

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Covid 19

This time last year we were still meeting remotely due to the restrictions. Meetings in the Village Hall resumed in June 2021 because the legislation allowing remote meetings ended on 7th May 2021. As a PC we were very cautious in our approach to physical meetings, initially with extra spacing between seating, hand gel and masks. These measures have now been dropped but we are very mindful that some councillors and/or residents may still have a preference for added caution. The PC is supportive of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) view that local councils should be permanently allowed the option of holding remote meetings and that in the future a hybrid approach to council meetings would be useful. I would like once again to thank everyone who helped our residents through the worst of the pandemic.

Neighbourhood Plan

“Our Plan” went to referendum on 6th May 2021 and it was my pleasure to attend the “count” in Bath and to see that we had a majority “Yes” Vote. Sincere thanks once again to the team that worked on “The Plan”, and to residents for going out to vote in the referendum.

War Memorial

The completion of the new War Memorial was the highlight of 2021. This time last year we had a partially rebuilt War Memorial and still had a bit of extra fundraising to do. The auction of the Stanton Poppy artwork and the sale of the Stanton Poppy prints helped significantly with the final funding, along with some further generous parishioner donations (adding to the grants and donations that had already been received). Thanks to Cllr Pushman for his work coordinating this project.

The finished memorial looks very fitting both in purpose and location. It has been a real pleasure for all the PC to hear the positive feedback. The 2021 Remembrance Service was one to remember, it was well attended and the reception in the Village Hall after the service enabled us to thank everyone involved with the project. The PC is liaising with the Church regarding the 2022 service – and Yes, we hope to arrange a road closure this year!

Allotments and Cemetery

Thank you to the new owners for agreeing to the continued use of the existing allotment site. There has been work to tidy up the boundaries, new terms of reference for plot holders and a slight change in the individual plot boundaries. Currently all plots are taken but we are starting a waiting list. We are pleased that a category for PC allotments will be included in the Flower Show. Thank you Cllr Hudson for coordinating the work at the site and to Cllrs Pushman and Jones for their help clearing up.

Thank you also to Cllrs Jones and Hudson for keeping the PC cemetery neat and tidy.

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Highways, Drainage, PROWs and Transport

The safety on the B3130 continues to be an issue, funding is promised for a full appraisal of that road this year.

Many of the minor issues of potholes, sign issues and fly tipping are reported using the "Fix My Street" tab on BaNES website, this seems to work relatively well. It can be used by anyone. The clerk keeps an eye on what is reported and what is resolved.

Planned work to deal with the flooding/drainage near The Druid's Arms was postponed, the PC has suggested that the summer would be a more appropriate time to have Bromley Road closed for this work. Thank you to Cllrs Jones and Tibbs who keep an eye on all things flood and drainage related.

Shirley and Pete Edwards came out of "retirement" as our footpath officers, and are again keeping a watchful eye on our numerous PROWs, reporting issues and making suggestions for improvements. I would like to thank them for their work in this roll.

We have had a number of consultations to respond to this year regarding transport and transport routes, thank you to Cllr Batchelor for his help in responding to these.

The "surgery bus" service continues to be run weekly, but use of the service is very low. Cllr Jones is looking at what could be done to increase usage. Thanks to Pat Filer for his continued support on this.

Thank you to Cllr Hill for representing us on both Bristol Airport Consultative Committee and the Parish Council Airport Association. It is useful to be kept so well informed and to have a voice at these tables.

Planning

We have again had a higher number of planning applications (25 this last year) and still see a significant number that are for extensions. 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 Bath and North East Somerset council (BaNES) regarding consultation on the new Local Plan and the updating of the existing BaNES Local Plan. Thanks to Cllrs Hudson and Batchelor who have helped with these consultation responses.

Defibrillators

Thank you to Cllr Tibbs and the staff at The Carpenter's Arms for their regular checks of the 2 defibrillators in the Parish, ensuring they are always "emergency ready" and reporting the details to "The Circuit".

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Play Area

Thank you to Cllrs Batchelor, Hill, Pushman and Tibbs for undertaking the weekly check of the play area. This item is regularly on the agenda. We pay for quarterly professional inspections and continue to modify and repair the equipment as recommended in these reports. Most of the ongoing repair is done by Mr Nigel Penney, helped if required by Cllrs Hudson and Jones. The cutting and strimming of the area is contracted out. Forthcoming work for this year will include the removal of the sand and bark chippings followed by reseeded of those areas. It is a great shame that some residents continue to allow their dogs to exercise in the children's play area despite signs asking for dogs to be kept on leads.

The PC are still waiting for a formal response from BaNES regarding our expression of interest in 2019 to "Asset Transfer" the play area land (owned by BaNES) to the ownership of the PC. We continue to chase this issue.

Some Extra Thanks

May 2023 will be the end of this Parish Council term, the last 3 years have gone fast! A Parish Council is only as good as it's Councillors, Stanton Drew is blessed with a fantastic team of Councillors that are very engaged in helping our community. They all bring different skills, are all happy to share tasks, so collectively we get things done. Our meetings are a real pleasure to chair and I would like to personally thank them all for their commitment to the role as well as their help and support over the last three years.

As always, an extra special thank you to the residents who, free of charge, do various jobs around the parish, picking up litter, planting bulbs, maintaining verges... etc.... Thank you for caring about our lovely parish, you know who you are! We are very grateful to you.

I should really have said above that "A Parish Council is only as good as it's councillors...and it's Clerk". Julie is the the main point of contact for everything PC related, and in truth we would fall apart if she wasn't there keeping everything rolling on smoothly. Thank you for your helpful, cheerful efficiency!



Liz Richardson. Stanton Drew Parish Council - Chair