

Ampfield Parish Council

NEWSLETTER

May 2020

Issue 32



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CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The 2020 Parish Assembly was scheduled to take place on Monday 27th of April and then, as a result of the Covid-19 Lockdown, the Parish Council deferred the meeting to 1st of June. Unfortunately, due to the continuing lockdown it was not possible to meet on that date, therefore there will not be an assembly this year.

The newsletter was written in March in readiness for the planned April assembly and we are publishing it now, online, rather than hand delivering paper copies.

Using technology, the parish council will meet virtually until meetings are allowed in the village hall again.

Thanks to the 3 years of hard work and determination by the team of parishioners and councillors, the new Village Design Statement gained approval in September 2019 and a copy was delivered to every address in the parish. This document is a significant and worthwhile achievement.

The event to commemorate the American Airmen, described in the newsletter, was made possible by the parishioners who provided refreshments and dealt with the catering on the day. It was a good example of teamwork between Church and Council.

Hopefully, work will recommence on the new playground and car park at the Ampfield Recreation Ground before too long.

Bryan Nanson
Chairman

Your Parish Council to 2nd May 2020

Chairman: Bryan Nanson

Vice-Chairman: Allan Clark,

Councillors: Martin Hatley, Julie Trotter, Julian Jones,
Graham Roads, David Stevens, Kate McCallum.

Clerk to the Council: Kate Orange Parish Website: www.ampfield.org.uk

The public are welcome to attend all Council and Committee meetings, the dates and times are advertised on Parish Notice Boards and on the website.

Your Parish Councillors are the first tier of local government and are unpaid.

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How do I get in touch with Ampfield Parish Council?

Contact: Clerk to the Council: Kate Orange 2, The Square, Braishfield, Romsey

Tel: 07922 118840 Email: clerk@ampfield.org.uk

Footpaths and Rights of Way

Our network of footpaths and bridle ways continues to bring considerable enjoyment to many parishioners. For this, the parish owes much to its dedicated team of footpath wardens, Tommy, Ruth and Jon. It has been their efforts, in all sorts of weather conditions, that have enabled so many of us to be able to walk around the woods and the countryside of the parish, observing nature at (relatively) close quarters and absorbing peacefully the natural heritage that Ampfield has to offer.

There have been two main issues over the past twelve months. The first is very much weather related. The heavy and continuous rainfall of the past few months, when combined with poor natural drainage, has created very muddy conditions underfoot, which has made life difficult for many walkers and riders. The second issue has been vegetation encroaching on to the pathways in a number of areas. The most significant of these have been reported to the Hampshire Countryside Service and it is hoped cutting will take place over the next few months.

If, whilst walking, anyone spots a problem with the footpaths, please let us know or report direct to www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem.

Friends of Chapel Wood

Over the past 12 months, the Friends have moved forward on a number of important fronts. Most of the work associated with the recent health and safety inspection has been completed, we have reduced further the areas that have been inundated with *R. ponticum* and we have successfully maintained and improved the infrastructure within the woodland.

However, there are two major areas that stand out. The first is the memorial service that took place in July when over 100 local dignitaries and parishioners gathered in the woodland to honour the memory of five young American airman who sadly died when their Cessna aeroplane crashed in the wood on July 2nd 1944. There was a most moving service led by our vicar, Victoria, with a guard of honour comprising serving officers and airmen from the USAF.

The second area must be the Friends themselves. Without such dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers, the great benefits of our wonderful community woodland would soon decline. The parish owes them a great big 'Thank you' for all their efforts.

Transport Liaison & Road Safety

The traffic calming measures in the November newsletter have been submitted to Hampshire County Council (HCC) for detailed design.

Enquiries by Ampfield Parish Council (APC) about a fatality on the A3090 in April 2018 failed to establish that this was caused by deer crossing the road. HCC will not change speed limits without evidence of fatalities to justify the change. HCC have installed permanent High Risk Deer signs along the A3090.

APC plans to get two bus shelters installed using money from the developers at Morleys Green. The bus shelters have to be located near the Potters Heron and near the White Horse.



The Ampfield Market

Established in 2000 - now celebrating its 20th successful year !

Way back on September 2nd 2000, when Martin and Julie Trotter started the Ampfield Market, the village hall was a very different place. In April 1999 volunteers had carried out much needed work on the small cramped kitchen off the main hall to provide new units, sinks and ventilation to remedy the mouldy walls. Twelve people, including the Ampfield W.I. took part in that first event, selling organic produce, collectables, plants, crafts and jewellery.

