

# MILTON MATTERS

Issue No. 63      **Milton Neighbourhood Forum**      FEB 2018  
*New KEEP MILTON GREEN poster in centre pages*



*photo Phix-pix Photo & Graphic Solutions*

## ***Milton Market 2017 Christmas Lights***

**Wednesday 21 Feb 7.00 pm**

**Mary Rose School, Gisors Road, off Locksway Road**

### **NEXT FORUM AGENDA**

**Planning Application for Phase 1 Development at St James' Hospital**

**Dr Russell Hayes, New Cycle Routes on Milton Common**

**Update on Neighbourhood Plan**

**Feedback on Options Document on City Plan**

## **OPEN FORUM MINUTES**

### **14 Oct 2017**

The Chair reported that following residents' concerns at local air pollution levels the Forum has liaised with Friends of the Earth and the Head Teacher at Milton Park Primary School and installed monitoring equipment at the School for 2 weeks last July. Test results indicated very high levels of Nitrogen Dioxide emissions at 39.7 only marginally below EU/Government maximum permitted levels of 40. The School Governors have been advised of these results.

#### **ST JAMES HOSPITAL SITE PHASE 1**

**Bruce Voss** from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) in Bristol confirmed that comments from residents who attended the consultation meeting held at Milton Park Primary School, Dunbar Road, have been taken into account and will be incorporated into a forthcoming outline planning application to the City Council sometime during October 2017\*. Residents who attended that meeting had specifically raised issues about traffic density and infrastructure inadequacy. The application will include proposals to construct 107 homes on 3 hectares of land on the St. James' Hospital campus, with work commencing during 2019. An element of these homes will be affordable/social housing units. He said that work to remove Japanese Knotweed will begin in early 2018.

\* The planning application has been delayed until late January so we have made this the topic for 21 Feb Open Forum.

## **PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL'S LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION**

**Martin Silman**, Forum committee member and member of the Private Landlord's Association issued a handout setting out a summary of the **Issues and Options** contained in the City Council's consultation document. The City Council is asking for residents to comment upon its Local Plan document which is online, with hard copies available to scrutinize in libraries and community centres. It is lengthy and Martin's handout summarises questions raised in the Plan. Residents can submit comments in writing or via the online questionnaire

**Rod Bailey**, Chair of the Neighbourhood Planning Forum spoke about the its work and highlighted that the Neighbourhood Plan must follow the theme of the City Council's Local Plan. He said that Neighbourhood Plan covers the period to 2034 and the Milton Forum's ideal is for the St. James' Hospital site to cater for a mixed-use, with inclusion of homes, a school, shops, a GP practice and an element of residential care, with some "half-way house" facilities to relieve "bed-blocking" issues at Queen Alexandra Hospital. (There are three buildings on campus that could be used for this). He stated that, at last, the City Council has admitted that there will be insufficient school places across the City, especially within the Milton area.

Another significant need locally is for nursery places, and the Wind in the Willows nursery fulfils this . 2

## FORUM MINUTES 14 Oct..cont

**Claire Upton-Brown** from the City Council's Planning section was then invited to speak about the Local Plan process:-

1. there will be a further consultation stage following the current consultation exercise;
2. this will be followed by a "political stage", where the City Council politicians will consider what amendments are needed to finalise the Plan;
3. thirdly, the Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval, probably around 2018; and
4. there will then be an "Inspector" stage, with a Government Inspector scrutinizing the Plan and, if appropriate, seeking justification from the City Council Officers for any item within it.

Comments and questions from residents were discussed. Residents were encouraged to attend the meeting scheduled for Wed. 13<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2017 at the Eastney Community Centre, Bransbury Park, where staff from the City Council's Planning Department will answer questions between the 2pm and 8 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.10 hrs.

### January 2018 Update on the Council's consultation. Continued on P.19

We've had some success! The Milton Neighbourhood Planning Forum put forward their views on the proposals, as did the Forum and many local residents both last Sept. and back in 2014 when Milton Site Allocation was published.

