

CHAIRMANS REPORT – 2019 – 2021

Our current chair Councillor Ann Peal is not with us today for the annual meeting due to ill health, however, I am pleased to report that she is recovering steadily and I am sure with be with us again as soon as she can. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Cllr Peal for her sheer dedication and willingness to always try to assist the community, fellow councillors to achieve positive results.

Now I would once again wish to thank my fellow councillors and clerk for all the amount of work which they carry out to make sure your council runs so well. They don't just turn up once a month for a meeting but undertake a lot of background work attending site meetings, representing the council on outside bodies, studying planning applications or carrying out various tasks around the parish. This can take up a considerable amount of time and we appreciate all they do.

We have had a few changes on the Parish Council and have welcomed new members.

Councillor Dodson moved to Kent and so resigned in August 2019, Cllr. Margaret Coleman was co-opted to the Parish Council in November 2019 Council.

Councillor Gina McCurrach resigned In November 2019 and Councillor John Cooper was co-opted onto the Parish Council in December 2019.

Councillor Michael Graham resigned in December 2019 and Councillor Roger Hawes was co-opted onto the Council in April 2020.

Councillor Brian Neville moved to Wales and so resigned, Councillor John Berry was co-opted as his replacement.

Covid 19

The past couple of years have been difficult for all, however despite the challenges the devastating effect of the Covid 19 virus and the lockdown and the restrictions that have been imposed, some very positive and heart-warming acts of great kindness have been happening around us. We have come out to clap for our wonderful front-line workers, some of whom are of course residents of our village, and we have had time to draw breath and enjoy the luxury of time and space. You could feel the positive effect on the environment – more birdsong, less road noise and clearer air.

In recognition of all the good work and community spirit shown over the past year or so it has been decided to dedicate a community shelter and bench at the recreation ground an ongoing reminder of all the good works carried out during the lockdowns.

Although we didn't know it at the time, the Parish Council's meeting of 9th March 2020 was the last one to be held in the traditional Pavilion meeting setting.

As the crisis deepened the Parish Council took the decision, in the absence at the time of any local or national government guidelines, to move to on-line virtual meetings, starting in April 2020. All subsequent meetings have been held on-line, using Zoom.

The Pavilion has been closed for private hires since April 2020, we did have the return of some of our regular groups when the 1st lockdown eased.

The Parish Council has strictly adhered to government regulations related to the management of the Pavilion and also the recreation ground.

Recreation Ground & Outdoor Facilities

The recreation ground's condition over the past couple of years has suffered through the infestation of chafer grubs.

The ground has been treated a couple of times to no avail and therefore a Birdguard system has been installed in the hope to drive off the rooks, this will only be used when absolutely necessary.

On a positive note, the tennis court was completely refurbished and a new net purchased.

Refurbished Tennis Court



Due to the dilapidation of the old fence around the children's play area, a new fence was purchased and the play area increased a little. We also removed some shrubbery which had overgrown and cleared an area in readiness for new equipment to be installed when the lockdown comes to an end.

New fence surrounding Children's Play Area



Planning Applications

We seem to have had quite a number of planning applications to review for the last few years, from full planning permission for building works, to tree management. Formal applications are always discussed at Parish Council Meetings whenever the deadlines coincide with meeting dates. In between meetings, comments from Councillors are sought via email or face to face to ensure that a consensus view can be sent to the City Council by the relevant deadline. All planning applications are open for personal comment and all residents are encouraged to add their own views to those of the Parish Council if they have strong feelings on an application. The Parish Council also, in support of City initiatives such as the local plan, ensured that the plan was reviewed and feedback given to ensure local views were acknowledged, thanks to Councillor's Cooper, Coleman, Selby and Perrins.

