



Thatcham Town Council will take ownership of litter bins

Town council to take over litter bins

THATCHAM Town Council has agreed in principle to adopt some litter and dog waste bins from West Berkshire Council (WBC).

Councillors agreed in principle to take on ownership and responsibility for emptying some of the 141 litter and dog waste bins WBC owns in Thatcham at its finance and general purposes committee last month – but only within the capacity of its £30,000 budget allocated for devolution projects.

It added taking all the bins would leave it facing significant additional costs amounting up to £82,901.68.

WBC currently owns 85 litter bins (34 on highway land, 51 on recreation land) and 56 dog waste bins in Thatcham.

TTC's current grounds maintenance contractor Scofell estimated it would cost £18,846.70 to empty the 56 dog waste bins, and £17,469.54 to empty the 51 litter bins once per week.

It added the 34 highway litter bins would cost £11,646.36 – or £46,585.44 if emptied four times per week as recommended, as many are located in laybys containing a lot of waste.

The costs are in addition to the town council's existing litter and dog bin service.

Costs for any repairs, maintenance or clearance of fly-tipped or excess waste are not included.

The committee resolved to undertake a survey of the locations, level of usage and size of each bin and report back at its next meeting in July.

Flood risk concerns over housing plans

Council objects to proposals for 236 homes at Henwick Park

THATCHAM Town Council has objected to a proposal for 236 homes – including 39 per cent 'affordable' – over flooding concerns on land at Henwick Park.

The application, by Croudace Homes, is related to the revised district Local Plan and includes 523 new car parking spaces as well as new pedestrian, cycle and vehicle accesses from Bowling Green Road and Cold Ash Hill.

It includes a mix of four one-bedroom, 13 two-bedroom, 76 three-bedroom and 49 four-plus-bedroom market-rate houses, flats and maisonettes – 142 in total.

Another 66 are classed as social, affordable or immediate rent housing, including 18 one-bedroom, 34 two-bedroom, 12 three-bedroom and two four-plus-bedroom homes.

And a further 28 are classed as affordable homes, including three one-bedroom, 19 two-bedroom and six three-bedroom homes.

Planning and highways committee chairman Simon Pike (Lib Dem, Thatcham West) recommended the committee reject the proposal, highlighting its impact on the National Landscape and the increased flooding risk construction work could pose by disturbing the existing flood drainage scheme on site.

He said: "The key issue here is after the examination hearings, the Environment Agency updated its flood risk assessment map, which now shows parts of this site to be Flood Zones 2 and 3, which wasn't taken into account in the application."

"Ardent, the consultants of the flood drainage scheme on the site, expressed concerns about the access passing between the two flood attenuation basins."

"One of the issues raised is the concern about the construction work releasing water from underground aquifers, which is based on the historic records of flooding on the site, and this is not easily identifiable from the Environment Agency flood risk maps."



Plans for proposed housing at Henwick Park

Council leader Tom McCann (Lib Dem, Thatcham Central) added: "My concern is the same as yours. The underwater aquifers release needs to be thoroughly investigated by whoever the responsible people need to be."

"And we should actually ask the Environment Agency for their opinion on the possibilities whether such a development could adversely affect their works."

Mr Pike confirmed he has requested a more detailed site-specific investigation.

He added: "[The policy relating to housing on this site] doesn't give

any lower limits on housing numbers."

"So, if matters come to light which justify a reduction of that number, that would not be contrary to the Local Plan."

The committee voted unanimously to object to the proposal on the basis of the issues raised.

Cold Ash Parish Council also wrote on West Berkshire Council's planning portal requesting that the current application be denied or delayed "pending the submission of a revised, compliant Flood Risk Assessment and Sequential Test".

WBC previously rejected an outline planning application by Croudace for up to 265 homes on the site in 2015. Croudace appealed this decision.

The current application will be decided on Friday, June 13.

WBC will meet on Tuesday, June 10, to consider the Planning Inspector's recommendations and decide whether to formally adopt the plan.

