



**MINUTES OF SHERSTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON
THURSDAY 11TH MAY 2023 at 7.30PM, PRESCHOOL, RECREATIONAL
GROUND**

Present

- Mrs T Burgess (TB) – Chairman Mr Nigel Freeth (NF) Mr B Smee (BS) Keith Savage (KS) Matthew Wofinden-England (MWF) Mr O Evans (OE) Harry Stevens (HS) Katharine Bodey-Jones (KBJ) in Mr M Smith (MS) Andrew Tremellen (AT) Mr Edward Durell (ED)

0 members of the public

01.05.23	<p><u>Election of Chairman</u></p> <p>Members resolved to elect T Burgess as Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2023/2024.</p>
02.05.23	<p><u>Election of Vice Chairman</u></p> <p>Members resolved to elect A Tremellen as Vice Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/2024.</p>
03.05.23	<p><u>Apologies for absence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr M Tarrant (MT) • Robin Turner (RT) <p>Noted – Apologies for absence</p>
04.05.23	<p><u>Declarations of interest</u></p> <p>Members to declare any interest they may have in agenda items in accordance with the requirements of the Council’s Code of Conduct.</p> <p>MS – Agenda item 20</p>
05.05.23	<p><u>Exclusion of the Press and Public</u></p> <p>Resolved to agree any items to be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) has been excluded under Standing Order 3.</p> <p>Resolved: N/A</p>

06.05.23	<p><u>Minutes.</u></p> <p>Resolved: To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of Sherston Parish Council Meeting held on 13th April 2023.</p>
07.05.23	<p><u>Chairman's Announcements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email received from resident regarding the High Street in relation to the grant payment for the planter on the High Street • EV Vehicle Consultation held with Residents 30th April • Met with Keith Savage to commence handover of responsibilities for the Cliffhanger • Met with Robin Turner to discuss challenges with solicitors engaging in the Charity status of the Recreation Ground item • Escalated issues Acorn Developments (Sopworth Road Development) having with Wiltshire Council Planning Dept in relation to their pre-planning application submitted in February – Department not responding to calls or emails to Martin Smith (WC Councillor) • Primary School Olympic Day – request approved to use the Recreation Ground • Proposed Grove Wood lease increase by £50 a year on signing of renewed lease agreement • Annual Parish report – Appendix A
08.05.23	<p><u>Clerks Report</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerks report noted.
09.05.23	<p><u>To Review and Appoint Members to serve on the Working Groups</u></p> <p>Footpaths & Highways – TB / NF / MS / HS / MWF / KS</p> <p>Climate & Biodiversity Group – BS / MS / OE / KBJ / HS</p> <p>Allotments Group – BS / NF</p> <p>Communications Group – TB / KS / MWF / KBJ</p> <p>Operations Group – AT / MT / KBJ / NF / BS / KS</p> <p>Neighbourhood Plan – MS / MWF / TB</p> <p>Ways of working – TB / RT / KBJ</p> <p>Finance – ED</p> <p>Bold initials represent Group Leads</p> <p>Members to consider requirements for terms of reference for working groups.</p>

