

ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Serving the people of Odiham & North Warnborough

Chair's Message, Cllr Dr Angela McFarlane

I was incredibly proud to represent Odiham Parish Council on 27th June when recognising the achievement of 100 years of aviation at RAF Odiham by conferring the Freedom of the Parish on all who work or live on the station. It was a fantastic, historic event for Odiham Parish and celebrated the close bond between those who serve and the wider community. Thank you to everyone involved.

In this edition, you will find reports on our current work and projects and we are seeking your views on the plans that affect the War Memorial on page 12. Working with residents, we have been exploring options to reduce speeding in the Cemetery Hill/King Street area. This work will now be widening its scope and we hope to consult on a more expansive plan in the Autumn.

There is also an article about the proposed Local Government Re-organisation in Hampshire, however, this is a very fast changing picture and the final preferred options to be put to Government by 26th September are still unconfirmed.

The Parish is such a beautiful area, especially over the Summer months, with lots to do. I encourage you all to enjoy and support some of the lovely things on offer; the countryside, Basingstoke Canal, community events and the High Street shops and eateries.

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Local Government Re-organisation for the Hampshire Solent area

In Hampshire, local government services are provided through a two tier system of one county council and 11 district/borough councils plus three existing unitary councils covering the Solent area; Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight. For the Parish of Odiham, this is Hampshire County Council and Hart District Council with Odiham Parish Council working with Hart District Council.

Alongside Devolution (the creation of Mayor for the whole Hampshire Solent area), Government wants to replace the current two-tier system of counties and district councils with unitary councils across the country. Hampshire councils are currently working together to agree their preferred number of unitary councils and their associated unitary area. Each council is entitled to put forward their preferred option to Government by 26th September, then Government will review proposals and create a common plan for formal consultation, expected early 2026.

Each unitary council should have a population of around 500,000, but there are currently differing views on the number and compilation of each new unitary council:

Hampshire County Council is working with East Hants District Council and have published their preferred option for 4 unitary councils: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/governmentinhampshire/future-hampshire-solent/local-government-reorganisation>. There is also a survey on this webpage which runs until 17th August.

12 councils, including Hart District Council, have grouped and propose 4 unitary councils on the mainland plus the Isle of Wight as their preferred option. Proposals can be found at <https://ourplaceourfuture.commonplace.is/en-GB/> but the consultation will have ended by the time this newsletter is distributed).

There is a further sub-group of Basingstoke, Hart, Rushmoor who believe they will be together under all options and hence are working very collaboratively to establish a clear cluster: <https://www.hart.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/proposals-hart-basingstoke-and-deane-and-rushmoor>. See their consultation running until 17th August <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/Interview/2db87dda-672c-4f39-bef1-a8400ec9aedef>

It is not yet known whether each group will each submit a combined proposal or whether each council will submit their own individual preferred option.

Local Government Re-organisation is expected to completely change the landscape of Hampshire's local councils and promises to "simplify how councils are organised and run, creating large and financially resilient unitary councils that are more efficient, effective and deliver better value for money for taxpayers". New Unitary Council arrangements are likely to take effect from 2027 to 2028, with several more years to settle-in.

Parish and town councils have not been invited to be part of this process and will therefore not be affected but we are expecting some knock-on effects and potential opportunities so we will follow news closely.



**SELF CONTAINED OFFICE SPACE
AVAILABLE FOR SHORT- TERM HIRE
AT THE BRIDEWELL COMMUNITY
HUB**

● Three separate rooms ● WC and wash room ● Shared kitchen

Suitable for professional services such as physiotherapy and counselling.

Also suitable space for pop-up art exhibitions and workshops.





**VIEWINGS AND FURTHER
INFORMATION**

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Planning and Development

The Referendum for the reviewed Neighbourhood Plan was held on 25th March. There were 575 votes cast of which 545 were in favour of adopting the reviewed Plan and 30 were against. Following the Referendum, Hart District Council voted on 24th April that the reviewed Plan should be “made” and it has now become part of the development plan for the Hart District:

<https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/planning-matters/neighbourhood-plan-review-2024>

Following the work done to review the Plan a monitoring report has now been completed and can be viewed on our website <https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan-monitoring-reports>. This shows how the Plan has been used and what changes have taken place.

