

BURITON PARISH COUNCIL

During the year 2022/23 the Parish Council has:

- Reverted to normal arrangements following the Coronavirus pandemic whilst maintaining e-mail circulations to alert parishioners to a range of issues including scams from fraudsters, requests from the Petersfield Foodbank and other useful information
- Kept its finances on a sound footing, continuing to build reserves for future work to enhance the village hall and for other projects, by obtaining grants to supplement the Parish Precept Charge
- Agreed that there should be no increase in the Parish Precept Charge for 2023/24 so as to minimise extra burdens on parishioners during the cost of living crisis
- Introduced arrangements, with St Mary's church, to help parishioners through the worst of the winter during the cold weather and high domestic energy costs etc
- Transferred its banking arrangements to online banking whilst complying with public sector audit requirements
- 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
- Noted, with disappointment, the SDNPA decision to approve the development of 10 new houses on Greenway Lane without the new footpath that had been sought in the Local Plan
- Swiftly contacted the new developers (Imperial Homes, who had bought the Greenway Lane site from Metis Homes) to try to establish good liaison during the construction period and adherence to the Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Made complaints regularly to the SDNPA enforcement team whenever parishioners reported issues about construction at the Greenway Lane site and also commented on all applications by Imperial Homes to discharge planning conditions which were not in line with the permissions granted by the planning authority so as to try to ensure an exemplary development
- Made representations to EHDC to try to ensure that the four affordable homes in the Greenway Lane development will be allocated to people with an appropriate connection to Buriton
- Asked parishioners for suggestions for the street name for the new Greenway Lane development and proposed *South Downs View* to the EHDC authorities
- Made comprehensive submissions (including concerns about highways safety) to the Planning Inspector considering the Appeal lodged against the refusal of permission by SDNPA for the Re-Charge One proposals (for 60 holiday lodges with shops, cafes and 125 parking spaces at the Greenway Lane roundabout) and attended the appeal proceedings
- Made detailed submissions to the Planning Inspector considering the Appeal lodged against the refusal of permission by SDNPA for an EE phone mast close to the village, primarily to serve people on trains passing through the parish
- Met with the prospective developers of a new hotel at the Greenway Lane roundabout to try to obtain details of the development prior to the submission of a planning application
- Joined a Liaison Group to monitor works at the Butser Quarry site including a scheme to retain, protect, enhance and interpret the old lime kilns
- Continued to try to protect the Dark Night Skies via representations on planning applications
- Renewed the Asset of Community Value status for The Nest
- Hosted a delegation of planning officials from Oman to look at a range of local initiatives
- Noted that SDNPA was commencing a review of South Downs Local Plan and made arrangements for the Buriton Village Design Group to develop ideas for the Parish Priority Statement, including consultations with the community at the B-earth Day event
- Responded to a number of consultations, including proposals for a new waste water pipeline and HCC's Local Transport Plan
- Represented the community in County Council events about bus services to try to ensure that the Buriton bus service is not withdrawn in large-scale cuts being envisaged
- Responded to continuing interest in Buriton's innovative traffic calming and de-cluttering work (undertaken over ten years ago) by assisting other communities including some in Somerset, Sussex and Yorkshire

- Noted with disappointment that the school no longer has a School Travel Plan
- 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
- Arranged a site meeting with representatives of HCC, EHDC, WSCC, CDC and Harting Parish Council to develop ideas to improve safety, particularly for walkers and cyclists, on the B2146
- Reported problems on Rights of Way (including offences by Network Rail) to Hampshire County Council and resolved minor issues with landowners
- Pressed for damaged Byways Open to All Traffic to be included in HCC's 'winter closure' scheme and for gates to be added at each end which could be funded (with a number of other routes in the district) from SDNPA's CIL resources if HCC were to make an application
- Reported overgrown conditions on the Hangers Way in The Links and welcomed HCC ideas to improve the route
- Agreed with HCC's Rights of Way Rangers that they would approach landowners in the parish to try to replace the few remaining stiles with kissing gates and become stile-free in 2023
- Encouraged the South Downs National Park Authority to mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of the South Downs Way National Trail here (as it originally started / finished in Buriton) in an event with children from Buriton school
- Continued to try to reduce dog-fouling around the parish by arranging patrols from the District Council's enforcement officers which can result in Fixed Penalty Fines and by displaying posters produced by school children around the village and requesting stickers for bins from EHDC
- Supported a community litter-picking event with thanks to Adam and Hannah Griffiths again
- Reported incidents of fly-tipping to the District Council and suggested ideas to reduce this problem at the Greenway Lane hot-spot corner
- Provided new, recycled plastic seats on the recreation ground and at the village pond (with one more to follow during 2023/24) thanks to the generosity of family donors
- Initiated repairs to the bridge at Pond Green with assistance from EHDC
- Encouraged Queen Elizabeth Country Park to repair the pond in the Chalk Pits Nature Reserve
- Noted that, as a result of consultations, QECP is very unlikely to allow camping near the South Downs Way on the old landfill site near the Halls Hill Car Park
- Funded the installation of new energy-efficient windows and doors etc at the village hall
- Won a significant CIL award from SDNPA, providing funding specifically to undertake next steps of energy efficiency improvement work at the village hall
- Begun to explore next steps to improve sustainability and energy efficiency at the village hall, to identify measures and prioritisation to optimise choices for cost and CO2 savings – including solar energy assessments of the village hall roof and potential for EV charging points
- Continued a wide-ranging programme of maintenance and testing of equipment and facilities, including health and safety assessments at the village hall
- Implemented an on-line booking system for the village hall
- Continued to search for new uses for the Changing Rooms on the recreation ground and arranged for the Tennis Club to pay for the use of the Referee's Toilet for the year
- Obtained further CIL funding from SDNPA, from recent development in the village, which could be used towards next steps at the village hall and / or for replacing play equipment
- Continued to obtain frequent professional inspections of playground equipment with repairs being undertaken as necessary
- Installed new junior goalposts and a new basketball backboard on the recreation ground to improve facilities
- Considered proposals from the Tennis Club to install a concrete table tennis table on the recreation ground subject to satisfactory insurance implications
- Continued to explore the establishment of a Friends of the Playground Group
- Welcomed the proposal to relocate the defibrillator to the Next Hotel and continued to build up a financial reserve fund so as to be ready to replace the defibrillator whenever needed
- Welcomed the idea of using the phone box in the High Street as a library resource
- Paid regard to its 'Climate & Nature Charter' to ensure that the Council's activities consider climate change