10.05.23	<p><u>Appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies</u></p> <p>To appoint representative(s) to serve on outside bodies for the ensuing year 2023/2024.</p> <p>A. School - MS / AT B. Village Hall - BS C. Emergency Services/Planning - NF D. Area Board – MS / TB E. LHFIG – MS / TB F. SOSIC – MS / TB G. Scouts / Brownies – OE H. Church – NF I. Blooming Sherston – TB J. Sports Clubs – MWF / AT K. Gardening Club - MS</p>																
11.05.23	<p><u>Sherston Parish Council – Standing Orders 2023/24</u></p> <p>Members reviewed and approved the standing orders.</p>																
12.05.23	<p><u>Sherston Parish Council – Financial Regulations 2023/24</u></p> <p>Members reviewed and approved the financial regulations.</p>																
13.05.23	<p><u>Code of Conduct 2023/24m</u></p> <p>Members resolved and adopted the Model Code of Conduct.</p>																
14.05.23	<p><u>Policy / Procedure Review</u></p> <p>Members reviewed and approved the below policies and procedures.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="288 1451 930 2089"> <tr><td>• Communications Strategy</td></tr> <tr><td>• Community Engagement</td></tr> <tr><td>• Dignity at work</td></tr> <tr><td>• Complaints procedure</td></tr> <tr><td>• Data protection and information</td></tr> <tr><td>• Disciplinary procedures</td></tr> <tr><td>• Equality and Diversity</td></tr> <tr><td>• Freedom of Information</td></tr> <tr><td>• Grievance and Whistleblowing</td></tr> <tr><td>• Health and Safety</td></tr> <tr><td>• Retention of documents</td></tr> <tr><td>• Safeguarding</td></tr> <tr><td>• System of internal controls</td></tr> <tr><td>• Training</td></tr> <tr><td>• Vexatious complaints</td></tr> <tr><td>• Working Groups</td></tr> </table>	• Communications Strategy	• Community Engagement	• Dignity at work	• Complaints procedure	• Data protection and information	• Disciplinary procedures	• Equality and Diversity	• Freedom of Information	• Grievance and Whistleblowing	• Health and Safety	• Retention of documents	• Safeguarding	• System of internal controls	• Training	• Vexatious complaints	• Working Groups
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15.05.23	<p><u>Asset Register</u></p> <p>Members reviewed and approved the Asset Register.</p>												
16.05.23	<p><u>Planning</u></p> <p>Considered and commented on all planning applications received up to and including the date of the meeting.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="277 768 1477 1086"> <tr> <td data-bbox="277 768 486 846">Application No:</td> <td data-bbox="491 768 1473 846">PL/2023/03390</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="277 853 486 931">Application Type:</td> <td data-bbox="491 853 1473 931">Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="277 938 486 1016">Proposal:</td> <td data-bbox="491 938 1473 1016">New ensuite wc. and shower room in attic. New internal ground floor layout with new window, door and rooflights</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="277 1023 486 1086">Site Address:</td> <td data-bbox="491 1023 1473 1086">29 HIGH STREET, SHERSTON, MALMESBURY, SN16 0LH</td> </tr> </table> <p>COMMENTS:</p> <p>Number 29 High Street, together with Number 27, is Grade II listed. All the features mentioned in the “listing” are external to the property. There are no internal features identified as being of specific interest.</p> <p>The proposed works comprise:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The installation of a WC and shower room in the attic bedroom – to replace an existing cupboard. 2. The removal of a stud partition wall and raising of the ceiling height within the rear single storey kitchen area to open up the internal space together with the installation of four conservation rooflights (two on each slope). The existing ground floor WC and utility room are proposed to be repositioned into the former storage room and a rear lobby / boot room is introduced. A new backdoor and utility room window are added, to match existing doors and windows. <p>It is not considered that any of the proposed works will have an adverse impact on the character of the listed building. The only external changes to the building being to the rear of the property and affecting the most recently constructed single storey extension.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: No objection.</p>	Application No:	PL/2023/03390	Application Type:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)	Proposal:	New ensuite wc. and shower room in attic. New internal ground floor layout with new window, door and rooflights	Site Address:	29 HIGH STREET, SHERSTON, MALMESBURY, SN16 0LH				
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17.05.23 Outstanding Actions

Outstanding actions noted

- **08.11.21** - SOSCIC Donation – Utilisation of £5,000 for steps at the Rec – **AT**
 Update 12/01:- Meeting planned for Monday 16th with an architect to help with the planning application for the Court Street small entrance to the Rec
 Update 09/02:- Entrance to the Rec. need planning permission, so Sam Evans is to advise on the design. Costs will be incurred, and PC will pay for the planning permission
 Update 09/03:- AT advised that the planning application has now been submitted.
 Update 13/04:- Awaiting for planning permission.
Update 11/05:- Ongoing
- **18.11.21 – TB** – To write to the charity commission to obtain advice regarding the current status and future management of the Recreational Ground which is held in Trust for the use of recreation in the village
 Update 12/01:- Further Communication sent 12/12 in response to questions posed by Charity Commission - awaiting response from Commission. TB advised that a letter has been received from a resident requesting payment of their legal costs for advice obtained on the recreational trust. The PC confirmed that the legal costs would not be made as no agreement was made to obtain the advice. TB to respond to resident. As per Chairmans announcements RT to take over progressing this action with the CC.
 Update 09/02:- Met with Councillor Robin Turner to transfer responsibility for working with the Charity Commission and addressing issues with the PennyMead Recreation Ground. Advised Charity Commission of the same
 Update 09/03:-

