

SHIPTON-U- WYCHWOOD PARISH MEETING



18 April 2019

Annual Report 2019

Reports:

Chairman, Playground, Parish Communication, Volunteers, Allotments, Burial Ground, Finance (including unaudited accounts), Wychwood Surgery, New Beaconsfield Hall, Neighbourhood Policing Team, St Mary's Church, Lady Reade Educational Foundation.

Shipton-u-Wychwood Parish Meeting

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I would like to begin this report by paying tribute to my predecessor as Chair, Bartha Pitman and Rob Dyer as Vice Chairman for the hard work they put in and the sound legacy they left behind. We welcome Jill Mavin as Vice Chair; and Tom Etherington, Tim Brunsdon and Tim Yates as new members. I would also like to thank Lisa Wilkinson for putting up with us and keeping us legal and congratulating her on gaining higher professional qualifications.

This has been a busy year and many of our activities are set out in this report, you will also hear more of them at our meeting. There will be more significant activities in the coming year including the build of the 44 houses near the school, the arrival of high-speed broadband and the launch of a revitalised village Fair on 26 August.

But one lesson from the past and an increasingly important one for the future is that your Parish Council cannot do everything on its own. We need the help, participation, and commitment of all residents—so please join in.

Brian Rigby CBE

Playground report

The annual statutory ROSPA inspection found the playground to be in a good condition considering its age. There were some concerns regarding the matting in certain areas and deterioration in some of the wooden beams.

We had to close the zip wire for a few days in July to remove a wasp's nest. The need to close this led us to purchase some heavy-duty orange plastic netting and supports in order to close any other items that need repair in the future.

Unfortunately, the memorial bench was vandalised again in August with several stones being removed and thrown about. These have been replaced and so far, no further damage has occurred.

The tunnel is coming to the end of its useful life due to the rotting of all the supports and most of the retaining planks. We replaced 2 planks during the year but the whole structure will need to either be replaced as is, replaced with something else or dismantled and the area landscaped. This however is a decision for the coming year.

There are 2 other items that need replacing – the small, black rocker bike and the wooden stair bannister and supports. These will be done within the next 6 weeks or so during the refurbishment mentioned below.

We are about to set up a contract with a playground installation company Fenland Leisure to inspect the playground twice a year. This will include taking apart any mechanical workings and inspecting them. They will be able to make any repairs themselves at the time.

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This is in addition to the weekly walk through inspections the playground receives and the annual ROSPA report. This should ensure our playground is maintained to the highest standard for the future.

Due to the age of the playground, the wooden items are beginning to show their age and, in some cases, need replacing. The ground under several items is bare, uneven and requires substantial matting. To this end having received 3 quotes from companies, Fenland Leisure have been retained to undertake a refurbishment of the playground to cover all items no matter how small that are a current or potential problem. This does not come cheap and will cost £15,600 and is currently scheduled for some time in May. It will take 3 days to a week to complete and will be done outside the school holidays.

Tim Brunsten

Shipton Volunteers

The Shipton Volunteers are a group of volunteers who meet twice a month undertaking jobs to maintain, enhance and improve the village. We have now completed our twelfth year and in this last year there have been 39 volunteers helping. We've completed 25 working sessions, which equated to a total of 441 volunteer hours. There have been 5 new members join which is always very encouraging and it would be nice to continue this trend in the next 12 months. The more volunteers we have the more projects we can be tackle.

I'm grateful to all those who have participated and have given up their time to help with their dedications and hard work. Also, my thanks to the Parish Council for their continued support and guidance.

Amongst the tasks undertaken during this past year were - the annual litter pick, cleaning the pavements of weeds in Spring and leaves in Autumn, supporting the Wild Garden and Diggers Wood, oiling the communal benches, tidying the church grounds, Simons Lane, Swinbrook Road and helping set up and dismantling the 20th anniversary celebrations of the New Beaconsfield Hall and the Church Fete.