The Council's response to the Issues & Options Consultation suggests St James' Hospital / Langstone Campus should consider options **other than housing** such as commercial, leisure, tourism options.

It also says:- "Comments on behalf of Milton Neighbourhood Forum require careful consideration. There is clearly a need for both authorities to have a more joined up approach. Further discussions should be held to ensure that the available options and evidence is informing both the local plan and the Milton Neighbourhood Plan."

In terms of housing PCC recognised the need for a "broad preference for strategic sites to include a range of housing types but the potential for individual sites to be allocated for specific needs will be investigated" providing they recognise "the constraints faced by individual sites and test if they can be overcome... "Identified constraints, including the capacity of local transport networks, and the potential impact upon sensitive ecological sites and species, need further work before the capacity and potential uses of St James/Langstone can be confirmed. The best way to consider this is to assess the site as a whole, rather than individual parcels of land, and for that reason the technical work will continue on that basis, though recognising the different characteristics of the component parts."

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## NEW INVESTMENTS IN MILTON



The new path in Bransbury Park has now been completed. This was made possible through the Community Infrastructure Levy which is a tax on new developments whereby 15% of the money is ring fenced to be spent in the same Council Ward as the new development. The projects are decided by local councillors for the ward and can be suggested by anyone

in the community. In Milton, all suggestions are also brought to the Neighbourhood Forum Committee. The new path is designed to enable pedestrians and cyclists to move freely between Milton Market and Ironbridge Lane without joining vehicular traffic as well as completing a path which goes around the full perimeter of the park. Hopefully it will encourage more people to walk to the local shops in preference to driving.

The money available to spend in Milton has been due to the large Tesco development and homes at the north of St James'. So far we have benefited by improvements to the Milton Park skatepark Village Hall kitchen, Bransbury Park Community Centre Café, new cycle racks, the splendid Christmas Lights in Milton Market to be sponsored for 5 years and defibrillators at the two community centres. Future projects include works to Meon Infant School's playground and swift nesting boxes for local community buildings. There is still funding available so we must think hard about what we need to improve sustainability. Suggestions are always welcome at the Forum meetings or you can contact the local councillors directly (see Page 20).

**Dr. Russell Hayes**, Senior Highways Engineer, at Portsmouth City Council, will attend our Open Forum on **Wed. 21 Feb.** to outline plans for cycle paths across Milton Common and improvements to eastern corridor cycling routes. This will be supported by the City Planning Team giving feedback on the Issues & Options paper published last autumn which sought residents' views on proposals for the new City Plan. The Council has indicated some changes to its original proposals. As they had identified Milton as a new Strategic Housing Area (over 250 homes) an update on how this would be implemented in a new City Plan, as far as our area goes, will be a hot topic. *Chair* 5

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Milton Village Hall, 182 Milton Road, Southsea, Hants, PO4 8PR

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## MILTON HERITAGE TRAIL



The team of volunteers working to devise a new Milton Heritage Trail met recently in the Boardroom of the former Portsmouth Workhouse, now St Mary's House. The meeting venue allowed us to look at the fascinating history of the Workhouse which is situated

opposite the former Prison and forms a key starting point to learn more about the way that the Victorians managed their society.

