

Monkton Combe Parish Council Newsletter

Annual Report 2015-2016

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

Parish Council elections were held on Thursday May 7th 2015. Six of the seven Councillor vacancies were filled by unopposed election. Ann Stewart was co-opted as Councillor at the meeting on 13th May 2015, filling the remaining vacancy.

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 | Village Signs – footpaths, roads etc., Grit Bins, Village Cleaning, Public Seating and benches |
| Simon Call | Mill Leat and Weir, Road Safety, Broadband, and School Liaison |
| Gavin Douglas – Vice 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 - Chairman | Planning Applications, policy and consultation, Parish Plan, Boundary Walls, Village Hall liaison, Village Hall Car Park and Garden, Village Playground - health, safety & maintenance, Village Lock-up. |
| Mike Wareham | Roads and Highways, Gullies and Drainage |
| Geoff Davis – Clerk | Responsible Financial Officer, Parish Notice Boards and Communication Telephone 840201. Email. clerk@monktoncombecpc.org |

Meetings

The Parish Council met on 6 occasions during the period 2015-2016. These were meetings of the Full Council. The meeting on the 13th May 2015 was the Annual Parish Council Meeting. The Annual Parish Meeting or Meeting of Electors took place on 20th April.

Councillors also attended meetings with other Parish Councils and B&NES at joint forums and met with related organisations such as The Bath Preservation Trust and Highways England in order to represent the electors and to be kept informed of any plans that may affect the Parish.

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 also responds to Planning matters in the neighbouring county of Wiltshire, monitoring any activities on the Wiltshire side of the valley. Of particular importance this year has been the enforcement action against the stables at Waterhouse Lane. The Parish Council has made representations to Wiltshire Planning Authority and the Planning Inspectorate regarding this ongoing process.

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 maintain and improve footpaths and open spaces.

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 monktoncombecpc.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 saw the installation of a new Safety Barrier at the junction of Winsley Road and the A36. The road closure caused significant disruption and B&NES Council has apologised for the lack of notice regarding this closure. There is already evidence that such a barrier was necessary.

Parish Works – Repairs and Improvements

The Parish Council concluded the purchase and installation of gates on the Two Tunnels Path and public footpaths which improve the amenity and access to this path and the Tucking Mill Lake grounds. Whilst this was 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.

During the year, the council has also worked with B&NES to make repairs to the eroding riverbank by Waterhouse Bridge, work which unfortunately will have to be extended into the next Financial Year due to recent floods.

Parish Council Finances

Following on from the deficits of £2,100 incurred in 2013-14, and £4,148 in 2014-15, for the current year to 31st March 2016 we expect to record a surplus of the order of £1,600. This surplus together with the planned surplus for the coming year of £1,800 will, in the absence of any further significant expenditure, restore reserves to the safe level of £10,000. To achieve this, the Precept has been set at £6,450 for the year 2016/17, an increase of £495 on the current year. The council also receives a Local Council Tax Support Grant of £90, which has been reduced from £110 last year. This level of reserves is regarded as the minimum appropriate 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 18th 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.

Des Wighton. Chairman, Monkton Combe Parish Council.