

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2019

I am pleased to deliver my annual report for 2018-19, and it's only when I sit down to write my report that I realise just how busy we are for such a small parish.

### **PLANNING**

I'll start my report with planning ... Generally planning applications have been relatively straightforward during the year, with the exception of the planning application for Benhams Farm. If you recall this application was turned down but went to appeal – twice! The second appeal was not upheld and the application was dismissed.

We also saw the application for the development at Burghfield Sailing Club turned down, and this has also gone to appeal. We await the outcome of that appeal in due course.

At the time of writing there are no other planning applications for large developments in the pipeline, but that could of course all change!

### **WEBSITE**

The website continues to receive regular visits but is definitely in need of a revamp and I will be raising this at our next regular meeting.

### **LITTER PICKERS**

The litter pickers continue to do an amazing job, and we should pass on our particular thanks to Tony Holden. We have recently recruited a new litter picker, Jim Bryan, and we are very pleased to have him on the team. Tony also recently organised another community litter picking day, which was well attended despite the weather. The team collected over 50 bags of rubbish, which is amazing and upsetting in equal measure.

### **PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**

There has been a lot to do with regard to the POS during the year. We had a number of incidents of vandalism, which resulted in further repairs, particularly to one of the bridges. The area also suffered significant damage as a result of the travelers who arrived in the adjacent field. As a result we have had to survey the area to define an accurate boundary, and secure fencing will be erected around the area once the survey is complete. We also erected fencing and a new gate at the entrance, primarily to ensure that it is only possible to enter the area on foot.

We also re-tendered the maintenance contract during the year. The successful bid came from HGS Garden Services, who have already made a significant impact on the area around the POS and also Acorn Gardens, both areas are now looking very neat and tidy.

I would particularly like to thank Ivan for all his hard work. The POS has taken up a lot of his time this year and we are all extremely grateful for the work you do Ivan.

## **CIL FUNDING**

As you are aware, the Parish Council has started to receive the CIL funding from the Firlands development, now known as Burghfield Park. The total amount which will be received is in the order of £120K, and to date we have received £100K. We will be consulting with the public in due course, to seek suggestions as to how this money might be spent to the benefit of the community.

## **SUN-E**

The Parish Council were pleased to support the SUN-E initiative during the year and donated a small, but hopefully helpful, sum towards their start-up costs. The team at SUN-E has continued to organise a number of successful village events throughout the year.

## **TRAVELLERS**

As I mentioned earlier, we did have a number of incidents connected to the arrival of Travellers in the field adjacent to the POS earlier in the year. It took some time before they were asked to leave the location, mainly as a result of the lack of engagement from the owner of the field. However, when they were moved on they left behind a great deal of rubbish, which is still in the field, again due to the lack of interest from the owner. We are however grateful for the donation from the Plymouth Bretheren, who funded a new gate into the field in question. This will prevent a further incursion, in that location at least.

## **THANKS**

Finally, a few thank yous. Firstly I would like to record my thanks to Keith Chopping, who recently stood down as our District Councillor. Keith has supported us for many years, and we wish him well as he hopefully takes life a bit easier.

I would also like to record my thanks to Richard Smith, who stood down as Vice Chair and as a Councillor after the recent elections. Richard has served on the Parish Council for many years, and is an extremely experienced councillor. We wish him well as he joins Englefield Parish Council.

We said goodbye to Stuart Stanely this year, who stood down as a Councillor and we have welcomed three new Councillors after the recent elections. Diane Woodward, Fiona Jones and Peter Prewer. You are all most welcome.

I would also like to thank Elle for all her hard work throughout the year. You provide excellent support to us all, but to me in particular. I am sure I speak

for us all in wishing you well as you start your maternity leave. You are certainly going to have your hands full!

Finally, last but certainly not least, I would like to personally thank my fellow Councillors for all your support and hard work throughout the year. We have had a busy year and you all give up your time freely to work for the benefit of the community. As I have said before, Sulhamstead is very lucky to have you!