**Faringdon Town Meeting 13-4-14
Report from the Planning and Highways Committee: Dr M L H Wise**

The Planning and Highways (P&H) Committee is a statutory consultee for planning applications and can only make recommendations to senior councils. Since the Town Meeting of 14th April 2014, the P&H Committee has met 19 times and made recommendations on 72 planning applications, of which three were for large sites totalling some 650 dwellings. In addition to responding to consultations on national, and county and district council policies, the committee has taken action on street naming, bus shelters and salt/grit bins. The other major activity has been the production of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan.

Since last year’s report, which highlighted the impact of the proposed housing developments on the population of Faringdon, the Vale of White Horse District Council has confirmed its housing allocations for Faringdon and Great Coxwell and published them in its Local Plan Part One. Because of the potential impact of these combined developments, in conjunction with Great Coxwell Parish Council, we forced the developers to produce an Environmental Impact Assessment that took into the account their cumulative effect on the environment and, in particular, on traffic. However, this does not appear to have changed the minds of the planners. Of note is the allocation known as ‘South of Highworth Road’; in 2013, this site comprised only the field adjacent to Westland Road, owned by Faringdon United Charities, for which the developer, Drivewalk, had submitted an application for 126 houses. The Vale’s Local Plan has increased allocation on this site to 200 houses by including the field to the west, part of Highden Farm, so that the combined allocation backs on to the proposed Steeds Farm development. Last year, Drivewalk submitted a revised application for only 70 houses on the original site, all of which were to be contained in the part backing on to Westland Road. This raises the question as to how the remainder of the allocation is to be accommodated and whether it will require yet another access onto Highworth Road.

We also learned from Thames Water that none of the proposed developments can be connected to the sewerage until the sewage works is upgraded; this is proposed to take place in 2017.

Committee members attended the appeal made by Gladman against the refusal by the Vale of White Horse District Council to grant planning permission for a development on ‘Humpty Hill’ at which I made representations on behalf of the Town Council. In the event, the appeal decision was ‘recovered’ by the Secretary of State because it involved a proposal for residential development of over 10 units in areas where a qualifying body had submitted a neighbourhood plan proposal to the local planning authority. He ultimately refused the appeal, principally on landscape grounds, although the report indicates that the Inspector would have allowed it.

I represented the Town Council at two Vale of White Horse District Council Planning Control meetings regarding the developments known as Fernham Fields (200 houses/object) and Land South of Park Road (Sandshill - 380 houses/do not object); both were granted outline planning permission.

The Committee has made representations to the Vale of White Horse District Council regarding the Local Plan and the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Unfortunately, despite repeated representations and having passed examination in the Neighbourhood Plan, two sites allocated as employment land have still not been allocated in the Local Plan.

The Committee appointed Gary Kay Smith Ltd to undertake a parking survey as part of the S106 agreement for Folly Park View. The report was accepted by the Town Council, on 11th March 2015 and recommended to the White Horse District Council. However, it has no plans to implement its findings.

A development on Coxwell Road has been called Alfred Woods Close following our policy of recommending the naming of new streets from the names on the War Memorial.