

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL 2017/18**

Another busy year for the Parish Council has now been completed. While there have been no changes to staffing during this year we do have two new Parish Councillors, Mr Adam Palin and Mr Owen O'Grady, replacing Mr James Russell and Mr Bob Bather. Mrs Thelma Mason has continued to successfully lead the Council ably supported by Mrs Jennie Forbes as Vice Chairman.

Our Clerk has had a very demanding year as she undertook to study for the Certificate in Local Council Administration. This is a very challenging detailed course covering all aspects of local council work and the areas of law covering that work. We were delighted to be able to announce that Chris passed and is one of a limited number of Clerks to reach this level.

We were all very shocked and sad to learn of the death of Mr Graham Pearce in December. Graham was a Councillor for many years and served as Chairman and Vice Chairman. He contributed a great deal to both the Council and the community and is missed by us all.

We have had many meetings and discussions with the Highway Department regarding the dreadful state of the roads in the village. It has been agreed that reconstruction work will be carried out in spring 2019. Meanwhile we continue to report the numerous potholes that cause great aggravation to all.

The Neighbourhood Plan is being used by the Council and MSDC in relation to all planning applications. Discussions have begun with regard to the development of Old Vicarage Field and Old Estate Yard as detailed in the Neighbourhood Plan. This development will provide homes and a car park to serve the village. Paddockhurst Estate has begun predatory work on the site. However, there is much to be done before a planning application can be submitted to MSDC and work will not commence until Clock Field is completed.

We continue to discuss and amend our Village Enhancement Scheme with West Sussex Highways and, while the process is slow and frustrating, progress is being made. Unfortunately, the Traffic Regulation Order required to provide a safe crossing point from the Twitten into Lion Lane did not receive permission for various reasons. We have therefore included a reduced scheme in our plans so that it is as safe as we can make it for residents and allows a 20 mph speed limit to be introduced. Shanly Homes have provided funds for this work. Bringing the Village Enhancement Scheme to fruition remains a very high priority for the Council.

As you know Clock Field housing development began in September. Progress has been hampered by the wet weather conditions and by the completing of some legal requirements, however, it is progressing well and building of the homes is under way. There has been some disruption and disturbance to everyone near the development and we have been meeting regularly with Shanly Homes to try to minimise these issues.

During the past year we have continued to maintain Withypitts Pond with the help of Councillors and residents to whom we are extremely grateful and four pairs of waders were purchased to help with this work. We have also established a "Village Litter Picking" day as an annual event and we hope that residents will assist by filling a black sack or two of litter from the area around them. Details will be published in the Parish News at the appropriate time.

We were delighted to present the Civic Award to Mrs Barbara Podbury for all her contributions to the village and also nominate Mr Peter Lake for the Mid Sussex Community Service Award.

Following the receipt of funds, provided anonymously, we were able to purchase an inclusive use picnic bench for the play area. We are still trying to obtain another inclusive piece of play equipment via MSDC.

Our thanks go to WSCC Public Rights of Way Residents' Services for the excellent work carried out on the footpath between Turners Hill and Crawley Down. The surface is now flat and even and the walk between the villages is a lot quicker.

Additional grass cutting has been arranged for the verge on North Street which is used as a 'footpath' and also the verge on East Street. In addition, the hedge on East Street is being cut annually to keep the footpath clear. This work is funded by the Parish in addition to any grass cutting carried out by WSCC.

General Data Protection Regulations come into force in May and much work is and has been carried out to ensure full compliance with these new regulations.

The Council remains pro-active in its dealings with both Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council attending numerous meetings and conferences and commenting on consultation documents from them and from Government. When doing so, our main priority is always to put forward the needs of Turners Hill.

Our successful Cluster Meetings continue to be held on a regular basis. These meetings allow us to share information and discuss current issues with our neighbouring Councils of East Grinstead, Worth, West Hoathly, Ardingly, Ashurst Wood and Balcombe.

We continue to deal with all the normal issues such as:

- Planning applications – of which there have been several of importance to residents!
- Donations to St. Leonard's Church for the upkeep of the Church Yard; the Parish News which allows us to share information with residents as well as grants for village organisations.
- The provision of a Mobile Refuse Freighter and Garden Waste Freighter four times a year at The Ark and Turners Hill Park which we know is much appreciated and well used.
- Management, maintenance and letting of The Ark.
- Managing the letting of the court and football pitch on behalf of Mid Sussex District Council.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank:-

- Our Clerk and RFO who provide an excellent service to the Council and residents.
- Mr Cameron Bellisio and Mr Hugh Bellisio, The Ark Stewards.
- Mrs Ann Bolt for all her hard work on the Neighbourhood Plan and Village Enhancement Scheme and for supporting the Clerk and RFO.
- Mr Bruce Forbes for his continued support as our District Councillor.
- Mr Martyn Mason for his help with gardening and maintenance work.
- Worth Horticultural Society for judging the Best Kept Allotment competition.
- Mr Tony Cocklin and Mrs Thelma Mason for co-ordinating Speed Watch and Mr Jonathan Pratt for dealing with the Speed Safety signs around the Village.
- Mrs Jennie Forbes for organising and collating the Museum documents and displays.
- Mr Cox for supplying skips for Bike Ride day.
- The Paddockhurst Estate for supplying the Village Christmas tree annually.
- Turners Hill Parish News for allowing us to use the magazine to keep you informed throughout the year.
- Mr Jarvis for his assistance in moving grit around the village in order to maintain a full supply for residents during bad weather.
- Those residents who regularly attend Parish Council meetings. We are very grateful for their interest, support and encouragement and would love to see more residents coming for part or all of the meeting.

We are now in the last year of the four-year cycle and elections will be held in May 2019. Please do think about standing for election – there are likely to be some current Members retiring and it would be wonderful to have enough people for there to be an election. So, if you are interested in your village and committed to its future, please do think about it.

My sincere thanks go to my fellow Councillors, Clerk and RFO for their dedication and support during the past year.