

LOWER WINTERBORNE PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017

The Parish Council has seen even more changes emerging during the past year and we continue to try to balance change with tradition.

A significant change was the standing down of Councillor Graham Nash. Graham was a proactive councillor and kept a keen eye on the Play Park, Cemetery and Recreation Ground in addition to other council tasks. He will be missed and I would like to thank him for helping to keep the council grounded for so many years. David Knapp joined the council a year ago representing Winterborne Kingston taking a keen interest in the Youth of the Lower Winterborne. Sharon Jacobs has been co-opted onto the council representing Anderson leaving us only one councillor short. If you are interested in joining us please do not hesitate to get in touch.

It was encouraging to witness how communities worked together last year to celebrate the Queens 90th birthday – a fun day for all. Winterborne Kingston and Zelston both supported the Best Kept Village Competition and although neither carried off a prize they are both trying again this year. Our thanks go to Joan Nash for coordinating this in Winterborne Kingston and to Zelston residents for taking up the challenge yet again.

A quiet winter was just what our Flood wardens needed after the last few years and we appreciate their continued vigilance – my thanks go to Graham Hyde, Derek Andrews (Winterborne Kingston) and Rita Burden (Zelston).

There have been a significant number of planning applications across the Lower Winterborne most of which were supported. The Scats development, now it is finally off the ground, will add a new dimension to Winterborne Kingston as will the change of use to Abbots Court Farm.

The state of our roads continues to be a thorn in our side – particularly the C6 running from the A31 to A354 through Winterborne Kingston. This is not just the state of the road but also the speed of the traffic. The council is committed to doing all it can to bring about some improvements and Helen Andrews is always looking for Speed Watch recruits if you feel you could spare the time.

There has been a great deal of debate about the imminent changes at County, District and Parish level. This is already being felt in the reorganisation of work previously carried out by councils. Ventures such as the resurfacing of the footpath between the Greyhound and Broad Close where the cost was shared between the Parish Council and the County Council may become more common place. Grass cutting and drain clearing are examples of areas where the Parish Council may well have to contribute more as changes are instigated. To this end the Council has already started to create contingency funds to prepare for this gradual shift.

A dominant issue on Council agendas this year has been the Youth Building at Winterborne Kingston. The building is to be renamed and thanks to a group of enthusiastic councillors who are now being joined by equally enthusiastic residents it looks as though the building will take on a new lease of life.

Looking forward, it is inevitable that local communities will be more responsible for their own infrastructure. While the Parish Council will take a lead on this, resident's thoughts are vital. 2017 will see the start of the Neighbourhood Plan for the Lower Winterborne and a resident's action group to develop this will need to come from across the three villages. Public transport continues

to be under scrutiny and more changes will be announced in May requiring us to look more closely at the transport needs of our community.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to those residents who keep us in the loop, to the residents of the Lower Winterborne who take on community roles, to all the Lower Winterborne Councillors, to the District and County Councillors for their continued advice and support and to our Parish Clerk. 2017-18 may be a year of potential change but hopefully we can make it for the good.