

MARRANEWS

No 1/12

**THE NEWSLETTER OF MUNDHAM AND RUNCTON
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

PUBLIC MEETING

**‘THE FIELDS AROUND US’
HOW AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE CREATE
THE LANDSCAPES AROUND OUR VILLAGES.
AN ILLUSTRATED TALK
By Mr. DAVE ABBOTT**

**WEDNESDAY 28th MARCH
NORTH MUNDHAM VILLAGE HALL
7.30 P.M.**

This illustrated presentation will be followed by the MARRA Annual General Meeting. This will include:-

- **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT INCLUDING UPDATES ON MATTERS RAISED AT LAST YEAR’S AGM**
- **A REPORT ON MARRA INITIATIVES OVER THE PAST YEAR**
- **THE ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 2012/13.
Nominations for the Committee should be sent to Roland Higgins (tel 779658) by 21st March.**
- **A REPORT ON OUR FINANCIAL SITUATION**
- **THE OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE/DISCUSS MATTERS OF LOCAL CONCERN.**

This edition of MarraNews is being circulated to all households in the villages with an invitation to attend the meeting on 28th March and to join MARRA if you are not already a member.

NOT A MARRA MEMBER? - SEE BACK PAGE TO JOIN

The Chairman writes...

MARRA Annual Meeting 28TH March Village Hall 7.30 p.m.

You are warmly invited to this meeting, the first half of which will be an illustrated lecture by Mr Dave Abbott who has extensive knowledge and experience of agriculture and horticulture in the Parish and surrounding area going back some thirty years or more. The Committee are now well aware of the interest of our residents in the local rural landscape and Dave Abbott's lecture will I am sure look at what has brought about the present development and what might happen next. Please come along, I am sure you will find it fascinating and you might well recognise some faces and places.

All residents of the Parish whether MARRA members or not are invited to attend this meeting. If you are not already a member, please join us as our strength is in numbers and the greater our numbers the more we can justifiably claim to represent the Community. A tear off slip to join MARRA is on the back page of this MARRANEWS.

The lecture will be followed by the Annual General Meeting.

Mark Neave, Chairman.

The L.D.F. Housing Consultation Exercise.

Since the last MARRANEWS, in which we endeavoured to demonstrate the faulty nature of the whole consultation process put forward by the Chichester District Council in September 2011, the Council produced in late December a NEWSUPDATE in respect of the L.D.F developments reporting on the result of the Consultation.

In this they state that finally they received just 620 responses, and this from a District population of some 150,000. They further state that the 'online consultation was very successful'. In truth the 620 responses represent less than half of one percent of the population of Chichester District. Under half of one percent makes the whole exercise a total and expensive farce and representative of almost nothing at all. To describe this as 'very successful' is laughable.

They added 'the Consultation questionnaire was simply designed.' I do know one or two people who successfully negotiated the online processes but the vast majority will know the near impossibility of doing so and then registering with a personal code number and then dealing with a complex questionnaire, - 'simply designed'? - I don't think so.

In its NEWSUPDATE the District Council makes great play on the input of local communities such as ours in planning issues because of the Localism Act (Nov 2011) and neighbourhood development plans. In small print, however, it states local views 'will need to be in line with national planning policy and the local authority's strategic vision for the wider area'. In other words do as we say.

In conclusion it appears much planning is based on a belief in a great and growing demand for housing in the area. As mentioned in a previous MARRANEWS the District Council appointed a major consultancy, DTZ, to carefully examine population prospects for the District. Bizarrely they concluded that because of the ageing population death rates exceed birth rates and therefore the current population is declining by some 200 persons per year freeing up some 100

houses per year, turning on its head the concept of a growing population and increasing housing demand.

The next step is for the Council to prepare a draft Core Strategy and it is clear that the timetable for this has slipped quite substantially. We understand that the aim now is for the draft to be ready for consultation in the autumn.

LDF - Runcton Horticultural Development Area (HDA)

As well as determining the planning framework for future housing developments, the Local Development Framework will set out the planning arrangements for the use of agricultural land.

As described in the last MARRANEWS it is the MARRA Committee's view that the opportunity provided by the preparation of the new LDF should be taken to reconsider the concept of the Horticultural Development Area. Following MARRA's approach, the Parish Council has set up a Working Party to consider the proposals put to it by MARRA and it may be helpful for a joint position to be agreed with Tangmere Parish Council ahead of the period for consultations on this part of the draft LDF. The MARRA Committee believes that, as a minimum, the new LDF needs a clearer definition of what horticultural development is acceptable in open countryside.

Pedestrian Crossing at the Whyke Roundabout on the A27

In MARRANEWS 2/11 there was a report of a meeting between members of your Committee and representatives of the Highways Agency in this area. The latter informed the Committee that a pedestrian bridge for the A27 at Whyke had been part of earlier plans

for the improvement of safety, and that the structure had been virtually completed. Unfortunately, with the change of Government, financial constraint has led to the on-site construction being deferred.

Your Committee wrote to the Highways Agency to urge a change of priorities, stressing the danger of attempting to cross the A27 at/near the Whyke roundabout. An unsatisfactory reply was received stating that the Agency could not go ahead with the crossing as their funding priorities had changed. In December, there were two fatal accidents to pedestrians crossing the main road near this roundabout. As a result, your Committee wrote again asking for a reconsideration of the Agency's decision. They replied that they were "keen to progress a new crossing, subject to funding". On 3 January a letter from MARRA was published in the Chichester Observer urging readers to write to the Highways Agency about need for a new crossing. Since then there has been another pedestrian fatality on the A27. A further letter has been sent to the Highways Agency informing them of this latest tragedy, but no reply has yet been forthcoming.

It's a crazy situation when a bridge is proposed to prevent deaths but when 3 deaths do occur the footbridge is no longer a priority.

