MILTON MATTERS

Issue No. 73

Milton Neighbourhood Forum

March 2022



Local Milton resident Steve celebrates news that Aquind have been stalled in their bid to create chaos in City streets – see P4

NEXT OPEN FORUM AGENDA
WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 7.00 pm
At St James Church, Milton
Consultation on Milton Market Pedestrian plans
The City's Clean Air Zone Effect
Our Carbon Budget

OPEN FORUM 11 OCT.2021

The Chair welcomed residents to this first meeting in 18 months through Lockdown restrictions and thanked the Langstone Church hosting it. She also thanked the volunteers who distributed Milton Matters and asked all to show appreciation for the efforts of Viola Langley and Paula Savage in bringing opposition to the Aquind plans to the top of the political agenda.

She informed the meeting of planned protests against Solent sewage discharges. The upcoming AGM of St James Memorial Park Charity was publicised as trustees are being sought to try to save the Chapel in the hospital grounds from residential use.

Draft City Local Plan

lan McGuire and Tom Bell from PCC Planning Dept. updated residents. Advising that any comments on the draft Plan must be sent by 31.10.21 Details can be read online. These comprise papers on Green Infrastructure, Environment, Heritage, Carbon Neutrality and strategic sites with housing targets to achieve the Government's aim for Portsmouth of 17.700 more homes.

Locally 436 homes in St James, 130 at Langstone Campus are included. The expansion of Fratton Park, transport links for new homes and protected green spaces are all in the Draft Plan. Good quality design is emphasised too.

Residents were encouraged to lodge their comments now as these will be the only ones considered later when the plan goes before the Inspector.

Questions from the floor included finance for essential infrastructure:

It was explained that Community Infrastructure money levied on developers and other funding is directed towards the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan - a living document on the website but there will always be a lag between growth and infrastructure.

Concern at local poor bus services deterring people from getting out of cars will be addressed by a separate Transport Plan and the Leader reported more Government money has come for buses in the hope to improve reliability and services later in the day.

The new City Plan is likely to be in place in 2023 and will form part of the Development Plan for the City. This also includes the Milton Neighbourhood Plan which reflects local wishes but cannot deviate materially from the City Plan. Ian confirmed there is broad conformity between the two.

For example, the Langstone open space land swap which is not settled yet as the Draft plan is still out to consultation.

Great concern at the 17,700 housing target was raised. Planning have identified sites for 17,000 including Tipner by 2038. Second home use, affordability and local access was queried too with sewage capacity, power and broadband

This is in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan already mentioned. Was student accommodation in the 17,700? Yes 2.5 student and 1.8 elderly person homes = 1 house in the calculations. The new student block in Arundel St. took 234 homes off the target for the city. Targets slant the city towards 1-2 bed flats as they take less room when we really need family homes said ClIr.

OPEN FORUM 11 OCT.2021 cont..

The audience was frustrated that the government can set targets without space for allotments, schools, playing fields etc. Green initiatives such as 'green roofs' are part of sustainable design and will be an ambition for the council who admitted they do not have a design code, but believed Portsmouth is well defended in imposing a high level of quality design at planning stage. St James Housing was queried from the floor due to currently published 'blocky' designs. Ian suggested Milton devise its own code to add to their Neighbourhood Plan in due course.

to response questions sustainability, lan said transport is considered within individual applications wide. and citv Classroom provision at Meon Junior School with 100 new children with no new playgrounds or fields have been subject to the School Based Planners raising concerns at planning application stage. Now 436 Homes at St James will be added to demand so the location of any new school remains unknown.

Asked when St James will go to committee Ian said he did not know and would prefer the application for the Phase 2 site to be heard with Phase 1.

The 2 speakers were thanked for their time and for covering a long and complex process. Residents were encouraged to comment too.

