

Chair's Report 2019

Welcome to the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting and I will now spend a few minutes telling you about us, what we have been doing over the past year and our aims for the coming year

The Parish Council comprises of 9 Councillors who all devote their time on a voluntary basis to serve our Parish and wonderful Parish of Sparsholt

Katy Cobbold our Parish Councillor who represented the council as a school governor resigned during the year to devote more time to her children and work commitments. During our time with us Katy helped to recruit a headmistress. Katy is still a school governor and now actively working with the school to recruit another head teacher following Lynne Laver's departure. We thank Katy for her contribution to the Parish Council.

Since Katy's departure we have co-opted John Cooper to the Council and as many of you will be aware, John was one of the contributors to the Parish Plan. More on that later.

We welcome the support given to us by our City Councillor Caroline Horrill and our County Councillor Jan Warwick. Thank you to them for giving their time to update us on their roles and what WCC and HCC plans are this evening.

The workload of a Parish Council can be onerous at times which is why we have both a Finance and Planning subcommittee team to discuss the Finance and planning applications in detail before making recommendations and seeking approval from the Full Council. If you are thinking of making changes to your homes or making a planning application please do talk to us. As a statutory consultee WCC expect the PC to comment on all applications. We can often be very helpful, at your pre application stage to guide you to the best approach for a successful outcome to your application

The Parish Council meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month in the Mosaic Room of the Memorial Hall. We do not hold a meeting in August or December but if anything of importance arises during these months all Councillors have agreed to meet/communicate on any decisions that may be required. Members of the Public are warmly welcomed to attend any of our full Council meetings to see how we work and spend the money we receive from the Parish precept.

Our main focus this past year has been on trying to implement actions defined within the Parish Plan. We have met with both HCC and WCC to try and address a number of concerns raised, by residents within the plan.

You will not be surprised that the main concern is the one about roads and traffic. We appreciate our County Councillors effort in arranging a joint meeting between HCC, WCC and our Parish Council. It had been agreed that this group of people would walk the village to appreciate the residents' view of the volume and perception of speed of the traffic through the village. On the day the highways person from WCC was most helpful and gave

suggestions on how to mitigate some of our concerns. HCC did not attend and unfortunately need evidence of all our concerns before they are prepared to take any further measures.

To this end we would ask all residents to log any registration numbers of vehicles that make physical contact with them, any verbal abuse and details and photographs of HGV vehicles that have difficulty on our narrow roads.

WCC have already provided larger signs indicating to HGVs that our roads are unsuitable for them however it is important to remember that we are a farming community and some of these HGVs do need access to the farms. None of them are being directed through Dean though so residents in that Hamlet should get as much detail as possible for us to use to negotiate further with HCC. If you could all please report any information to Jill the Parish Clerk this would help enormously with collecting evidence.

A further meeting with HCC has been arranged by our County Councillor where we will present our problems and ask HCC to provide us with solutions. This is an alternative approach rather than the Parish Council saying what we want and then receiving reasons on why our solutions are not possible.

Planning applications

Many of you will be aware that we are working with WCC on a small number of proposed new houses/bungalows on the entrance to Bostock close. The size and final look of the properties are yet to be finalised and in the meantime a number surveys and pre-application work has commenced. There will be another village meeting in the Autumn, to show the number and type of building the site will allow. Please do talk to any Councillor if you would like to be considered for one of these new builds.

I understand that within a few months we will be receiving a planning application for Church Farm and for the space on Woodman Lane between Redthorne and Church Farm Cottages.

Spending Money

We are looking to replace a number of our Parish noticeboards as unfortunately a number of them are suffering from the effects of the weather and general wear and tear.

Congratulations to the Memorial hall committee who have installed new signage for the school and the Hall. I am sure you will all agree they look very neat and in keeping with the village.

The playground in Woodman close continues to be popular and its continual use and maintenance, as you can imagine one of our main expenditure priorities.

We are also committed to maintaining the upkeep and appearance of the village shop. To this end the roof and the appearance of the shop will be receiving a spring clean and general maintenance, and painting shortly.

Village Website

We do have a village website and the PC minutes and other detailed information is available at the click of a button. The village newsletter is still distributed to every household in the

village and I would like to say a huge thank you to all the volunteers involved in this bi monthly distribution.

Village Groups

We now have an active Cub and Beaver group in the village, a Yoga group, the WI, and a village school to be proud of. Thank you to all those people involved in supporting these activities and the updates they have provided which will be available on the website following this meeting.

Please do contact any of the Councillors if you feel we as a Parish Council need to be made aware, of matters that affect the life of the village. Thank you to all the Parish Councillors who take the time and effort on your behalf

Finally thank you to a number of people, firstly to Jill Judge the Parish Clerk who works diligently on our behalf to maintain our records, our finances and most importantly to keep all the councillors on the legal pathway. We might be a small council at the bottom of the local government ladder but we do have strict codes of Conduct that we must adhere to.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers within the Parish that support the Ham Green Team, The village shop , the Memorial Hall, The Church and Richard Summerfield who again this year organised the Spring village clean up and some sweet refreshments. Thank you also to the schoolchildren who helped some of their Teachers prepare make a delicious vegetable soup with extras for the Litter pickers. We plan to do another village clean up in the autumn and I feel sure that the Soup and the school support would be most welcome again.

All of you make Sparsholt one of the most enviable villages in Hampshire. Thank you.

Sue Wood

Chair Sparsholt Parish Council

April 2019