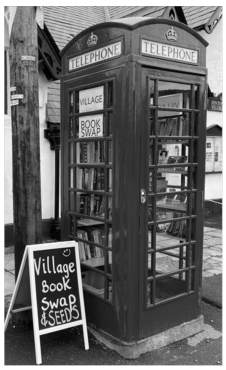
The Parish Times

JUNE 2021

ANNUAL REPORT

By Val Brodin, Chair of Bishopstone Parish Council

I started last year's report by thanking everyone who was doing 'their bit' to help take care of the isolated, shielding and vulnerable members of our community during lockdown.



None of us dreamt, then, that lockdown would be extended and repeated, or that Covid-19 would have such a long-lasting impact and require so much adjustment to our lives. This year, once again, I extend the parish council's sincere thanks to everyone who has taken time to care and support others and whose efforts have kept our parish such a safe, friendly and attractive place to live.

On behalf of the parish council I would especially like to thank Cllr Stuart McGuigan, who has retired after many years of service. Our thanks and sincere good wishes also to the family of the late Cllr Andy Greenhalgh, whose untimely death was such a sad loss to our whole community.

Bishopstone Parish Council's meetings this year have been held online, with residents able to attend remotely and submit questions and raise concerns as usual. Elections planned for last year were postponed till 6th May this year. Rural parish councils often struggle to find people willing to serve as councillors, and the few who do raise their hands are often elected unopposed. In Bishopstone this year, for the first time in 40 years, more candidates stood for election than there were seats available. 52% of villagers turned out to vote, and all nine incumbent councillors were re-elected. The election cost to parish funds will be around £1,100.

Newly elected councillors include Helen L'Abbate, an expert in risk management who was co-opted in June 2020 and Andy Clark, who joined the parish council in October. Andy has already made a difference by ensuring parish council Facebook posts automatically upload to the village website as we take our first steps into the use of social media.

We are fortunate to have two long-serving councillors with professional expertise in planning and infrastructure management, who contribute invaluable knowledge and considerable amounts of time to drafting the council's carefully considered responses to planning issues. The parish council does not make planning decisions. That is done by Members of the Borough Council (SBC) under guidance of the local planning authority within SBC. However, the parish council is a statutory consultee to all planning applications, and considers all applications on their merits, fairly and without bias.

It's also thanks to councillors' expertise that the parish council has been able to approach the highway authority in SBC with considered proposals for introducing a 20mph speed limit within the centre of Bishopstone (including a footway provision adjacent to the pond and restrictions on parking) and also for extending the 30mph speed limit on Bodyhorse Hill. It is not in the parish council's power to instigate these proposals, that falls with SBC, but it is by lobbying and considered approaches such as these that we get things done for the benefit of residents.

The parish council has maintained

Continued on page two

KEEP INFORMED

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

The Parish Council encourages prospective applicants for planning permission to seek pre-application advice from Swindon Borough Council.

Not only does this assist the Parish Council when commenting on applications but going through this process has many benefits for the applicant:

- It can help applicants understand how relevant planning policies and guidance will be applied to their proposal.
- It can improve the quality of planning application submissions by identifying areas that need to be addressed at an early stage you where you might need specialist advice, such as ecology or highways, before you submit.
- It can help applications be registered more speedily and can improve the likelihood of a successful outcome.
- It can save you time and money by identifying if a proposal is unacceptable in principle at an early stage.

Further information can be found at: https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20030/planning_and_regeneration/492/apply_for_planning_permission/2

PARISH BUSINESS

The Parish Council's monthly meeting is a very effective and immediate forum for discussion of matters of concern to villagers. Every Parish Council meeting starts with a 'public question time' and all residents are welcome to attend and ask questions. Dates for the year ahead are shown on page 4. Meetings usually start at 7.30pm, alternating between Bishopstone and Hinton Parva. Residents can also contact the Clerk to raise any issue, and councillors will respond as quickly and fully as possible. Agendas and minutes are published online at https://bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/parishcouncil/ and paper copies are posted on the village hall noticeboards.

MOTOCROSS DATES

The upcoming dates for events during at Foxhills motocross track are 29th and 30th May and 12th and 13th June.