Development sites

Crownfields: The construction of the care home is ongoing and when it is completed the construction of the 30 houses will start.

Land at Hook Road: Permission for this development was granted in December 2024, (subject to the agreement for S106 payments) for 22 houses which includes 8 affordable rented/shared ownership properties (2 x 1 bed apartments, 2 x 2 bed maisonettes, 2 x 2 bed houses and 2 x 3 bed houses).

Land at Longwood: An opinion has been issued by Hart on the possibility of demolishing the existing property and developing a 34 apartment McCarthy Stone complex. The advice given was that the scale and quantum of development would be regarded as excessive and out of keeping with the context and general pattern, density and low scale of residential development in the locality. McCarthy Stone has since held a public exhibition for around 30 one and two bedroom retirement living apartments and facilities.

Land at Dunleys Hill: This development site was removed from the Plan by the Examiner due to the difficulty of delivering Policy 14 (Public Open Space at Dunleys Hill) which was also removed from the Plan.

Changes to housing development targets: The new Labour Government’s revision of the NPPF in December 2024, increased Hart’s housing development target from 297 to 734 per year. Therefore, Hart has now lost its 5 year land supply status. This invokes the “tilted balance” in favour of housing developments. It’s not a “carte-blanc” for developers but does reduce the options to refuse housing. Hart have to work quickly to update the Hart Local Plan. It is not known what this will mean for Odiham and North Warnborough but having an up-to-date recently examined Neighbourhood Plan will help to ensure any future development can be as appropriate as possible.

ODIHAM & NORTH WARNBOROUGH PARISH HOUSING PROFILE

Population:
5,500

Number of households:
2,200

Tenure of household (%)

■ Social rented
■ Private rented or lives rent free/with family
■ Owns outright
■ Owns with a mortgage/loan/shared ownership

Number of bedrooms (%)

■ 1 bedroom
■ 2 bedrooms
■ 3 bedrooms
■ 4+ bedrooms

Occupancy of bedrooms (%)

■ Lacking 1 bedroom or more
■ Correct number of bedrooms
■ 1 spare bedroom
■ 2+ spare bedrooms

Average property purchase price
£540,842*

*As of Mar 2025 based on 47 sales in the previous 12 months

Average 2 bed rental price (pcm)
£1,325*

*In Mar 2025 based on 2 available properties

Maximum local housing allowance for a 2 bed property (per month)
£947.40

HART AFFORDABLE RENTED HOUSING NEED & CURRENT STOCK

Number of households with a housing need identified through latest housing needs survey in Odiham in 2015. No data for North Warnborough **55**

Number of applicants registered with a local connection on the Hart Housing Register **67**

Current stock of affordable rented housing as at 2.12.24 based on information provided by Registered Providers **293**
Other specialist affordable homes available, specific occupancy criteria applies

Current number of Rural Exception Site housing schemes within the parish:
1 site

Number of bedrooms	Average number of bids per available property April 2022 - April 2024
1	37
2	92
3	98

FURTHER INFORMATION

- 64.8% economically active, 2.1% unemployed, 33.1% economically inactive*
- 36.7% mainly work from home
- 62.5% households not deprived in any dimension, 27.4% deprived in one dimension, 8% deprived in two dimensions, 2% in three dimensions**
- 13.57% of children receive free school meals
- Median house price to median salary ratio for the Hart district as of 2023 is 9.9, higher than the national average of 9.1

*Economically Inactive includes students, those not seeking work due to illness/disability and those who are retired.

**Dimensions of deprivation are determined by census data and are used to classify households based on four characteristics of the household: education level, employment status, health/disability and adequacy of current housing.

Data sources for this parish profile: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics, Valuation Office Agency, Home.co.uk, Rightmove, Plumplot and Registered Providers.

