

LPC NEWS



Latest news & updates from Limpsfield Parish Council



From the Chair

The incumbent local Parish Councillors were re-elected in May 2023 and have returned to work, building on the many successes of the previous Council's 4-year term. Two new Councillors, Antony Taylor and Sophie Kemp replace Laila Turner and Philip Bailey, who stepped down after years of service. The election validates the Council's focus on the priorities of Limpsfield Parish residents, which are reflected in the Local Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan (CAAMP).

Specifically, the Council is focused on retention of the distinctive character of the Parish – open spaces, protection of the Green Belt and AONB, pursuit of a sustainable environment and preserving our historical heritage. These areas, along with our wonderful residents, make Limpsfield a fantastic place to live.

As you will see in the following pages, we have already made strides to reach our objectives. This has been achieved by the hard work of the Council, the Clerk, and the many residents who volunteer to make Limpsfield a better place to live. We will continue our work over the next Council term and look forward to updating you on our progress. As always, if there is an issue that requires attention, please contact us.

Thomas C. Briggs

Planning Update

Since we wrote in the spring, your Parish Council has intervened in several planning applications of note submitted to Tandridge District Council (TDC). We are pleased to be able to report on some of these and on how we are representing our Parish.

Annexes and change of use / development of rural outbuildings

There has been a significant increase in the number of applications for residential annexes. We have also seen a marked increase in applications that seek to convert or demolish farm or other rural outbuildings for the development of residential homes. We have objected to four applications over the last year that seek to build dwellings on sites of former stables and farm buildings:

- 1.Red Lane Stables (2022/1546) - replacement of stables with a 4-bedroom dwelling – Granted.
- 2.Orchard Cottage Farm (2023/358) – demolition of existing buildings and containers and erection of four individual dwellings. Not yet determined.
- 3.Trevereux Stables (2022/1098) - conversion of stable buildings to form a 2-bedroom dwelling. Not yet determined.
- 4.Hillview Farm (2022/762) – refused, appeal pending.

These developments are all in contradiction to our Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan LNP5, which seeks to protect the Landscape Character of the rural farm region of Limpsfield. We are very concerned about the suburbanisation of our Parish and the implications of the conversion of non-residential buildings, and are monitoring the outcome of the undetermined applications with a view to assessing the overall approach by Tandridge District Council (TDC) to applications in our rural areas.

Applications of Note

Green Hedges (2022/1614) - demolition of 1 house - replacement with apartments on the A25 behind Padbrook/Detillens Lane.

The Parish Council and District Council objected to this development, which is on the A25. However, it was approved on appeal. There have since been various planning amendments sought, one of which related to the inclusion of external balconies to some apartments. We represented the Parish at a full TDC committee to object to these. Disappointingly, planning permission was granted.

Gaywood Solar Photovoltaic Farm (TA/2022/963)

Tandridge District Council has refused this application on the basis of negative impact to an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and other harmful impacts. We are very happy with this decision. We await the decision on the parallel application that was submitted to Sevenoaks District Council.

The Studio (2023/281) - Change of use from dog groomers to child care centre in Limpsfield Village

This application was approved by TDC, despite the Parish Council's and residents' objections focused on congestion, lack of parking and safety concerns due to its location on Limpsfield High Street, opposite the Limpsfield Memorial Stores. The applicant is seeking to locate a childcare centre, which is currently operating at St Peter's Church Hall, Limpsfield.

Whilst we support local businesses, we objected to this application due to safety grounds at drop-off and pick-up times, exacerbation of existing congestion and lack of availability of parking in the vicinity. The application has been granted, *but* is subject to several traffic and parking conditions being met to the satisfaction of Highways and TDC. We have responded to the submitted Travel Plan, and will continue to monitor this application and the implementation of these conditions.

The former Grasshopper Inn at Moorhouse, A25 (2023/938)

This is an iconic site that has fallen into disrepair. We are keen to see it improved. Whilst not in our Parish, it is on the boundary in a very visible location within the Green Belt and Surrey Hills AONB. Accordingly, together with Tatsfield Parish Council, we have commented that the bulk of the proposed building should be reduced and that the existing remaining structure should be incorporated into the design, so that the legacy of an important landmark is not lost.

Oxted Quarry, Chalkpit Lane, Oxted. 2023-0154 (TA/2023/1135)

Although outside our Parish, we have been included as a consultee, as the development is on our boundary and significant in scope. We will work with Woldingham and Oxted Parish Councils to represent our views. To date, we have objected as the site is in the Green Belt and AONB and does not meet the requirements of sustainable development, given the distance from amenities. We are also aware of the potential impact on Oxted Health Centre, which is in Limpsfield Parish.

