent!

Does the change affect the Church ?

No. These changes are purely to do with the civil parish authority. Your worship will not be affected, neither will parochial parish boundaries or the Parochial Church Council.

Those living in the new Lighthorne Heath Parish will also continue to have the choice to be buried at St Laurence's Church in Lighthorne.

What did the Council do Last Year ?

We only set ourselves short-term targets last year as we wanted to ensure that, after the split, the new councils would be free to pursue their own agendas. This is what we did:

Lighthorne Heath Play Facilities: A climbing frame has been acquired and erected behind the village hall. A grant application for a youth shelter was successful and this has been erected by the skate board park. The council has agreed to take responsibility for play equipment which does not belong to SDC and insure it accordingly. After the split these assets will be transferred to Lighthorne Heath Parish Council.

Lighthorne Sports Association: The Fun Day last year was a great success and it was very encouraging to see so many people from both communities sharing in the many activities.

Over the winter the landscaping and planting scheme has been implemented, thanks to a grant from the Heart of England Community Foundation and lots of local help – again from both communities.

Highways: We were one of the first parishes to make use of SID (WCC's Speed Indicating Device) to remind drivers of the speed limit through Lighthorne. The new roundabout at Gaydon appears to have encouraged more traffic to approach Land Rover from the South via M40, but the possible release of further money for other traffic measures will depend on a traffic survey to be conducted once the situation has settled down.

Planning: We received 45 planning notifications this year, slightly fewer than last year. The inquiry into the latest District Local Plan is still in progress. We have attended on several days, during which our objections were heard, often being the only parish council present. Nevertheless, we are very pleased with progress.

We continue to attend regular community liaison meetings with Ford (Land Rover and Aston Martin's parent company) – it is expected that both our new parish councils will be represented at these meetings in future.

We are in the process of producing a village plan for Lighthorne Heath. It is hoped that this will soon be adopted by SDC as supplemental planning guidance. The data that was gathered in this process has proved useful in discussions with SDC and the Warwickshire Rural Housing Association.

The future of the Lighthorne Heath shop and post office is now assured, but we are worried about the delays in relocating the doctor's surgery. Their current premises do not conform to new accessibility laws and the practice is threatening to pull out. We are working hard to prevent that happening.

Central Government, the Region, County and District:

The consultation from by the DfT on *Future Development of Air Transport in the UK – Midlands* has concluded that proposals for a huge new airport at Rugby were

inappropriate, but we are now keeping a close eye on proposals for expansion of Coventry airport following the change of ownership. Growth here may have a knock-on affect on our area. One worry is that the glide-paths will probably be below those for Birmingham airport (which would mean more noise). Also increased use by larger aircraft would mean that smaller aircraft, including the noisier helicopters, could no longer use the airport and would go elsewhere. That may very well mean Wellesbourne.

Summary of Finances

Our 2002/03 accounts passed audit without qualification or comment of any kind. Arrangements for examining the final 2003/04 accounts are not known precisely, but we anticipate that accounts will be posted on notice boards in both of the new parishes and you will have the right to examine them in the usual way regardless of which of the new parishes you live in. This is because those accounts relate to the old parish. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact the Clerk to Lighthorne Parish Council (see the last page for current contact information).

The old Lighthorne Parish Council's annual precept for 2003/04 was £11,000. The draft accounts show how it was spent:

Our income from the precept
(Council Tax): £11,000

We spent:

Administration	£3,900
Use of Lighthorne Village Hall as a Post Office	£560
Insurance	£1,310
Electricity	£550
Repairs / Maintenance	£225
Grants / Donations	£2,750
Sports Association	£240
	<u>£9,535</u>

Underspend: £1,465

Administration is higher this year due to £405 of legal expenses to acquire leases on the three plots of land at Lighthorne Heath. Grants

made include £1200 for play equipment at Lighthorne Heath, £650 for the Lighthorne Sports Association planting project and £500 for Lighthorne Village Hall improvements.

