

**MINUTES FROM THE PADBURY PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 14th May 2019**

The Annual Parish Meeting of Padbury Parish Council was held on Tuesday 14th May, at 7.00pm, at the Pavilion, Springfields, Padbury.

Those present were:

Cllrs Long, Dickens, Murray, Williamson, Burton, Roberts and Morris, Cllr Llew Monger, Mrs D Long, Mr T Picketts and R Geddes.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Renshell and Chilvers.

The meeting was opened by Cllr Long, Chair of the Parish Council, and the minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting were agreed and accepted.

Chair's report

Introduction

The aim of this report is to reflect on the activities of the Parish Council over the past year.

General Overview

The Parish won the Best Kept Village competition for its class. Councillors Stephen Dickens and Fred Morris received the Morris Cup of behalf of the Village.

The Cup was displayed at various village events so all could view it.

The Council continues to receive support from our Ward Councillors, and we are always thankful for their guidance and advice. The Council meets monthly.

The major issues over the past year have been:

1. The plans to establish a new Unitary Authority,
2. The start of the construction of East West Rail.
3. The planing of the Oxford Cambridge express way.
4. The construction of a compound and preliminary works for HS2.

All of the above have had or will have an impact on the Village, especially with respect to through traffic.

Routine Business

We would like to express our grateful thanks to Deborah O'Brien who stood in as Acting Parish Clerk on the resignation of Rachel Taylor. Deborah remained in post until Rosie Geddes was appointed as Clerk to the Parish Council.

Cllrs. Fred Morris and Steven Dickens have continued to carry out the more practical tasks in the Village. These had included repair to gates, tree cutting, repairs to doors at the Pavilion, maintenance of the war memorial garden and general maintenance of Parish Property.

The Parish Councillors have continued to attend various meetings and briefings on many issues which may or have impacted on the Village. The Councillors have to deal with

matters arising from other Authorities and from Parishioners. These vary from potholes, broken streetlights and dog fouling to speeding traffic.

Cassie Rigg is the new editor of the Parish Pump. She has produced a new look magazine which is inclusive of all organisations in the village. We all thank her for her efforts.

Infrastructure and Environment

The housing development on Winslow Road by Lagan Homes began in January and is now well under way. The location and details of the pelican crossing across the A413 and the provision of new bus stops with Real Time Information Boards are not at present known.

Planning

We have dealt with the usual planning applications within the village for relatively simple extensions or alterations to existing structures.

The house built at Old End without planning consent has had its appeal refused. We are all waiting for AVDC to determine its future.

The application to change the 4 & 20 to a residential dwelling is under review by AVDC Planning Officers. The Council opposed this change; we await AVDC's decision.

Devolution

We have awarded the grass cutting contract to Lynch Gardening Services again this year. It was felt by the Council that they performed well last year.

Speed Monitoring

Speeding traffic through the village along the A413, Main Street and the Thornborough Road continues to be a major concern. Traffic volumes have noticeably increased over the last year. This has been the knock on effect of the housing and infrastructure developments at Winslow, Buckingham and Steeple Claydon.

Speed monitoring through the village is continuing, and it shows that speeding traffic is still a problem to be addressed. The primary school on the A413 being a particular high risk area.

Playing Fields and Play Area

The playing fields, MUGA and the pavilion continue to be well used.

The Council is at present considering the refurbishment or rebuild of the pavilion.

Bob Gough remains the part time caretaker. We thank him for his diligence and support.

The play area on Main Street continues to be well used. The play equipment has been inspected and repairs made where appropriate.

Millennium Wood

The parish council is responsible for its maintenance and management. The wood is appreciated by the villagers who use it.

We continue to be grateful to our anonymous benefactor who provides regular donations towards its upkeep.

Crime and Anti-social Behaviour

Padbury continues to be a relatively crime free area. There has however been an increase in theft, mainly by distraction burglary and breaking into vans and cars.

Dog fouling continues to be a problem. The council have restricted dogs from playing areas and have provided disposal bins for dog excreta. Articles have published in the Padbury

Pump to try and educate the few who are not responsible dog owners.