There is a step by step overview of the planning process on our website - www.limpsfield.org/planning.

You can view all of our objections and comments on any of the planning applications in the Parish via the TDC planning portal. www.tandridge.gov.uk/planning

Glossary of planning abbreviations:

LPC – Limpsfield Parish Council, TDC – Tandridge District Council

LNP – Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan, NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework,

TPO – Tree Preservation Order, TCA – Tree in a Conservation Area

Other Planning Issues

Communications Mast at Broomlands

The temporary communications mast on the field near the A25 (Green Belt) has been removed. The mobile phone operators are looking at how to improve current signals from existing masts, as well as planning the installation of a new mast at an approved site by the Moorhouse Layby on the A25.

Gatwick expansion – ‘The Northern Runway Project’

Many of you will have received a leaflet, advising of this nationally significant project. To date, the Council has registered its interest in being an ongoing consultee, and where we believe there may be harm to Limpsfield Parish, we will be able to make relevant representation to the Planning Inspector.

TDC Local Plan

Tandridge District Council recently presented its revised plan to the Planning Inspector. This was not accepted by the inspector and Tandridge was left with two options: either to withdraw the plan or to ask the Planning Inspector to write a report to conclude that the plan is not sound.

At a meeting on 19th October 2023 TDC agreed to the former option. While there is no plan in place, the district is likely to see additional pressures for development within and outside the built-up areas. Limpsfield is fortunate to have its own Neighbourhood Plan, formally adopted by TDC as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This will help protect the Parish from inappropriate development.

Surrey Hills AONB Boundary Review

The Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Review is ongoing. The public consultation to the proposed changes ended in June 2023, but the outcome is not expected until late 2024.

The Planning Committee submitted five areas for inclusion within the revised boundary area, and all have been included in the proposed changes. These changes will, we hope, be implemented, and will give further protection to some key areas of Green Belt in our Parish.

All Parish Council submissions and comments on any of the planning applications are available on the TDC planning portal.

We welcome questions and comments, which should be sent via our Clerk - clerk@limpsfield.org or by post to The Parish Council, The Pound, Wolf's Row, Limpsfield, Surrey RH8 0EB. We welcome questions and comments on other planning matters, which should be sent via our Clerk.

Ward Boundaries Review Success



Following our parishioner poll and official response sent to the Boundary Review Commission, in conjunction with Tatsfield Parish Council and our District Councillors/OLRG, we are happy to say that we will not be merging with Tatsfield in the Tandridge Ward Boundary Review.

The Local Government Boundary Commission is the independent body that draws ward boundaries. During the review process, it studied Tandridge to ensure councillors will represent about the same number of electors, and that the ward arrangements will help the District Council work effectively.

The Commission has published final recommendations for changes in Tandridge, which include 18 wards - consisting of 10 three-councillor, five two-councillor, three single-councillor wards. The boundaries of 10 wards will change and 10 will stay the same (including Limpsfield and Tatsfield).

On publication of the recommendations Professor Colin Mellors, Chair of the Commission, said: "We are very grateful to people in Tandridge. We looked at all the views they gave us. They helped us improve our earlier proposals. We believe the new arrangements will deliver electoral fairness while maintaining local ties."

The changes become law once Parliament has approved them. The District Council will ensure the arrangements are in place for the 2024 elections.

Limpsfield Village Conservation Area Implementation Activity



All residents and businesses within the Limpsfield Village Conservation Area should now have received a handy reference pamphlet that outlines planning regulations for the Conservation Area, as well as responsibilities as owners/tenants of Conservation Areas in general and the Limpsfield Village Conservation Area specifically.

As part of our implementation of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, we have undertaken a few activities already, as highlighted in the previous newsletter and at our AGM in April.

In addition:

- We are awaiting 2 Heritage Street Lamps to be installed at Hookwood and Sylvan Close, replacing the modern street lamps that are not in keeping with the Conservation Area.
- We have consulted with Highways and SCC's Historic Buildings Officer regarding the maintenance of Ironstone kerbstones and pavement.
- We have carried out a patch test of specialist cleaning of the ironstone cobbles that run from St Peter's Church to Stanhopes and The Bull, and hope to be able to carry out the remaining refurbishment soon.
- We have produced and distributed a reference guide for residents of the Conservation Area, as mentioned above.

Limpfield Village Community Speedwatch Needs You!



