

DistrictNews ● from Hook, Odiham, Hartley Wintney and surrounding villages

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hall upgrade is unveiled

A VILLAGE hall that has undergone a £65,000 upgrade has been officially unveiled.

Ridley Hall, in Lees Hill, South Warnborough, was opened by Councillor Jonathan Glen, Odiham ward member at Hampshire County Council.

The refurbishment, which took place over the summer, included installing a new porch, insulation, and a heating and air conditioning system.

Quiz kids are champions

YOUNG quizzers from a school near Odiham have been crowned as regional champions.

The team, from Lord Wandsworth College, in Long Sutton, beat Bedales School, near Petersfield, to win the regional final of the Schools' Challenge national competition.

Max Wright, Imy Potts, India Mayhook-Walker and Molly Wilson made up the victorious team.

For daily updates of local news, sport and other information, check out **The Gazette website** at basingstokegazette.co.uk



Hook Fun Run has raised £100,000 for local charities since it began in 1992

Fun run hits £100,000 milestone

ENTRIES have opened for a fun run in Hook that is celebrating a special milestone.

This year's Hook Fun Run and Road Race will take place on Sunday, May 17, with three routes with different distances in and around the village.

The event has now raised £100,000 for local charities, schools and community organisations since it began in 1992.

Beneficiaries include Hook junior and infants schools, in

Church View, The Base youth club, in Ravenscroft, Hart Voluntary Action and Rotherwick Brownies.

Committee member Jonathan Ruddle said: "We are absolutely thrilled to reach this milestone.

"As an entirely non-profit making event, we are so grateful to our sponsors who cover some of the costs so that we can donate as much as possible from entry fees back to the community. "We would like to thank

everybody who has run over the years, and all those who contribute their time and enthusiasm to help make the Hook Fun Run and Road Race happen, come rain or shine."

This year's event, which is being sponsored by spirits firm William Grant and Sons, will feature a 2.5-mile fun run, a six-mile road race and a 10-mile road race.

To find out more, or to enter this year's event, visit hookfunrun.com.

Rick's a real sport

A PHYSICAL trainer and parachute instructor from RAF Odiham has received an award in recognition of his sport and fitness coaching.

Sergeant Rick Harrop has been awarded the Chief of Air Staff Commendation for his work at the north Hampshire airbase and with the wider community.

The 34-year-old is in charge of the Physical Education Flight, helping to keep fit personnel on the base and helping its sports teams.

Outside of work, he coaches at Alton Rugby Football Club, and through this has organised visits from personnel to local schools.

He said: "I was shocked to receive this award – it was a complete surprise. There are kids who live nearby who do not have access to sporting opportunities. I take great pride in helping them participate in sporting and fitness activities."

His officer in command, Squadron Leader Tom Draper, said Sgt Harrop is an "outstanding senior non-commissioned officer who is fully deserving of official recognition".

He added: "Sgt Harrop's infectious enthusiasm and leadership have had an exceptionally positive impact on RAF Odiham's Physical Education Flight, resulting in improved morale across an operationally focused unit.

"His work in the local community has had untold benefits, with the rugby clubs making significant improvements as well as reaping a haul of trophies over recent seasons."

Sgt Harrop joined the RAF in 2001 and has served at seven different units, as well as in countries such as the Falkland Islands, the USA and Northern Ireland.

He will receive his commendation at a ceremony at RAF Northolt in London later this year.



Sergeant Rick Harrop

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Campaigners sign housing strategy petition 'It's time for Hart to think again'

MORE than 600 people have signed a petition to demand a change in housing strategy in Hart.

The We Heart Hart campaign, started by a man from Hartley Wintney, had 637 supporters by the time *The Gazette* went to press.

David Turver set up the petition two weeks ago in a bid to get Hart District Council to reduce its proposed new housing figure and to stop its plan to build a new town in Winchfield.

As reported in *The Gazette*, Hart wants to build 4,000 new homes up to the year 2032, in the hope developer contributions will pay for infrastructure improvements, such as a new secondary school.

Hart is currently testing Winchfield as a site for building a new town with an eventual total of 5,000 new homes.

Mr Turver said: "A new town will lead to an extra 12,500 people on the outskirts of the existing settlements and of course many of them will work in Basingstoke, Fleet, Farnham, Farnborough and Aldershot and will have to drive through Hartley Wintney, Hook, Dogmersfield, Fleet and the Crookhams to go about their business.

"It is time for Hart to think again." He said neighbouring authorities struggling to find new sites for housing may claim Hart can take more if Winchfield is developed into a town.

Mr Turver added the overall number of new homes planned should be reduced and, rather than building a new town, brownfield sites such as disused office buildings should be converted into new homes.

By Chris Gregory

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The petition will be handed into Hart District Council, but will remain open until this year's local elections in May.

Tristram Cary, member of Winchfield Action Group, said: "It is really encouraging to see people right across Hart opposing a new town in Winchfield as they realise the devastating impact it will have on the whole of the district as well as on one of the most attractive parts of Hart.

"It will also take away one of the most popular amenity areas in the district."

Developer in bid to increase homes

THE number of homes planned for a former office site in Hook could go up.

Taylor Wimpey won permission to build 50 homes at Landata House, in Station Road, in 2012, but has not started building work.

The developer has requested a meeting with planners at Hart District Council to discuss changing the plan by building up to 70 smaller flats and maisonettes.

Have you got Hook district news for us? Telephone Chris Gregory on 01256 337414 or email chris.gregory@basingstokegazette.co.uk – and follow Chris on Twitter: @CGregoryGazette