If you fancy joining us then see our page on the Shipton-under-Wychwood website for dates and activities (<https://shiptonunderwychwood.org/shipton-volunteers/>) or alternatively you can contact me on the below email. Similarly, if you have any thoughts on any different projects that we can undertake, then please let me know. carolearnold@shiptonunderwychwood.org

Carole Arnold

Parish Communication

Social Media

Your Parish Council will soon be setting up a Facebook account so you can keep updated with the latest local news, events and information. This will also allow villagers to raise issues and concerns with your PC. Please use this new service and get involved. Go Live date is planned for May 2019.

The newsletter is changing!

With the changing nature of the information we bring you, we need to attach links or documents which just aren't feasible to send out as paper copies. So, this will be last the paper copy you will receive automatically.

But don't worry, we are going online. Newsletters will continue to be sent out via Shipton Alerts and will also be put on the website. However, for those of you who don't have access to the internet you can request a paper copy of the newsletter to be posted out to you. So, to continue to receive a Parish Council newsletter you will need to

Either send an email to shiptonalerts1@gmail.com to be added to the Shipton Alerts contact list or contact Lisa:

by phone: 0781 1174733

by letter: Parish Clerk, New Beaconsfield Hall, Station Road, Shipton, OX7 6BQ to request a paper copy.

Rob Dyer

Allotments

The allotment field has been tidied up and looks a great deal better than before. The aim is to encourage more people to rent a plot and to provide a better view for people entering the village from the Swinbrook Road. The same area will be cut later in the year to prevent seed heads from blowing around.

We also plan to hire a skip and clear away the discarded items that people have left on their plots. Another proposal is to plant more spring bulbs at the entrance to the field in the autumn.

Hopefully our efforts will result in a more attractive place in which to grow food and flowers or just walk through on the way to somewhere else.

Jill Mavin

Burial Grounds

The burial ground next to St Mary's belongs to the Church but its management has been taken over by the Parish Council.

Maintenance

The epicormic growth at the base of the willow trees either side of the path has been removed. The Shipton Volunteers have cleared the walls of ivy and vegetation and did a great job. This will help maintain the structure of the walls from vegetative deformation and damage. The surrounding walls are generally in good condition but are old and in some places beginning to collapse. Furthermore, due to nearby tree growth, sections have deformed quite badly, which if left will cause significant damage and eventually total collapse. The Wychwood Project are a volunteer group that are repairing and rebuilding these sections. This will continue over the next few months.

Capacity

Concern for the capacity of the burial ground has been raised since the late 1970's. The only area with unused space within the burial ground (the cemetery) has as little as four or five years left. Once the burial ground is closed, it will not be possible to re-open and other options will need to be considered. The Parish Council has a power, but not a duty to provide burial space. Our options, although not easy, are as follows:

Do nothing. The burial ground will be full within the next few years and burials will no longer be possible. There is no obligation on either the Parish or District Councils to make provision for this practice. Once closed, a burial site cannot be re-opened. Ashes can then only be scattered on the bank in the closed churchyard or interred within the burial ground (space allowing). The loss of this facility would be unfortunate.

Economise and Re-use. Maximising the empty space in the cemetery will allow a small extension to the existing capacity, as will converting the unused (and un-consecrated) section. This, along with the potential

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removal of the walnut tree, could add an estimated five years capacity at current usage. Most importantly and significantly, we could also reuse old and abandoned graves within the Existing Burial Ground. There are many spaces that are abandoned and do not have headstones which could provide several decades worth of capacity. However, the possibility that one plot is used for more than one person (a widespread practice in cities) is a contentious one.

Land Acquisition. The only land in the ownership of the Parish Council is the Allotment site. This would require the consent of the Secretary of State (under the Allotment Act) and this would be a difficult, costly and lengthy process. The nearby Glebe Field on the Ascott Rd is owned by the church, who sadly are unwilling to negotiate its use for this purpose. The Council could acquire land elsewhere, but this process would be time consuming and costly, even if appropriate land were found. It would also not have the proximity to St Mary's after the funeral service.

None of the options available are perfect and all have disadvantages, but time and diminishing capacity means a decision will be required reasonably soon. The Council therefore invites comment and discussion.