We are interested in setting up a Community SpeedWatch group for Limpfield High Street, but we can only do so with the involvement and participation of Limpfield residents.

The Parish Council will set up and co-ordinate the group, procure the equipment and arrange the necessary training by Surrey Police, but we need volunteers (a minimum of six people) to form the group.

Detillens Lane and Bluehouse Lane already have established SpeedWatch teams and these groups have been very successful in encouraging road users to observe the 30mph speed limit.

In Limpfield High Street, the speed limit is 30mph north of the mini-roundabout and 20mph from the mini roundabout up to the A25 traffic lights. We all know that parking and congestion in the High Street is a problem, and the Parish Council is aware of this issue. However, at the same time, we want to encourage road users to observe the speed limits in Limpfield High Street, which can help to reduce the congestion.

If you would like to volunteer, or if you would like to know more about the SpeedWatch scheme, please contact the Parish Council (clerk@limpsfield.org) or talk to one of your Parish Councillors.

Crime & Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)

Unfortunately, there has been an escalation of theft and anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Limpsfield and Oxted areas. The local police would like to reiterate the importance of reporting all crimes - via 999 if it's an emergency or via 101, in order that they can be followed up to help build prosecutable cases against repeat offenders. As you may be aware, much of Station Road East is in Limpsfield and therefore many of the Oxted businesses fall within our Parish.

There are a number of activities currently being undertaken:

- The Oxted BID (aka Love Oxted) is driving a campaign in conjunction with Limpsfield and Oxted Parish Councils, local police and Tandridge District Council to help support shop and business owners in the town to reduce shoplifting and threats against shop staff.
- The shops are all on a WhatsApp Shop Alert Group, have their own CCTV and the Oxted BID has also installed the DISC security programme and App to facilitate centralised intelligence, photos and CCTV of local and out-of-town offenders. They are also trialling a Shoplifter Alert green whistle campaign.
- A meeting was held recently with our local MP, Claire Coutinho, the Surrey Police & Crime Commissioner, Lisa Townsend, Tandridge Borough Commander, Lyndsey Whatley and the local councils. This was a first step towards lobbying for more support for our town from the police but also to establish how we can all work together more effectively.
- Limpsfield Parish Council is also supporting Oxted Parish Council in the installation of a new CCTV system to cover the town centre, which should be installed by the end of January.

New NOx Measurement Device

Typically unnoticed by the public, Limpsfield and Oxted host an inconspicuous network of air pollution measurement devices that help monitor local air pollution. These "diffusion tubes" measure Nitrogen Oxides (NOx), highly reactive gases that form when fuel is burned at high temperatures.

- NOx gases contribute to the formation of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) that produce ground level ozone pollution.
- Ozone can aggravate asthma and cause other lung damage.
- Transport vehicles and other fuel burning engines are the primary sources of NOx emissions, which makes roadside measurement.

Upon a suggestion from Limpsfield Parish Council, Tandridge District Council has recently located a NOx diffusion tube in a high traffic area on the A25. This will help improve the quality of NOx measurement, which will allow for better assessment of the impacts on local air pollution of future development projects. We are fortunate to live in an area with relatively clean air and this should gradually improve as older vehicles are retired from the fleet.

The most recent Air Quality report can be found using the following link:
<https://www.tandridge.gov.uk/Environmental-concerns/Air-quality>

Nature and Biodiversity

What can we do in the Limpfield Parish?



Limpfield Parish is 94% Green Belt, with a high proportion of natural green space, including large publicly accessible areas, such as Limpfield Common, the High Chart, Staffhurst Wood and Itchingwood Common.

Maintaining and enhancing local biodiversity (the wide variety of plants and animals occupying our local ecosystem) is integral to the quality of our rural landscape.

Facts you may not know:

- Farming/Agricultural Management has the biggest impact on nature in the UK.
- For England, the residential garden area is more than four and a half times larger than that of our National Nature Reserves.
- Individuals and families can make a real impact on nature in their own gardens through re-wilding on a domestic scale.
- There are scarce habitats within Limpfield Common, in particular, heathlands and ancient woodlands, managed by the National Trust.

Limpfield Parish Council is developing a local biodiversity plan for the Parish and is soliciting input from residents and biodiversity experts. There is national, county and local activity to take forward biodiversity and sustainability, and we would like to develop an approach at a Parish level, which adds value to these activities. We plan to host a local biodiversity information meeting in 2024 to develop and implement local activities. We hope we will then be able to focus on what we can do as a Parish, what individual households can do, and how we can all best achieve positive outcomes together, both with and for businesses and farmers, as well as residents and their families.

