

**THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF PILTON
WAS HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
ON WEDNESDAY 20th APRIL 2016 AT 7.30pm**

Present: Councillors	Robert Kearle (Chairman) Roger Noble (Vice-Chairman) Steve Bowler David Drew Jean Foley John Howe Stephen Kearle Joe King
	Karen Buckley (Clerk/RFO)
SCC representative	Nigel Woollcombe-Adams

Members of the public present - 20

APOLOGIES: were received from MDC representative Nigel Hewitt-Cooper

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: held on the 22nd April 2015 were approved and signed.

MATTERS ARISING: None

REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL 2015/16:

Councillor Kearle welcomed everyone to the meeting and reported on another busy year.

Planning: 40 planning applications were processed during the year. A few were controversial but most rather easier to deal with.

Fords and Bridges: A great job has been done with restoring the Ford Bridge, now we can move to restoring the Cockmill Ford Bridge

Footpaths: The Parish footpaths are in great shape, thanks to Steve Bowler and the ASBO's team.

Burial Ground: The burial ground is looking great thanks to Dave Drew and Ron England.

Litter pick: The village litter pick took place. Thanks to all who took part.

A big thank you to all the Councillors

Thanks were given to Steve Bowler for his work with restoring the Fingerposts.

Councillor Kearle thanked Scott Baldwin for updating the website

Thanks were given to the Clerk for her hard work and dedication and to fellow Councillors for their dedication to the cause.

A vote of thanks were given to the Chairman, Councillors and Clerk and a reminder that there was the AGM on Sunday after the opening of the Multi Use Games Area.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Treasurer presented the audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016. The accounts are completed and will go to the Internal Auditor in the next couple of weeks, followed by the External Auditor. The precept for 2016/17 remains at £8000. Burial fees were up on last year and the maintenance cost of the burial ground were down. The Clerks salary was more than last year due to the crossover between the outgoing Clerk and the incoming Clerk. The overall spend on sundries was down. There was the need to pay election cost and £2442.36 was spent on the Fingerpost. The closing balance at the end of the year was £32459.52. A commitment is in place for £10,000 towards the multi-use games area.

SCHOOL REPORT: Councillor John Howe read the school report.

The Summer Term was a notable term as they said goodbye to Mrs Caroline Amor after 26 years service. The stage 2 end of term performance was fantastic and 'Ye Ha!' showcased a very talented

Year 6. At the end of term they said goodbye to their Year 6 who achieved an excellent set of SATs results.

Summer events went ahead despite weather related glitches including year 6 residential, sports day and sports week, country dancing on the Cathedral Green and forest school days were highlights.

The Autumn Term began well and the school continues to thrive with a full reception class and a rising roll. The Year 6 children were excellent hosts at the open morning and led the Harvest Festival and Carol Service superbly.

The term ended with the infant nativity 'Gold, Frankincense and Mirth'. There was a traditional Carol Service with Year 6. The Choir was invited to sing at the Advent Service in Pilton Church and 'stole the show'.

The Spring Term was very busy with fewer distractions than the other terms. One of the highlights of the term was the 'Colour and Light' science based enrichment week. Their annual book week coincided with their visiting book fair and World Book Day was another highlight. The Children dressed up as book characters and created books of their own.

The term ended with an Easter Service. An important part of the service was the sharing of food and the children loved the mini-eggs!

At this time the school have 206 pupils on roll and an over-subscribed reception class for September, which is good but they can only admit 30. They still have a small number of available spaces across the school that they need to fill to meet their 'magic' number of 210 pupils as this directly affects the levels of funding and the opportunities they can offer pupils. They have 49 children on roll who live in Pilton, East & West Compton or Pylle.

Thanks were given to the Parish Council for agreeing to the request for funding to enable an adult to travel on the Pilton Bus to and from school each day. So far there has been no interest but the funds have been ring-fenced.

FOOTPATH REPORT: A Status Report was provided by John Pratt (attached)

Councillor Steve Bowler stated that there are around 50 footpath/bridleways from the Fosse Way to Lower Westholme and Old Wells Road to Stickleball Hill.

Responsibilities to keep footpaths clear and well maintained and stiles and bridges in place and in good working order is with the landowner. Not all do so and therefore some maintenance and repair work is done by other groups or organisations.

- Pilton ASBO's – group of local people who keep footpaths clear and walkable
- Mendip Ramblers – may replace stiles
- Bridleway users – get involved with bridleway maintenance and repairs
- Somerset County Council – Major work, bridge and stile repair and replacement.

Pilton ASBO's work is overseen by the footpath sub-committee chairman and comply with risk assessment, health and safety requirements and procedures. Their annual report shows that they tackled 16 different footpaths for 118 hours work. They get some financial backing from the Parish Council and the Pilton Show grants committee.

If anyone has any issues with any Pilton footpaths they should contact Councillor Steve Bowler, any Parish Councillor or Somerset County Council. If it is a simple maintenance issue, the work could be scheduled with the ASBO team. Scott Baldwin will be changing the map on the website so you can pick a footpath to walk.

The signposts look wonderful and really stand out, this includes the milestones.

Councillor Bowler thanked all members of the ASBO Team and footpath sub-committee for the work they have done.

GABRIELS ORCHARD REPORT – This was read by Councillor Joe King.

The last year has been a busy one for Gabriel's Orchard and its volunteers. Well attended monthly working parties have been well attended to carry out the various seasonal tasks.

