

Old Milverton and Blackdown Joint Annual Parish Meeting 27th April 2015

Councillors: Jonathan Lander, Ann Kelsey, Cliff Davies, Lynda Keeling, Jamie Emmerson

Clerk: Graham Cooper

Old Milverton and Blackdown are amongst the smallest parishes in Warwick District with only some 50 and 40 dwellings respectively.

THE PARISH COUNCIL HAS BEEN WORKING HARD

Protecting the parishes from large scale development
Protecting the Green Belt
Establishing speed limits in Old Milverton and Blackdown
Planning to operate speed cameras to help enforce speed limits in the Villages
Replacing the notice boards in both Parishes
Replacing some planters in Old Milverton
Developing a website

BUT

THREATS REMAIN

The Local Plan requires more homes
The Green Belt review might allow large scale development in Old Milverton and Blackdown
The Park & Ride Scheme must be challenged
The Parishes could be considered too small to be viable and merged with other councils
The final decision on the Gateway Development may result in major development in the parishes

THE BIGGEST ISSUE FACED BY THE JOINT PARISHES WAS THE DEFENCE OF THE NORTH LEAMINGTON GREEN BELT

The Draft Local Plan threatened Old Milverton and Blackdown with:

3000 houses	Retail Park
Industrial Development	Park & Ride scheme
Northern Relief Road	Schools

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

With your help the Joint Parish Council also prepared a draft Neighbourhood Plan, as evidence to the Planning Inspector of the Parishes objections to the Local Plan and the residents considered views on development in the area. This involved:

- Obtaining residents and businesses views on development needs
- Evaluating these views and drafting a neighbourhood plan
- Publishing the draft Neighbourhood plan for consultation and holding a well attended exhibition in the Parish Room

The Neighbourhood Plan cannot be finalised until WDC has completed the Local Plan

IN RESPONSE with your help the Joint Parish Council:

- Obtained professional help to object to the proposals
- Produced newsletters, displayed posters, banners and distributed over 2000 leaflets objecting to the proposals
- Generated an army of over 1000 supporters and letters objecting to the proposals
- Met the Chief Executive, the Leader of WDC, attended WDC's Overview & Scrutiny Committee and lobbied all District Councillors to explain why the proposals were "unsound" and did not comply with the National Planning Policy Framework
- Challenged Warwick District Council to find the Exceptional Circumstances to build in the Green Belt
- Obtained support from the Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England
- Held the largest Parish Council meeting ever seen in Warwickshire. Over 150 people attended requiring us to move from the village hall to the church.

We produced evidence based arguments and were not NIMBYs

THE OUTCOME IS A DRAFT LOCAL PLAN WHICH REMOVES ALL DEVELOPMENT (except the park and ride scheme) FROM BLACKDOWN AND CLASSIFIES OLD MILVERTON AS A LIMITED INFILL VILLAGE BUT

There is a significant risk that this current version of the local plan will be rejected, because the planning inspector's initial comments state that he believes there are insufficient houses included in the Local Plan and Warwick District Council has not complied with its duty-to-cooperate with neighbouring councils

NORTH LEAMINGTON GREEN BELT REVIEW

WDC is reviewing the North Leamington Green Belt to see if it is needed. (Recommendations available end May)

The Planning Inspectors examination of the Local Plan also starts in May 2015. If, as seems likely the Planning Inspector decides that the Local Plan need more houses:

THERE IS A REAL RISK AND THREAT TO OLD MILVERTON AND BLACKDOWN THAT WDC REMOVES THE PARISHES FROM THE GREEN BELT AND PERMITS LARGE DEVELOPMENT HERE.

PARK & RIDE SCHEME IN BLACKDOWN

The site for the Park and Ride scheme has yet to be found. It is proposed that parking should be provided for 200 cars

In theory, an attractive idea to reduce traffic in Leamington. However we must continue to challenge this proposal because:

- It will not be a dedicated scheme but effectively a car park where scheduled buses can stop to pick up passengers
- It is supported by the local bus company because its customers are largely students and to make the service more profitable it wants buses coming back from the University to be filled with commuters rather than to be empty
- WDC recognises that there is already sufficient parking in Leamington and that to make the scheme work, it will be necessary to raise car parking charges
- It is likely that the scheme will fail and that the site will then be available for alternative development.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Joint Parishes receive a disproportionately large number of planning applications. Some 100 in the last 4 years

The ultimate decision is with WDC but we make recommendations to try to ensure compliance with the rules for development in the Green Belt (National Planning Policy Framework)

We support home improvements that are not disproportionately large, don't affect neighbours and are in keeping with the rural location

We are concerned by continual creeping development, particularly on the north side of Old Milverton Lane, which is being carried out without the provision of new sewers so effluent is directly and indirectly released in to the River Avon

We consider road safety

Major new developments include:
Priors House: the Hockey Pavilion: The Ramada Hotel: storage at Quarry Farm: North Leamington School: Disc Golf Club House

THE PARISH ROOM

The Parish Room is in need of repair. We are working to find funding of £4000 to improve ventilation and reduce condensation

PLANTERS AND NOTICE BOARDS

The rotten planters in Old Milverton have been replaced and new plants introduced. Both Parish notice boards are dilapidated and are to be replaced by free-standing metal notice boards for which we have obtained grant funding. Net cost £450 each

A TEAM EFFORT Thanks to all parishioners, Parish Councillors past and present, involved in opposing the Local Plan, developing the Neighbourhood Plan, and presenting the Exhibition, including, District Councillors John Hammon, Norman Pratt & Bill Gifford, the CPRE and the North Leamington Green Belt group. Thanks also to all those who regularly help maintain the Villages by cutting the verges, attending planters, litter picking and maintaining the Church yard. Others we thank for servicing the Villages include the Church wardens, the Village Hall Committee, Ann Kelsey for being our Rural East Forum and Neighbourhood Watch representative, Nicola Wall and Ann Kelsey for organising the Village Tidy Day and Graham Cooper for his advice and support.

PARISH BOUNDARY AND WARD CHANGES

The area around Range Meadow Close has been removed from Old Milverton Parish with the loss of 62 dwellings, over half the Parish

Old Milverton and Blackdown Parishes may be considered too small to be viable and merged with other Councils

Already District Ward boundaries have been changed to move Old Milverton and Blackdown into the more urban wards of Milverton and Manor respectively

We opposed attended various meetings but were overruled

GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT

The Secretary of State has ruled that the Gateway Development at Baginton Airport should be considered as part of the Local Plan and the Green Belt review

The outcome will have significant implications for the parishes. If passed, more housing may be required for workers. If declined, more industrial land will be needed in Leamington and housing development could be moved to our parishes. **Strong informed opposition will be required.**

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

We will need professional help to challenge many of the threats facing the Parishes and have accumulated a fighting fund of £17,500 for each Parish

SPEED LIMITS

After a lot of campaigning we have achieved speed limits of 40mph in Blackdown, 30mph in Old Milverton Village, 40mph on Old Milverton Road and 50mph on Old Milverton Lane

Traffic continues to speed and we have initiated a speed gun exercise to warn offenders.

HIGH SPEED BROAD BAND

Old Milverton is not included in planned Broad Band upgrades.
Slow speed are bad for businesses, inconvenient and may affect property prices
We are actively campaigning for Old Milverton to be included in WDC's High Speed Broad Band programme

WEBSITE

We have launched a website
www.omandbparishcouncil.org.uk to make information more readily available and keep everyone updated