

Monkton Combe Parish Council Newsletter

Annual Report 2018-2019

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

There were no Parish Council elections were held this year and all Councillors continued in their post for the year. 2019 is an Election year and the following people are nominated for election:-

Alvis, Lyn: Bradby, James Christopher: Buchanan, Ross: Douglas, Alastair Gavin: Wareham, Michael John: Wighton, Des - Simon Call and Ann Stewart did not wish to stand for re-election.

Parish Councillors and their individual responsibilities

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

Meetings

The Parish Council met on 6 occasions during the period 2018-2019 which were 6 meetings of the Full Council. The meeting on the 10th May 2018 was the Annual Parish Council Meeting. The Annual Parish Meeting or Meeting of Electors took place on 23rd 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.

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.

B&NES Council have now ceased the Parish Sweeper scheme, and following protests from this and other Parish Councils, are providing transitional funding to phase it out. The Parish Council has resolved to continue the Parish Sweeper scheme by funding it from the Parish Precept. This is the primary reason for the increase in the Parish Precept this year. Similar increases will be necessary in the following two years to compensate for the reducing funding from B&NES.

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.

Highways Maintenance

The council has worked with B&NES Highways to achieve a number of road safety improvements and continues to progress further works.

Parish Works – Repairs and Improvements

Village Playpark – The Parish Council continues to progress the items of play equipment that need replacement to ensure the playpark remains a safe place for children. The reserves have been carried forward to achieve at least some of this refurbishment during this year.

Phone Box, Mill Lane – The refurbishment of the telephone box as a village information point and book store is now an ongoing project, and the replacement windows, display boards and maps, and paint have all been procured. Parish Councillors have volunteered to complete these works in the coming months.

Village Hall Flooring – In conjunction with the Village Hall Management Committee, the Parish Council has replaced the Village Hall floor, so there is now an excellent new floor which should serve the Hall and Village for many years to come.

Broadband Improvements for Monkton Combe – Your Council continues to work to improve the provision of Broadband to the village. Truespeed continue to progress the development and installation of their service through the valley from Combe Hay, via South Stoke and Midford. Their project is dependant on signing up enough customers to make the installation of the fibre links to each village financially viable.

Parish Council Finances

Following the restoration of Parish Council Reserves in 2017-18 to a safe level of £13,483, the Parish Council further increased the precept to fund substantial Parish and Other Works in the year, budgeting expenditure of £4,500 to reflect expenditure of £1,000 to repair and re-surface the village carpark, and £3,000 to replace items of play equipment in the play park, over and above day to day repairs. It also increased the Other Works budgeted expenditure from £600 to £1,600 in order that the Parish Council would be able to provide a grant of £1,000 towards the cost of replacing the Village Hall floor.

The funds for the Car park and Playpark are carried forward in the reserves to undertake these works during the coming year.

B&NES Council has now ceased the Parish Sweeper scheme and has implemented the transitional funding in order to phase it out. In the light of the reducing funding to pay for the Parish Sweeper the Precept has been raised by £700 to £7,968. This increase compensates for the reduction in Parish Sweeper funding. As the funding from B&NES reduces to zero over the next two years, it is expected that a similar increase in precept will arise in the following two years.

The Parish Council has set a deficit budget for 2019-2020, showing a deficit of £3,700 reflecting the cost of the anticipated works to the playpark and carpark. This will yield reserves of approximately £11,000 by the year end.

B&NES Ward Councillor support - Finally, we thank Neil Butters, our Ward Councillor 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 29th April.

This is an opportunity for all residents of the Parish to attend a meeting with the Parish Council and other local groups, the Church, the School and the W.I and allows us all to hear from you – question us on our actions, give us suggestions of what you'd like us to do in and for the village, and get involved.

Please try to support the Council by attending.

Des Wighton. Chairman, Monkton Combe Parish Council.