

BURITON PARISH COUNCIL

During the year 2015/16 the Parish Council has:

- Completed repairs and renovation works at the Village Hall including new radiators, lighting and toilet facilities; with all repairs being fully funded by insurance policies
- Arranged for a complete overhaul / renewal of the French drain outside the village hall
- Carried out repairs to the village hall car park
- Helped with repairs to the village hall after damage caused by hirers
- Repaired benches and other equipment in the parish after autumn storm damage
- Worked with the District Council to remove rats and algae at the village pond
- Organised a number of community litter-picking events during the year (including a 2016 'Clean for the Queen' event) – with particular thanks due to the Parish Clerk for making all the arrangements
- Drew parishioners' attention to County Council consultations which could lead to reductions in the operation of the Petersfield waste recycling centre and potential risks of increased fly-tipping around the parish
- Arranged opportunities for the public to discuss significant planning applications at Buriton Manor to help identify issues to be included in Parish Council responses
- Presented evidence to meetings of the National Park Authority's Planning Committee to object to development proposals at Buriton Manor
- Studied all other planning applications in the parish and submitted comments to the District Council, drawing upon the Buriton Village Design Statement and Local Landscape Character Assessment which continue to help to deter out-of-character development proposals
- Submitted evidence to the Government's Planning Inspectorate to help defend a number of appeals against the Local Planning Authority's refusals of planning applications for a series of proposed changes at Buriton Manor
- Noted the outcomes of the District Council's review of Licenses for weddings and events at Buriton Manor although the Parish Council was not entitled to submit any comments
- Assisted the District Council with information about planning enforcement investigations in a number of parts of the parish
- Hosted a well-attended public forum to discuss policies and proposals in the draft South Downs Local Plan – including a potential housing allocation in the village. Comments made by parishioners were taken into account when formulating the Parish Council's response to the formal consultation
- Submitted comments on draft Local Plan policies, on proposed housing allocations and recommendations for Local Green Space nominations to the South Downs National Park Planning Authority in response to its consultation exercise
- Noted progress with the work of the 'Plan B' group of volunteers towards up-dating the community's Village Design Statement and other related initiatives
- Wrote to MP Damian Hinds pointing out that new Government Planning Policy guidance had quashed the Local Planning Authority's ability to collect contributions from small residential developments which would have helped to provide new affordable homes in the district

- Supported the National Park Authority's bid to create an International Dark Skies Reserve, recognising that this might help to retain the beauty and tranquillity of our dark skies (with amongst the lowest light pollution in the South East of England)
- Supported a Dark Skies event in the parish in February 2016 led by the National Park's Dark Skies Officer, Dan Oakley
- Welcomed the new 'low noise' re-surfacing of the A3 through the parish for which the Parish Council had been pressing for some years
- Confirmed the Parish Council's possessory title of the pond car park and land around the war memorial; and initiated ideas for potential management and use of these areas via public consultation opportunities
- Convened an initial meeting to bring together a group of volunteers to consider ideas, options and next steps for any community bid to buy the Village Inn / Maple Inn, registered as an Asset of Community Value by the Parish Council in 2014
- Agreed permission for the Nursery School to make minor changes to provide improved play space and facilities for children
- Acted swiftly on any adverse comments in annual RoSPA inspections of play equipment and explored grant funding to pay for replacements and repairs
- Established a new Committee to raise funds for future play equipment and new playground facilities; including a popular Toy Sale
- Begun to explore the idea of running a local lottery to help raise funding for enhanced play facilities
- Joined with Steep and Sheet Parish Councils to employ a lengthsman to carry out minor works on highways and footpaths
- Agreed a natural planting scheme for the Greenway Lane roundabout following suggestions from parishioners
- Reported problems of vehicles continuing to use Bolinge Hill Lane as a through route to the Police and County Council; and encouraged parishioners to report incidents by phoning 101
- Pursued problems with capacity on the revised bus service with the County Council
- Contacted the Police following criminal damage to a series of parked cars in the village
- Reported problems on Rights of Way via the County Council's online reporting system and resolved minor issues with landowners
- Continued to request the County Council to address problems of motorised vehicles using BOATs in the parish
- Compiled a detailed case and submitted evidence to the County Council, challenging the legality of the 1986 upgrade of the Milky Way to BOAT status and seeking a Definitive Map Modification Order
- Provided inputs to help influence the contents of the County Council's 'Countryside Action Plan' for the next ten years, with comments about BOATs and other Rights of Way issues
- Hosted a public presentation by Network Rail to explain its proposals to close the railway crossing followed by a lively Question & Answer period

- Published a clear statement in the summer Parish Magazine explaining the Parish Council's position with regard to Network Rail's application
- Produced an updated version of the popular 'Exploring Buriton' leaflet describing car-free walks in the parish; with financial assistance from Hampshire County Council and the South Downs National Park Authority
- Drew attention to a number of dog attacks on sheep by producing posters, including references to the problem in the new walks leaflets and helping to initiate the launch of a nation-wide campaign, Sheepwatch UK, in the parish in February 2016
- Supported activities in the Chalk Pits Nature Reserve during 2015/16 including training and equipment for volunteers, activities for Nursery School children and a popular 'Bats & Burgers' evening with kind help from Hampshire Bat Group and the Five Bells
- Produced an educational pack for Buriton Primary School about the formation of chalk, its uses, the range of industrial activities in the Buriton Chalk Pits and the transition to a valuable Local Nature Reserve
- Completed the creation of the new pond at the top of the Chalk Pits Nature Reserve with seat and disabled access facilities
- Conducted regular liaison with the County Council about the management of the Chalk Pits Local Nature Reserve (now under the auspices of the QE Country Park)
- Attended detailed briefings about the Government's potential devolution proposals and submitted thoughts to the Hampshire Association of Parish Councils in the light of potential adverse effects on Parish Councils
- Provided support for the Buriton Fireworks Event and annual Camp-Out
- Worked closely with the Weston Residents Association – particularly on a number of Highways and Rights of Way matters
- Provided a number of talks to other communities in Hampshire and Sussex about Buriton's Parish Plan as it continues to be seen as an exemplar
- Continued to support the community website
- Continued to provide small grants towards the costs of the Parish Magazine and St Mary's Church
- Agreed to take over responsibility for the management of the village hall after retirements of members of the management committee (and a lack of new volunteers) left the existing committee inquorate, in breach of its licensing agreements and with no choice but to wind itself up
- Said farewell to long-serving Councillors David Bradley, Nigel Harrison, Amanda Martin & Margaret Oates; welcoming Tim Concannon, Daphne Gardner & Sarah O'Donoghue
- Reluctantly accepted the resignation of long-standing Parish Clerk, Wendy Shone, and advertised for a replacement.
- Agreed an unchanged precept charge to parishioners.