Produced by Action Hampshire on behalf of Hart District Council

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Local Highways

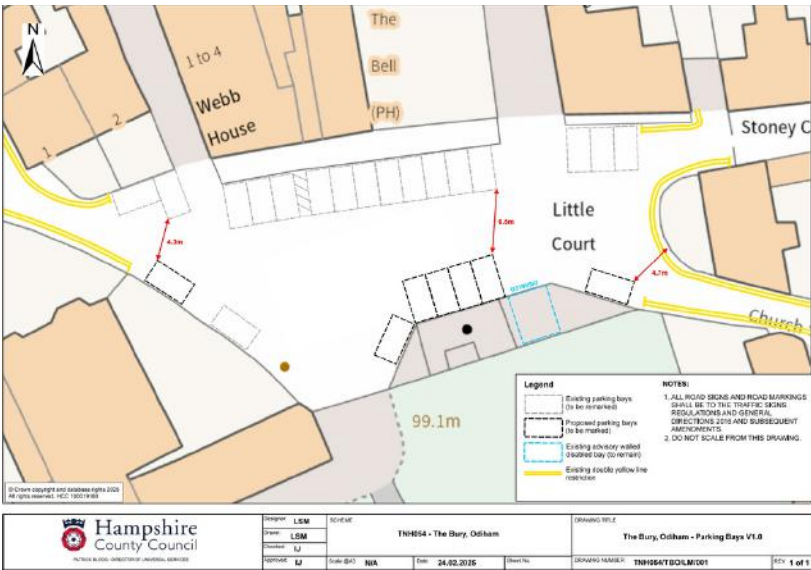
We in the Odiham Parish Council are very well aware of the numerous issues concerning both local parking, and also excessive speeding observed in parts of the Parish. We hear the frustrations and sympathise heartily with people. Unfortunately, you may or may not be aware, but neither parking nor the setting of speed limits are within the gift or authority of any Parish council – these are both the responsibility of the County Council. However, we hear your concerns and feel your pain. So what have we done?

PARKING

We have consistently lobbied HCC to undertake a Parish-wide review of parking, which has been endorsed (although timelines are still unclear). This includes issues such as removal of disabled bays outside the former Post Office and Fountains Mall and removal of bus stop markings on the High Street.

The Bury

One of the most contentious local issues is that of parking in the Bury: it is not uncommon for access to be heavily restricted, which can pose a risk for emergency vehicles. There is a plan, you'll be pleased to hear – see picture opposite – to designate and re-line the parking spaces in the Bury, thanks to our engagement with HCC. We are expecting this work to take place over the Summer.



SPEEDING

OPC is powerless to actually enforce speeding regulations. We do have a number of speed indicator devices that we employ around the Parish.

The speed indicator devices are expensive and proving unreliable. They are moved periodically as expert advice is that they become less effective on driver behaviour after a month or so.

Previously, we have set up a Speedwatch scheme in partnership with Hampshire Police. The planned Speedwatch sessions often fail due to a lack of volunteers consistently able to support.

We are always in need of extra volunteers- so please consider whether you can spare a couple of hours a month to support a session in your area.

Training is straightforward and shouldn't take any longer than a couple of hours of your time.

RAF Odiham/B3349 junction

Another continuing frustration is the junction off and onto camp. OPC has consistently engaged with RAF Odiham to try and reduce the speed limit in this area and have campaigned hard with HCC.

Whilst there has been some recent resurfacing work, unfortunately, we are still not managing to convince the appropriate authorities to take action: rest assured that we will continue to work with RAF Odiham in the future to try and deliver tangible improvements.

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

Can you volunteer?

Do you have an hour a week or a month to help tackle speeding in YOUR local community?

Training is provided- and you can help as little or as much as you are able.

Please email deputyclerk@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk for more information.

Overall then, we are seeing some modest success, but we feel the frustration that more cannot be achieved, faster. We will continue to engage, lobby and seek positive outcomes on your behalf. Meanwhile, please drive safely and park considerately, remembering that people often live and work in properties immediately adjacent to the highway.

A new 20mph scheme for King Street/Cemetery Hill?

