

Berkswell Parish Council
January 2014

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Sad news and new faces.

Cllr Sandie Benton. The Council regrets to announce that Sandie Benton passed away on Sunday 19th January after a long battle with cancer. Sandie joined the Council in 2009 and served as Chair of the Planning Committee and Responsible Financial Officer. She always made a cheerful and constructive contribution to the running of the Council on behalf of residents of the Parish. It was a pleasure to work with her and she will be greatly missed. Our thoughts are with her family at this difficult time.

Alison Cabbage. Ali joins us as a Councillor having been co-opted at our last meeting. As a resident of Meeting House Lane and a senior finance professional Ali will bring fresh insight and skills to the Council, and we are looking forward to working with her.

Sharon Butterworth. Sharon joins us as our new Clerk to the Council, having previously been Office Manager at the Heart of England School. Sharon has extensive administration skills which we will be making full use of! Councillors and our new Clerk are keen to implement some new ideas to make the Council more accessible to residents and more efficient, so watch this space for announcements of some interesting new initiatives.

Do come along to our next meeting on Thursday 13th February at the Reading Room, Berkswell to welcome Ali and Sharon.

Development looms large. One of the largest developments proposed in Berkswell for some time is now gaining momentum. The planning application for the Duggins Lane development is now in the system. The scheme proposes 29 dwellings for the former factory site. The Council will consider its response to the application as soon as possible. Keep an eye out for dates on our notice boards and website.

HS2 continues to thunder on, with the current Environmental Statement consultation now extended until 10th February as a result of the Government failing to supply all of the documents – 877 pages were “lost”. Once this consultation has passed the focus will be on the potential to petition the Government.

The Council remains committed to fight for meaningful mitigation so will be petitioning for all issues, not addressed by HS2 – including a tunnel. SMBC will also be petitioning, and we expect them to commit to petition robustly and comprehensively to ensure that those impacted by HS2 do not pay the cost of perceived Borough-wide gain. The Government wants to reduce the number of petitions, so HS2 will attempt to negotiate with potential petitioners. Councillors will meet with HS2 in early February to see how serious these negotiations are, and will report our findings at our meeting on the 13th.

Graham Lock
Chairman

