



Yardley Hastings

The Parish Council's Year

A report of the Parish Council's activities
from April 2021 – March 2022

As usual, prior to the village's Annual Parish Meeting, the Parish Council has produced a report of its activities during the past 12 months. There will be an opportunity for residents to raise any matters in this report, or indeed any other parish matter, at the forthcoming Annual Parish Meeting, details of which are given below. This meeting is open to all residents and the council members look forward to seeing you.

YARDLEY HASTINGS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

WEDNESDAY MAY 18th - 7pm

**Small Room, Memorial Hall – Entrance by rear patio doors
Everyone welcome**

The Parish Council - General

Parish Council elections were held in May 2021. Two of our long serving members and past Chairmen, John Keggin and Herbert Cave, decided not to stand for re-election and we thank them for their past service to the community.

There were only 8 candidates for the 11 places on the Council and, despite efforts since, there have been no applications to fill the vacancies.

The Council members during 21/22 have been Debbie Smith (Chairman), Alan Willis (Vice Chairman), Max Cooke, Richard Houghton, Chris Pickering, John Quilter, Alastair Rowton, and Duane Winter.

The Council's Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer is Geoffrey Gill of 11 Castle Ashby Road, (tel. 696203), email: yhparishclerk@gmail.com to whom any parish council matter can be referred. The Council's website can be found at: <https://www.yardleyhastingsparish.org.uk/>

The following members represented the Council on other village organisations.

Memorial Hall Management Committee – Debbie Smith

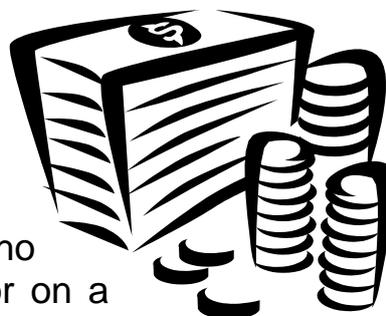
Yardley Hastings Society Management Committee - Alastair Rowton

Sarah Wilkinson continued to act as our volunteer Parish Path Warden, and has undertaken a considerable amount of work on the Millennium Triangle.

The Council met 13 times during the year and commented on 14 planning applications relating to the parish.

Finances

The Council raised a precept of £16,045 for the year under review and ended the year with a balance of £10,368. A full statement of the council finances will be presented to the Parish Meeting.



The Council is grateful to Glenys Kennedy, who continues to undertake the role of internal auditor on a voluntary basis thus saving the council money. The Council's accounts and internal monitoring procedures again resulted in a smooth passage through the audit system.

Recreation Ground and Village Handyman

2021 saw the long-awaited completion of the refurbishment of the Recreation Ground, which has received positive feedback. Lord Northampton granted us a 20-year lease, and this enabled us to access a grant of £50,078 from South Northants (now West Northants) Council towards the total cost of £66,000. We are also grateful to The Yardley Hastings Society for a grant of £6,700.

In order to identify any damage and to satisfy health and safety requirements, the Recreation Ground is inspected on a weekly basis by the Council's self-employed handyman and annually by an independent professional inspector.

As well as the play equipment inspection, the handyman contract involves other works including the mowing of the Millennium Triangle, Old Pond and Closed Churchyard; emptying of litter bins and gully clearance. The 3-year handyman contract came up for renewal in April 2021 and Terry Watton, who had been the contractor for 13 years, decided not to tender again. We would like to record our thanks to Terry for all his work. After the tender process, local resident Brian Osborne was successful.

The 3-year contract for mowing the Recreation Ground has also come up for renewal this year. Brown and Barden, our existing contractors, were successful and will continue to undertake the work for the next three years.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – June 2022

Towards the beginning of 2022, as part of the Queen's Green Canopy Project, the Council planted 15 field maples alongside the permissive footpath in the

field at the top of Church Lane to extend the existing avenue. We are grateful to Richard Hutchinson for his support for this initiative. Our trees are now registered on the Queen's Green Canopy website.



To celebrate the Jubilee, a Parish Council Working Party, comprising Councillors and non-councillor volunteers, has organised a programme of events - details now circulated to every household.

Gigaclear Broadband Installation

Work having started back in 2019 the installation has now finally “gone live”. Gigaclear have committed to carrying out works of reinstatement to paths, verges etc. in accordance with the relevant guidance published by central government, and we will be working with them to ensure that this is done.

Housing development adjacent to The Leys

In February we held a well-attended Open Event at the Memorial Hall, in conjunction with Compton Estates and Francis Jackson Homes. Plans were on display and there was an opportunity for residents to ask questions.

Works are now underway on the site which will provide 12 market value properties and 8 affordable rental homes. The new estate road has already been officially named and will be known as West Brook Close. It will also service a new village sports field behind the houses. It has been over 7 years since the Council started looking at what sports facilities people would like to see and, more importantly, what they would use. In the intervening time our focus for leisure and fitness has changed and it is therefore likely that we will start again with a blank canvas, now that it can be progressed. If you are interested in helping to progress this project, please contact our Clerk, Geoff Gill (details on the front page).



Sewage Works

For the last few months, there has been activity involving a steady stream of tankers visiting the Sewage Works in Castle Ashby Road into the early hours to remove waste. This generated a number of complaints to the Council, about the tanker activity and the state of the access road, and these were taken up with Anglian Water. We have recently been advised that the project to install additional equipment now been successfully completed, although it seems that there will still be a need for tankers to visit the site on an intermittent basis.

Millennium Triangle, High Street – Village Sign and Wildflower Planting

Over the last year more wildflowers, including campion, bluebells, cowslips and snowdrops have been planted on the wildflower area.

Observant residents will have noticed that the Village Sign on the Millennium Triangle went missing earlier in the year. It has been removed for repair and refurbishment but will be back in situ soon.

Policing, Neighbourhood Watch and Emergency Plan



Firstly, thank you to all those who have returned the form, advised us of equipment that you have which would be useful in an emergency situation, and offered to be a Street Contact. If you haven't returned your form yet, there is still time, or if you have lost it, you can request another one from the Clerk.

We would also encourage residents to sign up to the Neighbourhood Watch WhatsApp Group, which enables information about suspicious vehicles, the latest scams calls, recent crimes etc to be sent out rapidly. The alerts can also be sent by email. This system will also be used in the event of an emergency situation occurring. To sign up you will need to complete a form, obtainable from Helen Gavin, email: helengavin904@hotmail.com 07866 597579.

Richard Houghton is the Council member responsible for Police liaison.

Conclusion

This report contains just a glimpse of the Council's activities.

We continue to discuss the perennial problems of dog fouling and litter, though the former has not been cropping up so often recently, which is a good sign. Sadly, fly tipping is an increasingly frequent occurrence and we regularly have to report incidents via the "Fix My Street" system. Anyone can report an incident on line at: <https://www.fixmystreet.com> - Potholes and other highway matters can be reported on line at: <https://fixmystreet.northamptonshire.gov.uk/> On both sites you are encouraged to upload photos of the issue.

The Council prints regular reports of its meetings in the Village Newsletter and our full minutes and agenda are published on our website <https://www.yardleyhastingsparish.org.uk/>

Our Parish Council meetings are open to the public and we have a session for public participation at the beginning of each of them.

Finally, as Chairman for the past year, I would like to thank all the Council members, and our Clerk, Geoffrey Gill, for their support and hard work on behalf of our village community.

Debbie Smith

Chairman on behalf of Yardley Hastings Parish Council, May 2022