

Hythe and Dibden Parish Council

The Parish Picture – February 2005

Hythe and Dibden Parish Council would like to wish all members of the local community a Happy and Prosperous New Year

Quality Parish Council Status

At the end of last year the Parish Council achieved Quality Parish Status. In order to be awarded this status the Council had to demonstrate, to an independent panel approved by central government, that the Council is representative of and actively engages all parts of the community and that it is effectively and properly managed. It is hoped that in achieving this award the Parish Council will lead to more opportunities for external funding and partnership working for the benefit of the local community. In order to maintain the award the Council will have to undergo this assessment every four years.

Budget 2005/06

Hythe and Dibden Parish Council has finalised its budget proposals for 2005/06 in order to continue in its design to provide a high quality and improving service for local residents. There will be an increase of less than three pence per week on a band "D" property. Fees and charges for the use of facilities such as the Parish Hall, football pitches etc will be increased by only 3%.

The key elements of the budget are:

- Phase 1 of a major new play area at Ewart Recreation Ground
- Increased planting of spring bulbs along Southampton Road
- Continued programme of improvements to allotments.
- Continued support for the youth work carried out by the Handy Trust.
- Continuation of the Market Town Initiative.
- Provision for possible public consultation on a Community Warden Service
- Introduction of a planned maintenance program at The Grove and Clayfields Sports Centre.

Community Safety

The Council was extremely disappointed that following the introduction of the Hampshire County Council(HCC) Community Safety Officers, New Forest District Council did not continue with its proposed Community Warden scheme which had been developed in conjunction with the Parish Council specifically to meet the needs of the Parish. However in its aim to promote Community Safety in Hythe and Dibden during the budget process the Parish Council considered the cost of providing our own Community Warden Service. However due the cost involved, it was agreed to review the success or otherwise of HCC Community Safety Officers after six months operation. If it is felt that the service is not meeting the needs of the community then the Parish Council will carry out public consultation on whether you would be prepared to pay an additional contribution to provide our own local service.

Grant Aid

As in previous years the Council has set aside a limited amount of funds to support local organisations and groups that benefit the local community by means of grant aid.

Whilst each application is considered on its own merits it is not the Council's priority to fund ongoing annual running costs but to help with set up or once off capital costs.

If your group or organisation wishes to apply for grant aid, application forms and further details are available from Jan Bevis on 023 8084 1411 Ext 201.

Market Towns Initiative

In the Christmas edition the Waterside Herald there was a tear out form on which you could tell us what three items you "love", "hate" and "wished for" in the Parish. We have been very pleased with the number of returned forms and if the project is to be a success then it is important that the views of the community are taken into account. The comments made are currently being collated and will be used by the group overseeing the project. **Hythe and Dibden is our community**, help in shaping its future, it is still not too late to send in your forms. If you have lost your copy then a further copy can be obtained for the Parish Council offices at The Grove or by contacting Helen Owers on 023 8084 1411 Ext 208.

Annual Parish Meeting

Each year the Parish Council is required to hold a Parish Meeting where electors of the Parish can meet and discuss current issues, the work of the Parish Council, District Council and County Council and the respective Councillors over the last year. On occasions arrangements are made for a speaker to address the meeting on a topical issue. Awards such as the Community Spirit Award are also made at the meeting. There is also an opportunity before and after the meeting to informally meet your local councillors. This year the meeting will be held on the 21 March 2005 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Hall, West Street, Hythe. We would welcome your attendance. Full details of the agenda will be available from the beginning of March and will be found at the Library, Council Offices, notice boards and on the Councils website at www.hytheanddibden.gov.uk

Forthcoming Council Meetings

Members of the public are always welcome to come to meetings of the Council. At each Council and Committee meeting time is set aside for members of the public to participate and speak to Council Members. All meetings are held in The Grove St Johns Street, Hythe. The following meetings are due to be held over the next month.

7 February 2005 Council Meeting

14 February 2005 Amenities Committee Meeting

28 February 2005 General Purposes and Finance Committee Meeting

These meetings all start at 8.00 pm however prior to each meeting there is a Planning Committee which starts at 6.45pm. Full details of each meeting will be found on the Councils notice boards or can be obtained from the Council Offices.