OPC formed a working group with residents to investigate the possibility of a 20mph speed limit on King Street and Cemetery Hill. This included the collection of speed data to evidence average speed. This exercise with Hampshire County Council cost over £500 and was part funded by residents. The data confirms the average speeds are below 26mph so the road meets this criterion for a lower speed limit. (The effectiveness of a 20mph depends on driver compliance and the experts deem this unlikely where the average speed is above 26mph).

However, we have since had a response from HCC on costs. As the scheme would require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which is a time consuming and costly process, the bill is likely to be in the order of £35,000. As a result, they have suggested we look at a wider area (since the TRO costs remain the same although obviously the cost of any signage, road markings etc would go up). At the OPC meeting on 15th July, this is what OPC resolved to do. The decision was also informed by recent representations at the meeting and via email about speeding in the High St and along West Street.

We will now broaden the scope of the working group and the consultation. If we are to make any progress, we will need to raise a significant sum from the Precept (OPC's share of Council Tax) as we are unlikely to get all of this money from anywhere else - especially given the local government re-organisation at the moment. HCC Cllr Glen confirmed this at the meeting on 15th. OPC would not be comfortable to do this without clear backing from residents that this is what they want us to do, and are prepared to bear the cost. Please look out for a formal consultation that will be launched in the Autumn newsletter as well as online. The results will inform the budget setting for the financial year 2026/27.

Desk space available at The Bridewell



Do you need somewhere to work over the summer?

The Bridewell Community Hub offers Hot desks for £10 per day with discount for regular block bookings!

We also have a small meeting room for £24 for 2 hours.

All prices include FREE Wi-Fi and refreshments

To book or for more information please scan the QR Code



Bookings



Freedom Parade - Friday 27th June 2025

Our thanks to RAF Odiham and everyone who played a part in making this such a fantastic day!

With special thanks to Hooke Highways and Neil Gibbons for their complementary services which supported this community event.

The full event brochure can be downloaded at

<https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/council-business/council-led-events/raf-odiham-freedom-of-the-parish>

All photo credits to Neil Gibbons

https://neilgibbons.smugmug.com/Odiham-Freedom-Parade?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZWQCMATAAYnJpZBEwdHVMWlQumVZejhZVINZdAEeo-fzHvE7moDZog3SFjsEILp9U4VRJl0CSwkPzW9DZlySf9NxP5GcCr1Wzew_aem_QSXzWitjdNfS0hMyWwhQw



Freedom Parade - Friday 27th June



Freedom Parade - Friday 27th June 2025



What's on - Save the date!

August



Council meeting - Tuesday 19th August - The Bridewell, 7.30pm
All residents are welcome to attend in person or online. Public participation permitted.
Odiham Food Fayre – Bank Holiday Monday 25th August - Odiham High Street
Enjoy a lively food and drink market right in the middle of Odiham High Street highlighting local Hampshire Fayre. There will be live music and entertainment.
<https://www.facebook.com/inOdiham>, email info@inodiham.co.uk, or visit www.inodiham.co.uk



September


Council meeting - Tuesday 23rd September- The Bridewell, 7.30pm
All residents are welcome to attend in person or online. Public participation permitted.

October


Council meeting - Tuesday 21st October – The Bridewell, 7.30pm
All residents are welcome to attend in person or online. Public participation permitted.

Book Festival - Saturday 18th October- Run by Odiham Book Exchange.



November


Remembrance - Sunday 9th November – Odiham War Memorial, 10am

Council meeting - Tuesday 18th November – The Bridewell, 7.30pm
All residents are welcome to attend in person or online. Public participation permitted.

Christmas tree lights switch on - Thursday 27th November – Odiham High Street, 5-6pm Help to kick off the Christmas celebrations!

Odiham Extravaganza – Sunday 30th November - Odiham High Street
A festive fun filled afternoon and evening with a variety of gift stalls. There will be food, drink and live music. Odiham High Street shops and restaurants will be open too. <https://www.facebook.com/inOdiham>, email info@inodiham.co.uk or visit www.inodiham.co.uk



December


Council meeting - Tuesday 16th December – The Bridewell, 7.30pm
All residents are welcome to attend in person or online. Public participation permitted.


