

KBS Village Action

So what has been happening since the last edition of the News? The Witney Road application was postponed until the 9th January because of the well-timed intervention of the Parish Council. Their independent highways survey found, surprise, surprise, that there were a large number of errors in the applicant's survey. Holes in the superstructure but unfortunately nothing below the waterline.

Christmas came and the New Year and then a posse of pensioners (collective noun?) were outside St John's College being carefully eyed by clearly suspicious security men. What sort of trouble were these oldies going to cause? Chaining one of their party to the railings? They could NOT march to the gate or even set foot on anything owned by St John's so they unfurled the Save Our Village banner, waved the GREEN not GR£ED posters and handed over the 530 signature petition to the Lodge Manager. Their business done, they engaged in a friendly chat with him – he understood their position ... if I lived in your village ... and so on!

And then to Abingdon and The Vale offices. Two of their Officers said: Yes the e-petition was unfit for purpose because the numbers went down instead of up, Yes this had happened before, Yes they would take a copy of the paper petition with 530 signatures in lieu of broken on-line technology.

Two days later and the Witney Road application was being heard. What a fascinating experience if only it wasn't in our back yard! Ninety objections and just one in favour. Three people with three minutes each ably pointed out the unsustainability of the proposal BUT the theme seemed to be if the Councillors turned this application down it would be granted on appeal together with substantial costs. There were, however, some Councillors who were vocal in their objection to the scheme and one of them likened it to "rape" of the village!

The very next day it was discovered that an application had been submitted for 98 houses off the Draycott Road. It transpired that this application had been submitted on December 20th and that the Planning Officer had been rather economical with the truth when telling the rest of the Committee about other housing schemes faced by the village. KBS Village Action has objected, as have the Parish Council and our District Councillor. The saga continues.

So are we downhearted by the planning process driving a spike through our community? (or some such euphemism) Will the numbers really fall off for the second photoshoot in the village now we know that planning permission has just about been granted? Surely we won't be able to get more dogs into the photograph? That would be NO, NO and YES! It's as if a wartime spirit has taken hold of our Community. What gets someone waxing lyrical about coming out to protest on a cold winter's afternoon?



"It was grey, no sun at all (as promised by the Chairman) a few flakes of snow were falling out of the sky and the camaraderie was as warm as toast..."

Cheesy? But there is just something about being with like-minded people – of all ages – when you kind of know you are in the right and what is happening is wrong. Suddenly people who have rarely spoken to one another before are ... well, ... talking ... enthusiastically! It can't be all bad!