

Monkton Combe Parish Council Newsletter

Annual Report 2014-2015

(This document and a comprehensive range of Monkton Combe Parish Council documents can be found on our website:- monktoncombecp.org)

No local elections affecting the Parish Council were held in 2014, however the two vacant positions were filled by co-option. Cllr. Simon Call was co-opted at the Parish Council meeting on 8th May 2014, and Cllr. Mike Wareham was co-opted at the meeting on 17th November 2014.

Parish Councillors and their individual responsibilities

Lyn Alvis	Neighbourhood Watch, B&NES and Other Parishes liaison, Village Bus Service; Bus Shelter, Footpaths and Bridleways
Ross Buchanan	Mill Leat and Weir, Village Signs – footpaths, roads etc., Grit Bins, Village Cleaning, Public Seating and benches
Simon Call	Road Safety, Broadband, and School Liaison
Gavin Douglas - Chairman	Graffiti and Litter, Fly Tipping, Litter bins, Dog fouling, Police Authority liaison
Ann Stewart	Church liaison, Rights of Access and Stiles, Hedgerows and Verges.
Des Wighton - Vice Chairman	Planning Applications, policy and consultation, Parish Plan, Roads and Highways, Boundary Walls, Gullies and Drainage, Village Hall liaison, Village Hall Car Park and Garden, Village Playground - health, safety & maintenance, Village Lock-up.
Mike Wareham	To be determined
Geoff Davis – Clerk	Responsible Financial Officer, Parish Notice Boards and Communication Telephone 840201. Email. clerk@monktoncombecp.org

Parish Council Elections - The Parish Council must be elected on Thursday May 7th this year. All the present Councillors are standing for election again this year, and this Parish is supported by 7 councillors. The Parish Council carries out important work to help to sustain our community, so it is particularly important that anyone interested in standing for election should submit their Nomination papers before the deadline on April 9th 2015. To collect nomination papers please contact our clerk, Geoff Davis. If you have any questions about our role please ask Geoff or any current Councillor.

Meetings

The Parish Council met on 6 occasions during the period 2014-2015. These were meetings of the Full Council. The meeting on the 8th May 2014 was the Annual Parish Council Meeting, and this was preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting or Meeting of Electors.

Planning

During the year we have considered many different planning applications for works in or near the Parish. We only comment on purely 'Planning' grounds, using Local and National planning policies for guidance which still support the purposes of Green Belts and AONBs.

The Parish Council has continued to work with B&NES Council to develop the Place-Making Plan, and has responded to the further consultations on the Housing Development Boundary and the Local Green Space Designation.

The Parish Council also responds to Planning matters in the neighbouring county of Wiltshire, monitoring any activities on the Wiltshire side of the valley.

Village Cleaning

The Parish Council employs Ian Croker to keep our public footpaths maintained and the village clean and clear of litter. He continues to do a fine job throughout the Parish, so a huge vote of thanks is once again due to him. He clearly makes a very noticeable difference to the village and surrounding roads as a whole, and is one of the most important services we provide.

Footpaths and Open Spaces Maintenance

The Parish Council employs Jeff Avis Garden Services to keep the village car park area, Miss Davies's Garden, and the playground mown and maintained. This also makes a very noticeable difference to the village and this fine job throughout the Parish also deserves a huge vote of thanks.

The council has also worked with B&NES Council and Landowners to achieve a number of improvements to footpaths and open spaces and further works are pending.

Parish Council Website

The Parish Council website is fully operational and a full range of Parish Council documents including this report can be found on this site at monktoncombepc.org.

Highways Maintenance

The council has worked with B&NES Highways to achieve a number of road safety improvements and continues to progress further works. The end of the year has seen the closure of the A36 for 16 weeks, and the council works tirelessly to discuss matters with B&NES Highways and the Highways Authority. We endeavour to obtain the best picture of the situation at all times, and to keep the community informed.

Parish Works – Repairs and Improvements

Further significant and necessary repairs and improvements to village structures and facilities have been carried out during the year. The Lock-Up has been repaired at a cost of £4,312, and Playground improvements including new railings at a cost of £2,250.

The Parish Council has also facilitated the purchase and installation of gates on the Two Tunnels Path and public footpaths to improve the amenity and access to this path and the Tucking Mill Lake grounds. Whilst this is a significant cost, all of it has been met by generous grants from Wessex Water and the B&NES Ward Councillor's Initiative funds of Councillor Neil Butters, Roger Symonds and Cherry Beath.

Parish Council Finances

Following on from the deficit of £2,100 incurred last year, for the current year to 31st March 2015 we expect to record a further significant deficit of the order of £4,000. This is the result of the significant expenditure on the parish works described above, and those carried out in the previous year. The result of this expenditure is that Parish Council reserves are expected to be only about £5,000 by the end of the year. Therefore, in setting the precept for next year of primary importance was the need to restore reserves to an acceptable level. The Precept has been set at £5,935 for the year 2015/16, an increase of £1,045 on the current year. The council also receives a Local Council Tax Support Grant of £110. This increase will enable the Parish Council to generate appropriate reserves going forward to meet future demands for maintenance and development within the Parish.

B&NES Ward Councillor support - Finally, we thank Neil Butters our Ward Councillor and recent Chairman of BANES for his ongoing help and support throughout the year.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held in Monkton Combe Village Hall at 7:30 pm on Monday 20th April.

This is an opportunity for all residents of the Parish to attend a meeting with the Parish Council and allows us to hear from you. Please try to support the Council by attending.

Gavin Douglas. Chairman, Monkton Combe Parish Council.