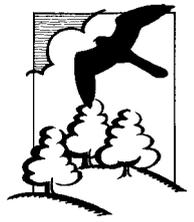


PARISH COUNCIL OF HAWKHURST CHAIRMANS LETTER – MAY 2019



Hello,

Last month, I said I would let you know how we got on at the TWBC Planning Committee. Firstly, it was fantastic that so many of you from Hawkhurst attended; it made clear how strongly we feel about the developments facing our village. Of the three applications discussed, two were refused (Streatley and Fieldways/Copthall). But, unfortunately, the 28 houses at Hartenoak was approved. This was incredibly disappointing. We have been reviewing our options but, so far, have not found a way of challenging this.

On a more positive note, it was a huge relief that the Dandara application (Fieldways/Copthall Avenue) was turned down. We should all be immensely grateful for all of the hard work of the Copthall Avenue residents in fighting this, as well as to everyone who signed the petition and commented. Thank you. I think this, together with the efforts of our Borough and KCC Councillors and Hawkhurst Parish Council, showed what we can achieve when we work together.

No doubt we will face further applications and appeals. So now our focus needs to be on ensuring that we are in the strongest position possible to face these. Recently, doubts have been expressed about the status of the NDP. Obviously, this is a very serious matter. We met with the TWBC Planning Managers to raise these issues. They assured us that the NDP should and will continue to be considered in all planning applications in Hawkhurst.

TWBC are edging ever closer to being able to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply. Once this is in place, our position will be even stronger. However, in the meantime, HPC are working with our Borough Councillors to find ways to give the NDP as much clout as possible. I'll keep you updated.

I would like to thank everyone who joined us for the Annual Parish Meeting, last month. We were really pleased by the attendance. Thank you to everyone who has let us know how they felt it worked. We honestly do welcome your feedback (positive and negative) as this is how we are going to get better at delivering what Hawkhurst wants.

Another huge thank you to everyone who turned out to help with the Hawkhurst Spring Clean. This was such an amazing success that we are proposing to make it a more regular event. We'll keep you posted about future arrangements.

Hopefully, some of you will have noticed the recent improvement in information from HPC on social media. The credit for this goes to Jane Pyne, who is posting events and notices on the Facebook Community Group and Nextdoor Hawkhurst to keep residents informed. Thank you, Jane.

Clare Escombe

Chairman, Hawkhurst Parish Council, May 2019