For problems with Waste Collections call Streetsmart on: 01793 445501 - Monday to Friday 8.00am-8.00pm; 01793 466453 at all other times

Chair's annual report for 2020-21

From page one

all publicly owned areas to a good standard this year, including the pond, island, village verges and footpaths. We have provided and emptied dog bins and litter bins, made grants to both village halls and the newsletter and maintained the defibrillator in Bishopstone. We also adopted the heritage phone box in Hinton Parva, funding its conversion to a vibrant book and seed exchange for the community.

Councillors and the clerk have liaised with SBC's tree officer, the highways department and housing association to try to resolve issues noticed by councillors or reported by residents, such as parking problems near the Wyncies, dangerous trees and flooded gulleys.

Residents in The City won't need wellies to leave home next winter since we engaged with SBC to solve their muddy problems. SBC has now installed sleeper steps, a new French drain and gabion walling. The parish council contributed to the substantial costs, helped with preparatory work and will be taking on future maintenance.

Willows by the pond have been pollarded and island maintenance carried out, encouraging new wildlife to take up residence – have you seen the egret yet? Councillors also ensured that traditional wooden fingerposts were used when SBC replaced direction signs, upholding the traditional look of the conservation areas.

Although this year's parish clean-up was called off, councillors are grateful that volunteers have kept litter in check and reported fly-tipping. We all hope that the dumping problem will abate when normality resumes, as well as some traffic and parking challenges. Our additional dog poo bins have helped relieve one unpleasant problem though, sadly, some walkers continue to leave their dogs' deposits in the coombes and, bizarrely, hanging from trees.

Broadband speed has been a big issue in the parish in recent years, eased for a while by the 4G mast in Bishopstone. This year, lockdown home school, working from home and the proliferation of household devices quickly highlighted the disparity between urban and rural broadband provision.

The parish council is still working with Ward Councillor Gary Sumner to try to bring an entirely new fibre network to the whole parish, through the government's Gigabit fibre 'voucher' scheme. Initial costings received in October were not viable, as nearly 100% of residents would have had to subscribe. A more tightly drawn scheme was being costed when, in December and January, a small cluster of homes to the east of Bishopstone unexpectedly achieved fibre connection, we believe via BT's Universal Service Obligation. This significantly reduced the pool of potential subscribers for the voucher scheme. Back to square one, new figures are being calculated by Open-Reach. The parish council will keep residents informed and continue to lobby and investigate every option and opportunity to bring better broadband to our villages.

This year, councillors debated at length whether to continue offering financial support to the Parochial Church Council to help them maintain churchyards in the parish. The parish council is not responsible for this work, but has historically given the PCC money towards it. Councillors decided to continue giving money to support maintenance of these important heritage assets whilst ensuring full compliance with local council regulations.

For an unprecedented 8th year running the parish council unanimously agreed not to increase the parish element of our council tax. It remains at £39.08 for a band D property. Bishopstone Parish now enjoys one of the lowest council tax rates in Swindon. This has been made possible by renegotiation of contracts and clear prioritisation of spending. The members of Bishopstone Parish Council, unlike many others in Swindon, voted to perform their duties on a voluntary basis and do not take an allowance. All of our funding goes to providing services to the Parish.

I would like to extend councillors' thanks to Jaine Blackman, our new clerk, who has spent her entire first year trying to keep everything orderly without ever meeting the full parish council face to face. Great job, Jaine – we look forward to seeing you on the 17th! Thanks also to Paul Bailey, for continuing to audit the parish council's accounts even in his retirement. We are very grateful.

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place at 7pm on 17th May at Bishopstone Village Hall, followed at 7.30pm by the first meeting of the newly elected council, unless cancelled by Covid rules. Watch for news on the village website, noticeboards, and Facebook. Because of Covid regulations, there is limited capacity in the hall, so please contact the clerk if you would like to attend or raise questions.

I wish to thank all residents who have supported the parish council's efforts this year, and particularly my fellow councillors for their unstinting efforts and hard work. Congratulations on your election success and I look forward to continuing to work with you for the benefit of our community.

VAL BRODIN Chair
Bishopstone Parish Council
May 2021

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

All the sitting councillors for Bishopstone and Hinton Parva were re-elected in May's local elections.

