



# LESBURY PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

(Issue 44 - April 2015)

The Parish web site is [www.lesbury-pc.org.uk](http://www.lesbury-pc.org.uk)



**Planning for the Future - Lesbury Post Office, Newsagents and Village Store;** - This is a note from Carol and Roger with their thoughts to the future.

*It is over 4 years since the Post Office and shop were re-opened following the closure by the previous owner. Since that time and with much community support we have re-established it as both a valued resource and a viable business. Having worked to improve the facilities to provide a valuable asset at the heart of the community we think it is important to begin to think about the future. Neither Roger nor myself are getting any younger and we need to think about how we can secure the future of the business in the community. We believe the time is right to begin to look for someone with the energy,*

*enthusiasm and community focus to take the business into the next phase. If you, or someone you know, would have an interest we would invite you to come and talk to us.*

**Please be clear:**

- *the business is not at risk*
- *there is no plan to close the business*
- *this is about starting early and planning for the future*

**15/00446/FUL Construction of 1 four-bedroom dwelling and 1 three bedroom dwelling, including the development of associated garden, landscaping and parking.**

The PC had objected to this development with regard to the demolition of outbuildings on site and access. The application has been revised retaining the stone outbuildings to address the main concern of the Conservation Officer (as well as the PC). To do this the eastern dwelling has been revised and reduced to 3 bedrooms from 4 to accommodate its new position in relation to the outbuilding. In addition a stone wall will be built along the southern boundary rather than timber fence.

**15/00449/FUL Construction of a single four-bedroom residential dwelling, including the development of associated garden, landscaping & parking provision-Land East Of Cherry Tree Cottage Lesbury Northumberland-** The PC had objected to this development on grounds of access on to the B1339 and the position of the building in relation to the existing dwellings. Following concerns from the Highways Department (and the PC) NE has revised the access from the B1339 to the rear of the dwelling via the track leading from Old Alnwick Road and round the back of Cherry Tree Cottage. Both applications are still "Pending Consideration" by NCC.



The Northumberland Estates



**NCC Review of Planning Services-** NCC is undertaking a review of the Planning Service as it is believed that it has been under performing in various areas compared to the national norm. It commissioned 2 reports from POSE, an independent group of planning

officers and one from Deloitte. These underline where change should be made. The main issue arising for Town and Parish Councils appeared that they may lose their "local voice" in planning decisions. The majority of TC's and PC's including Lesbury PC flagged up their concerns with this potential issue in an overwhelming lobby of NCC. In a recent letter from Grant Davey, Leader of NCC he has stated the following;- "*Despite claims to the contrary there is no intention to seek to exclude town and parish councils from the planning process. The Council values the contribution made by town and parish councils and recognises that they are an important consultee on planning applications. The*

*National Planning Practice Guidance makes it clear that town and parish councils, whilst not technically statutory consultees on planning applications, are nevertheless very important consultees in that process. The council (NCC) is fully committed in continuing to consult all town and parish councils on all applications in their area and will continue to take their views into account when assessing planning applications. The Council wants to continue to work proactively with local councils and is committed to providing a rolling programme of training on planning matters and to the publication of a series of Protocols on Major Developments, pre-application Discussions and S106 Agreements. These will clearly set out the role of local councils in these matters and will put in place clear arrangements for town and parish councils to get involved at an early stage in the process." It remains to be seen how this develops in the coming months.*

**Parish Council; Transparency Code and audit;**- The Government is proceeding rapidly with its programme to change the audit arrangements of local councils, and to require every council to be more 'transparent'. However, the most imminent changes will impact on the smaller councils such as Lesbury (i.e. those with annual income or expenditure below £25k pa). From 1 April 2015 smaller councils must post key financial and governance information on a publicly-accessible website. From 1 April 2015, every smaller PC will need to have access to a website such as ours ([www.lesbury-pc.org.uk](http://www.lesbury-pc.org.uk)) which they must post agendas and minutes of PC meetings (which we do). From 1 July 2015 we will need to post information about our governance and finance. (Which we currently do via the minutes and our auditors).



**Remembering those who served;**- You may have read an article in *The Gazette* about Piper Daniel Laidlaw who was awarded a VC in the WW1. Piper Laidlaw attended Lesbury Village School for a short time and it is thought appropriate to find some way to commemorate his bravery and to acknowledge the sacrifice made by other former pupils of Lesbury School.

*With this in mind, we propose to commission a commemorative plaque to be placed inside the hall. Piper Laidlaw's family, particularly his grandson David, is supportive of this and has very generously sent a donation towards the cost and others may wish to do this too. It would be very helpful to know if you are able to 'pledge' a donation, no matter how small, towards the cost of the plaque. We will only ask you to honour your pledge if we are unable to raise funds elsewhere. To make a pledge please contact Charles Jones at 14 Lealands, Lesbury NE66 3QN; telephone number 01665 830527. The plaque will be unveiled on 26<sup>th</sup> September, 100 years and a day after the Battle of Loos where Piper Laidlaw showed conspicuous bravery. (Mary Hollins). More in the next Newsletter.*

**Nature note;**- Sorting out sawbill ducks is never simple. Two species of these fish eaters with their specially designed 'toothed' bill have recently been seen from Steppey Lane Bridge - Goosander and Red-breasted Merganser. Mature males are the easiest to separate, although both have a black/glossy green head, the larger and heavier Goosander has a mostly white body, and the Merganser always shows a wispy crest at the back of the head. Immature males and females are a different matter. Apart from size, all have red/brown heads and show a crest, but the easiest way to separate these is by the breast; a Goosander has a sharp division between the brown neck and white breast, whereas the Mergansers' colours 'merge' between the two. Red-breasted Mergansers have occasionally bred on the Farnes, but otherwise are very rare in summer, however we could be lucky and see the Goosander bring her offspring from further upstream to sample the delights of the clear water of the Aln.



#### **Parish Council Contacts.**

**Parish Clerk** - Mrs Elizabeth Taylor, Rivendell, Steppey Lane, Lesbury, NE66 3PU, Tel: 01665 830040, e mail [lesburyparishclerk@googlemail.com](mailto:lesburyparishclerk@googlemail.com).

**Parish Council Chairman:** Bob Dutton; Tel. 01665 830801

**Parish Councillors;** Gareth Breese - 830195, John Gebbie - 830642, Douglas Hunter 07903 243362, Dave Knowles - 830467, Roger Styring 830531, Adrian Vass - 830134.

**Parish Council meetings** are usually held in Lesbury Village Hall on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. All residents are welcome to attend.