Finances

We have issued the precept for the following year. A full report from the Treasurer will follow

Conclusion

I am grateful for all the support I have received from my fellow Councillors and the Clerks this year. The Council has had to deal with many and diverse issues. We are all grateful to all the villagers who have attended our meetings and for their help and suggestions.

We acknowledge the hard work done by other organisations and their members within the village to make this such a pleasant place in which to live.

Treasurer's report

The annual internal audit for 2018/19 was completed successfully, with no issues.

As at 31st March 2019, Padbury Parish Council's bank accounts totalled £31,424.62.

- £7,719.47 in the Barclays Bank Community Current Account.
- £5,312.00 in the Barclays Millennium Wood Account – comprised of monthly donations towards the upkeep of the wood.
- £18,393.15 in the Barclays Play Area Account.

Total expenditure for 2018/2019 was £41,016.44 which included £18,000 towards the village hall alterations and improvements which was covered by the New Homes Grant received from AVDC. A new finishing mower was also purchased in July for £3,480 inclusive of VAT which has allowed us to maintain the sports field much more effectively.

Income received from the Pump advertising was £390, contributing towards the total printing costs of £935.16.

Padbury Youth Club, Football Club and Tennis Club paid their fees in full.

After careful consideration, the precept for 2019/20 has been increased to £21,550. This represents a very small increase in line with inflation to cover to increasing energy prices.

It was recently confirmed we would be receiving the devolved services grant (£1,697 – now received) to cover 2019/2020 but this may be the last year we receive the grant. At present this is the only service that has been devolved to the Parish, but we should be aware that there might be additional services devolved in the future, and we should be prepared for that.

Padbury Parochial Church Council – Revd Ros Roberts

I and the PCC of St Mary's would like to thank the chairman and members of the Parish Council for all the support that they give to St Mary's. Especially for the donation to the church for the upkeep of the churchyard. This is really important to us as it allows us to maintain the peace and tranquility of the churchyard and as a valuable place for people from the village to come and remember loved ones and find a place of peace and quiet.

I and the PCC look forward to continued mutual support with the Parish Council to enhance our village and community. The Parish Council and its members are regularly prayed for in church services and in our prayer group.

We have much to celebrate in our parish over the last year. Although it has been a difficult and challenging year especially regarding our finances. The PCC made the decision at its January meeting to join the parish Giving Scheme.

- Discipleship and Mission has remained a challenge.
- We are fortunate to have a beautiful well used church for a variety of worship and community uses.
- Our messy Church service once a month is small and it has not always been well attended it continues to have a core of families.
- We welcomed Alex Allcock—Rouse as organist and he has enhanced our regular Sunday worship.
- Paul and Kathie Cresswell moved away and are very much missed in our church family and the community..
- The baptism Policy, is engaging with baptism families. However there have been fewer baptisms this year and few of the families come to church.
- During the year we have celebrated 1 baptism, 2 weddings and 3 funerals
- The special atmosphere of the church and churchyard also offers the opportunity of a quiet place for tranquil reflection which is used regularly by many members of the community.

Our links with Padbury school continue to be strengthened, with regular visits by members of the clergy, and church members, and Footsteps afterschool bible club has 11 children this year. Some of whom have started to come to messy church.

- Our social life has been busy with the Lamb Lunch. The church quiz's set by Angela Nottage have been enjoyed by people near and far. Thank you for all your hard work Angela.
- Matt Vincent has worked on getting the finances in place to do the work on the roof and to help the PCC set a budget for the year. It costs 26,00 year to keep the church open, warm insured and safe to use. As well as heating and maintenance of the Organ. This equates to £2,177 per month and £ 537 per week. The PCC have undertaken to address this with the Parish giving Scheme and fund raising.
- The monthly shared Coffee morning in the village hall goes from strength to strength and is enjoyed by so many.
- During the year A prayer group started and meets on the 2nd and fourth Saturdays at 09.00 in the church.

In the Benefice

- The benefice services are helping the parishes get to know each other and come together to share in worship.

- Advent lunches using +Stephens study book on the beatitudes. This lent the study is using 'Finding your voice' based on the film The King's Speech, on average 10 people met each week.
- An Alpha course has been run Successfully in Gawcott
- Mrs Sandra Cosby who is a Licenced Lay Minister joined the benefice in March 2019, and will help with pastoral care, some services, and school assemblies

Again it has been a challenging year for mission and finances in all the parish-es. And I appreciate the continued hard work of everyone as we work out how we move forward. Things that have not gone so well are the discussions on the Parish Giving Scheme and Discipleship, although they will continue to be reviewed.