Affordable Housing

February 2020 - An affordable scheme in South Wonston should be based on community support, the identification of tenants and inspection of the many sites available. The Parish Council had agreed on a need and WCC had sent the draft feedback from the site consultation of 16th December 2019. However it was identified that the most recent survey did not have sufficient responses and there was not enough community support to proceed with the project at this time and therefore the recommendation was to defer for 1 year.

A review took place in February concerning the validity of the figures supporting the need related to affordable housing and it became apparent that there was not sufficient evidence.

During the March 2020 meeting a motion was proposed by Cllr Perrins "I move that the Parish Council should rescind the motions of 12th February 2018 (a vote in principle for 20 homes only) and 8th April 2019 (that a need for affordable homes in South Wonston has been validated and that councillors will support a future development of affordable homes in South Wonston) and will only return to the issue of rural affordable housing on an exception site after a minimum period of five years, having made enquiry at Winchester City Council and of the Parish of South Wonston and received exceptionally clear and incontrovertible evidence of verifiable need and community support, the criteria for which to be laid down and published by the Parish Council.

Tree Wardens

New Tree Wardens , Lesley McKinnon and Paul Wyeth, have been appointed and are responsible for assisting the community and the Parish Council to plan and organise new planting projects.

Trees have been donated by the Woodland Trust, we were awarded 165 sapling.

In addition, the Wardens will also look at action that maybe needed i.e. Ash Die Back. They have worked with the Parish Council with planning applications related to review tree management/removal. We are losing an inordinate amount of trees and hedgerows over the past couple of years for various reasons to do with new building initiatives and health and safety reasons. We hope that given the visibility of the work the Tree Wardens are doing this help residents understand the importance of hedgerows, trees on the wild life and for our own well-being.

Rowan Saplings planted in Avenue Style at the side of the Play Area Fence



Footpaths

Our thanks go to Councillor Peal, Councillor Perrins and the Countryside Team for a positive outcome into the repair on the stretch of track by Bridge Bungalow and adjacent to the Watercress Line. Match funding was agreed to enable both parties to move ahead with the project.

It is imperative that our footpaths are kept clear and passable at all times.

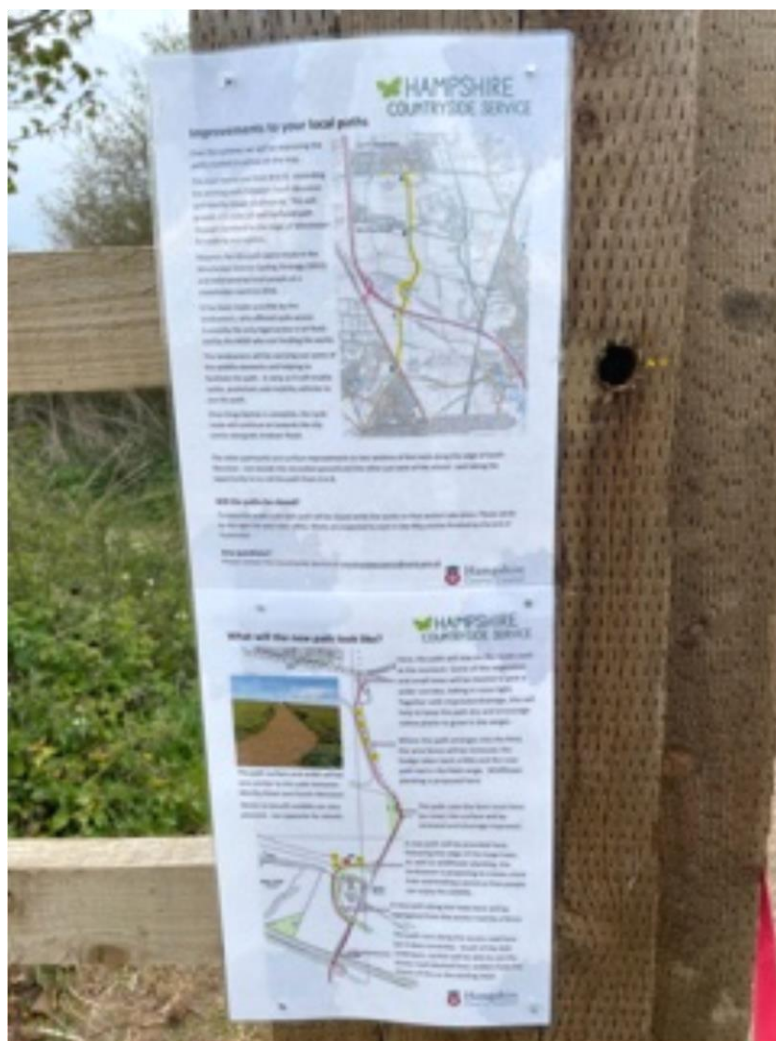
Ox Drove - new stretch of path linked to Watercress Line