 - Email sent to resident regarding the outcome of the legal fees payment request on the 13th January.
 - Ongoing communications with Charity Commission
 - Investigations underway to identify a specialist Charity Trust solicitor who will be engaged to update the existing Trust Deed, key to this is ensuring the Pennymead/Recreation Ground is protected and retained as a recreation facility.
 Update 13/04:- Ongoing – 2nd meeting of the trust held on 13/04/2023. Awaiting for confirmation from a trust law specialist regarding representation.
Update 11/05:- Initial law firm approached fairly non-communicative as a result made initial approach to Clarke Willmott in Bristol who responded with what were deemed to be prohibitive costs. Council to discuss and agree next steps in June meeting
- **06.11.21** – Asset register - **TVR** to update the current Asset register with any land / equipment owned that needs to be added.
 Update 12/01:- Meeting held between BS and Clerk, actions ongoing.
 Update 09/02:- ongoing
 Update 09/03:- Ongoing
 Update 13/04:- The new asset register will be issued at the May meeting.
Update 11/05:- Now complete and approved – Action closed.

- **15.03.22** – Boules Pitches - Building 3 boules pitches on the Rec in the south east corner between the trees and close to the steps into Court Street – **NF**

Update 08/12:- Approval was received from the Recreational Trust following a meeting on the 22nd November to allow the siting of the proposed Boules pitches. The PC resolved to match fund the boules committee and EMR £3,000 for the creation of the boules pitches.

Update 12/01:- No further updates.

Update 09/02:- NF approved, and hope to start work mid May.

Update 09/03:- NF to prepare an article for the Cliffhanger

Update 13/04:- Article drafted and sent to Cliffhanger for publication

Update 11/05:- Article published, provisional start date 1st week of June.
- **18.10.22** – **TB/MS** - Status of Neighbourhood Plan/New Surgery – TB and MS to write an update for residents.

Update 12/01:- Update received from Surgery this week, needs to be included

Update 09/02:- Meeting arranged with NHS (National Health Service) to visit both existing surgery and proposed site to support funding discussions cancelled due to illness, rearranged for 10th February

Update 09/03:- Awaiting a formal planning application before comments can be made.

Update 13/04:- Awaiting for a formal planning application.

Update 11/05:- TB drafted due for publication in June edition of Cliffhanger and on Parish Council Website and Parish Facebook page
- **12.12.22** – **AT** - Play Inspection report - AT to arrange for the required work to be undertaken. A quote to be obtained for the replacement of the wooden adventure trail.

Update 12/01:- Meeting organised on Monday 16th with a representative from a company called Playdale to look at the replacement of the activity trail on the Recreation ground.

Update 09/02:- . Adventure Trial – following assessment, there are too many rotten timbers to be safe, AT investigating cost of replacing timbers to repair and replace these timbers.

Update 09/03:- AT obtaining quotes for the adventure trail and pyramid climber

Update 13/04:- Awaiting quotes to replace the adventure trail and the purchase and installation of a pyramid climber.

Update 11/05:- 2 quotes received and being accessed, awaiting a 3rd quote.
- **08.01.23** – **MS** – Approved to purchase 7 gates to be sited 2x Easton Town, 1 Brook Hill, 2x Tetbury Road and 2x Knockdown Road. Parish to own and maintain, Wilts Council to install.

Update 09/02:- Quote accepted and Wiltshire Council advised, request made to be added to the installation list.

Update 09/03:- Ongoing

Update 13/04:- Awaiting delivery and installation date from Wiltshire Council. MS to draft a communication with the phased plans for speeding initiatives which will be communicated to the parish.

Update 11/05:- Gates delivered, awaiting Wiltshire Council to install, may take up to 2 months. Speed assessment strips installed in key

areas where speeding is deemed to be an issue. Request for 2 further strips for Pinkney and Brook Hill.

