

# Bourne Parishes – WSCC Councillor report

## Chidham and Hambrook Parish – October 2022

Parish	Issue	Type	Priority	Requested	Actioned
Chidham & Hambrook	Chidham school Community Highways Scheme	Highways	1	Nov-21	In progress
Chidham & Hambrook	Speed reductions and traffic calming - WSCC TFG	Highways	2	Sep-22	In progress
Chidham & Hambrook	ChEmRoute improvements & speed reductions	Highways	2	Nov-21	In progress
Chidham & Hambrook	Introduce Gigabit Broadband	Technology	2	Nov-21	With Parish
Chidham & Hambrook	Launch the free travel Bourne Community Bus	Transport	3	Nov-21	Launched June
Chidham & Hambrook	Cycle path from Cala homes to Chidham school	Transport	3	Feb-21	Cancelled

### Lion park annual resident fees investigation

I called First Port in early September in order to voice frustration at the lack of response from the local contact Rebecca Brant over the last four months and the lack of a meeting with residents to discuss their concerns about the 40%+ annual charge increase for most residents over the last five years. In March 2022 First Port was bought by Emerica and they now handle 313,000 properties in 5,600 developments for 1,300 resident and management companies across the UK. I spoke to their call centre in South Africa who indicated the area manager was Nicola Green. When I was away I got a voicemail from A First Port Manager re email contact but they have not yet emailed. I will be following up further with First Port but engagement is likely to continue to be challenging I suspect.

### Chidham school

A meeting was held this week with the Parish, Head and CDC and WSCC Councillor to look again at the parking issues around the school and perceived speeding. We met with Peter Dessent and other residents to create an action plan.

WSCC action:

1. Carry on with the 2023/24 Community Highways Scheme (CHS) as reviewed with extended zig-zags and bollards on the West side of the school drop-off.
2. I will also ask if we can consider the bollard types that look like young children for use outside the school >>>
3. WSCC Speed Policy Jan 2023 post public consultation ratification 2022 will pave the way to having a 20mph zone 150-300 yards either side of the school gates as well as a 40mph zone south of the school on Cot Lane instead of the 60mph National Speed limit, as a result of a Parish TRO, likely early 2023.



Other actions:

4. The Parish will look at a survey of car users near the school to find out if there are any obvious solution
5. The results of the survey will be sent to parents in the Chidham school weekly newsletter via the Head
6. Peter and other residents are setting up a speedwatch group to review speeds along Chidham Lane
7. Adrian will look at whether there is a need for the enforcement team to come down with Pam Bushby re parking on current zig zags outside the school (there are no yellow lines currently)
8. School to republish in the newsletter the ability for parents to park further out (Bosham Inn 4 mins, Chidham Village Hall 3 mins and St Wilfrid's 6 mins) and to walk in – more sociable and environmentally friendly
9. It would also make sense to use social media via both the Parish and school to influence parents to reduce their car travel and to try to stop inconsiderate parking
10. Another option is to consider more car sharing amongst parents that know and live near each other

### WSCC Speed Policy

We're still waiting on the online link for the new WSCC Speed Policy public consultation which will now start early October. The consultation will last about 8 weeks and Parishes and residents are encouraged to contribute their views. This will likely mean that the public research will be reviewed in December and announced in January after approval by WSCC Cabinet. The new Speed Policy will have the following benefits (if the public agrees with it):