THATCHAM

Keeping in touch

Have you got a story? Contact our Thatcham reporter MIREK GOSNEY on (01635) 886637 or email: mirek.gosney@newburynews.co.uk Twitter @mgosney_nwn



News updates from Thatcham are now available online throughout the week. Go to newburytoday.co.uk and select the district pages

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18-month ban for drink-driver

A MOTORIST has been caught drink-driving.

Nathan Palmer appeared in the dock at Reading Magistrates' Court on Wednesday, April 23.

The 40-year-old, of Horse Guards Way, Thatcham, admitted driving a Vauxhall Corsa on Hussars Drive in Thatcham on March 25 after drinking more than the legal limit.

Tests showed 47mcg of alcohol per 100ml of breath in his system.

The legal limit is 35mcg.

Palmer, who has previous convictions for motoring offences, was fined £400.

In addition, he was ordered to pay £85 costs, plus a victim services surcharge. Finally, Palmer was banned from driving for 18 months.

Honda motorbike stolen in town

A MOTORBIKE has been stolen in Thatcham.

Police are investigating the theft of a red, white and blue Honda CBR 900 Fireblade, index plate X234***, from The Henrys on Monday.

The offence is understood to have taken place between 7.24pm and 7.30pm.

Contact the Police Enquiry Centre on 101, quoting reference 43250232876, if you have any information which might help.

Rosy remembrance of VE Day

THATCHAM Town Council has planted three rose bushes in honour of VE Day and VJ Day.

Dignitaries and members of the Royal British Legion Thatcham Branch gathered in the Broadway on Friday afternoon to plant the bushes, with a plaque, to commemorate both milestone anniversaries happening this year.

Mayor of Thatcham Suzanne Adamantos opened the ceremony with a few words.

She said: "It's an honour to welcome you all here today as we gather to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day and VJ Day."

"We remember the sacrifices made by so many in the pursuit of peace and

freedom.

"As we plant these peace roses here in Thatcham, we do so not only in memory of the brave men and women who served, but also as a living symbol of hope, resilience and the enduring value of peace."

"May these roses stand as a reminder to future generations of what was endured and what was won eight decades ago."

Newbury MP Lee Dillon and representatives from Thatcham Town Council and Thatcham Memorial Foundation also attended the event.

The tools to plant the rose bushes were provided by naval veteran Jim Holland, founder and CEO of Carma, based in Newbury.



Deputy mayor Petra Pemberton, Newbury MP Lee Dillon, mayor Suzanne Adamantos, members of the Royal British Legion Thatcham branch and Jim Holland

WI's plants and poem

MEMBERS of the Thatcham Women's Institute held their coffee morning, bazaar and plant sale to commemorate VE Day on Saturday.

They succeeded in raising more than £1,000 in just over two hours towards the maintenance of West Berkshire Community Hospital Courtyard Gardens.

Lead radiographer Andrea Bradd opened the event and expressed how important the gardens are and the difference they made to the staff and patients.

Thatcham WI also shared a poem with the *Newbury Weekly News* written by its member Liz Whitehead.

It reads as follows:

In 1939 the men left the farms as they went off to defend our shores.

But without food being imported we needed to grow more.

What we need, said Churchill, 'is a land army to work our farms'.

So, he asked the WI president to call the group to arms.

Dressed in brown dungarees with their hair tied in a scarf.

They set to work to 'Dig for Victory' they thought would be a laugh.

They milked the cows, and fed the pigs, and collected lots of chicken eggs,

They learned to drive a tractor and plough the fields instead.

Over 85 years later they still grow plants and flowers,

You can see them in the hospital garden where they work for hours.

They have made a calm oasis of peace and tranquility,

Where the only sound is the song of birds and the quiet hum of a bee.

On Saturday in Thatcham they celebrated the VE Day anniversary.

Dressed in the uniform they went back in time to a distant memory.

With no war time rationing the cake stall was laden with cake.

New hospital flowers could then be bought from the money that they make.