MARRA has joined forces with the Whyke Residents' Association (WRA) and the Chichester Access Group (CAG) to press for the footbridge to be built. CAG, which campaigns for good Access For All, is concerned that the talk at present is solely about how people can safely reach St Joseph's hostel. Barbara Teasdale, the CAG Chairman, said *'I think that the Highways Agency is missing the point by solely focusing on the fact that the*

three deaths relate to people who were users of St Joseph's. There is a serious access issue for the communities on either side of the A27 as the heavy traffic flows on the dual carriageway make this a dangerous crossing in daytime let alone at night. So much so that I doubt if any parent with children or a disabled person would ever contemplate trying to cross the A27 at this point.'

The A27 has effectively cut off the lakes as a recreation area for those living north of the A27. For those living south of the A27 it makes cycling or walking to the Whyke area considerably more arduous as the Donnington Road footbridge, canal footpath underpass or the Bognor Road roundabout footbridge all involve circuitous routes. All three of these crossings are well used but none of them address the existing and latent demand of cyclists, pedestrians and disability scooter/wheelchair users for a safe crossing at the Whyke roundabout.

Runcton Green Waste Composting Site

In January the Parish Council arranged a visit to the Runcton composting site (on the Chichester Food Park and backing onto Marsh Lane). The Woodhorn Group now manage this site on contract to Langmead Farms as well managing the composting unit at Tangmere. They also own a farm in Oving.

The day was attended by a group of local residents including Andrew Smith, our county councillor, Denia Turnbull, chair of North Mundham Parish Council and Mark Neave, MARRA chairman. We were taken round the site and given an in-depth introduction to the science of large scale composting. The Woodhorn representatives were keen to tell us how they manage the composting

process to avoid emitting unpleasant smells whilst at the same time generating sufficient heat in the heaps of material (called windrows) to kill off bacteria and seeds. The whole process takes 12 weeks during which time the material has been turned many times as it moves from one end of the composting area to the other. The final step is to sieve the composted material to remove woody pieces that will need longer to break down – these are returned to the starting windrow – and non-compostable material such as bits of plastic.

The whole operation is strictly regulated by the Environment Agency which requires a record of all input loads to be kept and samples of the finished compost to be scientifically analysed. The product from the Runcton site is used by Langmead Farms. (To be suitable for use in gardens the composting process has to take at least 16 weeks.)

Diamond Jubilee celebrations

For the Jubilee celebrations, a working party from the Parish Council has begun to draw up a programme for the weekend of 2nd, 3rd and 4th June. On Saturday evening a ceilidh (country dancing) is booked for the village hall. The Kingfisher Band will provide the music and there will be a fish and chips supper. Sunday will be for street parties when it is hoped that even the far flung, more isolated homes will be included. The main feature for Monday will be a hog roast on the playing field and the lighting of a specially constructed beacon.

Final details of the arrangements for these events will appear nearer the time in the Parish Newsletter.

A form for parents of eligible children to register for a Village Commemorative Jubilee mug is enclosed with this newsletter.

Pagham Harbour Local Nature Reserve

A little later than originally intended but on 2nd February the RSPB took over the management of Pagham Harbour Local Nature Reserve from the County Council. Under the partnering agreement, the RSPB will use its experience and expertise to manage the Harbour, with the County Council continuing to provide financial support over at least the next 10 years.

The successful completion of the transfer means that, in addition to an annual payment to help support the reserve's management, the County Council will also be making a capital investment of £100,000 over the next four years which will be matched by the RSPB. The capital funds will be used to enable much needed improvements to be made to the buildings and infrastructure of the site.

As reported in the last MARRANEWS there will soon be another reserve on the western side of the Manhood peninsula created by the Environment Agency Medmerry Managed Retreat Scheme. Work is now proceeding on the construction of the new sea wall which will run in a 7 km loop from the western edge of the Bunn Caravan Park to near the holiday village in Bracklesham. The plan is to complete all the work during 2012 and breach the existing sea wall early in 2013. The new salt marsh that will be created will be about 2/3rds the size of Pagham Harbour.

The new reserve will be managed by the RSPB in conjunction with the Pagham Harbour Reserve.

Affordable housing

There is no further progress to report on this issue.

North Mundham Pavilion Extension and Renovation Project News

When fundraising, patience is always a virtue. You believe that you have a project which everyone will want, but will everyone want to support it? There have been various ups and downs since the fundraising for the redevelopment of the playing fields pavilion began in earnest. The North Mundham Playing Field Trustees have, however, been encouraged over the past 18 months by the great community support for this project.

John Rosewarne, the Chairman told MARRANEWS *"We are within sight of our target of £169,000 and the Trustees are having one last push to collect funds. At the moment we are going through the bureaucratic hoops that are required when planning a building. We can then talk to the builder. The start date for digging the foundations should be in the Spring with the building work continuing through the Summer. We are looking forward to having a smart new look pavilion and training room in time for the new season in September."*

MARRA Membership and Subscriptions

If you are not a MARRA member we urge you to join as our aim is to promote the interests of residents in the parish of North Mundham and the greater our membership the more we can claim to speak for the whole community. There is a tear-off slip at the bottom of this page to join MARRA.

Our policy is to keep costs to a minimum but there are expenses, principally the printing of the newsletter and arranging a speaker for the AGM. As a result, since the Association was formed in 2005 we have only had to ask for subscriptions of £5 per household twice.

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I wish to join the Mundham and Runcton Residents' Association and enclose £5.00 towards expenses (cheques should be made payable to MARRA).

Name_____

Address_____

Please send to Mr. Paul Jarvis, MARRA Treasurer, Bracken Lodge,
Brookside Close, Runcton, Chichester, PO20 1PY. Tel: 07732584509

