

NEWS

Proposal to build 72-bed care home in Ringwood

PLANS have been submitted for a 72-bed care home in Ringwood with a cafe/bistro, hairdresser and cinema room.

The proposed development being put forward by Frontier Estates would be built on land off Hopclover Way and includes associated access, car and cycle parking and provision for amenity space.

A design and access statement submitted with the planning application to New Forest District Council (NFDC), said: "This proposal is to create a state of the art care facility for elderly and frail residents with varying levels of dependency and a significant degree of dementia."

It added: "The project is promoted on the basis of local and national recognised need for safe and secure accommodation for those who are unable to care for themselves at home and are generally deemed medically suitable for discharge from hospital. The development will be the home for remaining life for residents. The proposal is not a "retirement" community or "extra care" accommodation. This type of development is known to be "good neighbourly" with minimum visual or noise impact on surrounding properties and with limited traffic movements and parking demand."

The development would also have a cafe/bistro, cinema room, hairdresser and meeting rooms, which would be used to "encourage local community interaction with the home and its residents".

The plans add the home will provide "much needed care facilities" and would "greatly improve the existing site and environment". The site is located at the newly built Hopclover Way, which is part of the new housing development by Linden Homes at Crow Lane.

Vehicle access would be off the new Hopclover Way and the plans include parking for 32 cars.

The application added: "The design aims to be sensitive to the scale of surrounding buildings and its rural context and it strives to maximise the sense of openness and outlook both to and from the site especially along Hopclover Way and towards Castleman Trail."

Step forward for revamp but more money needed

By Katy Griffin

A PROJECT to renovate Sandleheath Village Hall has taken another step forward but £12,000 still needs to be raised to finish the job.

The second phase of the refurbishment, which involves work to the exterior and interior of the main hall, has started. The first element is the refurbishment of the roof where the tiles will be repaired and replaced, the battens renewed, and insulation added.

The chair of the trustees, Keith Bennett, said: "The start of phase two is yet another significant step towards providing our residents with a much-needed, modern village hall, ready for a great variety of local public and private events."

"Our hall will greatly enhance our rural village life, particularly post-Covid when we will be able to rebuild and develop our community using the new facilities."



Work in progress on the refurbishment of Sandleheath Village Hall's roof.

"In addition, our thriving Sandleheath Community Association, which organises village events and is doing much to support our more vulnerable residents during Covid restrictions,

will have a flexible, serviceable home."

The whole refurbishment programme is costing in the region of £140,000. The hall project has seen the disused St Aldhelm's

Church building undergo renovation works to ensure it was fit for its new role. It now boasts a fully renovated, reconfigured and re-equipped kitchen/toilet block including disabled and baby-changing amenities.

The first phase of the refurbishment of the new village hall cost around £59,000. The trustees hope to finish phase two soon but say that is dependant on raising £12,000. Once funds are available, the hall will be modernised and enhanced inside, including a new electrical system and insulated windows.

Trustee Mike Richardson said: "We are getting near the total required for realising our project, having recently received generous donations from both the Bernard Sunley Foundation and the Garfield Weston Foundation. That said, £12,000 has yet to be raised and obtaining this final amount is likely to be the most challenging. We are still very much fundraising." Visit sandleheathvillagehall.com to donate.

Church stays connected



Avon Valley Churches reaching the community online via Zoom

WORSHIPPERS have been responding to the challenges of living in lockdown by forming a "hybrid church".

The teams at Avon Valley Churches have been connecting to all those who have been shielding since March, as well as those unable to attend church due to social distancing. They have achieved this by forming 'Hybrid Church' - a combination of in-person worship, when restrictions al-

low, as well as live streaming services.

Volunteers have also been creating daily online videos, ranging from Thought for the Day to reflections uploaded to the group's Facebook page and YouTube channel.

Canon Gary Philbrick, Rector of the Avon Valley Churches, said: "In spite of all of the awful things which Covid has caused, there have been some joys - and reach-

ing out to so many people, locally, wider afield, from our congregations, and those with whom we've never had contact before, has been one of them. "It's been a steep, but wonderful, learning journey for us all. The Church is now online (but definitely not 'virtual'), but we've also discovered more than ever how important our physical meetings in Church are as well - we've become a 'Hybrid Church'."

Hampshire to pilot Covid test scheme

A NUMBER of care homes across the Hampshire County Council area will be taking part in a new national scheme to support family visitors to have regular Covid-19 tests to enable them to visit loved ones more safely.

Hampshire is one of only three areas in England chosen to take part in the pilot ahead of a wider national roll-out.

The council's executive member for adult social care and health, Councillor Liz Fairhurst, said: "We are delighted to be taking part in this innovative pilot which is going to help residents to receive visits from their loved ones more regularly and with added reassurance, whilst also paving the way for a wider roll out of this approach nationally."

Regular testing will be offered to one family member or friend per resident. The aim is to enable, where possible, indoor visits without a screen to take place while reducing the risk to care home residents, staff and visitors.

The pilot aims to further develop the evidence base for how testing with fast, reliable Covid-19 tests can be delivered at scale.

For more visit: gov.uk/government/news/pilot-for-family-members-to-get-regular-testing-for-safer-care-home-visits.

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