

## Parish Council update report: February 2021

It has been another busy few months since the last update in November as the Parish Council continues with normal business whilst addressing a range of effects of the pandemic. Meetings have been held on Zoom in November and January – with three extra Planning Committee Meetings (also on Zoom) to consider a number of applications and emerging proposals. It has been pleasing to see members of the public attending the majority of these meetings.

We have also been able to recruit two new members of the Parish Council from amongst a strong field of applicants. Tom Wheeler and Lee Lloyd are both now joining the team and will bring a wealth of local knowledge, experience and passion for the parish. We thank them and all the other applicants for their interest in joining us.

The Parish Council continues to provide local COVID-19 updates on the community website and in email newsletters. With East Hampshire being in a particularly critical period in the battle to beat the virus it is vital that everyone thinks twice about their daily activities and follows all the guidance about social-distancing and self-isolating. People all over the country have not been following these rules which has helped the virus to spread – and this means that some hospitals (including Portsmouth) have been under huge strains. We all owe it to those hard-working NHS heroes to do our bit and act responsibly.

We also continue to work closely with the Neighbourcare service, St Mary's church, the Five Bells and others during the lockdown periods. Peter Gray provides an invaluable service as an alternative to venturing to shops in Petersfield or supermarkets elsewhere. A wide range of fresh produce is usually available and Peter can be contacted via 07926 264440 or [peter1965gray@gmail.com](mailto:peter1965gray@gmail.com). Thanks are also due to all the other parishioners who are quietly helping to keep things going and looking out for neighbours. Please continue to try to check whether any friends or neighbours need any help – or simply a chat. The usual Neighbourcare service can be contacted via 07769 691919 or 01730 269034 or [pillmeadhouse@btinternet.com](mailto:pillmeadhouse@btinternet.com).

We are pleased that so many parishioners responded to the call to produce pictures and messages of support to help boost the morale of NHS staff in Portsmouth. Feedback confirms that these have helped morale as staff realise that they still have support and that people are thinking of them.

It is a particularly busy time on planning matters with big proposals by TJ Waste for the Butser Hill Quarry site, with an application to close the Village Inn and change it into a house, with proposals to build ten new houses on Greenway Lane and, at the time of writing, also suggestions of a tall EE phone mast on Kiln Lane. These matters are always discussed at parish council meetings, with opportunities for any parishioners to have their say, and – if timescales permit – special meetings can also be arranged. Agendas and Minutes from Parish Council meetings are always published on the community website: [www.buriton.info](http://www.buriton.info)

There have also been some problems with local Rights of Way and parishioners are encouraged to report any issues via the County Council website (<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>). The use of local Byways by motorised vehicles has caused problems in this parish for many years with repeated requests being made to the County Council to ban this traffic. The Parish Council has decided to press the County Council and National Park Authority on this matter again – but help and evidence from people will be vital. There is more about this matter (and how you can help) at the end of this Update Report.

The Council is also likely to consider how to make the best use of all its assets – including the Changing Rooms next to the village hall. If you have any thoughts about this matter, please let us know.

There has been a promising response from parishioners to information in the last Update Report (and in the Parish Magazine) about our new "Pollinator Project". Once the County Council is able to start this initiative we will be trying to think of ways to involve as many people in the parish as possible – but the Covid restrictions are currently making this sort of thing rather challenging. In the meantime the Parish

Council is arranging for more trees to be planted and for adjustments to be made to the mowing regime on the recreation ground.

We have learnt that Network Rail will be doing some significant work on the railway line near the village in March and May. More details are promised nearer the time but they will be using part of the car park at the village hall as a compound as follows: Monday 8th to Friday 19th March and Monday 3rd to Friday 7th May.

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](mailto:buritonducklings2020@gmail.com) or 07983 201052.

Details of Parish Council meetings continue to be posted on the noticeboard in the High Street as well as on the website and, 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.

### **Local Byways and Rights of Way: your parish needs your help and evidence**

Amongst the Rights of Way and footpaths in our parish are a number of unsurfaced 'Byways Open to All Traffic' (BOATs): including The Milky Way and Mead Lane.

Motorised vehicles are allowed to use these routes but the Parish Council has argued for many years that this discourages walkers and horse-riders as well as damaging the local environment. Requests to the County Council to use its powers to ban recreational vehicles have never been approved, even though this is done in other parts of the country. But we want to have another go!

Buriton is not alone in wanting to protect these rights of way for walkers and horse-riders – and to look after their heritage, landscape quality and character. East Meon, Langrish, Steep and other nearby parishes also have problems on BOATs and we are hoping to join forces with them to try to get something done.

But, clear evidence will be needed – and this is where you can help.

We would like to receive any of the following:

1. Timed/dated/located photos of damage to BOATs by 4x4s/motorbikes: ideally, before and after damage. NB: close-ups of puddles, tyre tracks etc are not so good, as they could be anywhere. It'd be better if some of the context for the damage can be seen on the photos
2. Timed/dated/located photos of convoys of 4x4s/motorbikes on BOATs
3. A 'diary / log' of the use of BOATs by 4x4s/motorbikes and any adverse effect e.g. noise nuisance
4. Records of complaints you may have made to the County, District or Parish Councils (or to the Police) and any replies
5. Any evidence of 4x4s/motorbikes using BOATs to facilitate trespass or criminal activities
6. Written statements about the enjoyment (and lack of fear) experienced on the routes before the increases in vehicular use – and any old photographs. Older residents who have lived here for many years may be able to help here?
7. Statements from walkers or horse-riders whose legitimate use has been affected by vehicular uses: either through fear of meeting vehicles on the narrow paths or actual experience of direct conflict.

Photos provide the simplest, most direct and useful evidence and modern mobile phones are excellent for the 'on the spot' capture of relevant instances of "danger" or "damage".

Please help in any way that you can and send information to the Parish Council via Doug Jones at 17 Bones Lane, [doug.pam@btinternet.com](mailto:doug.pam@btinternet.com) or phone 01730 231326 to discuss.