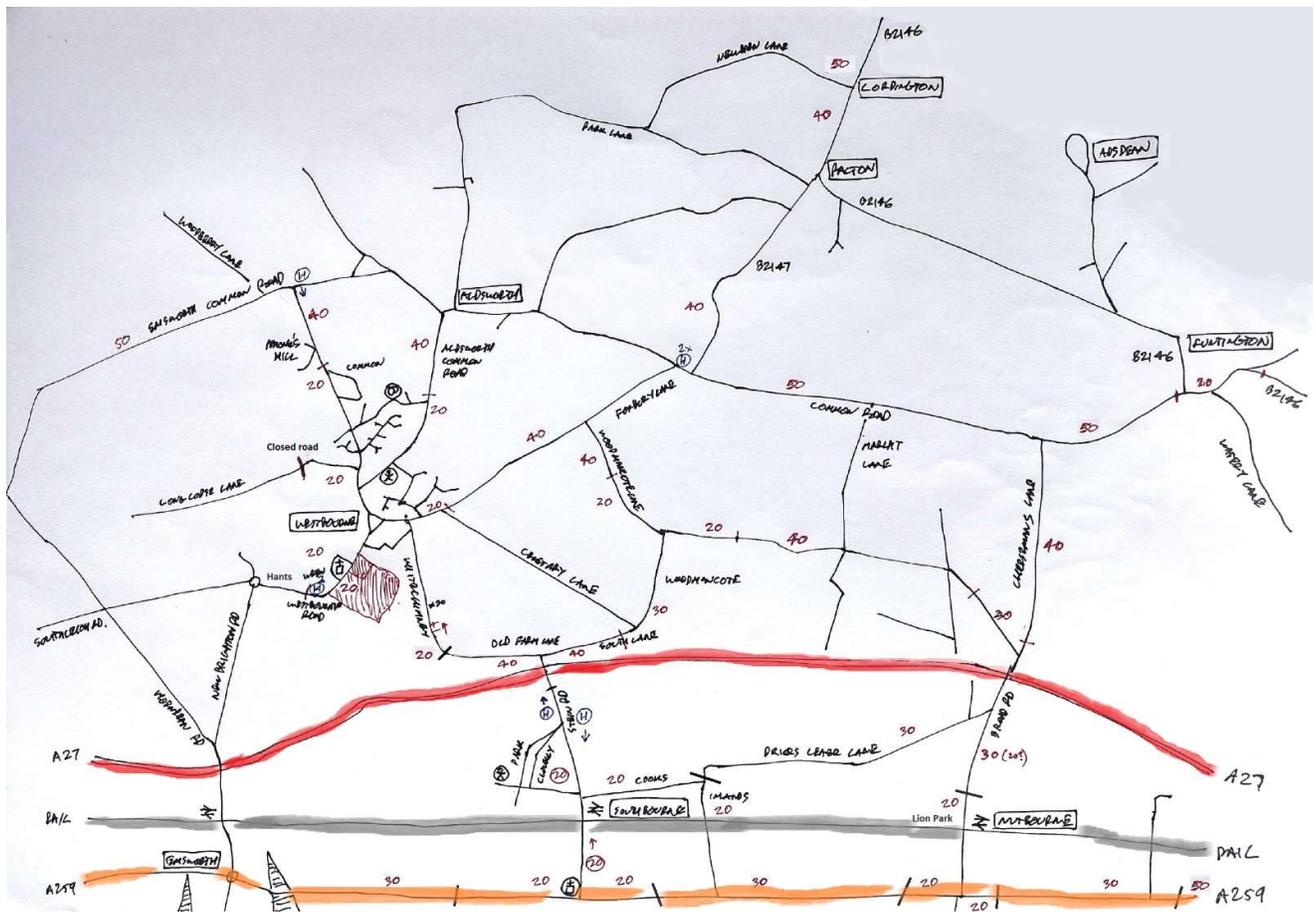
- National speed limit in West Sussex and SDNP will stay at 60mph but the option will be there for rural villages to request to reduce speed limits to 50mph, with new signs installed.
- Policies that better support 20mph zones for residential areas, Neighbourhood Planning and where there are cycle routes and horse riders etc along specific routes.
- 20mph zones outside every school for around 150-300m either side, depending on the road
- New Speed Policies will certainly help support Parishes in their desire to drop speed limits from 50mph to 40mph, 40 to 30 and 30 to 20mph as required. They should also help avoid having to have the current 'buffer' speed reductions over very short road sections e.g. 30 to 60mph at the top of Broad Road. Instead there could be a 40mph limit at the top of Broad Road up Cheesemans lane rather than the current national limit of 60 mph.

**What happens with speed limit changes required before January 2023?**

It is already clear that many Parishes need to coordinate with their neighbouring parishes so that any new speed limits proposed are consistent as road users move between parishes, often over a distance of a few hundred yards.

All Parish speed limits will need to be reviewed carefully and in coordination with Neighbourhood Plans, TROs, CHSs etc. Westbourne Parish has already started this speed limit planning process after a meeting in Sept. Amongst other plans Southbourne will change the top of Stein Road to 40mph and this could continue East and West at the junction to Westbourne and Woodmancote as the short section at the top of the road to the junction still has a 60 mph limit.

Other examples of how speed limits could change between neighbouring villages of Nutbourne, Hambrook, Southbourne and Westbourne are given overleaf. The speed policy, assuming agreed by the public from the consultation and ratified by WSCC Cabinet in Jan 2023, will also help with some of the many speeding issues on the Chidham peninsula and down to the school and Old House at Home at certain times.



