

CHAIRMAN REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 18TH APRIL 2024

It does not seem possible that it has been a year since the last APM.

2023 was another active year for the Parish Council.

In May we held the picnic on the Playing Field to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. This was a joint venture with the Memorial Hall, and it was a successful afternoon with good attendance, lots of fancy dress and the weather surprised us and was fabulous – a welcome surprise seeing that the Coronation weekend had been so cold and wet. The Hall Committee and the PC have decided that an annual picnic get together could be a fun event so look out for this year's picnic in June being held on D Day commemoration weekend.

Frustratingly, parishioner attendance at PC meetings was low overall. We intend to try and encourage better attendance this coming year. Concerns raised however reflect last years concerns about speeding and dog fouling.

The Planning Committee received numerous applications this year . Each of these are discussed in full lead by Councillor Hannah Greenslade who chairs the Planning Committee. The Parish Council are only consultees and not the decision makers, but feedback is sent back to the planning committee i.e. decision makers at the FODDC.

Our PCSO attends some of the meetings and will action any issues we raise. We are pleased to note that crime rates within Woolaston remain low. This year we have 2 new roles within the PC. Councillor Peter Brown is the Neighbourhood watch liaison and has attended meetings and will be organising promoting crime awareness this coming year. Councillor Mary Greenslade Vice Chairman of the Parish Council is fulfilling a new role as representative for the council with the Gloucestershire Police Advocacy Committee.

Tree maintenance on Parish land continues and further tree work (a felling of a diseased lime) in the churchyard was required. Unfortunately, the weather has been so wet the work has been deferred until the summer. Grass cutting continues but again was affected by the weather.

Unfortunately, dog fouling and litter still remains of some concern. We have however and we are lucky to have Steve Hamblyn our litter picker who does a sterling job keeping the village clean and tidy. He goes over and beyond and has carried out work in the churchyard and cemetery too. We also know that other villagers have litter picked and we are very grateful for this.

Our financial position has been outlined by Gill and we have stayed within budget. This followed our request to increase our precept for last year in line with inflation to cover our expenditure.

Gill our Parish Clerk has worked hard again this year to ensure that we meet the required standards, and that all necessary bureaucracy is dealt with appropriately. She successfully completed her CiLCA qualification this year and our congratulations on that achievement were given. It is a lot of work, and we were so pleased that she passed. On behalf of Parish Council, I would like to thank her for all her work this year. We do appreciate it very much and it is not an easy job.

We have welcomed 2 new councillors this year. Councillor Pete Brown is a returning councillor and is now Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee and Councillor Jeanette McElroy who joined us after last year's APM. They are both valued contributors to Council and have thrown themselves into the fray with enthusiasm.

I would also like to thank our District and County Councillors who have frequently attended meetings and provided written reports. They have taken action, given advice and also provided feedback on district and county activities.

Finally, I would like to thank all my councillor colleagues for their hard work and support. They give freely of their time and always do so willingly. Their support to me in this role is also invaluable and they have made this job and the meetings enjoyable, informative and fun.

I know I speak on behalf of the Parish Council in saying that we will continue to work hard to try and ensure that Woolaston retains its reputation as a vibrant and thriving village and one which we all love and are proud to live in.

Terina Riches

Chairman Woolaston Parish Council

April 2024