

Cocking Parish Council

Chairman's report

April 2019

David Imlach

The Council

During the last year we have experienced a couple of meetings which have attracted large turnouts and covered the accident road at the Chichester end of the village and the other occasion was the question of the future of the Bluebell. Both meetings were difficult to Chair but people wanted to voice their concerns and I am the first to say they were badly chaired.

The year has also seen the Council being one councillor short although at the latter part we welcomed Jean Jackson but at the same time Peter O'Neill was too ill to attend. Some villagers make the comment that the Council is not worth joining or else it doesn't do much. Well come and join and make it worthwhile. It is not fair to criticize those who are willing to represent the village. Look out for when the Council are looking for recruits and apply. I intend to list over the couple of pages where we are at with various activities. As well as a councillor having to attend eleven meetings per year there are several organisations that we are represented on and they are: --

Midhurst Area cycling group,

Pendean travel group,

Footpath group led by SDNP,

CDC Forum,

WSSC Forum,

All Parish Meetings – CDC.

We say farewell to Peter O'Neill who has decided to discontinue as a councillor, and we thank him for his many years of loyal service.

We are missing from the list of councillors for 2019: Richard Marks, who could not manage the time to register his papers due to the lambing season, and we hope to see him being co-opted in the future if there is a requirement.

Lastly Peter Craig did not re-register as he is pursuing other interests. Many thanks to him for his service

The Clerk

We have had another year with Greg Burt as our Clerk, we are lucky to have this position filled as so many councils these days cannot fill this position. Thanks, Greg, for your hard work and the knowledge of council procedures you bring to us. We just hope you will continue to be with us for many years to come.

Traffic Speed in our Village

We have now had speed strips positions at both ends of the village. The entrance to the village from Midhurst, we hope, will have a reduced speed limit as currently the limit is derestricted into a 30mph zone. We are awaiting feedback on the measurement at the top of Cocking hill, but we know it is definitely a dangerous area for people to cross the Southdown's way. We are still registered to

use speed indicators, but we are lacking volunteers who have found it disheartening to stand and watch all drivers brake to come through the area at 30mph.

I am looking for any volunteers who would like to discuss future ideas to reduce speed and currently I am in touch with Singleton Parish Council to find out where they have obtained their portable speed indicator from. We are arranging a **gateway at the** Midhurst end of the village which has been funded by a villager, leaving us with a healthy budget for any other devices.

Footpaths

Firstly, many thanks to Peter Craig and Richard Marks for sitting on the SDNP committee dealing with footpaths and rights of way. With regards to the footpaths around our village, we have taken an attitude of not being dependant on any council cutting as it seems non-existent and have kept them clear of overgrowth this last year. We have also cut back considerable the area around the History Column thanks to finding a new contractor with appropriate cutting equipment. A healthy budget figure has been allowed for 2019 and part of our maintenance recently has been to cut back the edges of tarmac paths of weeds, especially around the entrance to the Croft area.

Cycleways

This year our village hall hosted an exhibition by SDNP of the Centurion cycleway which currently is shown to terminate at the car park at the top of Cocking Hill. When complete this will definitely bring more riders and hikers to Cocking. The stage that has to have plans approved and costed) is to drop down from the South Down's way and on to Midhurst. The initial thinking is to cross the 286 from the car park and proceed along the South Down's way, turning left just before Manor Farm, and dropping down into cocking by Bumble Kyte, then progressing past the post office and following the path to the Heyshott turning, and then crossing later to Pitsham Wood.

Playground

£800 has just been spent on upgrading the swings, as well as replacing rotten wood on the climbing frame. This is the final part of a complete overhaul of all the equipment, as a few years ago with a £10,000 big lottery grant and a community team from SSE, several pieces of equipment were replaced, including a new roof for the climbing frame, and the replacement of sand in the Petanque area. I'm still carrying out some minor works which will not impede the use of the playground.

Newsletter

Again, this year two issues have been printed and the last issue number was number 27, which shows how many years the newsletter has been going and still is well received with no negative comments. We try and avoid such items as chairman's or editor's address and make it as informative as possible. Over the last several years, we have used Kerry Type for printing and layout, and although we pay them commercially, we thank them for the interest they take in making a good job. We are grateful to CDC for a grant of £170 which covered the cost of the insert we put into the September issue detailing the names and background of those men who did not return from WW1.

Village Hall

Although there is a separate report, I must, on behalf of the Parish Council and the village, thank Perter Craig and his team for running such an efficient organisation, and recently, being featured on Google, with a very high number of enquiries on the subject.

Remembrance Weekend

This year we remembered the anniversary of the end of WW1 and the Council donated £250 to the Poppy Appeal to purchase a SILENT SOLDIER which was placed by the central bus shelter. Not everybody agreed with this location but the reason for this spot was that it was under the CCTV coverage from the garage. We also saw a record turnout at the Service around the War Memorial. For the first time the Council laid its own Poppy wreath. The village also saw large Poppies hung from various poles and thanks for the sponsorship of the Village Hall Management Committee who paid for the Wreath and large Poppies. We also managed a bonfire in the evening as our alternative to a Beacon. This fire was in a field at Manor Farm and thanks to Malcolm Woods and Richard Marks for organising.

Village Maintenance

Item	Description	Comments
Bell Lane	Road surface investigation	WSCC highways asked to look at this issue
Clearance of old fencing by Malthouse Carpark	Dilapidated fencing needing to be removed	Hyde actioning
Old Willow tree	Located by the playing field	Cowdray to inspect for safety
History column	Cleaning of bronze plaques	By sculpture studio
Worn footpath	Footpath running alongside Bumble Kyte	Currently under investigation

Thanks

Several businesses who supply either goods or services on a chargeable basis have carried out certain works on a good will basis to support the village. I take this opportunity to name them, thank them and apologise if I have missed any: --

English Woodlands Timber LTD, Milestone Garage, MR Woods Property Services, James Shaw, The Sculpture Studio, Stanley Plastics

Lastly, thanks for tonight's catering to the Marks and Woods Families

David Imlach