The Market was set up to bring together all the various village groups - the school, the pre school, the W.I., the church etc. From that small beginning, word spread and the Markets popularity grew steadily. Now, we regularly fill 18 - 20 tables and have a healthy and diverse waiting list. We are proud to have raised over £25,500 for hall funds, the Market team have always generously volunteered their time and services free. These proceeds have helped us to improve and extend the hall over the years to provide a top quality venue for everyone to enjoy.

Planning

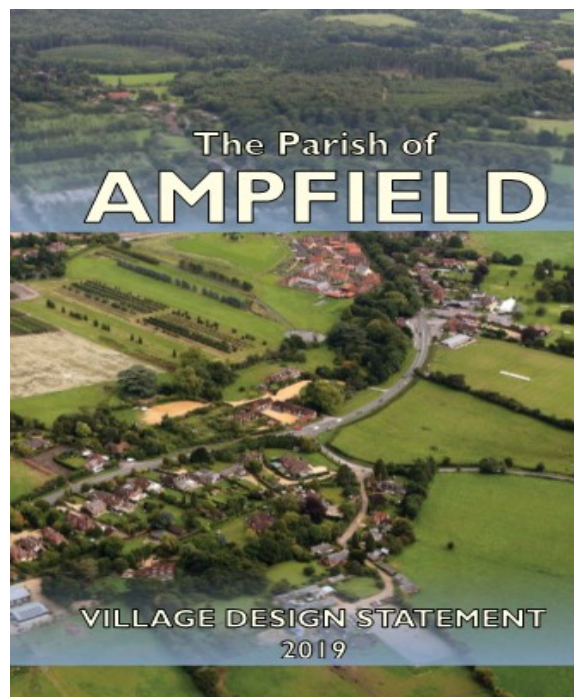
From April 2019 to March 2020 the Planning Committee met 16 times and considered some 106 applications, a high proportion of which were tree applications where we are usually content to leave matters to the TVBC Tree Officer. Details of all applications can be seen on the Planning Register on the Council website.

By far the largest likely development in the parish is that of the Proposed Care Village on Baddesley Road which received outline planning permission in 2018. In early February this year the Planning Committee was given a presentation of the forthcoming detailed planning application for the 1st stage of construction. The detailed application was then submitted to TVBC and considered at our planning meeting in March and at the time of writing the decision of TVBC was awaited. If approved, Development will be taken forward by Inspired Villages Group Ltd who, we understand, will also operate the care village.

AMPFIELD PARISH VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

It is very pleasing to report that the Ampfield Village Design Statement 2019 was adopted by the Test Valley Borough Council at a meeting of the full Council in September 2019. As a result, it becomes a Supplementary Planning Document and is required to be taken into account when future planning applications are considered.

Ampfield Parish Council would like to thank the officers at TVBC, the graphic designers, the printers, every parishioner who contributed by completing the questionnaire and by attending the open meetings and finally, and most significantly, the members of the VDS group who worked so hard to put this fine document together. The revised VDS will be of great assistance to the parish council when assessing planning applications for many years to come.



COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

2020/2021

I have served as the County Councillor for the Baddesley Division for 29 years. I am a member of the Health and Social Care Select Committee. If the authority is to remain financially sustainable beyond 2021/22 there needs to be significant change in the way Adult & Children's Social Care is funded. National Government have certainly been less than generous with their local authority funding settlements and services have been cut significantly. During the last decade £480 million of savings have needed to be made.

I am a member of the Hampshire Pension Fund Committee & Board. I can report that it is financially sound and now worth well over £8 billion.

The Council Tax for the year beginning 1st April 2020 will be £1286.28p for a Band "D" property an increase of 3.99% of which 2% is specifically allocated for Adult Social Care.

A further £80 million pounds of further savings need to be made at the County Council next year in order to return a balanced budget

This will now result in higher costs for services and many further cuts.

Library services are proposed to be reduced along with many more services. However, I am hopeful after my contribution at the February County Council meeting the four Community Libraries may be saved.

The lack of repair to Hampshire's highways is causing significant damage to resident's vehicles. Over the last twelve months 1406 claims have been made against Hampshire Highways and £157K has been paid out over the last twelve months in compensation and added to this figure are the legal costs.

Many organizations within my Division have benefitted from my community grant fund of £8K.

Last year it was a privilege to attend a service to remember the five American Airmen whose Cessna UC-78 crashed into Ampfield Woods 75 years ago just before the start of the D-Day campaign.