Tom Etherington

Finance

Shipton PC's income for the financial year 2018-19 was £46,293. The PC received a generous donation from a resident of £2,300 to purchase radar speed equipment to be used by the Speedwatch team. The now defunct Shipton fete committee transferred their remaining funds of £604 to the PC account as the new Shipton Fair is now under the PC's remit. The carol service raised £403 which was donated to Wychwoods Saplings and Bods.

Expenditure: as usual the major items of expenditure are the grass cutting and the clerk's salary. Various items have been purchased this year such as the Speedwatch equipment mentioned above and walkie talkies for the team, a new dog poo bin for Station Road and a new litter bin for the playground. The PC invested in a new laptop for use by the clerk and a significant amount of money has been allocated to the brand new Shipton Fair. Village maintenance has included work at the Burial Ground and a major clear-up at the allotments (not yet paid for).

Donations were given to support Wychwood Wild Garden, Wychwood Bowls Club and to improve Dog Kennel Lane amongst others.

As at 31st March 2019 the PC bank accounts held £104,195. Nearly £16,000 will be spent over the next month on playground maintenance and new equipment; £1,000 is due for the work already completed at the allotments; the reduced speed limit on Station Road, the signage and a new VAS are also due to be implemented in the next few months, at the cost of £8,600. Due to the healthy reserves, the PC took the decision to run a deficit budget again for the financial year 2019-20.

Full accounts are on the next page

RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS ACCOUNT - YEAR
ENDED 31st March 2019

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| INCOME | 2018-19 | 2017-18 |
| Precept | 34,497 | 33,279 |
| Council Tax Grant | 446 | 489 |
| Allotment Rents and Wayleave | 1,042.09 | 1088.85 |
| Bank Interest | 233.09 | 77.94 |
| Burial Fees | 1,791 | 1,225.00 |
| Carol Service collection | 483.6 | 0 |
| Grant for grass cutting | 1,761.30 | 1,761.30 |
| Other Income | 427.1 | 47.54 |
| VAT repayment | 2707.53 | 3,092.42 |
| Playground Equipment Project | 0 | 0 |
| Grants | 2,904.22 | 3,100 |
| TOTAL INCOME | 46,292.93 | 44,161.05 |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Council Administration | 12,439.35 | 11063.03 |
| Parish Maintenance | 4,304.95 | 6,442.61 |
| Subscriptions/Memberships | 286.54 | 328.4 |
| Allotments | 228.85 | 2,114.14 |
| Recreation Field/Play Area | 2,393.17 | 3,889.43 |
| Burial Ground/Church Yard | 1,800.34 | 2,055 |
| Donations to Local organisations | 2,119.76 | 1,610 |
| Donations Community bus | 0 | 1,818 |
| New Beaconsfield Hall subsidy | 2,600 | 2,600 |
| VAT paid | 2,968.78 | 3,024.34 |
| Library Support | 2,120.94 | 2,044.12 |
| Other expenditure | 0 | 0 |
| Projects (Speedwatch equipment) | 2,300 | 1,751 |
| Shipton fete | 1,721.20 | 0 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 35,283.88 | 38740.07 |
| SURPLUS | 11,009.05 | 5,420.98 |
| GENERAL FUND | | |
| Balance as at 1 April | 93,186.23 | 87,765.25 |
| Add total Income | 46,292.93 | 44,161.05 |
| Less Total expenditure | 35,283.88 | 38740.07 |
| Balance as at 31 March | <u>104,195.28</u> | <u>93,186.23</u> |
| REPRESENTED BY: | | |
| Current account | 33,849.29 | 23,073.33 |
| Deposit account | 70,345.99 | 70,112.90 |
| Total | 104,195.28 | 93,186.23 |

Wychwood Surgery

New homes

The surgery is taking steps to balance the workload of the 100 new families that will be moving into the Wychwoods by removing patients from their list who have moved out of the practice area but not re-registered elsewhere and there are rather more of those than first thought.

New services

With the latest new Contract, all surgeries must move to work together in clusters of 30000-50000 patients, Wychwood is in conversations with other rural practices - Chipping Norton, Bloxham, Deddington, Cropredy and Sibford. Through that the Government want to see more community pharmacists (they will be reviewing patient's medications, ensuring safe optimal prescribing, compliance, concordance etc) and a move to social prescribing with surgeries providing "sign-posters", staff members who can help direct patients to locally available support and social and exercise opportunities. Over time this is likely to expand to include other roles like physio, nurse prescribers and paramedics.