Save the Date for the Second Odiham Book Festival!

Following the success of our inaugural book festival in 2024, we are delighted to announce that the second Odiham Book Festival will take place on **Saturday 18th October 2025!**

Parenting Teens
STARTS 16TH SEPTEMBER - 7.30 - 9.00PM
All Saints Church, Odiham

Are you navigating the ups and downs of raising a teen?
Whether you're cruising or just hanging on, this 6-week course, starting 16th September, is here to support you.

Join us in a relaxed and friendly setting, with food and drinks provided, as we share wisdom, practical experiences, and real conversations.

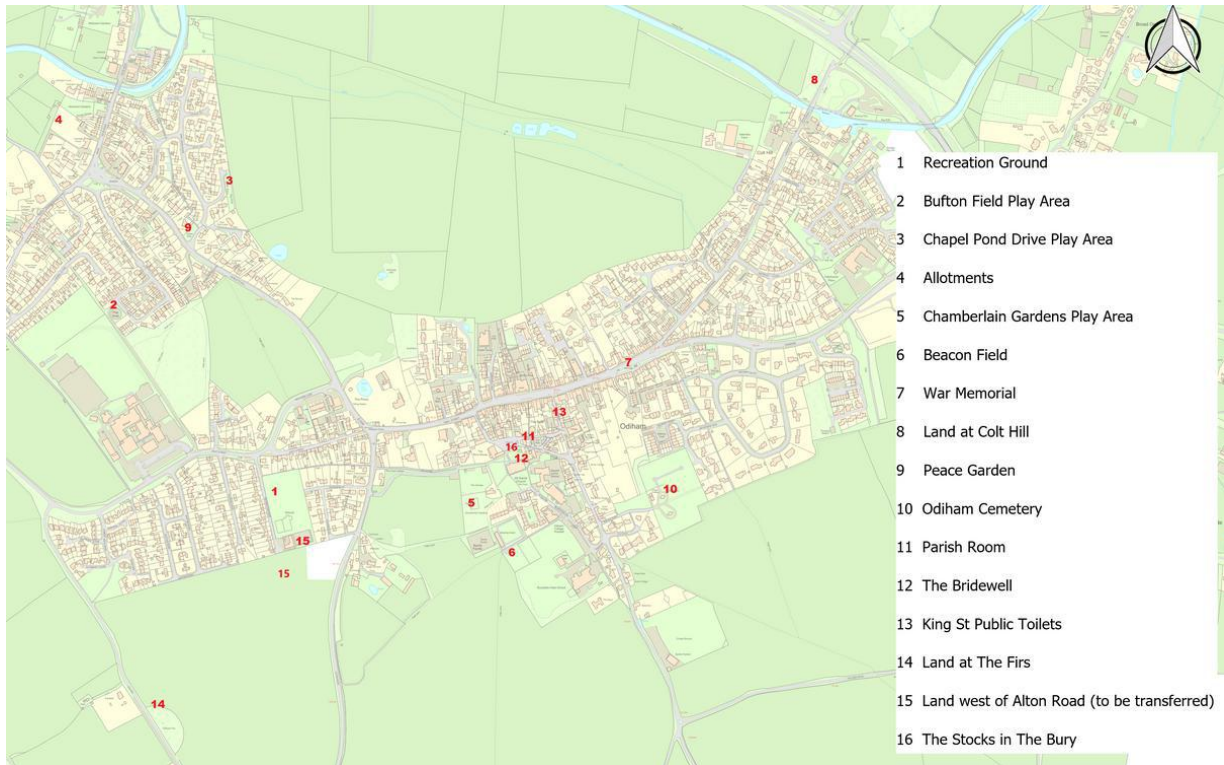
Let's help each other be the parents our teenagers need in today's world—while staying sane!
Explore ways to connect, learn from our teens, and grow in confidence through the joys and challenges of parenting.
Come along, be part of the conversation, and let's do this together!