I am happy to help facilitate this via the Bourne Roads Forum, which is the logical forum for changing speed limits.

## Small highways projects

TROs are still the best way to get something to happen fast for small Highways projects, like with speed or other signs, yellow lines, road junctions etc. If the budget is under £3k (£300 for unlit signs, £1k for lit ones) then it can take a month or two for a TRO, plus Parishes can contribute if it's over £3k to get it under £3k to implement a TRO quickly.

Again, if it's a speed only related TRO it's probably best to wait until Jan 2022 when the new WSCC Speed Policy is approved. I'd always advice Parishes to discuss their TRO idea with their County Councillor first as I can run the idea past WSCC Highways and get a view on likely success of the TRO. After that the following information will be needed:

1. Online TRO application (best if the Parish does this as they then control the whole process and get updates etc)
2. Resident research. Every TRO will likely require simple (a few up to 10 questions max) research to prove that local residents want what the Parish is proposing e.g. new double yellow lines or reduced speed limit). Key is the percentage supporting the TRO, so even if there are not many residents to survey on a rural road, if you can say over 80% support what you are proposing then that should suffice, but obviously high numbers of residents approving your TRO also helps.
3. A clear map of what you want to do. This doesn't have to be a detailed technical drawing but use of maps from Parish Online plus notes on location of signs and lines etc (WSCC uses What3Words for locations to within 3m).
4. Once the TRO has been reviewed the WSCC Councillor and Cabinet Member for Highways Joy Dennis are contacted for final approval. The new TRO process is faster than it was and, more importantly, the TROs that Parishes really want are more likely to be approved and implemented with the new TRO process introduced.

## Ideas to reduce speed through villages

Apart from reducing speed limits, good psychological ways are the use of positive reinforcement of a village area through white gates and 'welcome to the village' signs. These seem to work well to get people to reduce their speed as they come into a village. The other way that works is the use of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) that cost around £2k and, whilst in theory they should be moved around the Parish, in practice they are often placed in one site.

They work well in areas like Broad Road. Siting is key and the best use is maybe a few hundred yards after a sign that reduces speed e.g. from 40mph to 30mph, to remind vehicles they are in a lower speed zone. The best SIDs are the green smiley / red angry face ones that change to a happy face when a vehicle drops below the speed limit.

What also seems to work is road roundels with the speed marked on the road as a reminder to all passing vehicles

## Connected Kerb EV charging network

Phase one of the on-street electric vehicle (EV) charge point rollout in West Sussex were announced in June. A leaflet has been distributed to residents and businesses near the sites in 78 locations across the county, inviting feedback on the proposed locations and giving the opportunity to ask questions or share comments. To view the proposed locations, please go to [Connected Kerb's website](#).

This is the first phase in the largest-roll out of electric vehicle charge points by a UK council, with subsequent phases taking place to 2030, making it easy for electric vehicle (EV) users without driveways to charge their vehicles.

West Sussex County Council, Adur and Worthing Councils, Arun District Council, Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council and Mid Sussex District Council have signed a contract with Connected Kerb, one of the country's leading providers of EV charging solutions to install and maintain thousands of new charge points across the county.

The project is fully funded by Connected Kerb, meaning zero cost to local councils, and particularly beneficial to EV users without off-street parking. We will soon be engaging with residents who live near the proposed locations.

Residents can help us plan a network that works for them by sharing their views of where more charge points should be located across West Sussex. Whilst WSCC cannot guarantee that a charge point will be installed in the location suggested, it will help us see where there is demand and plan for future EV charging in the county.

To suggest a location, or to find out more about our plans, please visit the [Connected Kerb website](#)

Parishes can define their own EV charge point sites for negotiation with installer Connected Kerb.

- Rural site with car park with no power currently: 6 minimum EV charge points BUT with 3 installed first as dedicated bays (with fines if non EV vehicle park in them). 3 other EV charge bays for joint EV and other vehicle use installed within two years of the initial three EV charge points.
- Site with nearby power e.g. village hall, library, community hall etc. The minimum number of EV charge points is reviewed on a case by case basis but Connected Kerb will install single or double points as long as install charge total is less than £4k per EV charge point (they need to ensure commercial profitability over a 10-15 year period).
- Minimum power criteria on site: 7KW or 64A supply from a nearby power source
- Contact Charlie Allen at WSCC Place Services. Email [Charlie.allen@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Charlie.allen@westsussex.gov.uk)

Sites suggested in Chidham and Hambrook for one or two EV charge points as a trial are as follows:

- St Wilfrid's Church Hall car park
- St Wilfrid's Hospice shop
- Chidham and Hambrook Village Hall
- The Bosham Inn (one already in place)

### **Some frequently asked questions about EV charge points**

Will there be enough charge points for everyone?

