

BUCKLAND NEWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's Report Annual Parish Meeting

Tuesday, 4th June 2013

Welcome by Chair:

Chairman Trevor Marpole welcomed parishioners to the meeting and presented the Chairman's Report highlighting items that the Parish Council have been involved with over the last year. Parishioners are always most welcome at all our monthly meetings and can bring their views and concerns to the Council's attention during the Democratic Half Hour. Just as a reminder, don't ignore the **dorsetforyou.com** website . It can often produce a speedier response on some items. In particular it provides up to date information on past and present planning applications and is a conduit for reporting highway concerns.

The year has seen a change in Parish Clerk with the loss of Vanessa Wellstead stepping down in October and being very ably replaced by Sara Wood. The year has also seen a vacancy created by the departure of Cllr Mark Hammick to be replaced by a new councillor Alison Chant.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Council has continued to comment on a variety of Planning Applications the more important being a Whole Farm plan for Court Farm to improve its visual attractiveness, the complete demolition of the Old Rectory and its replacement with a new dwelling, Listed Building permission for garden areas of the Manor House and various farm applications relating to new Slurry and waste water regulations.

NEIGHBOURHOOD/PARISH PLANS

This has been by far the biggest undertaking of the Parish during the year. It has been led by Cllr John Baker assisted by Cllr Townsend and District Councillor Jacqui Cuff , and to a lesser extent Cllr Foot and Cllr Barker, with advice from WDDC. It has involving a huge amount of work by a core of dedicated parishioners concentrating in Working Groups to cover specific interest areas. To engage and elicit the views of all Parishioners, a questionnaire was circulated to every household in the Parish in September, along with manning a information stalls at both the Village Fete and Goose Auction. A public meeting was held in January to inform Parishioners of the findings of the questionnaire and these same findings are currently informing the direction of travel of the various Working Groups with the intention of the Parish Plan, covering non-development issues, being adopted in Summer 2013, and the Neighbourhood Plan, which covers building and development issues and requires Government examination, coming to a Parish referendum in Autumn 2014.

POST OFFICE

The Council has continued to make representations to the Post Office over the incessant unreliability of the service housed in the Village Shop. In April the service was relocated to a new venue in the Gaggle of Geese.

LENGTHSMAN

The Council looked into the economic viability of employing a shared Lengthsman to cover local repairs to public areas in the Parish. On balance, as much of the potential workload is already carried out by Parish Councillors or other Public Bodies, the rise in precept cannot be justified.

PARISH FIELD

Mowing of the field continues to be done very economically and efficiently by the County Council Grounds Maintenance Team.

Hedging Laying along the western boundary has been completed with the northern section being done commercially and the southern section being done by Kingston Maurward students under a work experience scheme.

A new mesh fence has been installed around the base of the Children's Play Area so that dogs are now excluded.

An oak memorial bench in memory of Sir William Aykroyd has been acquired for installation at the northern end of the field. A second hardwood bench has been donated by a local parishioner. Both benches will be installed on a hard surface this summer.

FINANCES

The Parish Accounts remain in positive territory.

There has been no increase in Parish Precept.

The Council continues to manage Sir William Aykroyd's legacy prudently.

A cost of annual inspection of the Children's Play Area has been reduced by switching companies

RURAL ROADS SCHEME

This is still active but has developed no further than the planning stage. Work was expected to start in Spring 2013, but there is no indication of a start date yet.

HOUNTWELL PUMP

Research has continued into the background of Hountwell Pump in Henley with a view to applying for a grants to restore the well and trackway. The Council wishes to keep the Pump in good order to ensure this supply of potable water remains available in perpetuity against a future public need.

HENLEY AND WHEELWRIGHTS PHONE BOX

Following a parish consultation, the future of these of these important landmarks is being considered to ensure they are safeguarded in the best possible way for the village. The opportunity exists to either list and/or adopt the phone boxes. Discussions are ongoing with BT and DCC and a decision will be made in the next few months.