

Lighthorne Parish Council

January 2020 Newsletter



Introduction

Welcome to 2020 from the Parish Council, and a new author for this annual newsletter. Many thanks to Laura Newberry for her informative writings over the past several years. There is quite a lot to catch up on that happened in 2019.

For those who like to keep their finger on the village pulse the web site at ***lighthornepc.uk*** is the best place to start. We also make occasional posts to our facebook page for those not averse to a bit of social media. You can also be added to an e-mail distribution list – details on the *News & Information* page of the web site.

Parish Council changes

We started the year with just four councillors out of a possible five, but ended the year with a full compliment of six, our allocation having been increased as a consequence of Lighthorne including the proposed Managed Ecological Reserve on the site of the old quarry. Nevertheless, it would be good to have one or two people 'in reserve' as it were, so if being a parish councillor is something you might consider please do approach an existing councillor to get an idea of what is involved. We would especially welcome representation from Redlands to ensure that the needs and concerns of residents there are not overlooked.

As alluded to already, Laura Newberry stood down from the council after many years of excellent service. During the year we welcomed Mike Langhorn, Richard Stanford and John Hunter to our ranks. Alan Archer remains as Chairman, with Andy Smith as Vice Chairman, along with Hermione Archer as a regular councillor.

Our long standing Clerk, Corinne Hill, left us in April, with Des Thomas taking up the reigns. Des unfortunately found himself over committed and so in September we welcomed Ian Wilson, an experienced clerk who has settled into the role well. Our thanks to Corinne and Des for their support.

Planning

The majority of planning applications within the parish are not controversial, and we make no representation. Where we do take a position this is noted on the *Planning* page of our web site, with links to the various documents on Stratford District Council's planning pages.

GLH rumbles on, and we now start to see the development taking shape. An unwelcome notice of intent to close the road through the village was received in March giving a month's notice. This was to facilitate the laying in of a new gas main to serve GLH. Thanks to a concerted effort by the PC, supported by our District Councillor and our MP, along with helpful input from several villagers, this threat was seen off, with a far more sensible and less disruptive route used instead.

Home Farm continues to take up a disproportionate amount of our time, and some of us rue the day in 2015 that we succeeded in supporting the initial planning application for four houses. A subsequent eight applications have raised this to six houses, but I am glad to report that a seventh dwelling has been seen off, for now. An ancient hedgerow unlawfully removed by the developer will be replaced, albeit along a different path, with protection in place to ensure it is maintained as a hedgerow and not further disturbed. One must hope that this marks the end of the saga, and that the houses are occupied and settled during 2020 with no more applications to deal with.

Finances

Thanks to the success of The Pavilion Café the council now has a regular rental income, as well as a great local facility to complement our wonderful pub. The initial significant outlay providing much needed improvement to the waste treatment will be more than offset by the rent over the term of the lease. The new treatment plant is now protected from accidental vehicle incursion by a smart set of barriers.

The rental income, coupled with expected Section 106 developer contributions likely to be forthcoming soon, has put the council on a relatively strong financial footing. In addition we receive income from The Allotment Association and from dog training that takes place on the sports field. This has enabled us to make a contribution to the Village Hall extension, and to increase our support for the outreach Post Office.

The council will continue to look for opportunities for prudent investment in the parish that maximises benefit to residents, whilst ensuring that our reserves remain sufficient to enable us to deal with unforeseen circumstances.

Safe path to the sports field

Every cloud has a silver lining, and out of the scare over the gas main, contacts were made with representatives of the GLH developers that have opened the possibility of us creating a safe path from the village to the sports field. It isn't yet a done deal – formal agreement from the land owners still has to be obtained – but we do have agreement in principal. The site has been inspected, an optimal route identified, and initial estimated costings produced.

As soon as formal permission is in place we will work on submitting a planning application with a view to starting work as soon as planning permission is granted.

Whilst external funding opportunities continue to be explored, the council is confident that we can afford a solution out of council reserves. Hopefully 2020 will see the end of people risking life and limb by walking up the Chesterton Road to get to the sports field.

You can help. Once the planning application is submitted details will be circulated, and the more comments SDC receive in support of the application the better. Once we begin work a volunteer work force will enable us to keep costs down and so produce a better solution for the same money.

Village Gateway

County Councillor Williams has allocated part of his discretionary funding to pay for new 'gateway' features at both ends of the village where the 30mph limit begins. White fences, road markings, and clearer signs will be put in place, with the hope that this will encourage people to slow down as they enter the village. It has been noted that the 30mph limit on the Wellesbourne Road really needs to move to include the new built up area boundary. However, that is a more complex and expensive thing to arrange, so the council resolved to accept Cllr Williams' offer of funding for the gateway features in the current 30mph limit positions.