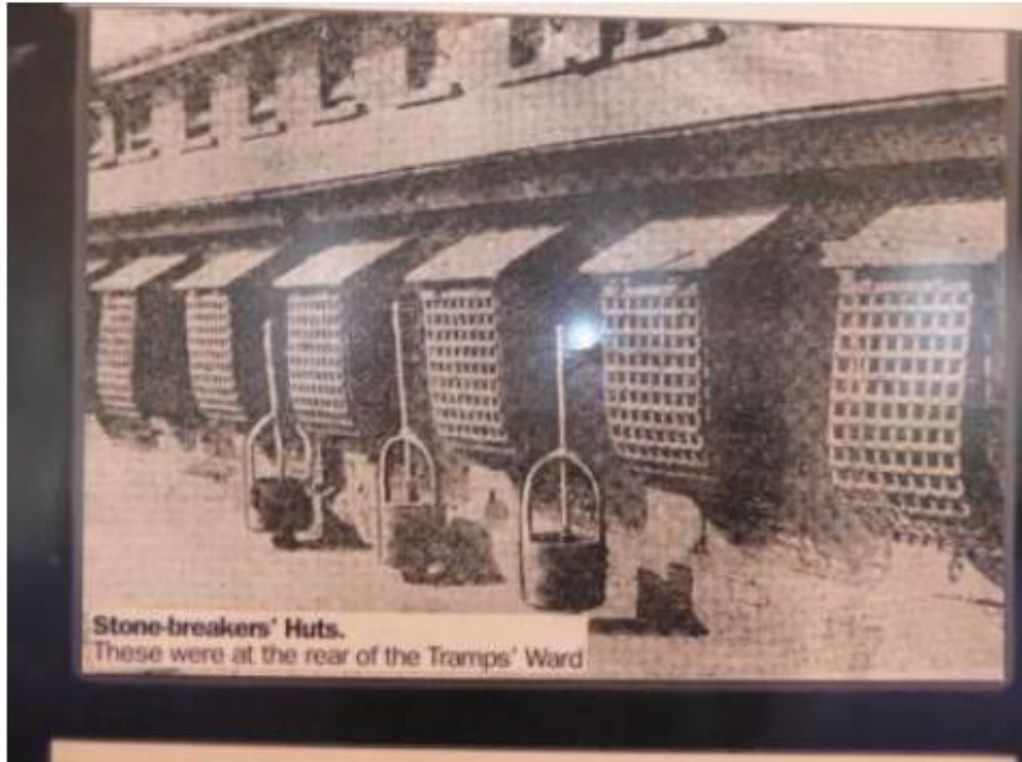
The design of the workhouse, with the Workhouse Master and Mistress at the centre of the long corridors, enabled a few staff to control large numbers of people. By 1868 the Workhouse population had climbed to 1,300. There were no indoor toilets, no dining hall and only one bath, used for cleaning tramps.

The Board of Guardians had a clerk who kept meticulous records of their decisions as these extracts show. Underpaid medical officers and chaplains earning much less than their counterparts in prisons, had little time or incentive to fulfil their roles conscientiously. In 1868 the workhouse officers were made to eat the same food as the paupers to ensure that bad food was promptly reported. This edict affected the Master, Matron, Drill Master, Tramp Master and Needle mistress. Hardest hit was Hodge the Taskmaster, who was still working aged 85. He had been on the staff of the old Elm Lane Poorhouse in Landport. After a lifetime of working, Guardian Kent proposed that Hodge be admitted as an inmate of the workhouse he knew so well. Luckily Guardian Cudlipp intervened and Hodge was granted a pension.

Recently the Forum has featured the problem of homelessness in our city and our own ward. One of the displays in the Boardroom explains how tramps were dealt with in 1869 when the number of vagrants in the casual wards of Hampshire Workhouses rocketed from 3136 to 24,470.



The authorities made a distinction between wayfarers, honestly seeking work and 'layabouts' and criminals. The latter were compelled to put in heavy labour in return for their night's shelter. *(photo from Boardroom display)*



Stone-breaking in specially equipped dens was the task of tramps who had to start at 7am breaking up half a ton of stone with a heavy iron pestle until the pieces were small enough to go through a 2inch riddle. Next he had to pound 1.5 bushels of stone to dust and finally pick 4 pounds of oakum. (old rope which had to be unpicked for caulking ship's decks).

*The Boardroom is only open by request, so these treasured histories are rarely seen by those of us who live such privileged lives today.*



**Prints and original paintings of Milton, Eastney and Portsmouth by local artist John Pearson. Visit [www.johnpearsonartist.co.uk](http://www.johnpearsonartist.co.uk) phone 02392 828998**

## YOUR HALLOWEEN FUN-DAY



You could find some very scary characters in Milton around Halloween! They are usually the helpful proprietors of Hi-Lites Hair, Phix-pix, and Vintage Pig (Chris & Alison Irish, DJ Bob Dawkins, & Arthur Smith-Weston) who worked with Sue Manning of Fruit & Flower Stores (pictured above with one of the children's devilishly decorated pumpkins) and local traders, to co-ordinate another great fun-day for local families.

