

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2021

The Covid 19 pandemic meant that there were a variety of restrictions imposed across the whole of the UK early in 2020. This included a change in meeting requirements for Parish Councils. As such there was no formal "Annual Meeting" of the Parish Council in 2020. This report I covers both 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.

Some of the Regular Items on our Agendas

Planning

We seem to have had a higher number than usual of applications for extensions over the last 2 years. All councillors are involved in planning applications, usually the two councillors who live nearest will take a closer look (visiting if required). Applications will always be discussed at our full monthly meeting (unless the timescale for return of comments does not allow).

Other planning issues this year include liaising with BaNES regarding consultation on the Rural Landscape Character Assessment and the updating of BaNES Local Plan. Thanks to Cllrs Hudson and Batchelor who have helped with these consultation responses.

Play Area

During 2019 the PC made an expression of interest to Bath and North East Somerset council (BaNES) to "Asset Transfer" the play area land (owned by BaNES) to the ownership of the PC. We currently rent the site from BaNES, we would like the security of owning the site. The PC are still waiting for a response on this from BaNES, we continue to chase this issue. In the mean time we are maintaining and repairing the equipment in the play area. Most of the ongoing repair is done by our "handyman" Nigel Penney, it is great having someone to take on the numerous "odd jobs", thank you Nigel.

Our accrued Community Infrastructure Levy fund was used to pay for a new fence by the parking area, it now includes a "Bike Gate". Thank you to Cllrs Hudson and Jones who helped with the installation.

Thank you also to Cllrs Batchelor, Hill, Pushman and Tibbs for undertaking the weekly inspections of the facility.

Highways, PROWs and Water

The potholes seem to be never ending! The process of reporting these and fly tipping is easier with the "Fix My Street" tab on BaNES website. Speeding is a continued concern especially on Bromley Road and the B3130.

The "lockdowns" saw a significantly increase in people walking through the parish. Sadly, this brought with it an increase in littering and cars parked in gateways. To try and tackle this issue we have had some A5 signs showing the Country Code put up at the start and end of the most heavily used routes.

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Shirley and Pete Edwards have “retired” as our footpath officers, I would like to thank them for their many years in this roll. If anyone is interested in taking on this job, please contact the clerk.

There continue to be a few areas around the parish that have issues with flooding, some drainage related, some due to field run off. Thank you to Cllrs Jones and Tibbs who keep an eye on all things flood and drainage related.

Surgery Bus

The service continues to be run, weekly, despite Stowey Sutton withdrawing from the service. Thanks to Pat Filer for his continued support on this.

Specific Projects

Covid 19

We are truly blessed to live in such a kind, caring community. The first lockdown came upon us so suddenly, it was incredible how fast individuals, organisations and businesses came forward with offers of help. Indeed, it was quite a task to keep the Parish Council website up to date with details of all the offers of support.

I would like to thank everyone who has (and maybe still is) helping our residents through these unusual times.

As a result of the restrictions all PC meetings have been via “Zoom” for over a year. It currently looks as if normal meetings may resume in the near future.

War Memorial

Our fundraising has gone incredibly really well. There will be a slight increase to our initial figures because the boundary wall has also been rebuilt, however I am certain that we will reach the new figure thanks to our generous parishioners and grants from local organisations. Full details will all be formally documented.

Work has started, the new walls are looking beautiful. We are lucky that some Parishioners have contributed their time and skills for free, some have gifted stone. This genuinely is a “Community” project.

Thank you to everyone who is contributing in whatever way. A special thank you to Cllr Pushman who is project managing this.

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Neighbourhood Plan

This week will see the referendum on the Stanton Drew Neighbourhood Development Plan. Another example of a "Community" project. The pandemic restrictions meant that we have had to wait 6 months for our referendum, but at last it is here!

This is not the place to write in detail about how a Neighbourhood Plan will add a new level of planning policy. It is the place to offer our very sincere thanks to the team that has collectively spend an enormous number of hours working on this. Consulting with residents, assessing all the attributes of our parish, summarising the findings, moulding it into a "Plan", liaising with BaNES, preparing all the supporting documents that are needed, making the final adjustments that the external examiner required.... And much much more. Finally, "Our Plan" is going to referendum on 6th May. Thank you "Team NP!"

Defibrillators

A new defibrillator was installed at The Carpenters Arms thanks to generous donations from the Community Café, Pensford Publow and The Stantons Community Trust, Rotary of Chelwood Bridge and "The Carps". Pub staff will be the "guardians" and the PC will take on any other upkeep.

The defibrillator at The Village Hall has had its rusty old cabinet replaced thanks to a grant from Cllr Karen Warrington. Thank you to Cllr Tibbs who is the "guardian" of that machine and who keeps the PC updated on all "Defib" issues.

A Final Note of Thanks

I would like to formally record my thanks to the fantastic team of Councillors that so capably share the tasks of this Parish Council, especially in what has been a very difficult 2 years.

I would like to add an extra special thank you to the residents who, free of charge, do various jobs around the parish. We are very grateful to you for caring so much about our lovely parish.

Last and by no means least, thank you to our Clerk. She is the engine of the PC. With cheerful efficiency she holds the finances together, is the main point of contact and the person who ensures your councillors are on task!



Liz Richardson. Stanton Drew Parish Council - Chair