Safeguarding has become much more stringent over the last six months as the diocese complies with National set guidelines. And this will affect us all.

Your support will help us to...

Continue to offer regular worship, in addition to Baptisms, Weddings and · Funerals, and those services which bring the community together at Christmas, Easter, Harvest, and Remembrance. proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ; and bring the community together to celebrate God's love shown to us in Jesus and God's providential care;

To be a vibrant worshipping community

Visit the sick, bereaved and others in pastoral need,

Care for our church building, and churchyard so that this focus for community and spiritual life can be passed on to future generations.

Where do we want to be?

Looking forward we want to develop and sustain our parish to become a more Christ-like church.

To be a more contemplative church with Christ:

- By deepening the prayer of every member, encouraging daily pray-er and sharing prayer. Encourage more use of the bible.
- developing the faith of our existing and our future congregations through our existing worship provision and exploring ne ways as we reach out in faith.

To be a more Compassionate church as Christ:

- Encourage whole life discipleship and supporting each other and

learning together in this.

- Be encourages to identify the needs of our community and sup-port them to address those neds.
- Encourage parishes of the benefice to work across traditional boundaries and seek the resources to do so
- In our social action. by engaging in the issues of the world through learning, discussion, prayer and action.

To be a more courageous church with the Holly Spirit:

- Address finance by stewardship renewal
- Intentionally Missional by making Christ meaningful to all.

Working collaboratively to develop lay ministry and encouraging the gifts of all members and involving more parishioners in our pastoral and welcome work

- Making disciples and disciple making.
- Work with families and young people.
- Become a church of blessing in to its members and to its community.

May I thank all of you for the help you have given in time, skills and financially over the last year. It is through your support that we are able to keep St Mary's's at the heart of the community and offer a variety of worship, prayer and activities meeting a wide range of needs. Going forward I hope that these can be developed. By our growing in discipleship.

It has been a challenging year for mission and finances in all the parishes. And I appreciate the continued hard work of everyone as we work out how we move forward. I know some have not agreed with some of the service changes, but there has been a definite strengthening in the benefice on which we can build as we work together.

Churchwardens and PCC

The role of the church Warden is firstly to support the vicar in her ministry and secondly to be responsible for the fabric and orna-ments of the church. For most of the year we have functioned without a formal Church Warden.

However thanks to the efforts of the members of the PCC and others we have managed to operate without. Hopefully new people will come forward to fulfil this im-portant role in 2019. During the year, we have been blessed with much support from members of the PCC and others.

During the year the roof was repaired. There is also a problem with the church lights that are well past their useful life. These were replaced with LED fittings and bulbs during the year.

The churchyard has been beautifully maintained, thanks to the dedication of Neil Gibbard with help from David Rasmussen , who with his Son replaced the fence adjacent to Mark Ayres house. A very big Thank you to them all

The Friends of St Mary's

Over the past couple of years the friend's group has diminished with many of them moving away and not replaced, Plus the main organizer Paul Cresswell moving away. The PCC has taken the decision to amalgam-ate the friend's scheme with the parish giving scheme.

I would like to say to all our Friends "Well done, and our deepest thanks!!"

Buckingham Deanery Synod 2012

There have been 4 meetings during the year. The future structure for the Deanery was, once again, the main topic of discussion throughout the year and a new benefice comprising the parishes of Beachampton, Thornborough, Whaddon and Nash is to be formed. It will be known as the Blackthorn Chase Benefice. Stowe will join with north Buckingham to become north Buckingham parish with stowe.

As in previous years, there have been discussions on varied topics, including the parish Giving Scheme to which all the treasurers were invited. Safeguarding, the deanery mission action plan and Setting All God's people free.

A Deanery website - it is at www.buckdeanery.org. Where the minutes and deanery information can be found

Bible study

The friendly Bible Study group, with members from around the Benefice, still meets at my home every Monday morning. We use study books to help us relate modern day issues to the Bible. We would love some new friends to join us. Contact me on 01280 814474.

