



Let's keep fighting for our village!

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Editorial

The past 24 months have been very traumatic for our community with a number of planning applications for various developments put forward that could impact us for generations to come. However, everybody in Thakeham Village Action (TVA) is determined to keep up the fight to preserve our beautiful environment and the character of our village. We do not oppose small scale organic growth or improvement of facilities in the village - what we strongly oppose is inappropriate large-scale development.

In this newsletter, you will find out more about what TVA stands for as well as the latest news on campaigns we are involved in.

Thakeham Village Action- Why do we bother?

There have been suggestions recently at meetings and in the press that TVA does not represent an important strand of opinion in the community. We do not believe this is true.

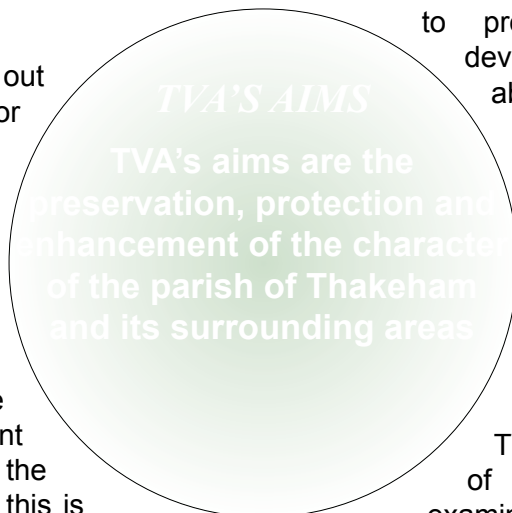
Ask yourself this question: "Am I pleased that the proposed Laybrook Landfill application was withdrawn?" If the answer is 'yes', then you must also recognise the pivotal part played by TVA in bringing this about.

As long as you support TVA's aims, you can be a member of TVA, no matter where you live. You can attend its meetings, join any of its committees or participate in its events. Naturally though, the majority of members live in or near Thakeham.

TVA works with other groups, such as Thakeham Parish Council (TPC) and local pressure groups, including the local branch of CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England), to help establish the facts and build up a viable argument either in favour or against a particular proposal. TVA has a major advantage over TPC in that it can react quickly to situations and is not bound by parish council regulations and process that can sometimes be a hindrance to the task at hand.

TVA is NOT about saying 'NO' to proposals for every development, but it is about saying 'NO' to proposals that would turn Thakeham into another dormitory settlement-a sort of Northern extension of Storrington or a Western extension of Ashington.

TVA has eleven years of experience in examining planning applications and, though there is always more to be learned, TVA believes it is respected by Horsham District Council (HDC) and listened to at the highest levels. If you want to judge the expertise that TVA brings to the table, go to the Horsham Planning Portal website on <http://public-access.horsham.gov.uk/public-access/> and look at our submission relating to the Abingworth development applications DC/10/1314 and DC/10/1316 – search by application number, then click on Documents and scroll down. This is the result of many hundreds of hours of effort



taken to understand and research every aspect of these very important planning applications.

Where TVA does not have the resources to cover a particular aspect (for example ecological sustainability), we make sure that someone else is doing that work on our behalf and we check the results carefully. So, whether you are for or against a major development proposal, you can be sure that TVA will have done a thorough job in examining how the application respects or breaks the rules.

Sometimes, people living in the same community want different things, but we strongly believe that TVA represents a significant community view. In the case of the Abingworth proposals, the comments made to HDC from the local residents are overwhelmingly against this development. These comments, both for and against, are worth reading (see Horsham planning portal website as above). We are pleased that the TPC is adding its voice to reject the scale of the proposed 146 house development as inappropriate for this area.

Please support TVA however you can. Become a member, come to meetings, come to fundraising events, donate what you can. Help save your own village environment. TVA is here for you and supports you.

Landfill at Laybrook - on hold

The good news that Cory Environmental had withdrawn its application for a landfill at Laybrook was unfortunately not the definite end of the matter. It *could* still be designated for landfill by the County Council in its plan, the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

However, in July WSCC announced that it intended to suspend work on the Core

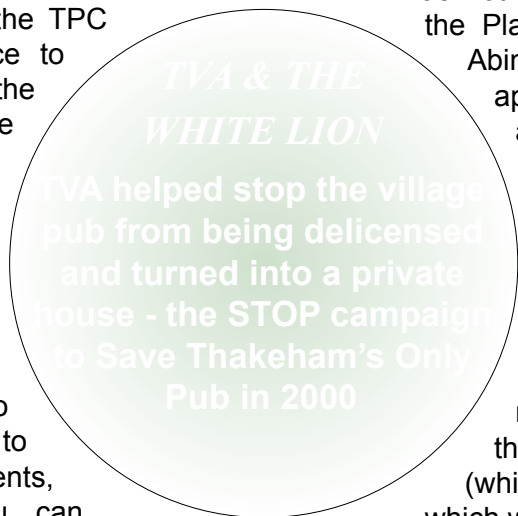
Strategy due to "a number of uncertainties about plan preparation which have arisen", not least the Government announcing it was reviewing the national Waste Strategy, which could make rotting rubbish landfill even less of an option. Everything therefore remains on hold until the process restarts, probably sometime next year. TVA's committee members are maintaining a watch on developments, ready to react when required.

Abingworth Developments proposals – latest news

At the time of writing, TVA understands from Horsham DC planning department that it has not yet scheduled the date on which the Planning Committee will decide on Abingworth Developments' planning applications for the Abingworth and Chesswood sites. We understand that the earliest date is 16 November 2010, but if the Council officers are still waiting for further information, it could be deferred until later.

