

# Caterham on the Hill Parish Council News



## The Parish Council's Response to Tandridge District Council's Local Plan Consultation

Caterham on the Hill Parish Council has submitted a full policy and detailed response to the challenge presented by Tandridge Council's Local Plan Consultation. Residents have had to grapple with an array of papers prepared by different authors, sometimes contradictory, while trying to sift through the documents to identify what will affect them, and how best they can contribute to the consultation.

Through a process of engagement, which included a well attended public meeting and discussion at our Council meetings, on our website and elsewhere, we helped residents to engage with the process as fully as possible, so that their local knowledge could be fully captured. Our own response has been informed by residents, local experts, and knowledge acquired through the Neighbourhood Plan volunteers; it reflects the strong feelings expressed at the public meeting and has the full support of the elected Parish Councillors.



Heath Road allotments

All of this occurred in the context of last year's flooding and its aftermath - completely ignored in the TDC Local Plan Review. Residents were asked to comment on the possible influx of new building into a community which already understood its inability safely to receive it. Residents have also pointed out the difficulty of securing a local primary school place, a doctors' appointment, a parking space close to their home or place of work; and they have suffered cuts to important bus services and increasingly overcrowded trains.

The District Council has asked for comments on two schemes at the same time, doubling the potential for confusion. It has to develop the Local Plan, consulting on the possible development of sites put forward by owners or developers; and then it is putting Council owned sites forward for sale or development. For the purposes of the Local Plan Tandridge District Council (TDC) did not need to do this. It is doing so because of its financial position. It may include some council homes to help with the difficulties for families looking for affordable housing. However, while this is a fine ambition, there is still no infrastructure investment to support such development.

It is unfortunate that two of the TDC owned sites have generated the greatest concern for residents. The Hambledon Park land has now been withdrawn from the list of available land, but TDC has added the Heath Road Allotments site for potential development.

The Parish Council calls upon Tandridge Council to revert to its fundamental duty: to protect Caterham on the Hill from further threats to its broken infrastructure, to take to heart the response of the Parish Council and of individual residents and groups who have responded to this consultation, and to work to make the renewal of the broken its priority, rather than profit from new homes.

*Dear Resident,*

*As ever, it has been a busy year; for many of our residents it has been traumatic, such as for flood victims and their families. In other ways it has brought us together to defend what matters to us and to protect our community.*

*The experience of the flood has changed public policy. As I write, a strategy has been approved to ensure the County, as Flood Authority, comments properly on planning applications, so that the implications for water management are properly considered. TDC have identified flood prevention as their top priority for Community Infrastructure Levy spending, which properly recognises the issue as a key one for our town, and we have heard that TDC recognises that further large scale development in Caterham will put too much pressure on the local infrastructure and is looking to build a "garden village" elsewhere.*

*Perhaps the community has not since the last war been so united to defend what we love about our town, and never so well equipped to fight the fight.*

*I am very proud that the Parish Council has played such a key role; it will continue to speak up for our community and defend its amenity at every turn, and be vigilant to rebuff every threat.*

*Councillor Chris Botten,  
Parish Council Chairman*

# An interview with Caterham Children's Centre Manager, Linda Smith

by Councillor Caroline Warner

## **Please can you tell us how you came to be the Children's Centre Manager?**

I became Centre Manager for the Children's Centre in June 2007, having been employed on site as Day Care Manager since 2003. The Sure Start Children's Centre Initiative interested me because it enabled us to offer support to our families as well as run the day care facility.



## **It would be great to hear more about what goes on at the Children's Centre?**

Caterham Children's Centre operates from two sites, one opposite The Arc, Caterham on the Hill and one within the grounds of Marden Lodge School. We are open five days per week between 8.00am - 3.00pm. A "week in the life" will include: Antenatal sessions, Breast Feeding Advice, Health Reviews, Adult Learning workshops such as our recent Healthy Eating & First Aid sessions, sessions to encourage and develop children's speech & language, physical, social & emotional development and much more. We are also qualified to offer targeted support work on a 1:1 basis with families who might need a little bit of extra support, for instance with financial difficulties, relationships, Post Natal Depression, Parenting Advice, we are Jack of All Trades and Masters of None!

## **Why is it so important to have support for families with babies and toddlers?**

We like to support families from the early stages of parenthood. We recognise that becoming a new parent isn't always as glossy as portrayed in magazines. There will be sleepless nights, worries about feeding, development, and "Mother-In-Law" advice that might be outdated and go against current recommendations, for instance with weaning, whereby current practice would be to start weaning after 6 months when babies tummies are mature enough to cope with solids, whereas our grandparents might have weaned much earlier "because you have a hungry baby." We also want to get the message out that babies can't be spoilt by cuddles and that it's ok to hold them to bond and nurture, when babies feel safe and secure they will thrive. With parenthood can sometimes come waves of Post Natal Depression and it's important that families know they are not alone and that feelings of anxiety are natural and will pass; this is why 80% of our work is focussed on families of young babies.

## **The Parish Council awarded you a grant recently to train breast feeding volunteers.**

### **Can you tell us how that's going?**

We were delighted to receive the grant; it was approved just as the last cohort of volunteers began their training, and they all graduated as Peer Supporters on 26th January. We had a triple celebration because it was the 9th birthday of the Caterham Baby Café, and we were able to sign up the next cohort who will start their training on 21st March; we couldn't do this without the grant we received via the Parish Council. The Peer Supporters help Mums who are new to breast feeding to get over the worries of whether they are doing things "right", so that they feel able to breast feed at ease giving the babies the best start in life.

