

Chairman's Report – March 2019

Parish Council - The Council has remained the same as last year, but Claire Lawton, and John Whybrow have announced that they were not standing for re-election. John has acted as our most able footpath representative for 16 years. The results of our 2019 elections have just been announced, and I am delighted to say that Dr Vicky Pai and Bruce Clarke will be joining the Council in May.

Village Design Statement - BANES informed us in September that our VDS has been given the status of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which increases its authority, and which was the recognition we were seeking. The VDS has been printed and distributed to households in the village, and is agreed to be a beautifully produced document. Thanks are due to all of the VDS Working Party, but in particular Bruce Clarke as editor, Tony Baldero for the design, and Gail Pattison for chairing the Working Party for nearly 4 years.

Armistice Day Commemoration – Thanks to Claire Lawton for organising a most memorable event, and to John Lippiatt for the magnificent brazier on Pensdown hill.

Finance - There has been a slight increase in the Precept this year to allow for inflation. £2000 was donated to support the work on the Village Hall, with the offer of more later, should this become necessary. £500 has been spent on having the electric supply to the phone box disconnected and on repairs. The Village Design Statement cost £960 for consultancy fees and to pay for printing. First aid and defibrillator training cost £337. Refreshments after the Armistice celebration in November cost £150, and we also paid £25 to the young Bugler who played beside the brazier.

Planning - Mead Cottage. An application to remove the agricultural tie on the building was supported by the Parish Council, but was initially not approved by BANES. The tie has, however, now been removed.

Walnut Tree Hill. As Chairman of the Parish Council I have written four times to the Chairman of B&NES complaining about the delegated decision to allow the shipping container to remain, but without receiving a satisfactory explanation. However, at our request, the wall to the North of the house has been changed from a rendered to a more appropriate natural stone finish.

Bramble Barn - the Parish Council supported the application to turn a garage into living accommodation, which has been approved.

The Piggeries, Marksbury lane – An application to convert the ruins at the Piggery into a home was supported, but with reservations concerning the greater volume of the buildings proposed, cars using the bridleway, and external lighting.

Highways and footpaths – The work done last year to bypass a blocked storm drain near the Village Hall seems to have been successful in reducing flooding down the High Street, and a large log removed from the culvert under the Marksbury dip will reduce flooding there.

Phone Box - The phone box has been repainted, and the Gardening Club has provided planting inside and out, with the promise of more to come.

Defibrillator - A successful training session for 10 people was arranged in October, and we currently have 29 villagers on the associated call-out list. Many thanks to John Wilkinson for his continuing support to this project.

Priston Website - Once again thanks to Richard Bottle for maintaining the website, and for redesigning the interface to improve it for our smartphones.

Thanks - Finally thank you to our Parish Clerk Louise Callan, and all of our Councillors for their good work and support over the past year.

Doug Pattison, Chair, Priston Parish Council

April 2019