Local challenges

The challenges are less local but more the continuous drive for change from politicians and the travelling back around the same circle again and again. The greatest risk to all surgeries at this time is recruitment - the nation is short of GPs; each surgery is a recruitment failure away from disaster.

Integration of health and social care

This was integrated, then separated now it seems to be trying to re-integrate but is still run separately (NHS England v Councils). Not sure we are going to see much change for some time; unless there is a flow of funding into care and better pay for carers there will always be a shortfall of carers. The Paddocks is working well – it is able to maintain people's independence whilst providing care on site as and when needed.

Dr Brown's wants/wishes

Dr Brown's biggest wish is for one integrated webpage, kept up to date that shows all social events, coffee mornings, educational events, exercise classes etc available within the Wychwoods, rather than bits and pieces on half a dozen different websites. It would be wonderful to be able to point people to one place to look or to bring up one page and be able to provide them with the details of the things that interested them. It has to be easy for some people to find things or they stumble at the first hurdle. Chris Trotman has been trying to work on this, but she suspects that each organisation is somewhat protective of their own websites so are perhaps not keen on unifying the activities. But she puts forward the argument that we should all be looking to offer what is best for the entire community not worry about the ownership/power battles!

She would love to see Generation Games deliver Strength and Balance classes in the Wychwoods.

www.generationgames.org.uk/ She would like:

- to have a pool of volunteers who are happy to visit/chat with the more lonely/housebound people.
- if there were people who regularly attend the coffee mornings who would be able to collect the more isolated/housebound and take them to these events.
- to have more exercise opportunities for people - group walk, jog, cycle and not just all the younger people.

- to have help from people willing to be volunteer drivers to get people to and from the surgery and for those who have the time for journeys to and from hospital appointments.
- To have a list of confident 4x4 drivers who would be happy to help on those odd occasions we have really serious snow.
- To have health buddies - people with healthy eating/exercise habits willing to buddy/mentor those who need encouragement/guidance

Dr Nina Brown

New Beaconsfield Hall

The hall had a moderately successful year in 2018. Use of the hall by our regular users reduced a little compared with previous years and the use of the hall for weddings and parties was still less than we would wish. The Bumblefoot Rock Project, which has been going very well thanks to Lee's personal efforts, is making a positive contribution to our income. In 2018, income from hall hiring was at 93% of budget, but the increase in the Rock Project net income compensated for that.

It is unfortunate that several of our regular groups at the hall that serve young people have left us over the last two years. The latest being the Youth Club which has ceased operation. Set against this, the playing field is used much more than in the past and, of course, the Rock Project is specifically for the young. In terms of improving hall utilisation, our priority is to attract groups which cater for the young.

On 14th July 2018 the hall celebrated its 20th anniversary with well attended events during the afternoon and evening.

Each year we update our medium-term plan to forecast major expense items and cashflows over the next 10 years. This showed that we can expect the hall's finances to be satisfactory in future years in spite of significant spend being required to keep the fabric and the contents of the hall to a high standard as the hall ages and numerous items need replacement or refurbishment. This is provided we can keep income level at that which we have seen in the recent past.

An essential element in our financial stability is the annual subsidy paid to the hall by the Parish Council. I would like to thank the Councillors for their continued support each year.

Paul Chantry Chairman

Neighbourhood Policing

Over the last year I have had the challenge of covering the area on my own. In the Wychwood area we have seen our share of hare coursing and burglaries. This year I am pleased to say that we have 2 more officers here at Chipping Norton, so visibility and presence will increase.

PC Rob Webb who has worked out of Chipping Norton before, already has a lot of local knowledge and knows the area well. He is also the trained Wildlife Officer who regularly makes contact with the rural community and will deal with wildlife crime.

PCSO Maurice Trimmings is fresh out of the box and is in his last few weeks of training. From what I have seen he is keen to get stuck in develop his local knowledge of the area.

