

Monkton Combe Parish Council Newsletter

Annual Report 2020-2021

(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 this year and all Councillors continued in post for the year. As Councillor Gavin Douglas has now moved away from the village he is wishing to resign as Councillor, so we therefore have an upcoming vacancy on the Council and will be seeking someone to replace him.

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, Village Sweeper Truck
James Bradby	Church liaison, Village Signs – footpaths, roads etc., Footpaths and Bridleways Rights of Access and Stiles, and Hedgerows and Verges, Planning
Adelle Brenner	Road Safety, Public Seating and benches, and School Liaison
Gavin Douglas	Graffiti and Litter, Fly Tipping, Litter bins, Dog fouling, Monkton Combe School liaison, Police Authority liaison, Planning
Andreea Imecs	Finance, Broadband, Planning, Mill Leat and Weir, Grit Bins
Mike Wareham	Vice Chairman Roads and Highways, Gullies and Drainage, 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, Mill Lane Phone Box
Geoff Davis – Clerk	Responsible Financial Officer, Parish Notice Boards and Communication

Meetings

The Parish Council met on 6 occasions during the period 2020-2021 which were 6 meetings of the Full Council. The meeting on the 9th June 2020 was the Annual Parish Council Meeting. Only the meeting on 14th September 2020 was held in the Village Hall, but under strict Social Distancing measures and Risk Assessments. The Coronavirus Civil Emergency meant that all other meetings took place remotely Online using Zoom Software. Much of the business has been discussed via e-mail throughout the year with powers delegated to the clerk so that the Council could continue to function as normally as possible.

The Annual Parish Meeting or Meeting of Electors took place on 12th May 2020 and was also held remotely Online using Zoom Software.

Councillors also attended occasional other meetings with other Parish Councils and B&NES at joint forums and with related organisations such as The Bath Preservation Trust. Again all online.

Planning

During the year we have considered a number of 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. Comments have been agreed via e-mail, with as much consultation with residents as was possible.

Village Cleaning

The Parish Council employs Ian Croker to keep our public footpaths maintained and the village clean and clear of litter. We deemed him to be an essential worker, and indeed he has kept the village clean and free from litter throughout the various lockdowns. He continues to do a fine job throughout the Parish, and continues to work throughout the Emergency, so a huge vote of thanks is once again due to him. He clearly makes a very noticeable difference to the village and roads as a whole, and is one of the most important services we provide.

B&NES Council have now entirely ceased the Parish Sweeper scheme, and Ian Croker's work is now fully funded from the Precept.

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. Again this has been deemed essential work and has continued through the emergency. 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. We have agreed some limited parking restrictions for Trollopes Hill with residents and B&NES Highways. The need for these has arisen out of the increased use of the Canal and river for leisure during the Pandemic.

Parish Works – Repairs and Improvements

Throughout the CoronaVirus Emergency the Parish Council have been able to continued the very important maintenance and improvement works in the Parish.

Village Hall and Village Car Park – Following the burst water main to the village hall a new supply has been laid across the car park to avoid the damage to the Village Hall ever being repeated.

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, with further significant repairs this year. Reserves continue to be carried forward to achieve more of this refurbishment during this year. Playgorund Inspections will be carried out by RoSPA Inspectors this next year.

Miss Davis Garden – Due to the proximity of the Playpark, and access from it, a railing has been installed around the Garden as a safety feature. We wish to thank Monkton Combe School for their generous contribution towards the cost of this project. Funding was also provided from Ward Councillor Neil Butter's community empowerment fund, and we thank him for this important contribution. The balance of the cost was from the Miss Davis bequest for maintaining the garden.

Phone Box, Mill Lane – The refurbishment of the telephone box as a village information point and book store is now complete. It has been re-painted, re-glazed and fitted out with shelves and displays, and is stocked as a Book and JigSaw Puzzle exchange.

Broadband Improvements for Monkton Combe – Your Council continues to work to improve the provision of Broadband to the village. Truespeed have been active in the area throughout the year with most premises, including the Village Hall, now having access fast Broadband.

Parish Council Finances

Parish Council Reserves at the end of 2020-21 are at a safe level of £13,451. The Parish Council has further increased the precept by £700 to replace the funding of the Parish Sweeper previously received from B&NES Council. The budget carries £2000 forward for further Parish Works, being £1,000 to repair and re-surface the village carpark, and £1,000 to replace items of play equipment in the play park.

The Parish Council has again set a deficit budget for 2021-2022, showing a deficit of £2,019 reflecting the cost of the remaining anticipated works to the playpark and carpark. This will yield reserves of approximately £11,500 by the year end.

Full details of all the Councils Finances can be found on the website at <http://monktoncombepc.org/core-business/finance/> where the Audit is currently in progress.

B&NES Ward Councillor support - Finally, we thank Neil Butters and Matt McCabe, our Ward Councillors for their ongoing help and support throughout the year.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held in the VILLAGE HALL and REMOTELY – ONLINE using ZOOM at 7:30 pm on Tuesday 18th May.

The Parish Council is required to hold such a meeting between 1st March and 1st June each year. However, we are mindful that this meeting will need to be held under current Coronavirus restrictions, with all the necessary Risk Assessments, Social Distancing and other measures in place for those attending in person.

The Parish Council wants this meeting to be essential business only, and to be as short as possible. We will be organising another meeting of the Parish later in the year when full normal social contact and interaction is possible.

That meeting, later in the year, will provide a much better opportunity for everyone to meet the Parish Council and everyone else in the village, and for you to have your say and tell us about what concerns you following these most difficult times.

Should you wish to attend the meeting on 18th May please call or e-mail the clerk on 01179860369 clerk@monktoncombepc.org

Des Wighton. Chairman, Monkton Combe Parish Council.