- Continued to encourage climate change initiatives in the parish - to complement nature, pollinators and biodiversity initiatives
- Ensured that the 2022 Village Show had a strong focus on Climate Change and Nature to support the community's work in these areas and helped initiate a new B-earth Day event in 2023
- Promoted climate and nature initiatives at the new community event and in each edition of the Parish Magazine and elsewhere to encourage increasing community involvement
- Encouraged use of the Council's Thermal Imaging Camera by offering basic home surveys to all households: helping to identify where heat is leaking out, adding unnecessarily to fuel bills
- Asked Abri Housing Association to provide energy saving initiatives and advice for the tenants of their rented properties in the village
- Progressed its work with the County Council as a pilot community for an important Pollinator Project, exploring low cost actions to improve conditions and help retain the vital roles that these creatures play in helping farmers produce crops
- Continued with the new mowing contract arrangements for the recreation ground, leaving swathes of longer grass at the margins as part of the community's pollinators and re-naturing initiatives: providing new visual interest, homes for wildlife and, by absorbing and storing more carbon dioxide, a small contribution towards tackling climate change
- Arranged another successful Community Hay-Day on the recreation ground in September as part of the pollinators and re-naturing initiatives
- Made successful applications for further funding and support for its pollinators and re-naturing work from the South Downs National Park Trust
- Won grant funding for a Bee Lines project to scarify the margins of the recreation ground and sow yellow rattle seeds to weaken vigorous grasses and allow other wildflowers to flourish
- Won grant funding and other support for the Re-Naturing project on the recreation ground, to provide wildflower plug plants and hedgerow planting
- Supported the installation of an impressive Bug House on the recreation ground
- Liaised with Network Rail to ensure that they will not use damaging methods or herbicides near the recreation ground
- Won a 'Trees for the Downs' award to plant a series of more trees (Wayfarer, Oak, Field Maple and Cherry) in public spaces around the village
- Made a successful application to HCC for three new trees on highway land in Heatherfield in the October 2023 - March 2024 planting season: a Crab-apple, a Whitebeam and a Hawthorn
- Coordinated the installation of approximately 30 swift boxes in the village to assist this aerobatic but declining species
- Made a successful application for grant funding to purchase a moth trap to help record the range of pollinator species in the parish and to increase local awareness of biodiversity
- Continued to ask EHDC to address deterioration at the village pond, with replacement trees and other works
- Discussed arrangements for pot-holes in the village pond car park to be repaired once nearby building work has been completed.
- Continued to provide small grants to St Mary's Church and to the Parish Magazine
- Been featured on local radio highlighting local initiatives
- Provided funding and support for the extremely successful Queen's Platinum Jubilee Festival spread over four days in 2022 (with particular thanks to Lee & Denise Lloyd)
- Recorded condolences to the Royal Family upon learning about the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and put the long-planned local arrangements with St Mary's Church into place swiftly
- Thanked the Reverend Judith Bee upon her retirement from St Mary's for all her hard work in the parish over the years
- Thanked retiring Cllrs Jones, Johnston, Crew, Ashcroft, Stevens and Coates for their service on the Parish Council over many years and noted that, as a result of the Local Election process in April/May 2023, there are five members of the Council.