Milton Neighbourhood Plan

Rod Bailey explained that the plan is complete, published online and in paper in libraries and community Centres. The plan has followed guidelines in the 2012 City Plan, National Planning Policy and EU Habitats Directive. Residents had until 18.10.21 to raise guestions to PCC.

Plans for Langstone Campus were queried. As the University has existing right to the land, you cannot have a Planning Policy denying this so the group obtained a Habitats Regulations Assessment which had no recommendation for re-use the University vacated the shoreline site but its existing use would allow it to build elsewhere so the sports field was suggested. The University currently have no known plans and the Forum would prefer the site as a school away from air pollution in Milton.

The Chair asked the audience to thank the team who have spent the last 5 years preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. They are all volunteers and working within many constraints.

St James' Chapel

Steve Pitt introduced himself – a former councillor with experience in music and art who has come forward to work with the St James Memorial Park Trust established by Caroline Scott. He hopes to try to save the Chapel from residential development. Her extensive records of trees and the fight for the Village Green have been placed in City Archives and will be displayed in due course.

Steve outlined the high quality of the Chapel building and its potential to act as a community facility for Milton. PJ Livesey the St James developer have offered the charity 12 months to find a viable use for it including relieving pressure on Milton Village Hall. It was confirmed the garden will be protected. The meeting closed with thanks to

The meeting closed with thanks to Steve. 3

THE BATTLE FOR OUR STREETS



The first any of us in Milton knew about Aquind was a letter through the door in November 2018 asking us to confirm we owned our home and how much it was worth as their project could be in the vicinity of our homes. This created fear in the community. They had plans to dig up huge areas of Portsmouth starting at Eastney, working through Bransbury Park, Milton Piece allotments and local roads up the Eastern Road and beyond to end in a new terminal at Lovedean. They could then lay deep cables in 2 separate channels, to carry electricity from France to add to the National Grid plus data cables for hire.

People were afraid they would lose their homes to the work. Our local Councillors were asked for advice and could only tell us it was out of their hands and a national planning decision would be made on the appropriateness of the plans. Fortunately they set aside funds to fight the plans as a city of this size and complexity could not tolerate the upheaval the work would involve.

Local people were horrified as they heard at a Neighbourhood Forum, that a huge building at Eastney shoreline would remove the informal car park used for beach users and access would be required to our allotments. It was at this point that the concerns and fears grew into ACTION. Despite Lockdown restrictions and they were very real ones at the time, Viola Langley and Paula Savage came forward to lead protests at the allotments, encourage publicity for the campaign, brought TV cameras to our shoreline, produced banners making local feelings very clear, printed leaflets and posters and put very real pressure on both local and national politicians to oppose the scheme. Disturbance to wildlife was a key concern, with uncertain recovery. Disruption to a city with only 3 roads onto the island and one of them being dug up for many months would create chaos and add to high air pollution.

They encouraged many letters of objection with the opportunity to speak at the Planning Inspectorate's Inquiry where the viability and suitability of the scheme would be decided with a recommendation to the Secretary of State. Our local Councillors and brave residents came forward to speak at the Inquiry which was held on Zoom and some excellent points were made to indicate the problems the new cable would create



The STOP AQUIND group gained more and more support with a march from Eastney along the route of the proposed cable right up to Lovedean, with banners along the way. The two Portsmouth Members of Parliament organised petitions against the scheme and recorded their objection to the Inspectorate which included uncertainty about continuity of supply from France after a threat to disconnect Jersey over a fishing dispute and the link between the expiry of the Energy Chapter expiring in 2026 at the same time as the Fishing agreement. The fact that the backers of Aquind project had made substantial political donations was highlighted in the national press and tv and threw into doubt the judgement of the Government to decide the cable route fairly and accurately.

The project became a very 'hot potato' being passed from one Minister to another and after a deferral of 6 months finally we heard that the application had been rejected. Locally we are all able to breathe a sigh of relief that the first hurdle had been passed. However, legally the backers of Aquind have until 3 March to appeal the Minister's decision.

