

**REPORT FOR RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL****MARCH 2008****FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE FORD****Friday 29<sup>th</sup> February**

As a member of the NFDC Cemeteries Review Group, I attended a meeting at which the first part of the existing burial and memorial regulations were reviewed, a second meeting is to follow shortly to complete this task. This follows a series of unauthorised memorials and other serious breaches of the regulations. A timely resolution to this problem is seen to be urgent.

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> of March**

Took part in the annual Forest litter pick, I joined a *very small* group of volunteers in the sand pit area at Moyle's Court. It was astonishing how much litter and other waste was recovered in two hours. The task was regrettably unfinished due to the time allowed. The NFNP warden and the National Trust representatives hope to organise a further event later in the year, just to try and keep on top of the problem.

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March**

Attended a meeting of the NFDC/TVBC Commercial Services Joint Committee at Romsey. This is the Cttee whose deliberations my Overview and Scrutiny Panel will review later in the year.

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March**

Was present at the NFDC Cabinet meeting. It was agreed that from 1<sup>st</sup> April this year, a transportation contribution be sought by way of a Section 106 agreement (developers' contribution) on all small scale developments in our towns and villages which will contribute to appropriate transport improvements as a result.

Mr Bob Jackson, was named as one of the new Executive Directors at NFDC, Mr John Mascall is the other. This follows the recent revised senior management structure.

As a member of the project board I then went on to the NFDC Green Audit meeting at which the Council's policy on the way it runs (or ideally intends to run) its premises and transport fleet was agreed. A web link on this subject has been posted on the NFDC website.

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March**

A very interesting day conference held at the Calshot activities centre, organised by the New Forest Community Safety Partnership. The theme of this conference was Anti-Social behaviour, Criminal Damage and Alcohol related Disorder, which have very many sub-sections. There is no room here to summarise the conference, but I do have all the papers and hand-outs if anyone is interested to see them, and have a discussion with me over a coffee. There was a large attendance of parish and town councillors and Clerks from the Waterside and from Fordingbridge, but I felt that Ringwood town (considering its size) was rather under represented, although our own Police Station put in a commendable presence.

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March**

Held my usual monthly surgery at Stillwater Park with Cllr Thierry. Constituents' concerns are still mainly with planning matters and litter.

### **Wednesday 12th March**

This is, in fact, a Ringwood Town Council outside body commitment at the Blashford Lakes Study Centre (off Ellingham Drove). This was a meeting of the Blashford Lakes Consultative Forum. RTC is invited as an interested 'neighbour' whose land (the North Poulner Lakes and picnic area) adjoins the designated Blashford study area.

There was an agenda item regarding access and parking, which impacts on car parking provision on Town Council land by the Wash Pit as an easy access over our bridge to the footpath along the Linbrook.

Wessex Water representative presented a report on the water quality, the health of fish, alien aquatic plants, and strategies for any abstraction. Hampshire Wildlife Trust reported on the number of overwintering bird species observed, and much more. English Nature representative also gave a report on the overall ecological balance.

The new footpath network and new hides for birdwatching are splendid, and deserve perhaps more publicity and subsequently more visits from Ringwood folk.

### **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March**

The NFDC provides an audio version of their quarterly magazine 'Forest News'. The Ringwood and Fordingbridge Talking News lends the studio, recording technician and readers. I had the pleasure of being one of the readers for this recent edition!

### **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March**

Morning: Attended the Corporate Overview Panel. A communications review is currently taking place by the communications strategy group chaired by the Chief Executive Dave Yates.

The brief is '... NFDC needs to communicate with its employees, residents, partners and all other Councils in the area and neighbouring authorities in an effective, regular and consistent manner if it is to act as a responsible community leader and deliver high levels of service to its customers' Watch this space.

Afternoon: I attended the Cabinet Briefing. Among other items Tourism and NFDC/NFNP was discussed. I hope our Tourism Group might be able to lock into any discussions that might take place, if we are to be considered (as we are being marketed) as the Western Gateway to the New Forest.

Christine Ford

25 March 2008