

BURITON PARISH COUNCIL

During the year 2020/21 the Parish Council has:

- Welcomed Lee Lloyd and Tom Wheeler as new Councillors
- Continued to help co-ordinate emergency plans during the Coronavirus pandemic, including volunteers to deliver medicines and shopping during periods of lockdown and self-isolation
- Acted as an information hub during the pandemic, by maintaining the special COVID-19 part of the community website with local and national advice and information; supported by e-mail circulations to alert parishioners to a range of issues including scams from fraudsters, requests from the Petersfield Foodbank and appeals to support NHS workers
- Made arrangements with the Post Office for a weekly mobile service in the village while the normal facility in the church was closed due to the pandemic
- Explored grant funding to assist with the use of the Manor Barn to provide a pop-in facility for refreshments and socialising during the potentially lonely winter months of the pandemic
- Prepared and reviewed risk assessments for the use of the village hall and play facilities during the unprecedented conditions
- Decided to keep the Parish Council's car parks open throughout the pandemic so as to be able to offer fresh air and exercise for people living nearby who may not have such opportunities and also contacted HCC and QECP to enquire about the reopening of their car parks
- Obtained apologies from companies whose vehicles obstructed footways in the village and at Halls Hill with commitments that this anti-social behaviour would not be repeated
- Reported a small number of significant instances of anti-social behaviour to the Police
- Considered requests from food and drink traders wanting to operate at the village pond but declined all requests for fear of making the village overly attractive as a 'destination' during the pandemic with adverse effects on tranquillity, litter and local businesses
- Offered the Village Hall as a potential Covid vaccination centre if required
- Adopted alternative ways of working in order to continue with Parish Council business whilst upholding democratic principles and compliance with public health guidance, including holding remote meetings to keep local democracy going which saw regular attendance by parishioners
- Kept our finances on a sound footing, continuing to build reserves for future work to repair / enhance the village hall and for nature / wildlife projects, by obtaining over £30,000 of other income (including CIL payments and other grants) to supplement the precept charge
- Welcomed the substantial CIL payment from the developer which had been due for the conversion of Monks Walk: to be used to help with repairs / enhancements at the village hall
- Obtained grant funding and other financial contributions towards resurfacing of the village hall car park which was undertaken in July 2020
- Funded the cleaning of the War Memorial and welcomed the work arranged by parishioners to complete the prestigious community project with the construction of the nearby Portland Stone bench to commemorate activities of a wide range of parishioners through a number of generations during war times
- Coordinated arrangements for activities to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of World War 2 (both VE Day and VJ Day) which all had to be cancelled as no gatherings were allowed during the pandemic – although both occasions were marked quietly but with feeling at the War Memorial, including short speeches and prayers by the Parish Council Chairman and the Parish Priest (suitably socially distanced) on behalf of the whole community
- Tended a new commemorative tree on the Recreation Ground to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day as well as a new copse of Field Maples

- Welcomed the selection of the parish, by the County Council, as a pilot community for an important Pollinator Project, to explore low cost actions to improve conditions and help retain the vital roles that these creatures play in helping farmers produce crops
- Taken initial steps in this biodiversity project by planting more trees and making arrangements to revise the grass-mowing regime on the recreation ground – with more to come during 2021/22 once the County Council can formally launch this initiative – providing new visual interest, homes for wildlife and, by absorbing and storing more carbon dioxide, a small contribution towards tackling climate change
- Complained to the County Council when they unnecessarily strimmed the majority of the young shrubs and trees on the Greenway Lane roundabout
- Encouraged and thanked parishioners for fund-raising and installation of a defibrillator in the village as well as obtaining Listed Building advice to assist the project
- Studied all planning applications in the parish and submitted comments to the planning authorities, drawing upon the Buriton Village Design Statement, which continues to help to deter out-of-character development proposals
- Gave evidence to the National Park's Planning Committee and influenced the outcome of major proposals at the Butser Hill Lime Works so as to minimise potential adverse effects whilst obtaining a range of benefits for the community
- Considered proposals for a number of EE phone masts in the parish, primarily to serve people on trains passing through the parish, (including at Bolinge Hill, Kiln Lane and Head Down) and submitted detailed comments which influenced the decisions made by the planning authority
- Continued to try to protect the Dark Night Skies via representations on planning applications
- Refreshed the Assets of Community Value status of both pubs to ensure that both the Five Bells and the Village Inn continue to be covered by this legislative provision
- Ensured that the community was aware of the opportunity to make a bid to purchase the Village Inn when a notice of intention to sell was published
- Objected to proposals to change the Village Inn into a dwelling house (subsequently withdrawn)
- Contacted the owners of Haven Barn to point out the deteriorating condition of the old cartshed building and encourage repairs so as to avoid any potential public danger or health hazard
- Liaised with consultants preparing the planning application for the housing site specified in the South Downs Local Plan for up to ten new homes at Greenway Lane so as to try to influence a range of important matters including designs, layouts, affordable housing, parking, drainage, water supplies, landscaping & biodiversity, energy & sustainability, lighting, highways matters and also to try to ensure the inclusion (for safety and amenity reasons) of the footpath referred to in the 2019 Local Plan from the site to the railway bridge. There was also liaison to make arrangements for consultation with parishioners and with the landowner prior to the anticipated submission of a formal planning application in April 2021
- Responded to a number of consultations, including a detailed submission to radical Government proposals to change the planning system (highlighting some surprising omissions and some ideas which could reduce opportunities for parishioners to comment on plans for new developments) as well as commenting on HCC transport plans and draft changes to SDNPA Parking and Camping/Glamping guidelines
- Responded to continuing interest in Buriton's innovative traffic calming and de-cluttering work (undertaken over ten years ago) by assisting other communities including Cheriton and Hambledon in Hampshire, Wisley in Surrey and Cuddington in Buckinghamshire
- Continued to employ the services of the parish lengthman (in conjunction with other Parish Councils), carrying out a programme of minor works on highways and footpaths