*If you would like to know more about the work of the Children's Centre then come along to the Annual Parish Meeting on 12th April at 7.30pm in the library, Westway, Caterham on the Hill where Linda Smith will speaking on the work of Sure Start.*

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**The ANNUAL PARISH MEETING is for residents to have their say on anything they consider important to Caterham on the Hill. The Parish Council will be reporting on its work over the past year and there will be an update on the work of the Flood Forum.**

• The Parish Warden continues to report local issues such as potholes, overgrown hedges, litter and graffiti. If you have any issues that you would like reported you can do this via the website [caterhamhillparishcouncil.co.uk](http://caterhamhillparishcouncil.co.uk)



# Beating the Bounds

Caterham on the Hill Parish Council's Circular Walk will take place this year on Saturday 20th May.

The Hill walk is approximately 6 miles long and where possible follows the boundary of Caterham on the Hill Parish.

"Beating the Bounds" is an ancient and once widespread custom. A group procession walked around the 'bounds' of a common, carrying sticks or 'wands' to hit landmarks along the way. This was believed to pass knowledge of the land onto the next generation.

The walk will start at St Mary's church car park at 11.00am and there will be a break for refreshments after 3 miles in The Fox pub beer garden, returning to St Mary's Church for approximately 3.00pm.

For more information contact the Parish Clerk at [caterhamhillpc@msn.com](mailto:caterhamhillpc@msn.com) or call on 01883 708310.



## FLOOD FORUM



The Flood Forum can be contacted by email at [caterham.floodactiongroup@yahoo.org.uk](mailto:caterham.floodactiongroup@yahoo.org.uk)

Mary Austin, Julie Blackburn, Alan Wilkes, Clive Rees, Jan Stollery, Helen Rujbally and Colin Pugh (not photographed) are members of the Flood Forum and have been effected by the floods. Tabitha Whitcombe is the Community Flood Resilience Officer (RHS of photo)



A BIG 'thank you' to Adam from Brooks Exterior Cleaning who has been cleaning Caterham's dirty road signs free of charge.

## New benches, bins and gateway signs

One of the core aims of the Parish Council is to work to protect and improve the appearance of Caterham on the Hill.



Following a request from a resident, a new bench and bin are being installed by the 400 bus stop on Westway with a further bench placed by the Community Centre on the High Street.

6 new gateway signs were also recently installed.



## The Playground at the Arc

The Parish Council remains committed to supporting the replacement of the dangerous playground at the Arc. It has been a very frustrating year, as so little progress seems to have been made in enabling the work to take place. The Village Association accepted our invitation to come to the Parish Council and offer their explanation as to why the delay continues; unfortunately, Caterham Barracks Community Trust declined our invitation. Our hope to have the new playground in place for the Spring have already been dashed. We can only hope that good will and good sense will prevail so that the matter can be resolved as soon as possible.

# Planning Issues by Councillor Hilary Turner



## Tandridge Council's Local Plan Review

The Parish Council writes on page 1 about its response to TDC's recent public consultation. Our detailed submission is on our website. The main points include:

- The main Sites Consultation document draws on a number of background reports, mainly prepared by consultants, covering Green Belt (GB), Landscape, Ecology and Sustainability. However, there is a lack of coordination between these, and it is not clear how they are used in the Sites Consultation. For example, areas recommended to remain in the GB are nevertheless retained as potential development sites in the Sites Consultation. The Sustainability Appraisal appears to be only a 'desk study' and fails to take account of local conditions.

- We are pleased that some of the TDC owned sites in an earlier round of consultation, including Hambledon Park Open Space, have now been withdrawn from the potential development list.

- However, a new TDC-owned site - Heath Road Allotments (CAT 077) - has been added. This is a cause of major concern to allotment users, to many local residents and the Parish Council. We consider that all existing community and recreational open spaces and facilities should be safeguarded from development.

- We strongly support the finding in the Tandridge Green Belt Review that the strip of Green Belt which separates Caterham on the Hill from Caterham Valley and Whyteleafe fulfils important GB functions and should be retained. However, we are concerned that "the land accommodating Queens Park" could potentially be removed from the GB, and the possible removal from the GB of a small part of Coulsdon Common makes no sense.

## Planning Applications

We continue to put our views to TDC on major applications. We have expressed concern at the proposed conversion of a shop in Banstead Road to flats. We regard the scheme as over-intensive and unsuitable, with grossly inadequate car parking provision.

The major proposal for housing behind Nos.156-180 Whyteleafe Road, which we strongly opposed and which was rejected by TDC, has now gone to appeal before a Government Inspector. We will renew our opposition at the hearing.

On local applications for residential extensions and other schemes, we now ask for the use of porous surfaces on driveways and other measures to minimise flood risks.

## Annual Parish Meeting

12th April 7.30pm  
at the Library, Westway

Speakers are from Sure Start and the Flood Forum and residents can raise local issues.

Parish Council meetings are held at the library, Westway.

Dates of upcoming meetings can be found on the Parish Council website.

Councillor surgeries are held on the last Saturday of the month at Caterham on the Hill Library (with the exception of December) from 10am to 12 noon.

If you have an issue you would like to discuss with your local representative please come along.



Find us on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/caterhamhillpc](http://www.facebook.com/caterhamhillpc)

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