In January, Council decided to leave the precept for the coming year (2004/05) unchanged (for the second year running) at £11,000 or £23.38 for a band D household. This figure was set for the old Lighthorne parish, as was required by law. However, we made a recommendation that, in the event of the split, each of the two new parish councils should receive half of this amount. Because the council tax base for each of the new parishes is almost identical, you should see very little change to the parish council component of your council tax bill as a result of the split. In future years, of course, it will be up to each of the new parish councils to plan their own finances and to set a precept based on their needs.

What are your Plans for the year ahead?

It is not appropriate for us to publish any kind of plans for councils which do not yet exist. However, the new parishes will be required, by law, to hold an annual parish meeting before 31 July. All electors of the parish are able to speak and propose motions for debate at those meetings, so if you feel strongly about any areas that you think your new parish council should be concentrating on you should go along and have your say.

A word from the Chairman

We have come to the end of an era in local government in this area. As councillors we have also come (early) to the end of our term of office. So I want to take this opportunity to say thank-you. Thank you to all those who acted as councillors or officers over the past years, and thank you to all those within our communities who have worked for the benefit of all of us.

It seems a long time ago when I stood with twelve other people for the seven seats on the old Lighthorne Parish Council. It was clear that feelings were running high amongst those living in Lighthorne Heath. They did not feel

properly represented by the parish council as it then was. I feel that we have got a lot done since then, though, and not all of it obvious to those outside the council. It took a lot of work, and several false dawns, before we finally got the split of the parish that those in Lighthorne Heath wanted.

While I have been chairman the council has acted as a single team with shared goals, and that helped make us both strong and effective. There has been no party politics, just concentration on serving our electorate.

There will, no doubt, be a short hiatus while the new arrangements shake down, but it shouldn't be long before we all see benefits. Not least will be the fact that there will be more councillors per elector than before.

Finally, I'd like to wish all those who are elected to our new parish councils good luck – may their judgement be sound.



Cllr Mike Rigby, Chairman
31 March 2004

Who are the Parish Council (until 14 June 2004) ?

Members

Dave Brewin

16 Southam Crescent
Lighthorne Heath
Leamington Spa CV33 9TJ
T/F: 01926 641433
M: 07977 107773

Lou Giblin (*Vice-Chairman*)

2 Gifford Road
Lighthorne Heath
Leamington Spa CV33 9TT
T: 01926 641749
giblin.com@virgin.net

Liz Jones

12 Bitham Road
Lighthorne Heath
Leamington Spa CV33 9TY
T: 01926 640186
lizjones640@hotmail.com

Viv Purdy

11 Winyates Road
Lighthorne Heath
Leamington Spa CV33 9TU
T: 01926 641434
ianviv@purdy11.fsworld.co.uk

Mike Rigby (*Chairman*)

The Jays
Post Office Lane
Lighthorne
Warwick CV35 0AP
T (home): 01926 651420
T/F (work): 01926 464240
mike_rigby@uk.ibm.com

Tony Rose

The Old School House
Old School Lane
Lighthorne
Warwick CV35 0AX
T: 01926 651787
roseschoolhouse@aol.com

Josette Tait

Smithy Cottage
The Green
Lighthorne
Warwick CV35 0AU
T: 01926 651205
mail@taitp.freereserve.co.uk

Officers

Alex Tait (*Clerk to Lighthorne Parish Council*)

Smithy Cottage
The Green
Lighthorne
Warwick CV35 0AU
T: 01926 651205
alexta164@hotmail.com

Cindy Musgrave (*Treasurer to Lighthorne Heath Parish Council*)

1 Gifford Road
Lighthorne Heath
Leamington Spa CV33 9TT
T: 01926 641065
cindy@weeac.org

For Parish Council information on the web go to <http://www.lighthorneonline.com/PCHome.htm>

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