This is a major achievement for the leaders of the Stop Aquind campaign, their group of very active supporters and all those who followed in making their voice heard. It is not often that we can applaud such a successful campaign. We must thank Viola and Paula and their teams for the hours and hours of work that went into it. They were dealing at the highest level of decision making in this country and this takes a toll on people's personal lives. THANK YOU ALL

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FAREWELL TO LANGSTONE CHURCH



Many of you will know Langstone Church which has occupied a site on the southern corner of Milton Common, at the end of Shore Avenue, for about 42 years. Langstone Church began as a group of just eight people who met in a house in Moorings Way, in about 1973, and later, in Langstone Training Centre on the Eastern Road. The church grew and wanted a base, not so much to meet in, but one to go out from. This vision coincided with the end of the construction of the flyover at the top of the Eastern Road. Portsmouth City Council agreed to leasing the land, on Milton Common, and members of the church dismantled the, then redundant, contractor's huts, from the flyover site and redesigned them to create, what has been known as, Langstone Centre.

Many will have experienced the existence of Langstone Church. Some may have enjoyed the school assemblies which it presented at most primary schools in the city. Others may have attended one of the mid-week groups for children and teenagers or started even earlier as babies and toddlers with their parents/carers at the Tiny Tots sessions. These were so popular, that at one time, they were held on both Mondays and Fridays and offered the unique experience of sharing lunch together at the end of the sessions. You may have memories of the infamous, free Tent Events held on Milton Common and Milton Park or the carnival floats bearing singers and musicians praising the name of Jesus.

FAREWELL TO LANGSTONE CHURCH cont...





In 2012 Langstone Church, in conjunction with Milton Village Hall, created Pure Ground Coffee shop which is still extremely popular.

As with many organisations, Langstone Church is moving into a new season. On 2nd January 2022, the last service was held and Pastor Steve Macfarlane was presented with gifts in front of a large gathering of past and present members who were also treated to words from Bob Acheson (90) the original pastor. Bob and his wife Jean are well known in Milton and throughout Portsmouth. The occasion was a celebration of all Langstone Church has achieved in 49 years - many lives saved; baptisms, funerals, weddings and hundreds of ice creams, burgers, meals and drinks served.

Recognising the good work which has been carried out in Milton, the Langstone Church has been adopted by Christ Central Church, Portsmouth. Little Bears Forest Pre-school which is a separate entity from the Church, continues to operate from the Shore Avenue site.

After a time for the two congregations to bond, Christ Central Church, Shore Avenue will be launched, back at the building in Shore Avenue, with new leaders and an expanded congregation. If you're looking for a church, why not come along? You will be given a warm welcome!

Angela Barnes





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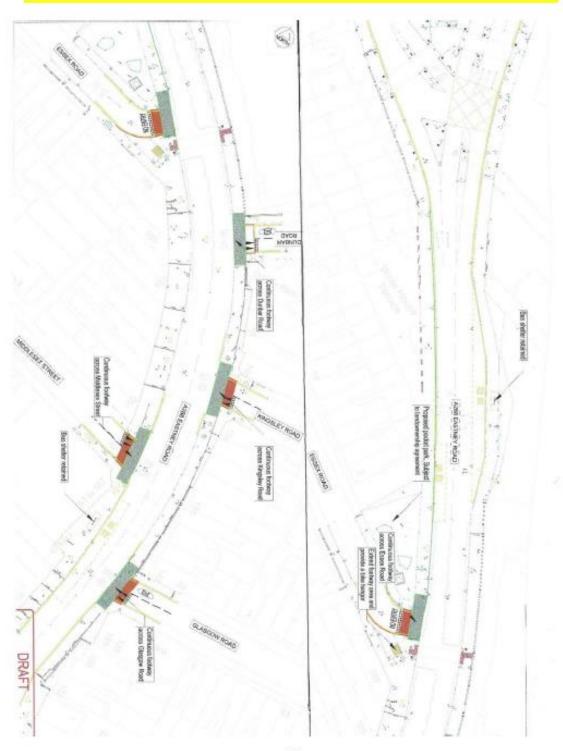
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PROPOSED CHANGES TO MILTON MARKET