Cleaners

During the year the dedicated band of cleaners have continued to ensure that the church is well looked after. Thanks to you all! We really do need some. Sylvia Nutt has taken over the rota from Kathie additional volunteers, however—not necessarily regular church-goers but people with an interest in this ancient and beautiful building. Please contact me if you can help.

Padbury C E School

Just after Easter 2018 the school joined the Oxford diocesan Bucks Schools Trust. A Multi School Academy Trust.

At the end of the 2018 school year the school said farewell to Mrs Duckworth who had been head teacher for 9 years. During her time the school improved academically and grew in numbers.

In September Mrs Lucy McFarlan took over as head teacher. She had no time ease herself in with a SIAMS inspection due in the early spring term and new guidelines for the inspection brought in over the summer, which challenged us all. One of important changes in the inspection was the schools vision. After much thought, prayer and discussion with everyone the parable of the vine was chosen to be the biblical reference on which the school would found its vision and values for the future and for the whole school community. The hard work of Mrs McFarlan, the staff, children and governors meant under the tougher guidelines the school was graded 'Good' which was the expected outcome. The school is in a positive place with a calm and creative atmosphere. I meet with Mrs McFarlan regularly in a chaplaincy capacity and I am available for all the school community in that role, as well as taking assembly regularly. I am chair of the faith in Schools committee which reviews all the faith based activities in the school.

Church Flowers April 2019

Thanks to the support of loyal band of arrangers, we have managed to keep fresh flowers in the Church for most of the year, however, this has become more and more difficult due to a dwindling number of volunteers. Fortunately, we do have several people who like to help with Festivals rather than being on the rota.

Remembrance Weekend was a memorable in many ways, not least for the wonderful display of poppies, including a cascade made from poppies crafted by many people from the village.

The Easter Lily scheme continues to be popular, supported by many who otherwise do not choose to attend Church. There was a small profit from the donations which helped to pay for oasis during the year. At all other times the arrangers provide their own flowers, as well as time and expertise. The Church is very indebted to them. **Blossom**

Padbury Pre-school – Tricia Norwell

I am pleased to report this has been another successful year for the Pre school. Our bookings for places continue to be strong and we are currently operating at full capacity with a very strong take up of places for the coming educational year. The Pre school has established itself as a provider of high quality early years education and word travels! The staff and the committee work hard to sure that we maintain this standard.

Our relationship with Padbury School is extremely good and we continue to liaise closely. Both the manager and the committee chair have termly meetings with the headteacher of Padbury School. This ensures we have transparency between the two organisations and enables us to work together for the benefit of the children. A large percentage of the children who attend Pre school continue their education at the Primary School and the close association which we all work at is a huge positive for all concerned.

The PFA and the Pre school committee have mutually beneficial objectives and together raise significant sums of money during the year. This can then be used to benefit both settings. At Pre school we acknowledge that the PFA are generous in their financial contributions to us and we are extremely grateful for this. This year we have also engaged in various fundraising events of our own such as participating in the sponsored Swanbourne Chase and holding coffee mornings in the village hall. Our finances have also been improved through various grants and schemes. Recently, for instance, we were one of the nominated charities for the Waitrose tokens scheme. These monies, together with PFA donations have allowed us to improve many of our resources and also improve the learning opportunities for the children. There have been a variety of purchases made during the year which have included things like enhancing our book area, replacing expensive outdoor play equipment and paying for a physical education specialist to teach the children important skills and nurture an early love of exercise. So vital in today's world. Next on the wish list is the purchase of more tablets which the staff use to record and chart the progress of the children and report this to parents.

One of the social highlights of last autumn was participating in the Buckingham Xmas Parade. Yet again, we did well and were awarded second place for our efforts. This event always has such a community feel and the children love participating.

Looking ahead to September, we have taken the decision to discontinue our Busy Fingers (mother/ toddler group). This group has been open on a Monday afternoon for several years but it has been running at a financial loss for much of his time. Historically, the Pre school has closed on both Monday and Friday afternoons but is otherwise open from 8.45-3.00. This includes an early starter session from 8.45- 9.00. We have decided that in order to provide the care and supervision that is needed, we will be offering an additional Pre school session every Monday afternoon in place of Busy Fingers. This just leaves Friday afternoon as the only session not available. We have a committee meeting this month and we will be considering this session too.