- Worked closely with residents in Weston about highways and Rights of Way matters as well as the re-painting of the telephone box used for community purposes
- Reported problems on Rights of Way via the County Council's online reporting system, resolved minor issues with landowners and submitted cutting priorities to HCC
- Arranged for parishioners to cut vegetation on some Rights of Way when HCC cancelled all its 2020-2021 cutting programme due to the Covid pandemic
- Pressed for changes on the route from Greenway Lane to QECP to reduce dangers to pedestrians
- Obtained improvements to Rights of Way signage, including in the High Street and in Bones Lane
- Funded repairs to a kissing gate after unauthorised use by cyclists during the pandemic period
- Allowed the school to close the Permissive Path on Parish Council land through school grounds as a temporary measure to reduce risks of transmission of Coronavirus
- Arranged for signage on the bridleway through the Chalk Pits to reduce dangers to pedestrians
- Sought views from parishioners about adverse effects of motorised usage of local Byways Open to All Traffic as part of a joint initiative with other nearby parishes
- Continued a campaign to try to reduce dog-fouling around the parish with a dog poop bag dispenser on the Recreation Ground and by arranging patrols from the District Council's enforcement officers
- Arranged for increases in the frequency of litter bin emptying in the village to cope with greater numbers of visitors during the pandemic
- Arranged for a new litter bin to be installed at the bus stop layby near the Greenway Lane roundabout as well as repairs / replacements to existing bins
- Arranged repairs to a number of the seats at the village pond and the installation of a new replacement in South Lane thanks to the generosity of a donor
- Arranged some interim repairs to the car park at the village pond whilst also agreeing to explore funding contributions from the households now using the route as an access thoroughfare
- Helped arrange BT coverage to the Monks Walk dwellings whilst avoiding proposals to install overhead wires on poles across the rear of the village pond
- Worked with the Queen Elizabeth Country Park to restore the outdoor classroom area in the Chalk Pits Nature Reserve and helped to explore the provision of Forest School activities
- Encouraged QECP to obtain tenders to repair the pond in the Chalk Pits Nature Reserve
- Swiftly addressed damage by cyclists in the Nature Reserve and endeavoured to minimise further visitors during the pandemic period
- Arranged for the provision of a replacement noticeboard at the Halls Hill car park so that local information, events and local businesses can be displayed
- Reported dangerous parking incidents up Halls Hill to the Police and to the highway authority during the pandemic period and arranged for measures to be installed to limit opportunities, followed by regular liaison with the County Council and the Queen Elizabeth Country Park about occasional parking problems outside the car park and other matters
- Reported occasional incidents of fly-tipping to the District Council and arranged for them to take action to remove a number of abandoned cars in the parish
- Alerted parishioners to reports of minor crimes and suspicious vehicles in nearby parishes – and encouraged parishioners to make reports to the Police
- Noted the departure of the Dottie Tots Nursery School from the village hall but worked closely with parishioners to identify and encourage a replacement service, welcoming Buriton Ducklings when the Covid virus regulations permitted
- Pursued BT to reinstate Wi-Fi coverage in the village hall as required by Buriton Ducklings

- Continued a wide-ranging programme of maintenance and testing of equipment and facilities in the village hall including health and safety assessments
- Commenced a search for new uses for the Changing Rooms on the recreation ground by leasing the building to the Tennis Club for a year
- Continued to explore replacement windows and doors (and other improvements) at the village hall in spite of problems faced by potential contractors during the pandemic period
- Helped arrange for the removal of the unattractive garage building on the recreation ground
- Undertaken significant repairs to play equipment in the new playground as well as continuing regular inspections and maintenance throughout a period when the availability of play areas and green spaces has been incredibly important
- Chased Network Rail regularly to make their fencing safe along the top of the recreation ground
- Complained to Network Rail about damage on the recreation ground by their contractors accessing the railway line by an unauthorised route
- Enlisted help from our MP to successfully recoup costs from Network Rail after they cancelled a contract to use part of the village hall car park at 12 hours' notice which led to complaints when they parked, instead, at the church and pond
- Checked precautionary measures when alerted to travellers looking for local encampment sites
- Upgraded the community website to improve its accessibility standards and ensure that it can be used by as many people as possible
- Continued to provide small grants to St Mary's Church and to the Parish Magazine
- Thanked all the teams of volunteers who assist with community projects, including: those who work regularly in Local Nature Reserves; those who helped obtain a defibrillator and those who had been planning all the activities to commemorate VE Day; the team who coordinated the commemorative bench project; and, of particular importance throughout this particular year, everyone who has helped with shopping, prescription collections and other tasks for households who are vulnerable or self-isolating during the Coronavirus pandemic.