



Puttenham Parish Council

The new Community Village Transport Hub is now open!

Finally, after 3 years of negotiations and fund raising with Your Fund Surrey providing the vast majority of the funds, together with contributions from Puttenham Parish Council, the Bonfire Committee, the Community Group and the Fete Committee this large community project is now complete. This is despite the many issues that were encountered during the construction! Details and comments as follows are from the Surrey CC Infrastructure Team who was advisor to our project – we couldn't have done it without them.

“As you're aware, the sub-contractor encountered a few issues which have caused delays to the works and required amendments to the initial construction plan. The main factors behind these issues were the geology of the area alongside the abnormally wet weather conditions present on-site.

The Hog's Back is famously a chalk outcropping flanked by clays to the north [London] and south [Wealdon]. Chalk is an incredibly porous rock; whereas the opposite is true of clay, hence the desire for a shallow pond to drain through the chalk. During initial excavation it did however become apparent that the car park and surrounding fields are also the location of a number of sub-surface springs, exemplified by the heavy rainfall experienced on-site. The boundary line between these two 'beds' runs through the car park as springs are a common phenomena in these locales, with water filtering down through the chalk before being forced up again by the clay.

Initially, the plan was to simply fill in the existing voids in the car park however, if O'Hara were to do this following the discovery of the springs, it would only have been a matter of time until the car park washed out from below. In order to avoid this, the methodology had to be changed to widen the surfaced area and excavate the sub-base to replace with a more compact stone. This 'lowering' of the ground-level had a knock-on effect meaning that surface water in the car park could no longer spill-off into the 'shallow' pond and required a more formalised approach i.e. gullies.

As above, the same was true for the pond itself. Without excavation through the clay down to the chalk layer, the pond would be non-functional as it would drain purely through evaporation and run-off rather than infiltration. Whilst a large open-pond would suffice from a drainage perspective, it would not be very safe for a public area so close to a school, even with the installation of a fence. Therefore the necessary decision was made to infill the pond with drainage stone [to provide sub-surface void space], and then landscape to create the originally intended shallow depression.

Additionally, work itself has been slowed by the adverse weather, at one point turning the site into something more akin to a swamp”.

After all the construction issues this should be a game changer for the village and the wider community.

Mike Blundell Jones
Chairman