We have a Facebook presence where we regularly flag up events and activities at the Pre School. We are very aware that we have a role in the community above and beyond providing a good education for the children in our care. One of the reasons for maintaining our mother/ toddler session in spite of it costing us money to provide it. We also do our best to join in with village events such as the recent Quiz Night in the village hall. We have suggested in the Padbury Pump that if any parents of toddlers would like to continue the Busy Fingers session in the village hall, this would be achievable and a huge plus for new parents. The staff at Pre school would be only too willing to talk to them about this and offer advice.

Lastly, a few acknowledgements. We would not be able to function as effectively as we do without the wonderful staff that are so kind, caring and dedicated and also the fantastic committee who work very hard behind the scenes to support the staff and allow the Pre school to thrive. I would like to acknowledge the contributions made on an entirely voluntary basis from all members of the committee. They are all busy people, with young families and many have jobs in addition. In particular, I would like to thank Claire McHenry (secretary, treasurer, etc, etc) for her continued dedication of many hours of her time to ensure the smooth running of the setting.

Aylesbury Vale District Council, Winslow Ward

Report from Cllr. Sue Renshell, Winslow Ward representing: Addington, Adstock, Padbury, Winslow and Chairman Aylesbury Vale District Council

Cllr. Susan Renshell – AGM Report May 2019

VALP:

Officers are currently finalising the modifications before these are sent to the Inspector for his approval prior to public consultation, which will be in May/June. The modifications include site assessment work with additional transport modelling of sites in close proximity to Milton Keynes, flood risk assessment and water cycle study, habitats regulation assessment, and a sustainability appraisal. The Inspector has asked for key infrastructure requirements to be set out in the Plan, instead of in Supplementary Planning Documents. This will include green infrastructure, parking standards, etc. He has also asked for all policy requirements to be in the wording of the policies, not in the supporting text. The housing mix policy, H6, is to be split into three distinct areas, including possible allocations of sites for residential institutions including care and nursing homes. We are currently awaiting transport modelling comments from BCC, which are imminent, and then we can complete the Sustainability Appraisal and site appraisal work.

This schedule of proposed modifications will be sent to the Inspector for his consideration. As soon as this is received the 6 week public consultation period will begin, with comments received passed to the Inspector. We hope that the Inspector will then issue his report and we can move finally towards the adoption of VALP.

There will be a Members' Seminar followed by a Parishes' Seminar to explain the modifications consultation in May.

EAST WEST RAIL:

On our western section of the route from Bicester to Bedford the Public Inquiry into the Transport and Works Act Orders opened on 6th February 2019. Impact on the local highway network during construction is a key theme of Local Authority objections.

The East West Rail company is currently undertaking a consultation on route options for the central section from Bedford to Cambridge. The Consortium has recently published its prospectus for the eastern section from Cambridge to Ipswich and Norwich. The Consortium is also looking at developing rail services along the Northampton – Milton Keynes- Aylesbury – High Wycombe – Old Oak Common axis. It is anticipated that HS2 will release capacity on the West Coast Main Line. Connectivity is very important for East West Rail, which intersects with the West Coast Main Line, the Midland Main Line and the East Coast Main Line.

HS2:

At the end of December 2018 AVDC was contacted by HS2 Ltd requesting a meeting in March with Local Members of wards affected by HS2. We contacted Local Members for expressions of interest and then asked HS2 Ltd for some dates for the March meeting. We heard nothing further, despite a follow-up email. Two weeks ago we managed to meet HS2 Ltd again at a public exhibition in Stoke Mandeville. We were told by EK they are now looking at two meetings in May – one for Local Members with wards from Wendover to (and including) the Thame viaduct, and the second for the remainder of the District. We asked for some dates in May but have heard nothing further.

AYLESBURY GARDEN TOWN

The Masterplan will be going out to consultation in May/June.

EXPRESSWAY

The consultation on route options will go out to public consultation towards the end of 2019, with the choice of route being made in Spring 2020. This will have implications for the Vale, and is bound to affect the elections for the Unitary Council in May 2020.