A scheme to improve pedestrian experience in Milton Market has been devised by Portsmouth Council. Its aim is to make the area more green and attractive to walking and cycling. Originally it was hoped that the Essex Road triangle of land could be improved too to allow access and perhaps seating, but this has not been possible as it is privately owned. Although new paving was hoped for, finance only permits discussions with Colas to see if broken paving slabs can be replaced as the part of the PFI programme.

The scheme now concentrates on the pedestrian experience around all side roads by providing continuous footways, reclaiming unused part of the carriageway on Essex Road by the junction with Eastney Road. Here the Council will be able to provide cycling facilities, declutter the junction with Devonshire Avenue by removing unnecessary guard railing and removal of the brick planter behind the bus stop by Bransbury Park which will create the opportunity to link the park with the bus stop as suggested by the Landscape Team.

Milton Park Primary School Headteacher is in full support of the scheme, as she believes the changes will help families to access the school at drop off and pick up times and also it will provide them with much needed link to Bransbury Park which the school uses on regular basis as there is no green area available within the school boundaries.

Residents' concerns may include the way that dogs on long leads will cope with crossing these pedestrian footways across the road edge, how we can make allowances for children running across, invalid buggies, etc. Particularly, the many scooters both legal and illegal, electric and non-electric which travel so fast on pavements now, up to 30 mph!! The local traders will need to understand how these changes could impact upon access to their businesses and to their regular deliveries.

A copy of the plans are shown opposite. These are of course, very small due to the size of our magazine, but so that residents can understand the impact this will have on current, regular users of our much valued local shopping facility, we shall have an explanation of its effect at the **Open Forum** on **Wed. 16 March at St James' Church at 7pm.**

At the Forum meeting, our speakers will include representatives from the City Council who will come to report on how the Clean Air Zone for the west of the city is working out. In addition the Council has a Carbon Budget and they will explain how this works and weaves into policy and decision- making.

WE ALL HOPE IT CAN INDICATE THAT THE ENVIRONMENT IS TOP OF THE AGENDA

*** PICNIC ON THE GREEN IS BACK SATURDAY 2 JULY 22 ST JAMES FIELD



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Mike and girls would like to thank all our customers for your help, support and kindness during the Covid period

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Milton Village Community Association

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MEMBERSHIP 2021-2022

If you receive Milton Matters, you can become a member of our Association!

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Membershp is just £9 per adult/senior per year (children are FREE on a family membership) and entitles you to discounts on private hall hire, priority booking & cheaper prices for trips/events! Here's an idea of what's coming on the next trips' programme, due out soon!

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Arun & Wey Canal Trip	Hampton Court Garden Festival
Windsor Castle & Jubilee Exhibition	Mill at Sonning Dinner Theatre
Lion King (London Show)	Fisherman's Friends (Mayflower Show)
Somerset Short Break	Thursford Spectacular Short Break
Disneyland, Paris	And more! Please contact the office for
	more info on any of these trips!

Look out for these exciting events at the Hall!

ECON CALIOI MICSE CACIMI	g events at the main	
JUBILEE	TRIBUTE	DINNER & DESSERT
CELEBRATION PARTY! Thu 2 nd June	NIGHTS! Various Dates	CHALLENGE! Various Dates 6-Courses - vote the favourite!