PCSO Wes Smith

Vicar's Report

Angela and I now feel very much at home living in Shipton, everyone has been very welcoming, and we are thoroughly enjoying life here.

When I arrived, the bells were leaving! However, the bells are now back and almost ready to be rung for the first time. We are very grateful to everyone who helped in the fundraising and lending a hand fitting the bells. In order for them to be rung for the first time we need to carry out some remedial work on the roof of St Mary's church.

Following the unfortunate coming away of one of the roof timbers a survey of the roof revealed some areas of death watch beetle and wet rot. The structural engineer advised us to keep the church shut as in his opinion there was a possibility of further failure of roof timbers.

Scaffold will go up shortly to enable us to use the church again, but a major fundraise will have to be undertaken to pay for the repairs, the costs for the present have not been fully estimated, but will no doubt be high. We hope to get some grant funding, but sadly contrary to popular belief expressed by a number of people who have spoken to me neither the Church of England or "the government" will be paying for the repairs.

Given this synopsis of my first 5 months as your vicar, I fear the next year will be mostly about organising events and activities aimed at raising funds. But raising money does not have to be dull, so hopefully we will have some exciting events ahead of us.

Hand in hand with all of this I still have Milton, Fifield and Idbury to care for and we have some plans in the pipeline for the life of the church in the Benefice.

Rev Geoffrey Clements

Lady Reade Educational Foundation Charity

The Lady Reade Educational Foundation Charity was endowed by Dame Harriot Reade of Shipton Court following her death in 1811. The aim of the foundation is to provide grants to students in the historic parish of Shipton (including Shipton, Milton, Bruern, Leafield, Lyneham, and Ramsden) who plan to attend college or university. The funds are intended to help the recipients to purchase books or other educational materials required for their course.

The charity is run by St. Mary's Church, Shipton, and the trustees meet each May to award grants. The Reverend Geoffrey Clement, as vicar of the Wychwood Benefice, is the Chair of the Trustees, and Victoria Martin serves as Secretary. The remaining trustees are Peter Rawlins of Milton, Anita Hollingdale of Shipton, and the Reverend Brian Ford of Ramsden.

In 2018, the Foundation awarded eight grants of £100 each to four students from Shipton, two students from Milton, one from Leafield, and one from Ramsden. We received funding from the Shipton-under-Wychwood Parish Council, the Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council, the Milton-under-Wychwood Welfare Trust, and Ramsden Church, as well as a handful of private donors.

On behalf of the trustees, we would like to thank the Shipton-under-Wychwood Parish Council for its continuing support. We are proud to have been able to provide grants to all eligible applicants, which your contributions have allowed.

Victoria Martin

Wychwood Primary School

Our performance results from the end of the academic year 2018 improved once again and were our best results under the new testing regime introduced in 2015. Children achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths at the end of Year 6 was 76% compared with 64% nationally. We are very pleased with our continued improvements across the school. This includes improving outcomes for our youngest children who start with us in Reception. All signs continue indicating that we are out-performing schools nationally and more importantly we continue to improve.

It has been a busy year once again as plans to improve our grounds continued apace. Last time I reported we added a much-needed adventure play space to our school playground and the children, with the help of volunteers, erected three willow domes on the field providing much needed shade during the summer months.

This year, we have just completed an all-weather pitch (we are still awaiting the installation of lights) with a generous donation from Lord Glendonbrook. The children will benefit from more space at playtimes and lunchtime as well as using the pitch for Physical Education. We are looking forward to hosting sporting competitions with partnership primary schools and to encourage community use.

Currently work is underway at the front of the school for our youngest children as we replace their outdoor space. We have designed an area where children can use the equipment all year around. We have fundraised for this project through our PTA and have received additional support from Liz Leffman. The children should return after the Easter break to find a new area to explore!

Governors and the school management team continue to try and manage the traffic outside the school. We have changed our drop off times to allow for a more staggered start to try and ease traffic congestion. For our families that do walk to school and children walking alone, we are continuedly concerned about safe places to cross, specifically on the Shipton side. We are encouraged that a zebra crossing is being considered.

Many thanks for your continuing interest and support.

Joseph Rubba Headteacher