Briefing note on Empty Properties and the use of EDMO's:

In comparison to the national picture and our nearest neighbouring local authorities Aylesbury Vale has a relatively low number of empty properties. As of January 2018 we had a total of 195 empty homes however this does include many properties that are only temporarily empty, for example some new build properties yet to be sold and properties that are being refurbished prior to re-habitation.

In recent years much work has been undertaken in dealing with the owners of long term empty properties and this has resulted in a reduction of 66% in the number of empty homes since December 2011. There are a range of enforcement options available to us including compulsory purchase orders (CPO's) and Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO's) however to date we have primarily reduced the numbers of empty properties by focussing on tracing the owners of empty properties and working with them to bring their properties back into use. AVDC currently charge owners of properties that have been empty for more than 2 years council tax at 150% of the usual rate for an equivalent occupied property. This provides a financial incentive for owners to bring properties back into use. In addition, our empty homes loan fund can be used to assist owners in paying for necessary repairs to bring their houses back up to a standard where they can be moved back into, rented out or sold.

Officers are currently focussing on a 'top ten' of properties on the empty homes list to bring them back into use. These properties have been selected taking into account their location, size, the extent of the works required and where the owner is known. This ensures that our efforts are focussed on bringing houses back into use in areas where housing is likely to be most in demand and the impact is likely to be greatest.

Since their introduction in the Housing Act 2004 EDMO's have not been widely used nationally. This is partly because declaring a management order is a long and expensive process that can be easily thwarted by the owner of the property at any stage. For example an owner only has to put the property up for sale for the EDMO process to be halted. Long term empty properties are often in a

serious state of disrepair and require substantial financial investment to bring them back into use, and once tenanted, there is an ongoing responsibility to manage the property (i.e. tenancy administration, rent collection, property maintenance etc...). At the end of the EDMO any money surplus after these costs have been paid must be returned to the landlord.

Whilst EDMO's do not provide a quick solution to the empty home situation, they are one of the enforcement tools that we already have available to us and may be appropriate to use dependent on the particular circumstances of an empty property. For example when other attempts at working with the owner have failed or in cases where the owner cannot be traced. AVDC are currently reviewing and updating our Empty Homes policy to ensure that it supports the effective use of a full range of options for Officers to bring long term empty dwellings back in to use, including the use of formal enforcement options such as compulsory purchase orders and empty dwelling management orders. Once completed this Policy will be submitted to Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee for consideration and to make recommendations to Cabinet for approval.

The new Homelessness Reduction Act places increased duties on local authorities to address homelessness. Officers have been undertaking significant preparation work to ensure that we are in a position to meet the requirements of the new Act and to ensure that our interventions deliver positive outcomes for those at risk of homelessness. As part of this we have been reviewing our current temporary accommodation arrangements and are working on a Temporary Accommodation Policy which will outline short, medium and long term measures that the Council could take to maximise the efficient use of our existing temporary accommodation (e.g. Griffin Place) and consider new and innovative ways of providing temporary accommodation in the medium to long term. This is considered to be a far more effective approach to providing temporary accommodation for those who are homeless than the use of EDMOs for the reasons detailed above.

Annual Report 2018-19 - County Cllr John Chilver

Roads and footpaths

Paul Foot has taken over from Matt Whincup as the Transport for Bucks Local Area Technician responsible for Padbury. I had a tour of the village with him recently and we identified areas for improvement. Fix My Street is the online reporting site for potholes, pavements, drains and other highways issues. The County Council has recently launched a similar site for online reporting of footpath and rights of way issues at pro@buckscc.gov.uk

Unitary Council for Buckinghamshire

The Statutory Change Order which will give the new council legal status is currently going through Parliament with final approval expected imminently. A Shadow Executive of 17 members (9 County, 8 District) will take decisions between now and the formal start of the new Authority in April 2020. There will be elections to the new authority (3 members for each existing County Council Division) in May 2020. Information meetings for Town and Parish Councils are being planned over the summer.

Vale of Aylesbury Plan

This is awaiting the Inspector's approval before a final 6 week public consultation in the summer. It should come into force later in the year. It will be carried across unchanged into the new Unitary authority and will continue as the leading planning document for the Vale.

