

Report of the Chair of Hawkesbury Parish Council

Administration

This has been a challenging year for the Parish Council. In May, Dave Carey, our clerk and local post master for five years, left suddenly although not unexpectedly. This also created some uncertainty about the future of the local post office.

Fiona Steeds kindly stood in at very short notice to help with letters and minutes.

The Council agreed to go to formal advert for a new parish clerk, and were successful in attracting six applications. After interviewing excellent candidates, we appointed Karen Gray, however because of her family commitments, Karen, resigned after a month. We agreed to appoint another interviewed candidate, Hazel Jones. I think everyone will agree Hazel has proved to be an excellent choice and has already undertaken training and is tackling the job in a very efficient manner, and we all hope she will stay with us. During this time our Responsible Financial Officer also resigned, and Hazel has stepped into the post at short notice.

We are very grateful to all those who have helped and supported us during the difficult past year. On a positive note, it is good to report that the Post Office is now open regular hours including Saturday mornings.

Cemetery & Village Clean Up

Many thanks to all those who have helped maintain the appearance of the parish throughout the year. In November, the Guides came along with other volunteers to help with a major clean up the cemetery.

Springtime saw the Spring Clean and Village tidy, which was well supported by the local WI, who were also promoting a litter pick campaign. Thanks to all those concerned – you really did make a difference.

Community Speed Watch

The Parish Council has provided the lead in the Community Speed Watch programme, and during the year councillors have worked jointly with colleagues from Badminton Parish Council. Several members have received extra training and attended a helpful network event. More volunteers are required. Speeding traffic through our village is of major concern to our residents.

Allotments

We were successful in leasing a small piece of land for more allotments from South Gloucestershire Council. The provision of the extra land adjacent to the current allotment site has certainly helped to reduce the waiting list. To help with the management of the allotments, the parish council will be introducing, with the agreement of the tenants, a new tenancy agreement. Thanks to Mr Goodfield for all his help in preparing the land and helping the parish council with this work.

Grants

The Parish Council allocated £1800 in small grants to various village groups as well as other national organisations which provide a local service. The Parish Council recognises the valuable service provided to the community by these groups. The Parish Council also works with the Hall Committee by maintaining the grass in the recreation ground.

A £100 was donated from the Best Village Competition Prize Money to help with the Village Bonfire. It is hoped this will now become a regular village event alongside the well attended Annual Christmas Lights, Carols Mince Pies. Thanks to all those who helped with these big community events.

Public & Planning

We have commented on about 40 planning applications throughout the year, and the public are always welcome to the meetings, however, not many of them stay until the end.

The Parish Plan has been progressed in different ways and hopefully has been picked up in other reports to the Parish.

Parish Councillors have been busy in different areas, negotiating to get Broad band to all areas on the Commons: busy being tree wardens and monitoring the public rights of way. Lyn Allen does have to be thanked for maintaining the bus shelter and thanks to Mr Tizzard for cutting the grass around the Plain and the Pound.

Thanks to everyone who has helped in their different ways throughout the year and we look forward to another busy year.

Sue Hope
25.iii.10