

Parish Council update report: November 2020

It has been another busy few months since the last Update in August as the Parish Council continues with normal business whilst addressing a range of effects of the pandemic. Meetings have been held on Zoom in September and November – with extra Planning Committee Meetings (also on Zoom) in October and November to consider some complicated issues including radical Government ‘White Paper’ proposals to change the planning system and changes to car parking standards for new houses.

It has been good to see that a number of parishioners have joined these meetings and taken part. Details continue to be posted on the noticeboard in the High Street as well as on the website.

The Council submitted a robust response to the Government’s proposals, highlighting some surprising omissions and also challenging their ideas which could reduce opportunities for parishioners to comment on plans for new developments. The Council’s response to Government is on this website: [here](#).

The Council is also aware of proposals from the EE phone company for ten new masts in the area – designed to improve reception for travellers on trains between Rowlands Castle and Liss. These masts – each quite substantial and over 15 metres tall – are part of a nationwide project to improve coverage along railway lines, but there appears to be relatively little consideration to help reception in nearby villages.

Although there has not yet been a formal planning application for any masts in this parish, at least two are mooted and the Parish Council feels that, as well as ensuring that they’d fit into the landscape, we would want to push for (1) improved reception for the community (not just for passengers on trains) and (2) all masts should be made available to all phone companies (not restricted to only some, as that could mean that more masts would be required in the future for other networks). The Council has alerted local landowners to these points in case it is possible to present a ‘united front’ to phone companies so that the community might get maximum benefits with minimum disruption.

At the time of writing, we are experiencing another period of national lockdown to combat the Coronavirus pandemic. The Parish Council continues to provide local updates on the COVID-19 pages of the community website and was already discussing ideas to help people in the community through the winter months with the Neighbourcare service, St Mary’s church, the Five Bells and others before the latest lockdown was announced. Please try to check whether friends and neighbours need any help – or simply a chat – and other ideas / help are always appreciated. The usual Neighbourcare service can be contacted via 07769 691919 or 01730 269034 or pillmeadhouse@btinternet.com.

It is still hoped that a new Childminding service, “Buriton Ducklings”, will be able to start in the village hall in the near future: fully insured and DBS checked. For more information or to register interest, please contact Jade or Emma via buritonducklings2020@gmail.com or 07983 201052.

The loss of bookings in the village hall is inevitably affecting the Parish Council’s finances and so if anyone knows of people, perhaps in Petersfield or elsewhere, who might like to book the hall for suitable purposes, please contact the Hall Manager, Steve Franks, via on 07878 027845 or buritonvillagehall@gmail.com

In order to combat dog fouling on the recreation ground and elsewhere the Parish Council has arranged for EHDC wardens to make regular visits – to educate and fine people as required. Using donations raised at the community stall at the Five Bells, a dispenser for dog-poop bags has been purchased for the Kiln Lane entrance to the recreation ground. With bags now readily available there can be no excuses – and fines will be more likely. Please help to spread this message.

Some information about our new “Pollinator Project” appears at the end of this Update. Please think about how you might be able to help and take part.

Thanks to the team who have been arranging to obtain a Defibrillator for the village, one has now been installed and is ready for use at 4 Kiln Lane, Buriton, GU31 5SG. This is a temporary location until a High Street site is confirmed by EHDC. Everyone is encouraged to familiarise themselves with the procedures for CPR and use of the defibrillator (so as to restore breathing and circulation in anyone whose heart and breathing have stopped) and there are many sources of information on the internet. Here is a link to the British Heart Foundation site: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMGpsKitCXE>

We have two vacancies on the Parish Council which can be filled by co-option. Might you be interested? You do not need to have any particular skills or experience – just a passion to make a difference. Meetings are held every two months in the evening, although there may be additional meetings in-between. For further details about how to apply, please contact the Parish Clerk, Petra Norris, email buritonparishcouncil@hotmail.co.uk or telephone 07943 536065. Petra can also discuss the roles and explain more about what is involved – or you could speak to any of the current Parish Councillors: Lynne Ashcroft, Andrew Bray, Heidi Coates, Tim Crew, Maggie Johnston, Doug Jones or Sarah Stevens. The deadline for applications is 14th December.

As always we say thanks to our Parish Clerk (Petra Norris), Hall Manager (Steve Franks) and Hall Cleaner (Darren Francis) for all their continuing hard work during these unusual times.

Helping nature help us: a new project for Buriton

Buriton has been selected as one of only six parishes in Hampshire to take part in a pilot programme to help improve conditions for important pollinators – and it is hoped that lots of people will want to take part.

Small creatures such as bees, butterflies, moths and beetles are vital for flowers, crops and food production. Some experts say that one in every three mouthfuls of food that we eat depends on them.

But Government reports show a loss of over half of bees, butterflies and moths over the last 50 years. Human activity is changing nature at a rate never seen before and Britain is becoming one of the most nature-depleted countries in the whole world.

The County Council project is intended to increase awareness and participation in villages like Buriton – and to begin to improve and connect local green spaces across Hampshire to help pollinators and other creatures.

Turning the tide could begin here!

The project offers the potential to involve the village school, St Mary's church, local farmers, roadside verges and residential gardens as well as Parish Council land and the existing Nature Reserves. Each part of the village might wish to think about how their area could help.

It may be possible to plant some more native trees or shrubs, to build bug hotels, to reduce grass mowing and to increase areas of wildflowers. Simply mowing some parts of grassed areas less frequently and thinking carefully about when not to cut vegetation back can probably help to create corridors for wildlife through the village to connect to the wider countryside.

And everyone can get a buzz out of wildlife-friendly gardening – excuse the pun!

The Parish Council has already made a start by planting a new copse of trees on the recreation ground during the first coronavirus lockdown and it will also be considering how to manage its land to enhance nature.

It also welcomes ideas from residents and hopes that lots of parishioners will be keen to join in the project. If you would like to take part in any way, please contact Doug Jones (01730 231326 / doug.pam@btinternet.com) or anyone else on the Parish Council.

There could be opportunities to extend the initiative beyond pollinators into something to promote greater awareness and understanding of nature more widely and to connect with other important issues such as climate change, healthy living and changing anti-social behaviours such as littering and dog fouling. All suggestions and ideas are welcomed ...