Izzy Wizzy balloon modeller was joined at the Milton Village shop by Cllr. Lee Mason, Deputy Lord Mayor who tried his hand at the skill, most successfully.





Tina from Hi-Lites brought in two great discos, the Fine Voice Academy Choir and a very popular face-painter. Jenny and Ann at Eastney Community Centre provided a great venue for Winnie the Witch and the children's Fancy Dress contest. The BMX Flatlanders gave a great display of their skills.

The Beddow Library was beautifully decorated by the staff who organised spooky stories and fun. The United Reform Church at Milton held their own Light Festival of activities too for our community. It was great that the local shops participated in a great Treasure Hunt to win a splendid hamper which they filled with goodies and vouchers from their stores. The Portsmouth Partnership gave us a grant of £500 which enabled us to pay the entertainers. Phix-pix donated the posters and oh-so spooky on-line advertising.

It was great to see people sitting in Bransbury Park gardens enjoying the music.

Thanks so much to everyone including the Pompey Pluckers, Milton Forum committee members and Milton and Baffins councillors who gave up their Saturday to entertain us. Clearly lots of fun on the day and sunshine too!



## PROGRESS ON THE MILTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



This Neighbourhood Plan is taking longer than we would have liked but we hope to have a draft on our website [miltonplan.org.uk](http://miltonplan.org.uk) shortly. There will be an opportunity to meet with us and discuss it at the Milton Village Hall in early March and it will be great if you can find the time to do so.

The Neighbourhood Plan process needs to follow prescribed stages and these are outlined on the website. Both Neighbourhood Planning and City-wide Planning are collaborative exercises with community engagement. Unsurprisingly there has been more engagement in our Plan than the Council's but the Council's has greater priority such that we must follow its strategic policies.

As you will be aware the first Phase of the St James' Hospital development is already governed by existing Council policies proposing residential uses. We have managed to influence much of the design and layout proposals but not got much support for our requirement for Residential Care-Space. We want the Council's help in securing the retention of Health and Community uses at least for some of the second Phase of the Hospital's redevelopment. This is the main building and the surrounding land to the north and north-west. *There now seems to be a recognition that the total loss of community uses on the Hospital is short-sighted.*

**This short-termism is the biggest obstacle to achieving Sustainable Development.** Our institutional bodies such as the NHS, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Council are failing us through an absence of resources, but this is mostly fed from unsustainable Central Government. No Neighbourhood Plan can be expected to deliver these improvements in Community facilities such as health-care and education but it can help try and ensure the redevelopment in Milton includes the options to help realise these and avoid promoting unsustainable developments.

Although the Council endorsed us as a legally compliant body to prepare a Plan with a Sustainable Vision nearly 3 years ago, the 2 institutional landowners have tried their best to continue with their old behaviours. The NHS by attempting to frustrate the retention of "Wind-in-the-Willows" Nursery in favour of higher residential returns and the University with their persistence in the potential for redevelopment of the Furze Lane sports-pitches.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN Cont...** It is one thing to exploit short-term profit opportunities through hard work and endeavour but not if it's at the expense of the wider community. In our case we shouldn't forget the community initially funded the creation of the Hospital and the former Teacher Training College.

Even if our institutions are no longer properly funded to meet our social care obligations or fund schools and hospitals, the dearth of these is not a reason to promote unsustainable large-scale housing developments because they stress these deficits further. The irony is the Council can receive a new homes bonus for delivering new homes but is no longer permitted to build new schools. We need new homes but equally, if not more importantly, we need the services and infrastructure our existing community requires too.

In terms of new schools, we have a potential group of volunteers prepared to set up a new "Through-School" Academy and the Campus site will be ideal, but not if the Council allocates the site for housing because the Dep't for Education will not fund residential land values. Furthermore, these volunteers amidst our community have little experience of project managing such complex initiatives whereas the house-builder can readily borrow money for his schemes and to make matters worse, isn't enforced to fulfil the Social Housing Obligations or to even fit Solar Panels on his roofs. These are issues we want to address in our Plan.