- 08.01.23 – TB** – Approved the spend of up to £1342.46 & VAT for replacing 2 heritage finger posts.
 Update 09/02:- AT sourced alternatives coming in at reduced cost of £850. Supplier asked to go ahead with making and installing.
 Update 09/03:- Ongoing
 Update 13/04:- Materials received, CNC company now designing
Update 11/05:- Finger posts installed at the bottom of Brook Hill and Forlorn – Item closed.
- 21.12.21 – BS** - Following a meeting at the allotment of Ben Smee and Victoria Purton (Assistant Estates Manager, Wiltshire Council) to discuss a replacement gate, Wiltshire Council (WC) offer a Community Asset Transfer of the allotments to the Parish Council.09.02.2022. Following discussion at the council, BS confirmed to WC that the PC are interested in an asset transfer of the allotments. 23.03.2022. WC provided a template example of a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) document and confirm there would be no charge by WC. [PC will incur legal costs]. 09.05.2022 PC wrote to WC Estates Department requesting the CAT document for our legal review. 31.05.2022 Victoria Purton provided a copy of the lease and registered title, and confirmed they are working on creating heads of terms and creating a "sale plan". WC also confirmed there are no restrictive covenants, rights benefitting other people etc.16.01.2023 BS emailed update requests to WC in June, July, August, Martin Smith in September, October, November and January 2023. Yet to receive the Heads of Terms and Sale Plan for our legal review.
 Update 09/03:- MS advised that the documents were being prepared by Wiltshire Council and would be circulated to the PC once completed, MS to chase again and advised that there are numerous asset transfers taking place and there is a que.
 Update 13/04:- Agenda item 18
Update 11/05:- Solicitors commissioned awaiting further instructions
- 16.02.23 – NF/AT** - Grove Wood Lease - NF and AT to investigate the details of the lease.
 Update 09/03:- NF – advised that a review has taken place and discussions with the land owner. Clerk to investigate the insurance implications for the insurance liability for Groovewood.
 Update 13/04:- Confirmation on insurance liability received - PL will cover the land in which your organisation uses to conduct its activities. If this land is used for your organisations activities then it will be covered. Lease – Awaiting for the land owner to arrange a new lease.
Update 11/05:- £200 yearly rental agreed, terms agreed, awaiting finalised lease.

18.05.23 Accounts for Payment – May 2023

Members reviewed the Schedule(s) of Accounts for Payment and authorised the payments for May 2023.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Costs • Staff Expenses - £10.80 • Patrick Cooper – Litter Picking – £72.00 (April) & £57.60 (May) • Park Lane Press – Cliffhanger – £785.00 • Village Hall – Room hire – November - May - £172.50 • JACS – Speeding Gates - £6,283.20 • M Smith – EV consultation software - £99.00 • IAP – IT - £124.94 • WALC – Playground training - £150.00 • Compass Graphic – Website - £132.00 • Wiltshire Council – Business rates Preschool - £1917.73 • Tom Key – Parish Maintenance - £489.00 • Magna Workshops – Oak Finger posts - £1020.00 • HMRC – PAYE - £838.03
19.05.23	<p><u>Parish Maintenance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on work completed and work planned – AT <p>Noted – No further updates.</p>
20.05.23	<p><u>Sherston Parish Council OZEV ORCS Grant</u></p> <p>Members to consider the consultation results for the electric charging stations and the overall scheme.</p> <p>Report – Appendix B - The online survey and Village Hall consultation meeting were advertised via a street letter delivered to most houses in the centre of the village and also on the Facebook group - Sherston What's Occurring.</p> <p>The online survey was held from 21/04/23 to 9/05/23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 64 responses were received, including 61 residents, 2 visitors and 1 other <p>Handwritten surveys were submitted at a face to face session on Sunday 30th April:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 were strongly disagree and 1 was in agreement • a number of people who attended the event did not complete either survey - on balance there were as many in agreement as disagreed in this category <p>The combined responses from the above were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73% agreed that Sherston should have public EV charging points • 66% said that the High Street was an acceptable location • 30% said they were likely to use the charge points in the next year • 50% said they were likely to use the charge points in the next 5 years <p>Resolved: To approve the scheme and the costs to the Parish Council of £5,288.00</p>
21.05.23	<p><u>Investment of Funds</u></p>