East West Rail

Following the public enquiry the Secretary of State's decision to proceed is scheduled for September. Enabling works should be starting this autumn with main works starting next year.

Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

Currently the route options within the corridor are being developed. There should be a public consultation on the route options towards the end of 2019 with a final choice of route in spring 2020.

High Speed Two

The decision on Notice to Proceed for the main construction works has been deferred to Dec 2019 following review of the business case. Following residents' protest action vegetation clearance works near Steeple Claydon has recently been suspended.

Buckingham to Winslow Cycle path

Work is currently underway to extend the cycle path along the A413 in Buckingham as far as Buckingham School and the Swan Pool and will be completed in June.

Report on the Alice Bessie Potter Trust for the Parish Council Annual Meeting

During 2018, the Trust was managed by the four Trustees, Mrs Renee Depear (Chairlady), Mrs Mary Chappell, Mr Arthur Cox and Mr Tony Picketts. Two meetings are held each year, one being the Annual General Meeting and the other is to review the list of beneficiaries and decide on the rate of distributions for the year. In total, 38 residents received distributions in time for Christmas. Mrs Depear has been re-elected as Chairlady for the present year.

Village Hall Trust – Diane Long

The Trustees can report that the Village Hall enjoyed another busy and successful year. Regular users include the WI, the Friendly Afternoon club, the Dance Academy, three separate Pilates classes, the Buckingham Camera Club, the Art Class, the Coffee Morning, the Table Tennis club and the Bingo club. In addition the hall is used for major annual village events like the Produce Show and the Sick Benefit Society Weekend. Another regular event is the Theatre in the Village performance which takes place in late autumn and which we hope will continue despite the difficulties caused by AVDC discontinuing its support and thus making it harder to identify and book suitable shows.

The hall is primarily a resource for local people and apart from regular clubs and events it is available on some Friday evenings, each Saturday afternoon and evening and each Sunday as well as certain other time slots for private events such as birthday parties, socials, and other similar activities. It is regularly used for children's parties, school PFA fundraising coffee mornings and family quizzes, charity fundraising events and national and local elections. Preferential rates are given to villagers and village organisations and rents are kept as low as possible. Because increased usage over recent years has meant a rising income, hire charges have not had to be raised since 2015. It is the Trustees policy that rental and hire charges meet the basic running costs of the hall, including all utilities and the maintenance of heating, boiler, fire fighting equipment and regular cleaning. They continue to do so and the hall continues to be financially sound. The Trustees runs the 100+ club and hosts several social events each year like Cheese and Wine evenings, the 'Ritz' Afternoon Tea, theme nights like Italian evening etc Theatre Performances and regular Bingo to raise funds to upgrade and improve the facilities.

Some of the more notable achievements over the last twelve months.

The Sick Benefit Society wanted to ensure the provision of a defibrillator in the village and sought the Help of the VH Trustees in arranging this. They donated a generous £1000 towards the purchase, a further Grant was obtained from Winslow Lions and with a contribution of £400 from Village Hall funds the Defibrillator was acquired and fitted to the outside of the hall in November 2018. An Awareness Event to explain how and when it should be used was well attended.

We have renovated and improved the toilets. The Trustees are very appreciative of the support received from the Parish Council in respect of the application to AVDC New Homes Bonus Fund. We were successful in our bid for £45,000 to improve the toilets and they are now finished and in use.

This spring the hall has been completely redecorated internally and the outside redecoration starts week commencing 12th May.

Future projects

For the future the Trustees are hopeful that the perspex sheets that had to be removed from the interior of the windows to allow them to be painted will be replaced with proper secondary glazing units, which will be more effective in minimising noise and draughts, enable proper cleaning to take place and will look better. The hall floor needs professional cleaning and resealing, the curtains are in poor repair and will probably need replacing and so it goes on.

In Conclusion

We sincerely thank the Parish Council for the supporting the application to AVDC for funding for the renovation and improvement of the toilets and we also thank all the other people who continue to support our lovely old village hall and who attend the fundraising events. Our own fundraising efforts together with the Grants we received means the Trustees have been able to spend over £65,000 this year on improving and maintaining the hall, ensuring that it is a freshly decorated, attractive, warm and comfortable venue for the future and continues to be a great resource for our lovely village.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm