



THE

WIGGONHOLT ASSOCIATION

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Protecting our Environment

SAND EXTRACTION: WE MUST BE PREPARED!

In accordance with a government requirement, a West Sussex Minerals Local Plan will shortly be drawn up to provide an allocation of land-won sand and gravel for a 25-year period to 2031 - the previous plan from 1999 to 2006 having been held over. The new Plan will cover areas of the County inside and outside the South Downs National Park.

West Sussex needs to find in the region of 1 million tonnes of sand and gravel each year. This time round it is likely to divide the allocation between soft and sharp sand (80%/20%). In planning terms this approach does not favour soft sand sites. The main deposits of soft sand are in the South Downs National Park where there are existing sandpits. The South Downs National Park Authority is against further sites in the Park but in West Sussex there are very few soft sand sites which are not in the Park (eg. the Storrington sites). It seems inevitable that some existing sites in the Park will continue to be worked.

Whilst there are constraints on mining in National Parks these can be overridden if there are exceptional circumstances or it is in the public interest. A major development in the South East such as a second runway at Gatwick and attendant house-building could create a run on aggregate minerals (sand and gravel) in the region.

There is a short list of sites to be included in the forthcoming Plan as being "in principle" suitable for extraction. Their suitability will be examined in public. There is also a long list of sites which contain the aggregate and have a willing owner, but which for the time being have been rejected. Last time round (in 1996) a brand new site at Wiggonholt was put forward and shortlisted. This contained 900,000 tonnes of soft sand. The seam which is available contains 2,000,000 tonnes, making it quite a large site. The land which does not at present have willing owners has an even greater capacity. (Continued on page two).

On Other Pages

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Remember the phone box
when we bought it for £1?
Now turn to page four.

Our annual trip on Wiggonholt when WACT chairman, Sally Schupke and Secretary, Julian Morgan, joined your editor and friends for what turned out to be yet another picnic in the sun.

More pictures on page four.

"WE MUST BE PREPARED" - continued from page one

So whilst Wiggonholt is currently on a 'rejected' list for the new Plan, this does not mean that it could not come forward, given the amount of soft sand it contains. The reasons given for rejection are to do with the effect on the landscape, but also the 'deliverability' of the site, i.e. making road access to the site available, but this could easily change.

The consultation process on the new Plan begins this month, when 'stakeholders', including the Wiggonholt Association, will be consulted. The public legal process begins in the autumn of 2014, with an inquiry (the Examination-in-public) following later in the year. The Plan will be on the public record. The inspector will report in 2015 when the new Plan will be adopted.

We know from experience that the minerals industry is highly resourceful and well advised in dealing with these proceedings. We had to match this expertise when we were formed in response to events 18 years ago. We developed a thorough understanding of the situation over two public inquiries and our efforts contributed significantly to the exclusion of the Wiggonholt Site from the Minerals Plan.

This time round, we have to be vigilant and we have to be prepared. For this work to continue, members' support and participation are vitally needed.

Even in Switzerland.....!

"Two million tons of food in perfect condition finish as waste every year, whilst 600.000 of the population live in poverty!" - reports the front page of the *Tages Anzeiger* of 18th September 2013.

The *Hilfswerk Schweizer Tafel*, an organisation that distributes some of this food to the needy, suggests that in order to help them do more, consumers should pay a *Solidaritatsrappen* - about two-thirds of a penny - with every purchase.

.....whilst in the South Tyrol

near Bolzano, they have expanded a non-polluting incinerator plant which has been taking waste brought by rail from a large area and has provided heat for thousands of homes in the provincial capital. It is now also producing hydrogen gas to fuel pollution-free local buses in the province.

MP NICK HERBERT IS AMONG SIGNATORIES OF CPRE CHARTER TO SAVE OUR COUNTRYSIDE

Last July, a few days ahead of the launch of a major CPRE campaign to save England's countryside, a group of MPs and celebrities wrote to The Daily Telegraph backing the initiative and urging the paper's readers to sign the Campaigns Charter.

The letter describes the English countryside as "precious, inspirational and irreplaceable", and warns that it is in danger of being eroded by poorly planned developments.

The CPRE Charter demands that the countryside should not be sacrificed and that previously developed brown-field land should always be re-used first to protect the beauty and tranquillity of the countryside and to breathe new life into towns and cities. The Charter also calls for a fair say for local communities, who are increasingly unable to stop the destruction of their towns and countryside. With the cards stacked in favour of powerful developers, the Charter asks for a democratic planning system that gives communities a much stronger say in the future of their area.

The Charter acknowledges that the country urgently needs more affordable homes for a rising population, including in villages and market towns, but insists that these must be sensitively located, built to a high-quality design that enhances local character and must conform to excellent environmental standards.

The Charter can be signed on CPRE's website. Among notable people who wrote the letter and are signatories to the Charter, are Bill Bryson, Jonathan Dimbleby, Sir Max Hastings, Virginia McKenna, Jonathan Porritt and our MP Nick Herbert.

Some facts underpinning CPRE's campaign:

- Local plans show at least 500.000 new homes planned for greenfield sites
- There are enough brownfield sites for around 1.5 million homes
- The reformed planning system is not working. The Green Belt, protected areas and what is ordinary but highly valuable and irreplaceable countryside, is being destroyed or threatened with destruction.

Dear Member

I hope you were able to take full advantage of our beautiful summer. Mind you, it did get a bit too hot for a while and my vegetables suffered outside, as well as in the greenhouse!