	<p>Members to consider investing of SOSCIC funds to ensure best value attained. Given increased interest rates in recent months, members to consider transferring funds to instant access savings vehicle which could provide better investment returns.</p> <p>Resolved: ED to investigate potential schemes / accounts and report back to the next meeting.</p>
22.05.23	<p><u>Tree Planting in the Tarters / Section 96 Licence application</u></p> <p>Members consider and resolved to obtain a Section 96 Licence under the Highways Act from Wiltshire Council – BS to apply for the licence.</p>
23.05.23	<p><u>Road signage in Sherston</u></p> <p>Members considered a request from a member of the public regarding improving the signage in Sherston.</p> <p>Resolved: TB to investigate as part of the footpaths and highways working group.</p>
24.05.23	<p><u>Cliffhanger</u></p> <p>Members considered the Cliffhanger content and streamlining the content.</p> <p>Resolved: That the PC will trail using the front page of the Cliffhanger for PC specific news items and the back page will be reserved for resident's letters to the Parish Council in June.</p>

Meeting concluded – 22:45pm

Date of next meeting – 8th June 2023 @ 7.30pm

Signed as a True Record:

Date:

Appendix A

SHERSTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH REPORT – 11th May 2023

Author:- Tanya Burgess (Chair)

General Update

I would like start by taking the opportunity of thanking all current and past Councillors for their efforts in the last year to support the Parish Council to service the local community. It has been another challenging year, with us struggling to attract new Councillors to make up our numbers, as well as us having to continue to learn on the job following the departure of previous members of the Council who had been in situ for many years.

We have a lot on our 'to do' list' if we really want to become the proactive Council we all want to be, however getting things done remains a challenge. That said, we are getting there slowly, having this year moved from a paper based process to introducing Office365, which enables the Council to work more effectively as all paperwork is now available 24x7 online for us to reference and work on. There is still much to do, not least of which is to undertake a review of our working practices to identify how we can increase our levels of efficiency, retain Councillors, plan for the future of Sherston, and more importantly identify ways to really engage our residents for their help and support with initiatives we would like to take forward.

So, what have we been up to?

LOWLIGHTS

Neighbourhood Plan

Regrettably progress has again been slow in the last 12 months. The developers, Acorn Development submitted an initial planning application in the last quarter of 2020 which was subsequently withdrawn as it was thought that a significant proportion of the application would not be supported by Wiltshire Council or residents. They subsequently submitted a pre-planning application having worked directly with individual planners within Wiltshire Planning to give any application submitted the best possible chance of being approved.

The pre-planning application was submitted on the 19th February 2023 – the application has yet to be responded to by Wiltshire Council despite the Developers chasing on numerous occasion – this lack of response has been escalated to our Wiltshire Councillor, Martin Smith by the Parish Council. We are currently awaiting an update.

What's happening with the proposed New Surgery Building?

There seems to be an understanding in the village that the Parish Council are solely responsible for driving and implementing the Surgery new build, this is not the case. It is a joint venture between the NHS, the Parish Council and the Developers. The Parish Council's commitment was to ensure that land was set aside in the Neighbourhood Plan and retained for the purposes of a Surgery build. We also need the NHS (NHS Estates), the ICB (Integrated Care Board) and local Primary Care Network (which includes 6 other GP practices) to also agree to the plans.

That said, we have not been resting on our laurels and have been heavily involved driving meetings with Wiltshire Council, Acorn Development and representatives from the Tolsey Surgery in an attempt to 'get things moving' for our residents, as well as Martin Smith (Wiltshire Councillor) having previously engaged James Gray (MP) and the Wiltshire Council cabinet member for planning and the Integrated Care Board (NHS) to push things forward.

So, what are the issues?