Sign up here 

Managing local assets on your behalf

We are often asked which council is responsible for a local asset or service and frequently signpost residents to the responsible authority. The split of responsibility between Odiham Parish Council, Hart District Council and Hampshire County Council can be complex and sometimes we have to research in order to find the answer ourselves! With the potential change of local Government in Hampshire on the horizon, we thought it was worth reporting on Odiham Parish Council's responsibility for local assets.

The Council's property portfolio includes land and property located across the Parish.



The property alone is valued at over £3.3M and this is often undervalued due to the way in which council's are legally required to report on assets. If, for example, an asset has been gifted to the Parish Council then this will show as £1 on the asset register. However, all properties are subject to regular professional valuations and these valuations are used for insurance purposes. All properties are Grade II listed.



The Bridewell in The Bury was built in 1743 and has seen many uses over the years; a house of correction, jail, police station and library. It was gifted by Hampshire County Council in 2022 for £1 and valued at over £1.5M.



The Parish Room was built in 1900 as part of a former fire station. It is now on a license to the Odiham Society on a peppercorn rent for the purposes of running a heritage centre and storing local archives.



The public toilets in King Street were transferred from Hart District Council in 2012 and are now managed within Precept to provide public toilet provision, supporting High Street businesses and local events.



There are two mortuary chapels in Odiham Cemetery, known as the North and South Chapels. This is the South Chapel. Its original features are relatively untouched and the Council's long term vision is to bring it back into use.



The North Chapel has undergone several repairs in recent years including installation of false wooden floor to protect the original tiled flooring from further damage. It is now used for storage of event equipment by the Council, InOdiham and the Odiham Society which is loaned for other community events.



Chapel Cottage is located in the heart of Odiham Cemetery. It was originally the home of the cemetery manager and, in recent years, it is let on a private tenancy and this income supports the Precept in funding the Council's annual budget.

The Council also has assumed responsibility for Odiham War Memorial and the stocks in The Bury but ownership is not registered with the Land Registry.

Managing local assets on your behalf

OPC Land ownership covers approximately 7 hectares and includes a mix of recreational spaces (some with play equipment), woodlands, Odiham Cemetery and the Hook Road allotment site. A further 0.25 hectares will be transferred to the Council as part of the Crownfields development site, likely to be next year, and discussions are in progress regarding a large site, estimated at 2.6 hectares.

Land management is generally funded through the Parish precept and the Council must balance the cost of regular maintenance against community benefit which, in some cases, includes leases to other community groups. For example, a section of the Recreation Ground is leased to Leapfrogs Pre-School and leases are also in place for Odiham & North Warnborough Bowling Club, Odiham Tennis Club, and to Hampshire County Council for a section of the Mayhill School playing fields.



New memorial bird bath, Odiham Cemetery

A new bird bath memorial has been installed in Odiham Cemetery, thanks to a generous donation from Haven Memorials.

The idea was hatched from several conversations with members of the public who wanted to remember a loved one who wasn't buried or interred in Odiham Cemetery. Councillors looked to find a solution which would sit well in the grounds and be significant enough to create a place of focus for loved ones to be remembered. This is when Haven Memorials kindly stepped forward and offered a solution, for a hand-sculptured bird bath with memorial plaques.

Haven Memorials is the local Monumental Company with roots set deeply in the Parish of Odiham. Co-owner, Andy, said "Clifford and I both felt it would also be a perfect opportunity for us to give a little something back to the community we have so many fond memories of.



I spent my childhood along with my brother Clifford growing up in the village and residing at Chapel Cottage within the cemetery grounds. Our parents kept the gardens and grounds immaculately presented and we still even now have people comment as to how delightful the gardens were back then.

We went to the schools in the village and made many friends and are still in contact with many of them today. I left school in 1982 and managed to get myself a position as an apprentice stone carver at E. Finch & Sons in Aldershot and spent five years learning the craft both there and at City of London Art School. Having completed my 'apprenticeship' I decided to give it a go on my own and in 1987 with help from our parents Haven Memorials was created and with continual hard work and passion we were able to quickly establish ourselves locally as the helpful memorial masons, always trying our best to offer helpful guidance in difficult times.

Thanks to everyone's support over the years we are now heading for 40 years of our family providing memorial masonry services to local communities and beyond and with our children now involved in the business we can look forward to being here to help for the next 40 years."