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Music Mad	Pilates	Bingo n Brunch (m)	Baby Ballet	Cribbage		
Curling	Adult Ballet	50+ Keep Fit	Home Ed	Line		
			Crafts	Dancing		
Children's	Cribbage	Baby Theatre	Bereavement	Yoga		
Ballet			Group (m)	_		
Dog & Puppy	Beetle	Let's Bounce Back	Children's			
Training	Drive (m)	(PCC Weight Loss)	Ballet			
Тар	Yoga	Breve Easy	Pilates			
Dancing		Community Choir				
	Community Sew	Dog & Puppy	Line Dancing			
<u></u>	& Crafts (m)	Training				

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CIVIC AWARD FOR WILLIE GOLDFINCH



Photo Phix-Pix, Milton

The Peoples' Memorial was built by Willie Goldfinch at his own expense upon the shoreline of Langstone harbour. It is a tribute to the serving men and women of our British Armed Forces who pay the ultimate sacrifice. Willie has produced a memorial recognised by many people. His only desire is to show respect and allows the community to do so. He has achieved a magnificent memorial all natural to the environment. Over the 12 years hundreds of people walk past the memorial, sometimes stop and contemplate their thoughts of loved ones. The memorial is effective and a stunning part of Langstone Harbour. Beautifully kept and a quiet resting place where an Annual Remembrance Day service is held on Remembrance Sunday.

The Lord Mayor presented a Civic Award to Willie in recognition of his unique concept and dedication in developing and tending the site. Receiving the award on 16 February Willie recounted a story about one of the contributions to his mound. A lady approached him on the beach and asked if she could add her stone. He readily agreed and said he would place it there for her. She asked for it to be buried 4ft deep which he did. As he helped her up the shingle, he asked whether she had carried the stone very far. 'Yes' she replied 'All the way from New York. It is a fragment of one of the twin towers where my daughter died'. So it is not solely for veterans. It is truly the peoples' memorial, greatly valued and a wonderful place to remember those we have lost. Willie is now passing its maintenance to a community group headed by Steve O'Shea.

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FORUM ISSUES

It was great to welcome so many residents to the last Open Forum. Thank you for taking the time to come along. Our venue has to change again. We are meeting at ST JAMES CHURCH (in the pews!) on Wed. 16 March at 7 pm.

I wrote in the last issue how much we all owe to Forum members and must specifically mention **Paul Docking** who has served not only on the Neighbourhood Forum for many years but been a key figure in the Planning Forum for the past 6 years, gaining us the necessary funds to pay consultants who gave technical advice. As Secretary he had a role supporting and advising the group throughout the process with much wise counsel. He has now stood down and lan Clarke is taking on his role. Thank you very much indeed Paul for such long and valuable service to both Forums.

By way of a Progress Report on the **Milton Neighbourhood Plan**, Liz Beth our Examiner from Bristol began considering our Final Draft on 12th January 2022. This was the very same day, the Council's Planning Committee deferred the decision on the St James' Hospital Phase 2 proposal for 151 apartments in the Hospital conversion and 58 new two and three storey houses on the surrounding land.

We expect to receive her Report in early March. Assuming she finds the Plan sound and the Community votes in favour of it at Referendum, City Council Planning Officers will have the tools to negotiate with Developers less intrusive and more socially and environmental compliant schemes than the one PJ Livesey has proposed.

Since our last meeting the application to develop Phase 2 of St James Hospital was placed before the Planning Committee and involved Chair of the Forum; Chair of the Planning Forum; ward councillors Ben, Kimberley and Jeannette; Steve Pitt, Chair of the Charity aiming to save the Chapel; Martin from Keep Milton Green and local residents speaking to voice their concerns and objections to aspects of the scheme including loss of valuable high quality trees, poorly designed new houses, increased air pollution, real fears that the Locksway Road junction would not cope despite the offer of traffic lights in place of the roundabout and lack of affordable housing in the plans.

After much discussion the Planning Committee decided to defer a decision pending further work on traffic analysis, high loss of mature trees, review of house designs and the financial viability presented by the developer claiming affordable housing was not practical. The scheme is likely to return to Planning Committee in March or April and will be out to a short consultation period. Phase 1 at St James is yet to be published. *Chair* 18



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