It has been fully acknowledged by all, that the current surgery building does not meet the needs of the local population or the requirements for modern healthcare. Hence the provision in the Neighbourhood Plan for a new surgery build. Against this backdrop the surgery team have been pushing hard and consistently to get the situation addressed but continue to struggle to get support and buy in to drive the new surgery build proposal from the NHS. The implications of the facility not being fit for purpose are evident to all:-

- Patient accessibility issues
- Patient privacy and accommodation issues
- Patient queuing at both the dispensary and reception
- Unable to service the volume of phone calls effectively from the growing patient base (1 receptionist)
- Cramped working conditions for the surgery team
- Lack of storage or service development space
- No space provision for the team to have breaks/lunch or adequate toilet facilities
- General run down nature of the building

Whilst this has been acknowledged, the Surgery are really struggling with several moving pieces which are outside of their control. The key blocker is how the surgery will be funded – the delay to the application for funding has been aggravated by the hoops the surgery team are needing to jump through to even apply for the funding via NHS Estates, not least of which was the whole application process changing mid-application. Having already completed one application process, they are now having to start afresh hoping to submit a further application to the ICB (Integrated Care Board) on the 10th May who can approve funding requests. They have also had to obtain agreement from their local Primary Care Network for North Wiltshire.

It's worth noting that the Surgery team are working very hard, and doing what they can under very difficult circumstances having in effect outgrown the size of the practice (both in terms of building size/set up and patient demand). The team are as frustrated as we are, if not more so, given that they are not able to offer the quality of care they would like to under the current circumstances, or the enhanced level of care they would propose if they had the benefit of a new larger building facility.

What are we, the Parish Council doing about it?

As a result of further delays, we have asked that Wiltshire Councillor, Martin Smith re-escalate this situation to both James Gray (MP) and the Wiltshire Council cabinet member for planning and the Integrated Care Board (NHS). We will ask them to come and look at the challenging environment the surgery team are having to work in to put it into perspective, and attend a meeting in the village hall with both the surgery, ICB representation and you the residents to explain why this is so problematic to move forward

Former Pre-School Building – why is it still vacant?

Background

Following the closure of the previous playgroup, Busyhands in the Village Hall there was significant pressure on the Parish Council at the time to work with residents to help set up a new provision for parents in the village. A service provider was identified, and a decision was taken to fund the build of a purpose built pre-school facility on the Recreation Ground which subsequently opened its doors in November 2019.

Unfortunately following a poor Ofsted report in early 2022 the pre-school provider decided to close the business and subsequently vacated the building in July 2022. Leading up to this event, the Parish Council had also received a complaint from a resident related to whether in fact the pre-school building should ever have been built on the Recreation Ground as the land had been left in Trust for the purposes of recreation for the village.

Why is the building still vacant?

Following receipt of a complaint from a resident, the Parish Council engaged the Charity Commission to review the background, comment on the complaint and if upheld, were asked to advise us on the best way forward to rectify and manage the situation. The subsequent investigation determined that the building of premises on the Recreation Ground and its subsequent use as a commercial business was outside of the scope of the intent of the original Trust Deed. We have also been advised that we are unable to re-commence use of the building for any commercial or non-recreational purpose until such time as we have taken legal advice from a Charity Law specialist to understand the scope within which we could potentially make use of the building. We are now aggressively pursuing this.

We fully appreciate that the situation is not ideal and are keen to get the building back up and actively in use at the earliest opportunity, recognising at the same time, that we do have few hurdles to overcome before we do so.

So what are the next steps?

We are engaging a Charity Trust Specialist, Clarke Willmott in Bristol to review the whole situation and advise us on the best way forward. As a Parish Council, we are keen to offer the building up as a play/pre-school if we can, however given the current climate, challenges with funding, recruiting and retaining staff, we and Wiltshire Council have struggled to identify a provider who is able to take it on.

At the same time as engaging Clarke Willmott, we are actively exploring other options for the use of the building should we be unable to resurrect the pre-school. If you do have any suggestions to help us with this, please do feel free to contact robin.turner@sherston.org.uk

Vandalism

Disappointingly this year a number of incidents have occurred around the village with damage being caused to both residents cars and properties. This has resulted in the Council having to request that local police representation patrols the village at regular intervals to deter any further damage.