Your councillors for Bishopstone, Hinton Parva and Russley Park are: top row from left, Val Brodin, Andy Clark and Julian Cooke; middle row from left, Nigel Crisp, Tom Green and Helen L'Abbate; bottom row from left, Gill May, Doug Stevens and Ian Thomas

BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Ms Jaine Blackman (Clerk)
Phone: 07913 819422
Email: Clerk@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org
Mrs Val Brodin (Chair)
Councillor-vb@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org
Mr Ian Thomas (Vice Chair)
Councillor-it@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org
Mr Julian Cooke
Councillor-jc@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org
Mr Nigel Crisp
Cllr.crisp@gmail.com
Mr Doug Stevens
Councillor-ds@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org
Mr Tom Green
Councillor-tg@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org
Mrs Gill May
Councillor-gm@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org
Mrs Helen L'Abbate
Councillor-hl@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org
Mr Andrew Clark
Councillor-ac@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org

The Parish Council's privacy policy can be viewed on its website at bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/

PLANNING UPDATE

All planning applications, their history and all supporting documents can be viewed at:
www.swindon.gov.uk/planning
Planning issues are discussed at the monthly Parish Council meetings. Public representations are heard prior to the start of the meeting.

PC Meetings 2021/2022

2021 ***(provisional dates still to be confirmed)***
7th June **Hinton Parva**
5th July **Bishopstone**
2nd August **Hinton Parva**
6th September **Bishopstone**
4th October **Hinton Parva**
1st November **Bishopstone**
6th December **Hinton Parva**

2022
10th January **Bishopstone**
7th February **Hinton Parva**
7th March **Bishopstone**
4th April **Hinton Parva**

All meetings begin at 7.30pm. Late changes are shown at bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/parish council/ and on the notice boards. Members of the press and public are welcome and should contact the Clerk at clerk@bishopstoneand hinton parva.org or telephone 07913 819422 to submit questions or attend online.

Useful Information

SBC Reception Premier House
01793 465055/465056
Civic Offices
01793 463668
Wat Tyler House
01793 463725
General enquiries to Streetsmart 01793 445501
Borough Councillor
Gary Sumner - GSumner2@swindon.gov.uk

Key Responsibility	Representative Hinton Parva	Representative Bishopstone
Finance	Nigel Crisp Julian Cooke	
Footpaths and Highways	Julian Cooke	Ian Thomas
Pond & Island		Doug Stevens
Hinton Parva Village Hall	Valerie Brodin	
Bishopstone Village Hall		Tom Green
Hinton Parva Charities	Peter Cooke	
Bishopstone United Charities		Doug Stevens Christine Thomas Laurie Manktelow (Ex Cllr)
Trees	Julian Cooke	Ian Thomas
Russley Park Liaison	Nigel Crisp	
Responsible Financial Officer		Jaine Blackman (Clerk)
Planning		Ian Thomas/Tom Green
Website/IT	Nigel Crisp	

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

S/21/0698 Erection of 1 no. dwelling and garage at land adjacent to Upper Farm, Hinton Parva Lane, Hinton Parva.
S/HOU/21/0491 Installation of 11no. solar PV panels to front of roof at 5 Cues Lane, Bishopstone.
S/21/0411 Construction of a pond at Home Farm, Hinton Parva Lane Hinton.
S/20/1497 Erection of 2no. dwellings and associated works at land adjacent to 1 Whatleys Orchard, Bishopstone.
S/20/1598 Erection of 1no. dwelling without compliance with conditions 9, 10 & 12 from previous permission S/12/1585 at land adjacent To Forty Cottage.

GRANTED

S/HOU/20/1710 Erection of a detached outbuilding at Tricklebrook, Church Lane Bishopstone.
S/TWC/21/0561/LAND Works to trees in a conservation area at 4 Newtown Cottages, Newtown Lane, Bishopstone.
S/TWC/21/0642/LAND Works to trees at The Lynchets, Icknield Way, Bishopstone.
S/21/0174 Extension of The Chalet and change of use of the land for use as a single dwelling house, The Chalet , Church Row Hinton Parva. Revised application.