Do let us know if you are interested in this important topic.

Meet our new National Trust Ranger for Limpsfield Common - Conor McNeil



This summer, Conor McNeil stepped into the role of the National Trust's Limpsfield Ranger for Limpsfield Common, as Jeremy Saunders has taken on a wider remit, which still includes Limpsfield.

A local boy, Conor grew up on Nutfield Marsh, went to Hawthorns then Caterham School, after which he headed to Plymouth University to read Environmental Science.

Following his degree, Conor worked for a time as a grounds man/kitchen gardener at The Pig at the South Downs Hotel, before joining the National Trust at Boxhill, as an immersive volunteer ranger.

Hearing about the role at Limpsfield, he had a look around the site, loved it and decided to try his luck with an application. The rest is history!

Conor is an environmental enthusiast through and through and on his days off, can be found foraging, gardening/soft landscaping, beekeeping and generally helping to keep his family's homestead healthy! He's also a keen writer of nature poetry.

Conor works for a re-wilding charity called "*Youngwilders*" as a project officer for their main site in West Surrey and helping to manage their annual event at the Knepp Estate, bringing together young nature enthusiasts from all economic backgrounds.

Conor is already a huge fan of Limpsfield Common, being very interested in the diverse habitats contained in the area. *"I look forward to giving these areas as much of my attention as I can afford,"* he said, *"so that they can reach their full and healthiest potential!"*

Current / recent projects include:

- New timber seating in cleared woodland area along New Road (towards Wolf's Hill).
- Widening rides and bringing light onto the woodland floor in High Chart.
- Dead-hedging renewal and expansion at Yalden Spring, as well as deepening some of the feeder channels, to help bring the spring back to its former historic glory!
- Maintenance of the heathland scrapes at Moorhouse and other areas to reveal the precious heather that is so important to preserve.

Please say "Hi" to Conor when you come across him amongst the trees! He has a hugely important role in the preservation and management of the Limpsfield Common/Chart area and would love to encourage younger Limpsfield residents (over 18) to get involved in the NT Volunteer Taskforce.

"It is phenomenally encouraging and reassuring to see the community involvement in Limpsfield Common and The Chart," says Conor, *"and I look forward to helping to ensure that all demographics are involved with local decision making."*

If you're interested, or know someone who might be, please email him: Conor.McNeil1@nationaltrust.org.uk

A warm welcome to Memorial Stores



A very warm welcome to both Di and Charlotte who've taken over the running of Memorial Stores, which celebrates 25 years next year.

Di, the new General Manager is a long-time Chart resident, and is joined by Charlotte, Mornings Manager (Monday to Saturday) and soon-to-be Chart resident (!), alongside Fraser, their Sundays Manager and a whole host of dedicated volunteers. Please give them a warm welcome and make sure you #shoplocal and continue to use your local village shops, businesses and post office.

New mobility gates across the Brook and Glebe Fields



On 5th October, two new mobility gates were officially opened by Surrey County Councillor, Cameron McIntosh, and the Chairman of Tandridge District Council, Cllr Chris Botten. The Chairman of Limpsfield Parish Council, Tom Briggs was there, plus members of the Tandridge Access Group with three mobility scooter users, and a number of well-wishers.

A mobility gate is an extra-wide kissing gate with an additional opening than can be unlocked by wheelchair or mobility scooter users, who can obtain a special key. As the gates are wider than normal, most single buggies can be pushed around the opening without the need for the special key.

Limpsfield Parish Council had already funded improvements to the path, including reducing the gradient of the section from the fields to Granville Road, and from Detillens Lane. These have been very popular improvements for the many walkers, runners and station commuters who regularly use this link path from Limpsfield to Oxted.

TAG (Tandridge Access Group) works to improve access for disabled people, and obtained a grant from Surrey County Councillor Cameron McIntosh, who has a fund for beneficial local projects. At the opening ceremony, Cllr McIntosh said how pleased he was to support this project and that these gates are unique in Surrey. He hopes that more will be installed following this example to make key footpaths accessible for all.

We have also contributed to the resurfacing of another key point on this pathway to be undertaken in the very near future.

Putting our best boots forward!

Over the last four years, Limpshire Parish Council has installed 17 kissing gates and two self-closing gates to replace difficult stiles as well as other improvements including surface work, path widening, steps, handrails, post and stile repairs and ditch work.

This has been made possible from CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) money received by the Council when developers build in the Parish.