If you are interested in purchasing a plaque to remember a loved one, please visit the Council's website at <https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/council-business/council/council-services/cemetery-bookings>

War memorial - we need you! (well, your thoughts and opinions)

We mentioned in the last two editions of the OPC Newsletter how we had formed a War Memorial working group to maintain and care for the war memorial, and also to develop a strategy and seek funding to repair and restore the fabric of the memorial itself. On the latter point, we have been engaging with local masons as well as the War Memorial Trust to develop an affordable and achievable plan. We're pleased to say that we are making good progress, but it takes time and patience – do bear with, we will update when we have more news. Meanwhile the working group will continue to keep an eye on the condition of the memorial and spruce it up as needed.



**"Your Parish
Council Needs
YOU"**

Separately, but connected, a parishioner had asked us about the possibility of having a flagpole near the war memorial. After undertaking some research, the intent would be for a high-quality, semi-permanent flag pole (fixed base, removable pole), to the left or right of the memorial. This would then allow for the flying of a flag on Remembrance Day and Remembrance Sunday, as well as other important fixed and variable dates (eg St George's Day, Official Birthday of His Majesty the King, etc), and is something we think would really add to the war memorial as a focal point of the village. As the British Legion website says: "Flying the Union Flag can be a way of expressing joy and pride. Flags are emotive symbols which can boost local and national identities, strengthen community cohesion and mark civic pride".



War Memorial survey

However, before we proceed with something as significant as this project, OPC are very keen to understand your views and opinions. A straw poll at the annual OPC meeting suggested a majority were in favour, but we think everyone should have the opportunity to express an opinion. Therefore, please can we invite you to use the QR code, and cast your opinion? We'd love to hear what you think.

Your Council

Odiham Ward

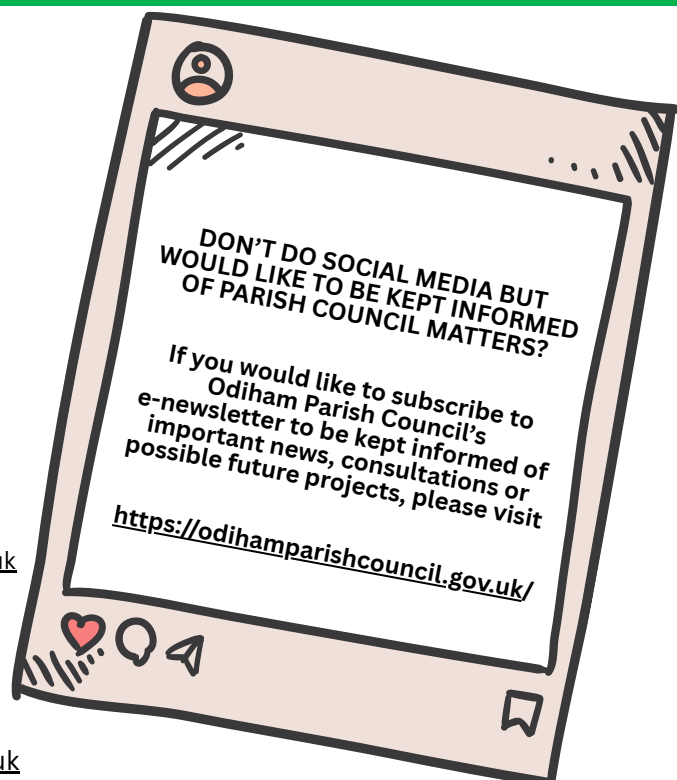
Cllr Leo Cornall cllrcornall@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Caro Seabrook cllrseabrook@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Mike Tate cllrtate@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Helen Tyler cllrtyler@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Pam Verdon (vice chair) cllrverdon@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Henry Woods cllrwoods@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk

North Warnborough Ward

Cllr Steve Bell cllrbell@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Angela McFarlane (chair) cllrmcfarlane@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Cllr David Sanger cllrsanger@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk

RAF Station ward

Cllr Chris Greensides cllrgreensides@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk



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