



Report to Parishes February 2020



The Winchester Strategic Plan for the next 5 years has been agreed, and the budget to deliver those priorities is to be adopted on 26th February

A second consultation exercise by Southern Water has been taking place on the proposed temporary pipeline into the Itchen from Preston Candover. Drawings showing the route from Totford to Itchen Abbas and photomontages were on display; staff available to explain the project and answer questions. The temporary pipeline project has developed further with more detail on the route and the construction. The whole project has been brought about by the need to protect the water sources for Southampton in the case of radical changes to the climate. Clearly Southern Water recognise the real dangers of the 'Climate Emergency, so much so that they are developing a desalination plant which should come on line by 2030. Southampton draws much of its water from the Itchen at Eastleigh, hence there is a possible need to supplement the flow in the lower reaches of the Itchen in the case of two dry winters. This is to be achieved by pumping from existing and largely unused boreholes in Preston Candover. In order to avoid damaging the habitat of the Candover Brook the temporary pipeline will discharge at the fish farm in Itchen Abbas. I had two questions which were answered: The first was, the effect that drawing water from the boreholes at Preston Candover would have on reducing the flow of spring water feeding the river, has apparently been the subject of several studies. The various studies have not come up with any firm evidence that the river will suffer adversely from this pumping. The second was, would the additional water being discharged into the Itchen via the fish farm sluices, wash unpleasant detritus from the farm into the river. I was told that all water flowing out has to meet the standards required by the Environment Agency.

WCC is developing their 'Parking and Movement' Strategy with consultation documents being sent out. There is concern amongst the 'market towns' such as Wickham, Bishops Waltham and Alresford that insufficient recognition of the special circumstances of these towns and that a solution that works for the city may not be best for them. The economic vitality of Alresford and its lively character depends in my belief, to a surprising extent to its role as a hub for smaller outlying villages, such as Bighton, Bishops Sutton and others in the Itchen valley. It is a centre not only for shopping, but for socialising. (The many coffee shops now in the town seem to do a good business!).

The one/two hours free parking puts Alresford on the same footing as the large supermarkets and therefore it should be retained. If people driving in from Bighton have to pay for 30-minute stay, it may be deduced that they are likely to drive a bit further and take their business elsewhere, also to the detriment of the environment by increasing their mileage. There is of course a conflict in demand between local shoppers and Alresford residents, and indeed other user groups. Residents might welcome a reduction in local shoppers and freeing of parking spaces, but would they be happy with Alresford becoming a dormitory town? Our apologies for this rather Alresford-centric article, but the issue is of relevance to residents locally, who enjoy the 'market town' functions of Alresford as well as its other attractions. Please submit your comments to WCC via their website.

We have successfully argued that Alresford needs a Parking and Access strategy to meet our very special needs, to balance the needs of retailers and residents. We have a meeting in February to scope plans and timescales for that strategy, and the associated consultation.

The Grange at Northington has been granted a licence to hold a weekend long 'Food Festival', for up to 20,000 visitors. In the first year 12,000 are expected including a large proportion of staff. The granting of licences is dependent on the applicant meeting certain requirements, such as the safeguarding of minors, control of alcohol, noise levels etc. The Licensing Act does not though include any particular requirement for traffic control, although the approval of the Police and HCC traffic has to be obtained, (which it has.) This is despite one of the main concerns of local residents being, quite rightly, the unsuitability of the rural



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roads around the site to cope with large numbers of additional cars. The applicant has to meet four conditions, such as a decibel limit, which do little to mollify concerns about the traffic. Planning permission is not required for an event of limited duration. The applicant is required to liaise with a stakeholder group. This should include councillors from all the town/parish councils likely to suffer from the additional numbers of vehicles before and after the event. Collective pressure might be able to bring about some pressure to limit numbers.

Our next **Councillor Surgery** is 0930-1045 Friday 6th March, at Alresford Community Centre, by kind permission of the Trustees.

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