Since our last newsletter we have kept busy repairing and replacing finger posts around the Parish, focusing our efforts on the south of the Parish, with stile replacements around Tenchleys / Pastens and Guildables Lane.

Working with the East Surrey Walkers, Surrey County Council, farmers, and landowners, we hope to be able to make the footpaths network around the Parish as accessible as possible.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you come across a Footpath that could do with improvement.

Glebe Fields: Please note, there are now cattle back in the Glebe Fields. Please do not approach the cattle, keep dogs on leads, keep to the footpath and pick up and take dog poo with you.



Local Support this winter

Oxted Library - Warm Welcome

Oxted Library is once again a designated warm hub for this winter, offering a warm and welcoming space to shelter. As a [#WarmWelcome](#) venue, they are a safe place to relax and keep cosy, with free hot drinks available. Everyone is welcome. Find out more on www.surreycc.gov.uk/warmwelcome or pop into the Library, which also has a very popular selection of puzzles to keep you busy!



LIMPSFIELD CHART COFFEE MORNING

"Wednesday morning coffee very quickly became an event I did not want to miss - an important meeting place mid-week with a lovely atmosphere."

Chart Coffee Mornings

It's so rewarding to be able to make a positive difference to people's lives and that is part of what the Parish Council can do on a local level, for our immediate community. We are very proud to support the Chart Coffee Mornings at St Andrew's Hall and feedback like this makes it all worthwhile...

"When I made a late, post-retirement move to Limpsfield, the coffee mornings were proper companionship, a much-needed chance to get out and talk to people I am very at home with, who have taught me everything I needed to know about the area. The cake is like something out of Bake Off and I wouldn't miss Wednesday mornings for anything now."

Aside from the Chart Coffee Mornings, Limpsfield Parish Council currently supports Citizens Advice Bureau, Oxted First Responders maintenance of Limpsfield-based Defibrillators, the local Air Ambulance, Limpsfield in Bloom and the Chart Fair amongst other ad hoc local events and activities.

In Other News



Limpsfield in Bloom

It was never in doubt, but Limpsfield in Bloom did it again this year and won not just one, but three gold medals:

- Gold medal for the large village and category winner
- Gold medal for Best Biodiversity and Environmental Innovation
- Gold medal for Best community engagement award

Many thanks to everyone in the village area and beyond who helped make this year extra special, including the green-fingered Limpsfield in Bloom team, Limpsfield Fitness and Panda Nursery. Thanks to the Limpsfield Cookery School for once again hosting a wonderful judging day tea.

Hookwood Cherry Trees

On a very wet September day, three of our dedicated councillors (Briggs, Wilson and Osborn) recently planted two Japanese cherry trees towards the front of the Hookwood Bungalows on Hookwood Park (a designated Local Green Space).

These trees replace two diseased trees that had to be removed.

FYI The Mulberry Tree we planted in commemoration of HM The Queen Elizabeth II at The Pound on Wolf's Row is doing well.



Noticeboards and Minutes

All Limpfield Parish Council meeting agenda and minutes are published on the Limpfield Parish Council website - www.limpfield.org.

Minutes of monthly council meetings can now also be found in the blue folder in the Oxted Library Local History Room, which is where we also house our historic maps - available to view by request. Due to the notices being repeatedly removed from our board in the bus shelter at the bottom of Snatts Hill, we have installed a new secure noticeboard with agenda and information on the side of Oxted Library, on the approach to the Oxted Health Centre.

Other noticeboards can be found in Limpfield Village opposite St Peters Church, by Memorial Stores and on Tally Road, Limpfield Chart.

We would like to thank Barry Chandler for doing a brilliant job refurbishing our lovely timber Memorial Stores board.



Diary Dates

- Saturday 2nd December – Love Oxted Christmas Market and Small Business Saturday (inc. Limpfield Parish shops/Oxted Library etc) and Live Music with The Oxted Band / Festive Songs by Bee. Titsey Rotary Santa & Sleigh.
- Sunday 3rd December - Limpfield Christmas Market (at the Cookery School) & Wickhams Courtyard Christmas Shopping - 10am-3pm
- 10th December - St Peter's Nativity Scene Display and Christmas Tree Parade
- Thursday April 25th 2024 - Limpfield Annual Parish Meeting, St Peter's Church Hall

***Any enquiries, issues or suggestions to be sent to the Parish Clerk,
Email: clerk@limpfield.org. Address: Parish Office at The Pound, Wolf's Row,
Limpfield, Surrey. RH8 0EB Website: www.limpfield.org
[@limpfieldparishcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/limpfieldparishcouncil) (FB / Instagram)***