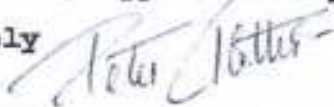
The sun was there too for the opening of our restored and transformed telephone kiosk in North Stoke. About fifty people attended, including SDNPA executives and representatives of other organisations. The local press covered the event and there was even an interview on the BBC Radio Sussex Breakfast Show. I can also report that since the opening there has been a good take-up of the material provided in this splendid little information point - a first in the SDNP!

Yes, another Minerals Local Plan looms and we must be alert. Not being on the preferred options list is no guarantee that sand-rich Wiggonholt will not again be put forward by the resourceful minerals operators. To drive home the message to non-member residents who might be affected, the facts were spelt out by Janet at a tea party she and Michael recently hosted at The Old Rectory. It is important that everyone is aware of what might be in store.

A well-attended annual outing on Wiggonholt again saw us picnicking in perfect weather at the side of Drungewick Lock and it was good to have Sally, the Canal Trust's chairman and Julian, its Secretary, with us for most of the way. In fact, when on the return journey we met the Zachariah Keppel with a lightly injured passenger on board, Sally was there to quickly arranged her transfer to our boat and a rendezvous with an ambulance at the next bridge. Moral of the story: Do not lean out!

We are still hoping to arrange a visit to an aggregate recycling plant this autumn. Apart from that, I am sure our Board will soon be thinking about a Christmas Party. Could we have your suggestions this year for half to three-quarter of an hour's "affordable" entertainment? I would love to hear from you: peter@wiggonholt.org or tel.01903 743 503.

Sincerely



Planning and Other Matters

THE BLACK HORSE, AMBERLEY

We have been advised that the sale was completed at the end of August and that the pub will be re-opening as soon as refurbishment has taken place. Separately, the new owners have circulated full details of their plans, which include an estimated re-opening in May 14.

GERSTON FARM, STORRINGTON

The appeal against HDC's refusal to permit the development which straddles the SDNP, was dismissed.

MELROSE DRIVE, STORRINGTON

This 102-dwelling application by Wates Developments has now gone to appeal. In opposing yet another major development in Storrington, our main concern is traffic congestion and pollution, with a 21,000 sq.ft. Waitrose store about to become a reality. We are making representations to the Inspectorate against the appeal.

HDC DRAFT HOUSING PLAN

The Plan provides for 11,500 houses in the Horsham Area. Such developments and a probable 2nd Gatwick runway, are bound to put great pressure on sand supplies.

REJECTED FOOD FEAST

Earlier this year in Nairobi, around 500 diplomats, UN officials and environmental ministers, were treated to an official gourmet dinner entirely made up of Kenyan produce that would have been thrown away. Some 1.3bn tonnes are wasted in this way around the world.

OTHER PHONE BOX RESTORATIONS

This summer in Suffolk, the Nayland and Wissington Conservation Society, with help from Babergh Council, launched a restored Box in Bear Street, Nayland, as a book and magazine exchange. We have also heard of another serving as a first aid post.

BRIEFINGS AND CONSULTATIONS

We have submitted detailed comments in response to the South Downs Management Plan consultation and attended a workshop on Water Resources in the South-East. The latter took place in Church House, Westminster, originally founded in 1887 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria.

NEW WEDNESDAY-ONLY BUS SERVICE LAUNCHED

The Sussex Bus Company have started a once-a-day service from Partridge Green to Chichester and back, also calling at Storrington and Amberley (01444 246693)

THE HAPPY FACES THAT SAY IT ALL!

Taken moments after the tape was cut, from left to right: John Vigar, chairman of the Churches Conservation Trust, Norman Dingemans, vice chairman of the SDNPA, Andrew Shaxton, chairman of the SDNPA Planning Committee and our Janet Aidin. Before this, your editor gave a brief history of the project to those gathered around, stressing that it had been Janet's "Baby" all along and listing the stages in funding with special thanks to the Park's Sustainable Communities Fund for covering the graphics. Also before the official opening, Norman Dingemans spoke to emphasise that the Park did not belong to the SDNPA, but to the public and that they had worked very successfully with the local community.

Photo-Derek Martin, WSCT d13345700a



WA members and guests were picnicking, whilst WACT volunteers turned *Wiggonholt*, ready to take us back to Loxwood Quay. *Wiggonholt* is popular and crews are in high demand.



Michael and Jane Joseph with son Howard and guests Sir Geoffrey and Lady Tuema Pattie. Howard has followed in his father's footsteps and become an airline pilot.



Tony Whitbread, Director of Sussex Wildlife Trust, with his wife, WA Director Viviane Doussy, and his parents. John Macey, seen in the background, enjoyed the trip once again.



Good to see our hard-working Company Secretary, Janet Aidin, relaxing with husband Michael in the green surroundings of Drungewick Lock.

.....and reporting a visit to the Coultershall Beam Pump

It was a members' private guided visit earlier in the year to this fascinating Scheduled Ancient Monument which had been restored by the Sussex Industrial Archaeological Society. The Pump driven by a water wheel was built in 1782 to pump water from the River Rother to Petworth House and Town. It is in full working order and was demonstrated to us delivering "a hogshead a minute".

The site is run by The Coultershall Trust and includes a visitor centre where educational events can also take place. The latest addition to the site is a 15kW Archimedes screw water turbine which generates renewable electricity. We are grateful to WA member, Michael Joseph, for arranging this interesting visit.