Safe Cycling

There was good support for a safe cycle route into Winchester in the Village Plan of 2008 and the Parish Council has pursued it ever since. Only in 2021 did it look likely to succeed with financial support from the Community Levy imposed on the development of the Camp next door. Only the first section has been planned, and funded, across country to the Water Works on Andover Road. The remainder along the Andover Road has not yet been planned by HCC but the Parish Council is emphasising safety as a prerequisite of its completion into Winchester. In the future it is hoped that South Wonston children will be able to cycle safely to both school and college if they wish.

Completion Plan of Safe Cycling Route to Winchester



Other Matters

The “Litter Pick” initiative, started by Councillor Frank Street still continues. A few hardy souls go out even in inclement weather, and to everyone’s credit efforts have continued during lockdown – socially distanced of course. My thanks to everyone who is so committed to this and for Frank’s energy in keeping this going.

Your Parish Council is here for you. Please don’t hesitate to contact if you have any issues or suggestions. Your Councillors are still constantly in touch with one another electronically and by ‘phone and will address any concerns or ideas you have even though we are unable, at present, to physically meet. Please keep any eye on the noticeboards and the website for information about future meetings.

The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes, primarily triangles and polygons, in various shades of green, creating a modern and dynamic design.

South Wonston Parish Council

Chairman's Report



Chairman's Report

My apologies to everyone for not being able to join you. I wish everyone well and hope the future will be brighter.

During the last year we said goodbye to Cllr Neville and hello to Cllr Berry and Tree Warden Lesley Mackinnon and also to Stu Allen and Nikki Day from Worthy Down. We hope you will enjoy your time with us.

2020-2021 challenged us with Covid 19, traffic problems on Alresford Drove, bonfires, fly-tipping, anti-social behaviour and blocked gullies. We also dealt with a boggy patch and a slippery slope on Ox Drove and the old railway line (with financial help from HCC) and continued to promote a safe cycle path to Winchester (helped by many friends and allies). We might also soon be involved in the Park and Stride route to the Primary School. We've planted trees on the Recreation Ground aided by the Woodland Trust, Tree Warden and volunteers and planned for improvements in all areas. We've also nursed the Pavilion through lockdowns and Government regulations and are likely to do so for a bit longer.

On the planning front we've had two road surface crushers and a solar farm near to home and another solar farm in the pipeline. The new Local Plan and the prospect of additional required housing will keep us busy.

The Parish Council returned to the affordable housing topic, deferred from last February, and held an Extraordinary Consultation meeting and passed a motion rescinding all previous resolutions and putting the subject on hold for a minimum of five years, only to be taken up again on very strict, council-decreed conditions.

Cllr Selby, an experienced council member of long standing, was voted Vice Chairman until May in place of Cllr Perrins, who wished to step down, though not from the council, after excellent and devoted service. My illness has brought her back to the helm. I'm sure the combined might of Clerk, Handyman and Councillors and our City and County Councillors and our Tree Warden and Worthy Down friends will keep us afloat. My thanks and best wishes to all. I hope to return soon. A.J Peal



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