The size of the fruit crop was very good last year, 275 bottles of orchard apple juice and made over 200 litres of cider, both of which continue to sell well and create an income stream for the orchard. Apples were able to be juiced and bottled using their equipment. A big 'thank you' was given to Philip and Gill Eavis, who store the equipment and host the juicing and bottling sessions. Thanks was also given to Maurice and Christine Davies, who store the finished product.

A student from Sheffield Hallam University is very interested in the orchard as it gives excellent opportunities to study different varieties of 'heritage' apples and their rates of growth.

A new development this year was to hold a traditional Wassail in conjunction with Pilton Village History Group. This was masterminded by Steve and Maureen Tofts, and included Morris Dancers and a mummer's play at the Village Hall, followed by a blazing brazier, bar and traditional ceremony up at Gabriel's Orchard complete with Pilton Choir. It was estimated that over 200 people attended. It was such a success that they have been asked to hold it again next year.

Gabriel's Orchard is run by its Managing Trustees, these are:

Richard Raynsford (Chairman), Jim Dowling (Treasurer), Joe King (Secretary), Christine Davies, Chris Nicholson and Mike Mayhew.

Thanks were given to Councillor King and everyone involved in Gabriel's Orchard.

SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT – Nigel Woolcombe-Adams

Rivers board is now up and running and waiting to be self precepting and people complained that they had to contribute.

Small businesses have been badly affected by flooding and the press stating Somerset was not open for business.

Adult Social Care is the largest expenditure and the budget is only kept up with inflation not growth. Care work contracts affected by the increase in the living wage as this increase costs. Somerset Together, Somerset County Council and the CCG for NHS are pooling their budget and trying to ease the older population bed blocking to ease budgets and getting more health care professionals working in the community and by seeing Nurse Practitioners rather than your GP.

Last year's problem with Child Care Senior positions have been eased with the positions being filled and progress to date is satisfactory. Forty more social workers have been recruited but there is a chronic shortage in the country.

Devolution South West has formed partnerships with Somerset, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. There have been positive noises from Whitehall but Government has said that before devolution of services and money they want an elected Mayor, which is difficult as one person would have to oversee the entire South West.

Finances at Somerset County Council are serious and balancing the budget more difficult.

Hinkley Point is no further along.

Thanks was given to Nigel Woolcombe-Adams for all the work he does.

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT – Councillor Steven Kearle read the report.

Thanks was given to Nigel Hewitt-Cooper for his diligent work and wished him a speedy recovery. Nigel Woolcombe-Adams stated he was much improved.

It's been another challenging year for local authorities, although as far as Mendip is concerned our neighbours are in far worse shape than we find ourselves in. In May last year Nigel Hewitt-Cooper held his seat for a third term, something he feels honoured to be charged with and this came with the promotion to Chairman of the Planning Board.

Going forward there will be challenges, but feel well able to cope. There is still a healthy emergency fund of around £3 million. Staffing levels are approximately 180.

MDC have opted to raise council tax for the first time in several years, imposing a 1.75% rise on the Mendip proportion of the council tax. Each 1% rise represents an increase in funding to Mendip of around £60k.

Last June, Fusion took over the running of the leisure centres. As part of this contract they agreed an investment of £1 million and have already spent in excess of this.

The offices in Shepton Mallet, known as The Hub, now have over 30 different public service providers occupying the excess space, including Somerset County Councils, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Capita, The Landscape Group, South West Audit Partnership, Shepton Mallet Town Council, Health Connections Mendip, To Health and Mendip YMCA. This unique project enables MDC to draw revenue on the form of rent for space they weren't using,

Mendip in one of the county's top performers when it comes to encouraging the building of much needed new homes and bringing empty properties back into use. New government figures show that there were 620 new homes built between October 2014 and 2015. Of these 252 were affordable homes – the highest figure in the county. Mendip brought 35 empty homes back into use during the same period.

MDC's enforcement capability has recently doubled and there is a renewed drive to tackle a couple of fly tipping hotspots in Frome which cost over £10k per year to clear up. Enforcement is also to be thanked for its continued work on the land known as Cock and Bull Drove as this edges towards its conclusion.

Consultation on the second part of the local plan took place, this aspect will look at where we allow development in the future. Once the plan is complete it will be the subject of further consultation, inspection and finally adoption.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS/QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR:

Councillor John Howe advised that two meetings have been held with Glastonbury Festival Limited and there is a good spirit of co-operation.

The amount of traffic using Neat Lane/Copse Hill. There is heavy traffic going up Copse Hill and the road is unsuitable. There were concerns that there will be an accident. This needs to be monitored however Pilton Parish Council has no power to restrict use if drivers have a valid driving licence.

The Traffic Survey will be completed by Sandra Howe.

Councillor John Howe has driven around the village with Neil Corp and made him aware of the defects. These will be resolved when the budget is available.

The Clerk was asked to put in the Roundabout a note to residents not to park in or drive on verges.

Landowners are responsible to fill in holes and the Clerk was asked to contact SALC to ask who would be responsible if an accident occurred and who would be liable.

Nigel Woollcombe-Adams stated that he has a grant to fill potholes.

Councillor Steve Bowler has been having trouble with his Broadband: if having problems contact your provider as they may be able to resolve this.

Nigel Woollcombe-Adams BT has been approached and it would cost £12k to £56k. Nigel is looking into this further.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm

A vote of thanks was given to Councillors for the work of the Parish Council.

After the formal business of the meeting refreshments were taken.