

BYGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL

Councillors Philip Hills James Northern Claire Phipps	Clerk to the Council: Mrs K Clark 73 Brookfield Way Lower Cambourne Cambridgeshire CB23 5EB Tel: 0795 646 5101 E-mail: clerk@bygraveparishcouncil.org.uk Web: www.bygraveparishcouncil.org.uk
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EARLY SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER

To the Residents of Bygrave

We hope you are all keeping safe and well in this time of still COVID but in addition other winter illnesses.

We apologise for the lack of newsletter over the past months but we had little firm information to pass on to you. However, now an update.

BALDOCK EXPANSION

The following statement has been issued to all members of the Baldock Bygrave Planning Group of which Bygrave Parish Council is part of the Committee

Look out for the first formal round of consultations on the Masterplan for Baldock. They will be run by Urban and Civic (U&C) at the end of March* and will be advertised widely in the next week or so. U&C have been appointed by HCC to be the principle developers for the whole of the Baldock and Bygrave development area. They have an agreement to work with both HCC and North Hertfordshire Council to create a Strategic Masterplan.

This initiative supersedes previous consultations and is a fresh opportunity for the needs and aspirations of local residents to be built into the design of the new developments. 2023 will be about creating an overall design for the proposed extensions to Baldock before the formal planning applications are made the following year. U&C have confirmed that there will be several more opportunities for public consultation as the design takes shape later in the year.

Alongside the U&C public consultations, the district council are setting up a thorough governance program including a Community Forum to enable local community groups to have their input. The Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group are going to play an important role. It will be drawing on local expertise in each of the key areas as they come into focus. Terms of reference are being drawn up and we will share more with you on this in the coming weeks.

Regardless of what you thought of previous attempts to come up with a Masterplan, it is really important that you make your wishes and views known to both U&C and the council. **We still have time to help shape Baldock's future.**

*Very briefly to add to the above the consultations will be held at the Baldock Arts and Heritage Centre, Saturday 25 March, 10am—2pm and Wednesday 29 March, 12—8pm. From what we can gather there will be little to look at BUT the idea is to get input of what you would like to see in the proposals.

I did check and I am told there will be a full public consultation in late Summer/Autumn when there will definitely be drawings and documentation to view.

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PROPOSED SOLAR FARM

Bygrave Parish Council set up a separate working party 'BAG' to deal with this specific issue. You have received a number of updates from them. The current situation, we are told is that there are conversations continuing between NHDC, HCC and PACE the developer. We will not hear much else until June time after the local elections in May.

The pre-election period, previously known as 'purdah', is the period of time immediately before elections or referendums when specific restrictions on communications activity are in place.

CHANGE TO ELECTURAL BOUNDARIES

We believe everyone received communication from our District Councillor that there was an intent to lose the current Arbury Ward where we live and make another Ward which makes us part of the Baldock.

Bygrave Parish Council objected in the strongest terms to this proposal. The PC considered that the needs and requirements of an Urban area are quite different to that of a Rural area. We have yet to learn of any decision.

FARR FESTIVALS

We understand that there will be no festivals to take place this year

SPEED THROUGH TOP AND BOTTOM VILLAGE

We have spoken to our County Councillor regarding the ever-increasing speed particularly in the top village. We have asked for at least a 20mph zone or chicane. We understand that this request is to be reviewed in County Hall.