

## **Is the Parish Council in favour of adopting the open space at Shurlock Road?**

Maggi and I met with Kevin Mist on 28<sup>th</sup> March to discuss the working group's proposal. Kevin was happy to support the ideas presented, but emphasized that before progressing to any public consultation the project should have the full backing of the Parish Council and our three Borough Councillors for Hurley and the Walthams.

The Parish Council has to take full ownership of the project from the outset. It will be the driving force behind the project and will need to tackle any issues/concerns as they arise. Once the initial development has taken place, the site will be handed over to the PC for ongoing management and maintenance, on a peppercorn lease.

### **OPEN SPACE – THE BASICS**

- Why develop this land for open space?
  - To preserve and protect the land for the Parish now and in the future
  - To protect the biodiversity present and provide users with access to wildlife
  - To provide a space for the community to come together – local schools and groups can get involved with things like tree planting
  - There is a possibility that the open space land can be used to enable a better link between public rights of way – Kevin Mist has liaised with Andrew Fletcher (footpaths) and they are amenable to a plan to reroute existing footpath 23 through the open space land (see map). But the project can go ahead without this in place
- What will it be used for?
  - In essence this will be a nature reserve, designed to protect rare habitats and species
  - There will be a children's play area close to the entrance, with parking for around 6-8 vehicles. Play equipment will be natural and in keeping with the rural scene
  - The rest of the site will be deliberately rural, with a few scattered picnic benches
  - The boggy nature of the land will require some raised walkways – and at some times of the year, certain parts of the site may be inaccessible
  - A pond could be installed as part of a phase 2 development, in the wettest area
  - Horses will not be permitted
  - Dog walkers will be allowed
- How will it be funded?
  - The initial development will be funded by a combination of Section 106 money and a capital bid (RBWM)

- There are also charitable groups and organisations which can be applied to for additional funding (for longer-term projects and maintenance, e.g. creation of pond)
- Ongoing maintenance will be the responsibility of the Parish – and is estimated at £7,000 annually (to include mowing, border and pathway maintenance etc)
- This will involve an increase in the precept of roughly £10 per household per annum
- What happens next
  - If the Open Space is fully supported by the PC and our Borough Councillors, the next step will be to consult with residents
  - The aim will be to hold a consultation event (day or evening) for resident info, and Q&As
  - Full details of the proposals and the voting process will be published in the Lych Gate
  - Residents will then vote