

New buses now in service



Sunday 24th February saw the introduction of the new buses for Dickens Heath and Wythall. The services are provided by Landflight Travel Services, previously known as Silverline. Their new services A4 (to Wythall) and A5 (to Dickens Heath) will, as before, provide a half-hourly service between Dickens Heath and Solihull, from 06:55 until mid-evening. In addition, their A6 service to Cheswick Green and the A7/A8 services to & from Blythe Valley pass the “Miller and Carter” roundabout.

Solihull Council (SMBC) have produced a new draft of the Local Plan, which includes potential development sites for several hundred new homes around Dickens Heath, including on Tythe Barn Lane and Birchy Leasowes Lane – developers Persimmon and Richborough Estates have already submitted detailed plans for consideration. Public consultation on the Local Plan runs until Friday 15th March [*that's quite soon – Ed.*], and the Planning Officers are looking for constructive comments and suggestions to help their decision-making. Representations can be made on-line, at <https://solihull.jdi-consult.net/localplan/>, or by post to SMBC.

There's still no final decision on the proposal to close Braggs Farm Lane. In October, SMBC proposed to close the road to through traffic, but following objections have deferred their decision. A formal review has now being requested, to settle the matter.

As you may know, a Food & Craft Market is held at Dickens Heath Village Hall on the second Saturday in each month between 14:00 and 16:00. This month's theme, on Saturday 9th March, will be “Mothers' Day”, so expect to find suitable gifts on the craft stalls. In addition to the many market stalls, drinks and refreshments will be available.

Fancy being on the Parish Council? Elections will be held on 2nd May, but nomination forms need to be with the Returning Officer no later than Wednesday 3rd April. You'll need the support of two other residents eligible to vote [*and some votes on election day might help, as well – Ed.*]. Details are on the Electoral Commission web-site.

It's farewell to Andrew Simpkins of Dickens Heath church, who's leaving the area to be closer to family. Fortunately, our annual summer “Festival on the Green”, one of Andrew's great legacies, will continue, under the organising committee that he set up.

And it's hello to Sergeant Paula McDowell. She will work with the Parish Council and SMBC to provide community policing for the Village. Sergeant McDowell is based in Solihull.

Preparations are ongoing for the Parish Council's move from Wharf House to the First Floor of the Library shortly.

Some internal building alterations will need to be carried out to facilitate the Parish Council and the Community use and Councillor Alan Scholes has agreed to act as the Project Manager for the alterations.

Following the success of last years "in bloom" competition, hanging baskets have again been ordered for the village, including adjacent to the new David Wilson and Bellway areas. Volunteers to help manage the more central area ground planters (watering and deadheading, etc.) would be most welcome.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held in Wharf House on Tuesday 12th March at the earlier time of 6.00pm and as usual, residents are welcome and may raise concerns in the "Public Participation" slot at the start of the meeting. The Annual Parish Meeting will also be held that evening at 7.30pm [*they usually have free refreshments there – Ed*] and again all are welcome to attend. Our new area Police Sergeant Paula McDowell has been invited to attend to meet residents.

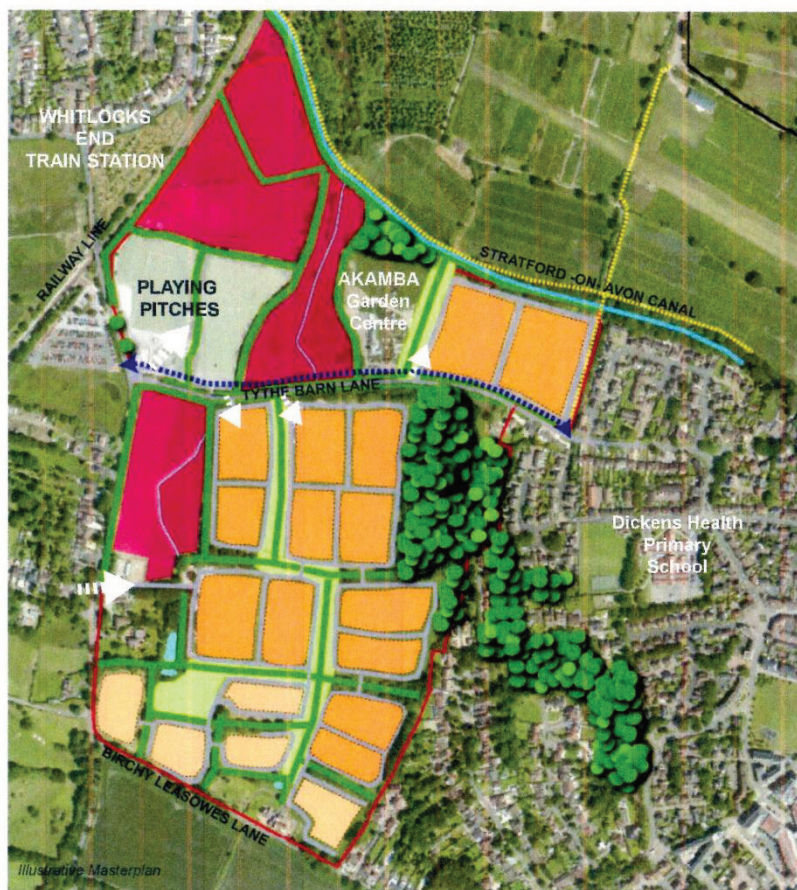
It is hoped that the next issue of the Dickens Heath News & Events will include an update regarding the adoption of the Village Green and the refurbishment of the children's playground.

Finally, as residents of Dickens Heath you will find that the Parish Council Precept included in the Solihull Council Tax Bill on the 1st April is reduced by a further 5% this year [*its true – Ed*]

January 2019

Solihull Local Plan Site Allocations – Masterplans

SMBC Illustrative Emerging Concept Masterplan: Site 4 West of Dickens Heath



The density across the site ranges from 30 – 40 dwph. The concept masterplan illustrates how the site can accommodate 350 homes. The layout promotes perimeter block development to maximise natural surveillance and encourage active streets.

The site contains important ecological habitats, as well as ancient hedgerows. The proposed layout seeks to retain as much of the hedgerow network as possible, containing development within the field pattern. Based on 350 homes there would need to be a provision of 2.3 ha of Public Open Space. This site will require Doorstep, Local and Neighbourhood Play Area as the nearest facility is over 1.27 KM away in Dickens Heath. This layout proposes to use the green corridors as areas to facilitate play and walking routes.

A pedestrian link north of the hedgerow along Tythe Barn Lane is proposed to provide a safe route to Whitlocks End Station.

The layout seeks to provide approximately 2 playing pitches and associated facilities including car parking in the north of the site. The Akamba Garden Centre is retained, but could be included in redevelopment.

Further work is needed to identify links from the new development to Dickens Heath Village Centre.

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| Future Access | Medium density housing |
| Road | Low density housing |
| SuDS Feature | Public Open Space – including play |
| Local Wildlife Site | Pedestrian link to station |
| Footpath | |