HIGHLIGHTS

Parish Maintenance

With more and more maintenance requirements being divested from Wiltshire Council to Parish Councils we took the decision to recruit a part-time Parish Maintenance person to help underpin the services offered by Wiltshire Council, as well as the specific service offered by the Parish Stewards. The two resources will be working closely together to support our maintenance requirements moving forwards and will be co-ordinated by the Operations Working Group.

Footpaths

The work to improve the quality of our footpath network continues at a fair pace, with signs having been replaced, re-fixed, additional waymarkers added in some locations and really excitingly, a large number gates have been installed, replacing stiles around the village to improve accessibility for both our residents and visitors (18 gates in total are planned).

The refurbishment of the 2nd of steps in Grove Wood was completed, however we are looking to revisit this with a view to tidying up some elements. As well as the 2nd phases of the coppicing plan having been completed in January of this year. I am sure you will agree the wood is looking fabulous, particularly in the spring when the flora and fauna really are coming into their own.

We have also been working closely with Sustainable Sherston who have planted a number of trees in the coppiced areas of Grove Wood, as well as along the banks of the river.

Our sincere thanks go to the Footpath Group, local farmers and local residents who have volunteered their time, manpower and tools. Stephan Leonard our resident Wiltshire Footpath Officer for providing and installing some of the gates, the Cotswold Wardens for helping install gates, (Deborah Ackerley, for helping drive some of the initiatives) and Sustainable Sherston for obtaining funding for and planting the trees.

The plan in the next couple of months is to re-surface the path along the river in Grove Wood and remove some of the trees which have sadly fallen into the river.

Asset Register

Our new look, detailed asset register is almost nearing completion having had a number Councillors work on it the last 18 months which great news. This register will provide a solid foundation moving forwards, not only allowing us to plan our workload, but also improve our ability to forward budget and manage risk.

Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan

Our first ever climate and biodiversity plan was approved by Councillors this year. It's been a steep learning curve for many of us, but hopefully will help keep us focussed and doing what we can to help this very important, global agenda item.

PennyMead Recreational Trust re-established

As a result of the concerns raised in relation to the management of the Recreation Ground, the Trust has been formerly re-established (although the Parish Council retains its responsibility for the Trust itself). This ensures that that independent minuted meetings are held relating solely to the Trust and that decisions are taken independently of Parish Council business.

I would like to thank Robin Turner one of our newer Councillors for offering front the Trust as well as take on the daunting challenge of addressing the historic issues with the running of the Trust.

Allotment Land

Plans to transfer the ownership of the allotment land from Wiltshire Council to Sherston Parish Council are nearing completion which will ensure that the land in the centre of the village is retained and protected.

Proposal to install EV Charging Points in the Village

A consultation took place in the Village Hall on Sunday 30th April whereby the proposal was shared with a few residents who attended. Feedback in the main seems to be positive, however we await the results of a survey which are currently being collated.

Councillor Recruitment Campaign

As part of a renewed approach to attract new Councillors, we were supported by Gail Hayman and her rather large group of volunteers to distribute a leaflet to all residents who receive the Cliffhanger. The purpose of this leaflet was not only to attract new Councillors, but to help raise what we actually do. I am pleased to say that this approach did prove beneficial, resulting in three application to join the Council.

PLANS FOR 2023-24

Proposed Parish Council Areas of Focus

- Increase transparency and flow of information to residents – re-launch the Cliffhanger and make best use of all available communication channels
- Speeding concerns around the village
- Working with Tolsey Surgery and Wiltshire Council to obtain funding decision from relevant funding bodies for New Surgery Build
- Ensuring the vacant Pre-School Building is fully utilised
- Refurbish steps into the Recreation Ground
- Re-development of the Sportsfield
- Sighting of Boules pitches on the Recreation Ground
- Grove Wood Coppicing – Phase 3
- Grove Wood replacement of river path surface and making good river bank
- General Footpath improvements

- Volunteers - establish a bank of volunteers to help with various initiatives around the village
- Undertake a full review of the Councils ways of working and propose changes to increase efficiency and effectiveness

I would just like to finish by thanking all Councillors for their ongoing support. It's not easy volunteering, holding down a day job and supporting all other asks you have of your time, particularly at home, so from me it's a heart felt thank you!