Some 230 responses were received by Horsham DC during the formal public consultation period (which ended on 16 September), ten of which were from statutory consultees and organisations and the rest from individuals. By far the majority of individual responses were from objectors, although a proportion did support development.

The statutory consultees who have responded to date include West Sussex County Council, which recommends objection on highways, landscape and ecological grounds (with responses on archaeology and rights of way to follow). The Environment Agency has objected to the submitted applications, with Natural England asking for confirmation that its standing advice has been followed. Southern Water



has questions regarding foul water capability. Thakeham Parish Council agreed at its meeting on 20 September to put in a qualified rejection to the proposals. At the time of writing, reports from several authorities were still awaited, such as Horsham DC's public health department.

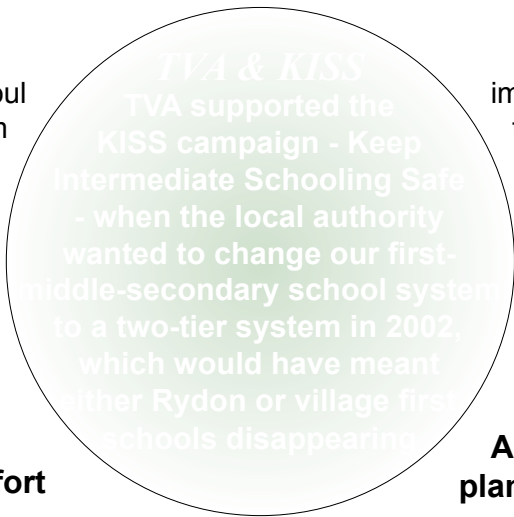
Double Southern Discomfort

Many will be aware of the application to build ten houses on a plot of land off Storrington Road between Snapes Corner and Concorde Close. According to the Vicar, the sale of the land, currently owned by Thakeham Church, will fund remedial work on the church building. Not surprisingly there are differing views on this application within our community, with the local residents mainly objecting, but others concerned about keeping the church building usable.

TVA has responded to the application commenting that, although the principle of protecting listed buildings through the policy of enabling development is accepted, in this case the application does not meet the criteria for permitting such a development. In addition, TVA commented that a development on this scale would jeopardise the rural character at the edge of the settlement and increase traffic on an already dangerous stretch of road.

But that is not the end of the story. Many will also be aware of the longstanding threat of development on all the fields between Water Lane and Snapes Corner to the north of the Davis Estate.

From documents circulated by Horsham DC, it appears that a planning application is now being considered to build about 70 houses on these fields. Details are sketchy at present, but whatever is being planned, it is likely to have a significant



impact on those living in the area.

Put together, if both applications are permitted, some 80 houses would be built on this land – what a prospect!

Another 100 houses planned nearby...

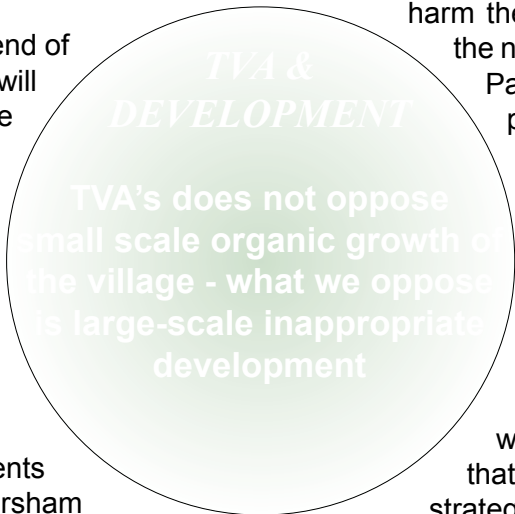
At the southern end of Hampers Lane, not far from Thakeham's parish boundary, an application for up to 100 houses is currently being considered. As TVA is concerned about all large-scale development in its environs, TVA has objected to this application on



the grounds that it is unsustainable, will harm the countryside character especially the neighbouring South Downs National Park and that the land should become part of the proposed Sandgate Country Park.

...and still more houses...

If all the applications described above are allowed, that would mean 326 more houses in the immediate area! We cannot cope with that scale of development. But that's not the end of it. At its September strategic planning meeting, HDC put the wheels in motion for 500 more houses in Billingshurst and 500 in Southwater. This is beyond a joke. And what happened to the agreed view that it is around Crawley and Gatwick that houses are needed?





TVA campaigns have attracted widespread support from local MPs and residents - notably the No Laybrook Landfill campaign which resulted in Cory withdrawing their planning application.

Membership

As stated earlier, we want as many people as possible to become members of TVA. Membership is open to all who support TVA's aims and has remained in the same format since inception - £5 per household, irrespective of how many people live in a household.

We also receive donations in lieu of or in addition to the membership fee and all income is graciously received. Fees help

to fund expert advisors and witnesses. Membership numbers have varied over the years, as have cash donations but our most recent figures are shown here. Please note that these figures do not include specific campaign donations or fundraising income.

Year	Paid-up Households	Family Numbers	Donations
2010	83	191	£1,130
2009	85	202	£2,850
2008	80	177	£115

Thakeham Village Action - Membership Subscription

I enclose a cheque (payable to TVA) or cash for £5. I include a donation of £ _____

Name & Address _____

E-Mail _____ Tel. No. _____ No. in Family _____

I am happy to receive information electronically from TVA
 Send to Mark Keenan, Copper Beeches, The Street, Thakeham, RH20 3EP
 (1st house on left immediately after the school),
 or if you wish to help you can email thakehamva@yahoo.co.uk