Alan Dowden, Baddesley Division County Councillor

Recreation Ground

Dates had been agreed in early December for final preparatory work and installation of the new playground. However, 2-3 days beforehand it started raining and, after a vehicle got stuck on the ground, the installation was deferred for what was thought to be a few days. However, it has barely stopped raining since then and at the time of writing the ground remains waterlogged and impassable. Nevertheless, we can look forward to the imminent installation of the new playground when the rain stops and the ground dries out.

On a more positive note, following a successful application for Community Infrastructure Levy funds, everything is now in place to implement the long-awaited car park in place of the existing playground. Construction will closely follow introduction of the new playground.

Ampfield CofE Primary School

The school continues to provide a nurturing environment for children from the village and from wider afield. As a very small school, children and staff get to know each other very well and we are committed to helping all children, especially those who are vulnerable, to do their best.

As a sister school to John Keble CofE Primary School in neighbouring Hursley, as part of a federation, the staff work together to develop the schools and share responsibilities. In January 2020, Mr David Ware joined the federation as Executive Deputy Headteacher. He works across both schools to support and improve standards in learning and teaching as well as supporting the Executive Headteacher in day-to-day leadership and general school improvement.

In September 2020, a new Business and Administration manager will work across both schools to lead finance, personnel and administration.

Please contact the School Office with queries about school places.
Tel: 01794 368219

Marcus Roe Executive Headteacher
Federation of Ampfield & John Keble CofE Primary Schools



PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE REPORT

Change of Clerk/RFO

Our Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) Doreen Matthews retired at the end of 2019, and our new Clerk/RFO is Kate Orange.

Audit for Year Ended 31 March 2019

The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019 were audited by PKF Littlejohn LLP and the conclusion was published on 28 September 2019. There were no matters for the Parish Council to address, arising from the audit.

Assets

In February 2020 we were generously given a footbridge at Morleys Green, for better access across the ditch to the green.

We have replaced the noticeboard on the A3090, principally funded by a Councillor Community Grant via Cllr Hatley. Following a boundary change, Romsey Extra Parish Council have kindly given us their share of the noticeboard on the Straight Mile.

The War Memorials and Memorial to the fallen American airmen (Chapel Wood) were cleaned in the Autumn.

The old changing rooms at the recreation ground have been demolished and we are ready to start work on replacing the playground and building a new carpark (depending on the weather).

Grants, s106 and CIL funding

We received the following grants:

Councillor Community Grant £971.80 towards a new noticeboard Test Valley Borough Council grants totalling £1,500 towards the production of the new Village Design Statement

There are s106 and CIL developers' contributions allocated to the new playground /carpark at the recreation ground.

Receipts and Payments

At the time of writing, we were still in the financial year ending 31 March 2020, so the figures given here are interim: the final figures will be available for the Annual Parish Assembly.

Receipts to end February 2020 were approximately £111,300. The full precept for the year has been received (£38,031). £70,393 was grants and developers' contributions (s106/CIL) for projects including VDS, new noticeboard, new playground and carpark. The remainder of income was from burial charges, rent of the recreation ground, Payments to end February 2020 were approximately £66,700. This was lower than anticipated as the new playground /carpark project has been delayed by the weather, and may now be deferred to the next financial year.

Budget and Precept

The precept for the year commencing 1 April 2020 will be £38,742 (last year's was £38,031).

This is collected from householders in the parish as part of the Council Tax. This is an increase of 1.87% from the previous year. Some of our funding comes from grants, s106/CIL developers' contributions, hire charges and reserves. We have budgeted to spend approximately £56,581 during the course of the year to 31 March 2021, which is slightly less than the previous year.

This is mainly because by October 2020 we shall have paid off a loan that we took out to purchase Chapel Wood; last year there were production costs for the new VDS, and the War Memorials cleaned by a stonemason. A full analysis will take place during the audit process later in the year.

Kate Orange, Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer – Ampfield Parish Council

ST. MARK'S CHURCH

St Mark has had another super year of worship, fete and festivals which culminated in the Christmas Services. The informal Carol Service in conjunction with the 'Friends of St Mark' was a particular hit with all those that attended the evening, singing carols, drinking mulled wine and meeting neighbours, a super end to the year.

Unfortunately, we have had some very big expenses this year when the lead from the roof was stolen and not long afterwards the boiler broke down and had to be replaced. The beautiful stained-glass windows are also in need of repair – all problems associated with looking after historic buildings with only small congregations and local supporters raising money to sustain us – nothing is given to us from central funds.

However, we are all in good Spirits meeting weekly to worship and praise God for the very many blessings we enjoy, not least to live in such a beautiful part of the world surrounded by such good friends. The church remains open daily and all are most welcome to come and enjoy a time of peace and quiet in the building or on the surrounding woodlands...