Tanya Burgess
Chair, Sherston Parish Council

Appendix B**Public EV charging points - survey analysis**

The online survey and Village Hall consultation meeting were advertised via a street letter delivered to most houses in the centre of the village and also on the Facebook group - Sherston What's Occurring.

The online survey was held from 21/04/23 to 9/05/23:

- 64 responses were received, including 61 residents, 2 visitors and 1 other

Handwritten surveys were submitted at a face to face session on Sunday 30th April:

- 3 were strongly disagree and 1 was in agreement
- a number of people who attended the event did not complete either survey - on balance there were as many in agreement as disagreed in this category

The combined responses from the above were:

- 73% agreed that Sherston should have public EV charging points
- 66% said that the High Street was an acceptable location
- 30% said they were likely to use the charge points in the next year
- 50% said they were likely to use the charge points in the next 5 years

Comments in support often combined with queries as to how the charge points would be maintained, the future proofing of them for later upgrades and the cost of the electricity.

Comments against the scheme ranged from it being a waste of public money, to concern about the pressure on High St parking (particularly for those with mobility issues) and suggestions that there must be a better place (the village hall carpark was quoted more than once). One comment suggested it would devalue the homes next to the charge points.

Spot checks were done on parking spaces on the High St:

- 6 checks over period of 7 days (from 3rd May to 10th May, which included the Badminton weekend)
- between 3 and 30 spaces free at every checkpoint
- the actual figures for free spaces were: 25, 22, 21, 3, 15, >30
- the 3 spaces were on Sunday 7th May, during the Badminton 3 Day Event, probably one of the busiest weekends in the village

In response to questions and concerns raised by survey:

1) The viability of the village hall car park was tested in a number of ways:

- discussions with Instavolt, a commercial provider of very rapid EV charge points ended due to Instavolt realising their investment needed to be over £100K for very rapid charge points - the main constraint is the capacity of the electricity grid in the area

- slower charge points may be feasible in the village hall car-park but there is some doubt as to whether the OZEV grant from Government would apply, as they prefer locations with easy access; the access to the village hall car park is both narrow and visibility is very poor when exiting onto the High St
- the village hall committee would also be responsible for policing the use of the charge points (they would probably need to employ a company to do this), whereas on the High St, they would be covered by Wiltshire Council traffic regulations

2) Is this a waste of public money?:

- The Government are incentivising communities to help the transition to EVs whether we like it or not - there is a grant offer of £11,683 on the table
- Wiltshire Council is also incentivising this transition with a grant of £2,500
- for a Parish Council investment of £5,288, we leverage £14,183 more into our infrastructure
- sales of new petrol and diesel cars ends in 2030 - that's less than 7 years away - in a few years time residents may be asking what are we doing to help them with this transition; there's also no guarantee that these grants will continue in the current form
- given the commercial sector are not interested at the moment, this is exactly the type of project the public sector should be pursuing

3) Will this devalue house prices?

- the installations can be black to match the existing bollards in that area of the High St to blend in better
- in terms of the High St views, the current view of the High St is dominated by cars - this will not change - the Coop end of the High St has a lot of street clutter (e.g. bollards, tree and tree guard, road signs) - this will not really change either
- EV charge points are likely to be an important part of the local infrastructure going forward, so they may have a positive impact on house prices going forward - just like a good school, a good shop and fast broadband
- I'm not sure anybody can predict the impact, but house prices are more likely be affected much more by wider economics in my view

4) Will parking issues on the High St be exacerbated?

- the main issue with parking appears to be residents desire to park very close to their homes
- occasionally there may be no free spaces on the High St, although spot checks have failed to confirm this
- the EV charge points are primarily designed to help residents in the centre of the village with no off-street parking; therefore the cars parked in the charge point spaces are likely to have freed up a space further along the High Street
- its unlikely the current parking issues will get any worse due to the charge points

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On the basis of the above information and thoughts, I propose that the Parish Council resolves to raise the purchase order with Joju Solar (being the preferred supplier for Wiltshire Council) for the proposed scheme to install EV charging points on the High Street.

Martin Smith
11/05/2023