When we meet with the University to discuss an education use for their site, the reception is certainly hospitable but their short-term financial interest is paramount. Whilst we can argue a better educated community in Portsmouth will have greater long-term benefits to the University, their accountant can unequivocally say:- "push for residential uses to maintain a strong balance sheet".

The way we have approached this Plan therefore is to aim for the right outcomes by challenging the conventional approaches. This involves adopting a sensible Sustainability Appraisal rather than a distorted one and exposing the myth that short-termism is the solution. In this latter respect, the high levels of traffic congestion and air pollution, higher incidences of pedestrian and cycling casualties, lower than average life expectancy, high levels of substance and alcohol misuse, lower than average educational achievement in our state schools and higher levels of obesity in our school children are a burden on us all. **Who pays?**

The accountant doesn't show it in his balance sheet but we see no reason to compound the burden in Milton **because we pay!**

Ask yourself what long-term planning has Milton benefited from? The answer is Milton Common as a Nature reserve, the building of a Hospital to treat the sick and a Teacher Training College to serve future generations. Unfortunately these are all past initiatives. The more recent ones have stressed the environment and ultimately ourselves. 13

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN Cont** Where's the progress in having our children crammed into overcrowded schools taught in large classes by overworked teachers? Where's the benefit in closing a Mental Hospital in a parkland setting to replace it with non-health uses in a City where the A&E Dep't continually fails to meet demands. What's the point of building on green-spaces in a City deficient of mature parkland solely for residential uses increasing the demands on the uses we've lost? Exactly and that's what we are still trying to do:- expose convention and create an alternative vision for Milton.

"Natural" Capital rather than Financial Capital has the higher long-term reward and ultimately determines our future. Health and Education are fundamental long-term priorities for any mature society and can help contribute towards advancing "Natural" Capital. Austerity fails us all if we continue with the usual quick-fixes and postpone investing for the future. **ROD BAILEY, Neighbourhood Planning Chair**

## **UPDATE & CONSULTATION**

### **MILTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**Sat. 3 March 2018 12pm – 5pm**

***Come along to view and comment on the plan which has been devised so that local people may influence planning and development in our area. Following this event, the plan will be submitted to the Council for approval and examination. Full details of the process and the plan itself will be posted on the website just beforehand***

***Visit [miltonplan.org.uk](http://miltonplan.org.uk)***

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***Date for your diary -2018  
PICNIC ON THE GREEN  
St James Field 2-5pm SAT. 9 JUNE***

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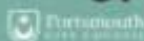
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## FORUM ISSUES cont. from P.3

The Forum is clearly relieved that the comments put forward to the City Council in considering a new City Plan have been taken into account. However we are not the only body which has made comments on the Council's Options and Issues document. The Hants&IOW Wildlife Trust and the RSPB have commented strongly on the importance of the Langstone Campus site as a strategic wildlife area.

However, Portsmouth University stated their wish to retain the option to develop the existing playing fields if new sports provision could be found. The Homes & Communities Agency are still progressing their current application for 115 homes on St James and demolition of other buildings under the Council's current City Plan and strongly supports St James/Langstone as a strategic site allocation in the new Local Plan providing housing including affordable homes.

We have invited representatives of the Planning Dept. to our next Forum on 21 February to learn how these conflicting interests will be considered. For full details visit

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/development-and-planning/planning/the-local-plan> or

<http://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=126&MId=3881>

**RECYCLING INITIATIVE** You may be wondering when some areas of Milton will receive the promised 140litre waste wheelie bins as black bags are being phased out. This is likely March/April and affected streets will be leafleted with details.

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Rod Bailey MNPF Chair  
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Ian Clark  
Paul Docking  
George Dominy  
Dominic Goodyear  
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### **Ward Councillors – Milton**

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Martin Silman

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election

*Please contact any Forum Representative or Ward Councillor for more information or assistance*

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Printed by Bishops Printers