Playground

Cllr Langhorn has undertaken to monitor the playground on a regular basis. As with local footpaths dog fouling is a health hazard, but particularly so where children play. This will continue to be monitored closely, and where repeat offenders can be identified action will be taken. Issues can also be reported to SDC at [*stratford.gov.uk/environment/dog-fouling.cfm*](http://stratford.gov.uk/environment/dog-fouling.cfm)

We continue to investigate the replacement of the slide, which has seen better days.

The Broadwell

A splendid team effort saw the laurel bush behind The Broadwell tidied up, and plans are in place to repaint the railings this year, as well as keep weeds under control. The Broadwell provided a nice setting for our Christmas Tree, organised by Josette Tait and Sam Lloyd.

Oak Tree on The Green

As many of you may have noticed the new oak tree planted on the green bordering Old School Lane did not flourish in 2019 and has died. After exploring several options the PC is delighted to confirm that Peter Reading has agreed to manage the planting of a replacement tree early in 2020. Our thanks to Peter.

Footpaths

After some reports of footpath obstruction, enquiries yielded the information that County Council support is available for voluntary groups wishing to keep footpaths clear. Failing that it is a responsibility of the County Council and/or the land owner to keep public rights of way clear. This information is now available on the *Rights of Way* page of our web site, accessed by first going to the *News & Information* page.

Voluntary groups

Lighthorne is fortunate indeed to have so many residents who contribute to the various voluntary groups: from Neighbourhood Watch, to Drama Group, to Film Club, to Lighthorne Ladies, to History Society, and less formal groups that gather to contribute to the community. Contact details for these groups are on the *Contacts* page of our web site, accessed by first going to the *News & Information* page. We also have a *Volunteering* page for those thinking of contributing.

Parking, speeding and general issues

Parking in the village is a hardy perennial problem, with occasional functions at the Village Hall, or heavy seasonal trade at The Antelope, resulting in some thoughtless parking to the detriment of others. We ask that care is taken to avoid blocking vehicle or pedestrian access. If the car parks are full please park fully on the road and not half on the pavement. It is not possible for two cars to pass safely on Bishops Hill when vehicles are parked, but parking half on the pavement may tempt people to try, risking an accident. By parking fully on the road this temptation is reduced, and pedestrians are not impeded.

Members of the council attend community meetings with Jaguar Land Rover and Aston Martin Lagonda. The issues of parking and speeding will continue to be monitored, and raised with JLR & AML where appropriate.

The District and/or County Council are responsible for many of the issues that arise such as damage to verges, overhanging trees on public land, etc. Any such issue can be reported to the Parish Clerk for discussion at the next meeting. Our district and county representatives are usually present, and if appropriate will follow up on our behalf.

Excess water is an issue that can sometimes be bounced between Warwickshire County Council and Severn Trent. If in doubt water issues can be reported to Severn Trent at stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/report-a-problem/. Pot holes and other road damage can be reported to County Highways at warwickshire.gov.uk/reporthishighwayproblem. If you don't get a satisfactory response please send a copy of your enquiry and the response to the Parish Clerk.

Your Parish Council

Up to date contact details for the clerk and for all parish councillors can be found on the *Councillors* page of our web site, and are included below.

It is a truism that when all is running smoothly nobody notices, which may account for the low levels of public attendance at most parish council meetings. When things go wrong we can fill the Village Hall! Nevertheless public attendance is encouraged and welcome. Meetings are almost invariably on the second Tuesday of each month at 8pm. There is a slot early in each agenda for members of the public to speak, although we are generally relaxed enough to allow constructive interventions throughout the meetings.

Why not make it a New Year resolution to attend at least one Parish Council meeting during 2020? We are always receptive to new ideas for improving the parish, and will support initiatives where we can.

We wish you all health, happiness and prosperity for 2020.

Chair

Alan Archer
3 Church Cottages
Lighthorne

01926 651950

alan.lighthornepc@gmail.com

Vice Chair

Andy Smith
The Stables
Lighthorne Rough

07463 790948

andy.lighthornepc@gmail.com

Hermione Archer
3 Church Cottages
Lighthorne

01926 651950

hermione.lighthornepc@gmail.com

John Hunter
Kissing Tree Cottage
4 Post Office Lane
Lighthorne

01926 651730

john.lighthornepc@gmail.com

Mike Langhorn
Church Hill House
Church Lane
Lighthorne

01926 651821

mike.lighthornepc@gmail.com

Richard Stanford
The Grange
Farriers Way
Lighthorne

01926 650008

richard.lighthornepc@gmail.com

Clerk to the Parish Council

Ian Wilson
2 School Hill
Mollington
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX7 1BL

07725 071616

lighthornepc@gmail.com