There are plans to roll out a charging network in sufficient numbers which will help you make the switch to electric vehicles with confidence. The aim is to have a chargepoint within a few minutes of residents that do not have access to off-street parking.

Who is funding installation and maintenance of the charge points?

The contract with Connected Kerb is a 100 per cent concession contract, meaning that West Sussex County Council and other partners are not required to contribute any funding towards this project.

What energy will be used to power the charge points?

Renewable energy sources primarily from wind, solar and hydro (water) sources will power 100 per cent green electricity supplied by Octopus Energy.

How do I find a charge point once they are installed?

You can download the Connected Kerb app via the Appstore or Google Play to locate charge points near you. You can also find them on Zap-Map ([zap-map.com](http://zap-map.com)) by using the network filter.

What parking restrictions will apply to the EV bays?

Only electric vehicles that are charging can use the dedicated EV charging bays. Within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), CPZ restrictions will also apply during the hours of the CPZ operation, i.e., a permit will need to be displayed in the bays, during the CPZ operation hours. It's important to note that even if you have an electric car and a valid parking ticket, you could still get fined for parking in an EV charging bay. You must be actively charging while parked up, and must also exit the bay once the battery is full to avoid a potential Penalty Charge Notice.

Electric vehicle charging bays are essentially owned by whoever is responsible for running them and so should be subject to the usual private parking fine rules. Fines would be applied by the owner of the space, the firm that runs it, but there has to be clear signage explaining the penalties for parking in an EV bay. Failure to do this, or unclearly worded or hidden signs with warnings, could mean drivers would be able to appeal.

As regards EV points on Parish owned spaces then it is up to the Parish to determine any fines to be incurred.

Can I install my own charge point?

Yes, but residents installing charge points within 2m of public highways may need CDC planning permission.

## Bourne Community Bus

We have 14 MIDAS trained volunteer drivers with three trained on Wed 7th Sept, plus three drivers available to support the hire of the second bus that is jointly run by the SCLT and community Transport Sussex. So far we have also received community bookings for both buses totalling £550, and that all goes towards bus operational costs.

During August and September, following delivery of 10,000 leaflets across all villages served by the bus, plus social media campaigns, passenger numbers rose well. In the last few weeks we have seen passenger numbers rise to the point where drivers have reported that the bus has been full on occasion, usually going to Emsworth and Havant, but also the number of people travelling to Chichester is picking up too.

This increase is likely down to a combination of the print of timetable leaflets and local parish distribution, plus the current household cost crisis (a family can travel on the Bourne bus free whilst a day ticket on the 700 bus is nearly £20). There is also no doubt that word of mouth is also helping, with many passengers travelling for the first time in August and, at the other extreme, one Westbourne resident using it almost every day!



We now have 16 volunteer drivers in total for the bus service, with two exclusively doing runs for groups, weddings and birthday parties in the main, using our second minibus that is available for hire from £30 per day.

**We still need more drivers, especially as some drivers can be away and we want to limit each driver's roster to three half days per month. We also need more drivers as we are considering running the bus on an extra Monday or Wednesday during the week, as well as taking on school runs for WSCC and other contracts to help funds.**

Our second bus, a 15 seat Mercedes Sprinter also with a disabled lift, arrived at Thorney Island mid-August and is available for local resident or group hire at a low cost, from £30 per half day self-drive to £150 per full day with a driver. For bus hire rates and details see [www.bournebus.co.uk/hire-the-bus/](http://www.bournebus.co.uk/hire-the-bus/)



Most Parishes have sent their annual £2,000 contribution but, if you are yet to do so, contact chair David Bangert at Southbourne Community Land trust via email at [davidbangert1963@icloud.com](mailto:davidbangert1963@icloud.com) to arrange payment.

I will be Project Managing the bus to the end of Dec, to support the bus service launch and ongoing operation and also to ensure that we utilise the second bus for hire effectively, plus gain new grants and funds, PR and marketing. The bus will be featured in the Ems VAleey Gazette and the Village Magazine this month, among other publications.

- The bus website gives all the details of Bourne Bus services, timetables and news and also a bus hire form.
- See [www.bournebus.co.uk](http://www.bournebus.co.uk) for more details. For bus related queries contact [andrew4bourne@gmail.com](mailto:andrew4bourne@gmail.com)

There are QR codes to scan to donate £1, £2 or £5 and we will also install a Sumup payment system on the bus so that, whilst all travel is free for residents, anyone can donate to bus running costs instantly via card tap and pay.

**Whilst there are a few more bus users the biggest concern is still the lack of passengers in the afternoons. For this reason we are likely to finish the daily service at 16:00 after the Bourne Community school drop-offs at Thorney, instead of finishing at 18:00, and possibly introducing a Monday or Wednesday morning service in addition.**

**If we do this it will mean having to replan all of the routes and stops, as well as removing some of the lesser used stops in each Parish and replacing them with other trial stops that are likely more popular i.e. not near the 700 bus route. As this is a major change it will involve a detailed planning meeting with all Parish representatives in early October, plus a reissue of new timetables to residents of around 2,000 per Parish for local door-drop distribution.**

## Amendments to the Environment Bill

Several changes were made last month that will help Chichester Harbour and coastal Parishes. However these changes will rely on Government enacting these requirements and also improving funding for the Environment Agency to track any transgressions, as they have suffered an 80% funding cut in the last decade.

1. A New duty on water companies and the Environment Agency to publish data on storm overflow operation on an annual basis. *Note currently only the hours of discharge, which has gone up ten times in four years.*
2. A new duty on water companies to publish near real time information - within one hour - on the operation of storm overflows. *Note: Southern Water already operates its Beachbuoy alert system*
3. A new duty directly on water companies to monitor the water quality upstream and downstream of storm overflows and sewage disposal works. *Note so far only discharge duration is monitored, not discharge volume (related to the diameter of the outflow pipe which varies) or content (at least 3% to 5% no water).*

## Planning applications – WSCC Highways improved input

I spoke to Steven Shaw at WSCC about some of the issues Parishes had been having (particularly Chidham and Hambrook and Southbourne) regarding getting WSCC Highways staff to actually visit some of the larger planning application sites, rather than just responding to CDC Planning Officers based on book research and using Google maps. This practice started during COVID but has impacted several sites (Pallant Homes for example). Highways are limited based on the NPPF in what they can review, such as access entry splays, turning points, movement through junctions, access etc. Steve told me that one of the challenges is that the 2007 Manual for Streets that they use to review the local road network no longer has criteria for road widths or footpath width. This is a key concern for Parishes where road widths planned for any new housing are less than the 5.5m advised by the DoT and should include a footpath of at least 1.0m and ideally 1.5m for wheelchair users. We know that many of our roads are 4.0m wide or less, leaving no room for a footpath of any type if refuse vehicles are to have access.

**Whilst none of the previous WSCC Highways responses can be reviewed again, Steven and his team are very willing to talk to Parishes about current non-determined or any future major developments that are of particular concern, as soon as they appear on the CDC planning portal. I suggest Parishes talk to Steven and his team and they will converse with the relevant CDC Planning Officer to ensure a robust planning response.**

Of concern currently are Willowbrook that affects both Chidham and Hambrook and Southbourne, and the Metis Homes application in Southbourne, so I would urge Parishes to contact Steven directly on these.

Contact: Steven Shaw, WSCC County Highways Manager

Email: [steven.shaw@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:steven.shaw@westsussex.gov.uk)

Phone: 0330 222 4674

## Meals on Wheels

Elderly and vulnerable people across the county will continue to receive more than just a meal after West Sussex County Council agreed an innovative new partnership that is set to commence in October this year.

Meals on wheels customers will still get to enjoy award-winning food made and supplied by apetito, which will now be delivered by Health and Independent Living Support (HILS) West Sussex, for at least the next five years.

HILS drivers and customer support teams will continue to offer important welfare checks while delivering meals, to ensure customers are well, healthy and safe. They also provide company to those who might not otherwise have any visitors and become isolated.

For more information about the meals on wheels service, or to sign up to receive meals in West Sussex contact please call 01225 759691.

All residents can use the Bourne Bus to get to a warm place to stay for the day and there are also plans to create safe warm community spaces all around the Parishes, such as churches and halls, if things get really tough during Winter.

## Great Sussex Way website – Parish village inclusion

I've spoken to Danielle Dunfield CEO at The Great Sussex Way (GSW) website this week about the Bourne Trail QR code project being led by Emsworth (see next page). Danielle admitted that there is currently little content on their website promoting any villages or towns west of Chichester ([only Bosham features currently here](#)) so the GSW team is happy to create new Parish village pages on their website to promote all local Bourne villages for tourists.

We can also have a link to the new Bourne Trail website at the bottom once it's launched (trial site at [www.bournetrail.wordpress.com](http://www.bournetrail.wordpress.com) ).

The GSW team is doing a website platform and page content revamp in Oct / Nov so it's perfect timing to add these Parish village pages in, plus to add a trial Bourne Trail website link.

### Example GSW page content - Selsey



**The historic fishing town of Selsey lies eight miles south of Chichester on the southern tip of the Manhood Peninsula.**

Famed for its Selsey Crab, lauded across the globe as one of the very best, the town has a proud fishing heritage, and there is still a strong cultural connection to the sea, with a fishing fleet moored offshore, still bringing in the catch.

Selsey's miles of natural beaches play host to a huge variety of wildlife both on and off the shore, and the RSPB reserves of Pagham Harbour and RSPB Medmerry are home to countless species of birds and wildfowl. In warmer months, visitors may even glimpse the seals from which Selsey's name originates.

With more sunlight hours than anywhere in the UK, and bathing water rated as excellent, Selsey is a great spot for a day in the sunshine. Explore the rugged landscape on foot or on bicycle. Enjoy a fabulous Selsey sunset and admire the impressive dark skies made famous by the late Sir Patrick Moore who lived in the town. Other notable Selsey residents and events can be sought out on one of the town's Blue Plaque Heritage walks.

Many of the town's fishing fleet crew the Selsey Lifeboats, which have been a feature of the town since 1861. The lifeboat station can be found on the shore at Kingsway and is open for visitors. Discover more about this hidden gem at the [Destination Selsey](#) website. Discover more about local history and heritage at the Bourne Trail website.



I suggest Parishes create page content for the following locations (Southbourne in bold)

1. **Southbourne**
2. **Prinsted**
3. **Hermitage**
4. **Thorney Island**
5. Westbourne (with Woodmancote)
6. Chidham
7. Hambrook
8. Nutbourne
9. Emsworth
10. Fishbourne
11. Dell quay

Tracie is your Great Sussex Way project contact for Southbourne and will collate the Parish content during October for forwarding to the GSW team. All Parishes should provide the following for village GSW pages:

- 250 – 300 words on each individual Parish / village
- Three images min 1200 x 800 pixels resolution in JPEG or PNG format
- Three businesses / shops to promote
- Three food and drink sites to promote
- Two events to promote e.g. Wemsfest / film club etc
- Three accommodation sites (optional)

## Bourne Trail history and heritage mobile scanning website

Mark Ringwood is leading the team looking at a new Bourne heritage trail project. The aim is to have QR codes and NFC tags that can be scanned by mobile phones leading to a new website. Small weatherproof signs and posters will highlight history and heritage around the Bourne villages, with links to local buildings, tourist sites, museums, industrial heritage and wildlife sites etc. The signs could be screwed onto standard oak posts (as in the SDNP) or installed on new pavement posts (like the [WSCC Glasdon ones here](#))

Example sign design around 26cm x 8cm



**Tamper proof screw points**

**Trail branding**

**Web address**

**High resolution picture + UV inks**

**Trail location**

**QR code and NFC Tag on back**

**Location description**

**Bit.ly link for those that cannot scan**

**Website visit encouragement**

**Bourne area contributors**



Mark is talking to the content contributors for an Emsworth trial website for an effective demo with photo and text content for 6 South Street Emsworth. The trial web pages and 6 QR codes will be the first local trial in Emsworth with a local school acting as a trial route to see if it works. Emsworth also has a contact to create artistic trail maps too.

- Current trial build website: [www.bournetrail.wordpress.com](http://www.bournetrail.wordpress.com)
- Web address already purchased for final site: [www.bournetrail.co.uk](http://www.bournetrail.co.uk)

After the trial website is complete in October we will seek funding (main cost is the website content and image editing etc), but I suspect that just £5k will fund development of the initial website build and around 28 pages (4 per village average) and then £10k more for around 100 pages (12 pages per village). Further funding will be required for the interpretation / posts / signs etc, which will likely be around £20-£25k. Total project cost estimated £40,000 funded by County, Council, parish and local business contributors.

We will also create some interesting 15s – 90s videos and create a Bourne Trail YouTube channel.

I'll keep Parishes informed Parishes of project progress via monthly County Councillor reports and meetings, but we now have Chidham and Hambrook on board as of their last Parish meeting in September

I've asked Adrian and Penny to get Bosham and Fishbourne involved as required, and possibly Dell Quay too.

Suggested Bourne Trail villages:

1. Emsworth
2. Southbourne
3. Prinsted
4. Westbourne (with Woodmancote)
5. Chidham
6. Hambrook
7. Nutbourne
8. Fishbourne (TBC)
9. Bosham (TBC)
10. Thorney Island (TBC)

The content required will be similar to that required for the Great Sussex Way, but will focus on local wildlife, trails, historical buildings and heritage assets and tourist attractions.

## Tackling lack of Council tax on second homes

Questions raised at CDC by Andrew Kerry-Bedell and answer from Cllr Peter Wilding:

Firstly, you say that "Chichester Council does not levy a Council Tax premium on second homes". Currently in England the maximum that can be charged for a second home is 100% (Note: Wales already levies a 100% charge and it appears to be working to increase Council revenue for local services). Legislation does not currently allow a premium to be charged on second homes, however, the Levelling up and Regeneration Bill currently going through the parliamentary process does include proposals to allow a 100% premium on Second Homes, effectively making the charge payable twice the normal Council Tax rate. The Council will make a decision on this proposal once the final regulations have been set by Government.

In answer to your further questions

- 405 empty properties (0.7%) 2,660 second homes (4.4%) in Chichester district from 59,736 properties
- Bosham Parish has 8 empty properties (0.5%) and 155 second homes (10%) out of a total 1,553 properties
- In Chidham & Hambrook 8 empty properties (0.8%) and 18 second homes (1.8%) from total 1,023 properties
- In Southbourne 17 empty properties (0.5%) and 75 second homes (2.4%) out of a total 3,153 properties

You have asked how many properties had the empty homes Council Tax Premium in each bracket levied in 2021/22, and how that changed from 20/21.

In 21/22 we had:

- 373 properties which were empty for less than two years
- 46 properties that were empty between 2 and 5 years
- 16 properties that were empty between 5 and 10 years
- 15 properties empty over 10 years.
- Total 450 properties.

~In 20/21 we had:

- 431 properties which were empty for less than two years
- 54 properties that were empty between 2 and 5 years
- 31 properties that were empty between 5 and 10 years
- 0 properties empty over 10 years
- Total of 516 properties (-66 homes)

Overall the number of empty properties fell from 516 to 450 over 20/21 to 21/22 and I can confirm the number has reduced further in 22/23 to 405.

Regarding your question about whether the Council will implement a premium for homes left empty for more than one year from 2022/23 I can confirm that the regulations to allow this in the Levelling up & Regeneration bill are not currently finalised or passed through Parliament. Also the premiums have already been set at maximum allowable levels for 22/23. A decision about future financial years will be made in the Autumn as part of the Council's usual taxbase setting process.

You then raise the issue of second home owners seeking to have their properties reclassified as a business rather than a domestic dwelling to avoid paying Council Tax then claiming small business rate relief.

There are currently 310 properties across Chichester district that are classified as holiday units, up from 186 in 2017.

The government is aware of this issue and from April 2023, second homeowners will have to prove holiday lets are actually being rented out for a min 70 days a year to access small business rates relief, not just available for rent. Holiday let owners will have to provide evidence e.g. website or brochure to advertise the property, letting details and receipts. Properties will also have to be available to be rented out for 140 days a year to qualify for this relief.

Finally you ask whether the Council will implement a 100% Council Tax premium charge for second home owners from 2022/23. **A decision on future years Council Tax premiums will be made in the Autumn.**

## Storm sewage overflows latest

An article will be featured in the Chichester Observer in the next week regarding SSOs, and I have passed the contact details of Southern Water's engagement manager to Observer journalists for their comment. To be honest SW seems to be trying to tackle all of the issues we have raised, but with lack of Government legislation and Environment Agency follow-up the prospect of getting both Storm Sewage Overflows and capacity increases sorted looks tough.

With the lack of any enacted or new policies on sewage and storm sewage overflows, lack of clarity on what is actually going to happen to fix this, and rapidly lengthening deadlines for any action to be taken (moved out again now to 2035 on SSOs), the Government machine has gone into a new spin cycle as can be seen from their recent press release here last Friday – [click here](#)

- “We are the first government to require water companies to take action to address these discharges” (so no Conservative MP voted against the Duke of Wellington's amendment then?)
- “By 2035, water companies will have to improve all storm overflows discharging into or near every designated bathing water; and improve 75% of overflows discharging to high priority nature sites.” (improve is a woolly term that means little in practical terms to a water treatment works)
- “These plans strike the right balance between the need for investment and the impact on consumers. Under this plan there will be no changes to bills until 2025.” (s

The press release also said “The Government has ruled out options which could add up to £817 a year to average household water bills.” This is a made up figure designed to scare-monger voters, the likely cost is £65 a year but only if ALL of the cost of the improvements was paid for by consumers rather than water companies.

The Channel 4 Dispatches program on Monday – <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/britains-water-scandal-dispatches/on-demand/73511-001> indicated that the cost per year for doing the work required is £65 per household, assuming residents are paying for all of the upgrade costs, rather than water companies paying for it from their profits or reducing shareholder dividends and executive pay. The Channel 4 dispatches program also showed:

- The plight in Emsworth and the state of our local harbour from both sewage spills and SSOs
- Every sewage pipe is supposed to have an EA licence but C4 found that 870 pipes do not have EA permits
- 1500 sewage pipes discharge straight into the sea and our coastal bathing waters
- The EA says 70% of our beaches have excellent water quality yet C4 sampling showed otherwise
- There was an accusation that EA picks and chooses when it samples, and 'bad day' samples get discarded
- The EA lacks the staff and will and political clout to enforce sufficiently against water companies
- [The Government press release five days ago](#) scaremongering the public into thinking if we fix SSOs then it will cost them £817 each. (C4 indicates it's actually £65 per year, and that despite investment of £5.5bn in the sewage system from the 12 water companies, they gave their shareholders £1.7bn in dividends that could have gone to fixing capacity and storm sewage overflows)

### **If we can't get Southern Water to improve sewage capacity before 2025, then the CDC Local Plan is at risk.**

The biggest issue is that, by ruling out any bill changes until 2025, little or no work to improve capacity or resolve storm sewage overflows can be done in the interim. Sewage works like Bosham and Sidlesham were over their EA legal permitted capacity in 2021, and the situation is getting worse.

If new house building plans continue (CDC and HBC still has Government imposed targets of 12,600 houses) then not just Bosham and Sidlesham but Thornham, Tangmere, Pagham and Loxwood will likely be over their Q80 DWF capacity by 2025, as outlined in the CDC Position Statement capacity calculations:

- **70,700 total houses sewage capacity in CDC area (excluding SDNP areas)**
- **12,600 new houses currently in CDC and HBC Local Plans**
- 11,600 new houses capacity based on Q80 DWF (as in CDC Position Statements) = **1,000 houses short and capacity in the wrong places**
- 18,300 new houses capacity based on Q90 DWF (EA legal limit) **less 12,600 = 8% sewage capacity remaining**
- 14,500 new houses capacity (Q90 DWF) if 2021 CDC increase trend continues (+21% YOY) less 12,600 = **2.5% sewage capacity remaining**

## **Beachbuoy water quality monitoring**

Southern water has changed its Beachbuoy pollution alert map for the public to stop issuing automatic red alerts after a discharge. I'm on the Beachbuoy advisory group and this was changed as they were getting a lot of false alerts. The aim is to make the alert system better for people who want to make instant decisions regarding going in the water, so the change does make sense. SW dynamic impact mapping (which is what it's called) means an SW alert does not now trigger a red alert on Beachbuoy if the outfall is out to sea, of short duration and the tidal conditions are not likely to affect coastal bathing waters .

The release will still appear on all SW Beachbuoy stats though, and none of the changes should affect the monitoring around Chichester Harbour, just Langstone.

To register for Beachbuoy real-time harbour water quality monitoring alerts and see service changes planned:

- <https://www.southernwater.co.uk/water-for-life/our-bathing-waters/beachbuoy>

## **Meeting with Southern Water October 10<sup>th</sup>**

Despite emails being sent to the Environment Agency to get them to engage on the know capacity issues at Thornham and Bosham, as well as the lack of legislation on storm sewage overflows, they have refused to meet.

Fortunately Southern Water continues to respond and engage positively with local County and District Councillors, which is welcome news, especially in aiming to come up with genuine solutions. Whether Southern Water gets the go-ahead for funding in works improvements from Ofwat is another matter however, as improvements are generally linked to increase in consumer water bills.

The meeting will involve Toby Willison (SW Engagement Manager), Nick Mills and Paul Rooney (technical managers), to discuss practical capacity solutions at Thornham and Bosham and storm sewage overflows. From our side there will be myself, Adrian Moss, Penny Plant and Jonathan Brown.

These discussions will form part of the SW DWMP and Brava analysis they are currently undertaking for all of their 380 works, that then goes to Ofwat at the end of 2024 for approval April 2025 onwards.