

BURGHCLERE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs J Letsome, Portal Hall, Church Lane, Burghclere, RG20 9HX

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ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 4th May 2021, 7pm

Notice is hereby given of the **Burghclere Annual Parish Assembly** which will be held virtually via Zoom and accessed via the link:

<https://zoom.us/j/3528703123>

1. Apologies
2. Welcome - Introduction of Speakers and Councillors.
3. To receive and note any Matters Arising from minutes of the previous Annual Assembly held on 20th May 2019. (added to end of agenda)
4. Parish Council Report – Cllr Richard Carrow
5. Pinder Recreational Trust Report – Cllr Andrew Crowley
6. Burghclere Sports Club Report – Andy Timbrell/Rob Moss
7. Earlstone Common Report – Denis Matthews
8. Herbert Plantation – Neill Bruce
9. Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Richard Carrow
10. Footpaths – Cllr Richard Carrow
11. Q&A

Cllr Richard Carrow, Chairman – Burghclere Parish Council – 22nd April 2021

Press and Public are welcome to attend

BURGHCLERE PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Held in the Portal Hall on Monday, 20th May, 2019 at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Co. Cllr. Tom Thacker

Bor. Cllr. Graham Falconer

Pinder Recreational Trust: Cliff James

Burghclere Sports Club: Geoff Morton

Tree Warden and Herbert Plantation: Neill Bruce reported by Peter Harvey

Neighbourhood Plan: Richard Carrow

Footpaths: Ian Findlay

Parish Councillors: Peter Harvey (Chair), Cliff James (vice Chair), Sandra Whiting, Ian Findlay,
Briony Canning, Roger Butler, Geoff Morton, Richard Carrow

9 members of the public

Peter Harvey informed the meeting that Bob Hills would not be attending and reported on the Neighbourhood Watch.

1. Introduction of Speakers and Councillors

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Speakers and Councillors. He advised that the Police have been unable to attend the meeting. He also advised that Cllr Findlay has sadly resigned. He thanked him for all his hard work during his 5 years on the Council and advised that the Council now has a vacancy which will be advertised.

Further to this, the Chair reported on item 7, the Herbert Plantation, in a report provided by Neill Bruce as he was unable to attend. The full report is detailed under item 7.

2. Parish Council Report – Cllr. Peter Harvey

The Chair advised that the Police have been unable to attend the meeting. He also advised that Cllr Findlay has sadly resigned. He thanked him for all his hard work during his 5 years on the Council and advised that the Council now has a vacancy which will be advertised.

Further to this, the Chair reported on item 7, the Herbert Plantation, in a report provided by Neill Bruce as he was unable to attend. The full report is detailed under item 7.

The Chair reported that there have been 33 planning applications over the past year and most have been granted fully.

Roads: Whilst HCC have worked hard to remedy the pothole issues, the traffic and the speed of traffic moving through the village is a huge concern and will be reported to the police for action to be taken to help alleviate this issue. The council will continue to report any issues within their monthly minutes.

3. Pinder Recreational Report – Cllr. Cliff James

I would like to run through the financial side first

We ended the financial year in a reasonably good position considering that this is an 129 year old building so there will be always be maintenance to be done.

Income - with Hall lettings, Cottage and Sports Club rental income, investment income slightly up on last year

£35,904.69 in 2017/18

£35,909.05 in 2018/19

Hall lettings are down for this period of 2018/19 by just £3,000. This is mainly due to less evening parties and wedding receptions; people are just not spending but holding back in the current economic climate.

Expenditure

Fortunately, the expenditure was not as high as previous years and is in the main now due to Building and Ground Maintenance and Staff costs.

£35,326.81 in 2017/18

£22,315.78 in 2018/19

This has laid us to an operating surplus from in 2017/18 of only £ 577.88 to a much healthy £ 13,593.27 this year. This surplus has now allowed us to replace some and enhance our Reserve deposit.

All our Utilities costs are going up, which includes Water, Electric and Waste Disposal as with the same for everybody.

With the replacement of the Boiler in the hall and the insulation fitted in the roof, this has proved to a winner on reducing our heating costs during winter months.

I would like to extend our thanks to Chris Saint for all his hard work in keeping the accounts up together through the past year.

You may remember that last year we were granted funding from Basingstoke Deane and the Good Exchange to fund the upgrading of the Club Room with Disabled Washroom, Kitchenette and Archive Store.

We worked closely with the Conservation Officer in early 2018 and arrived at an acceptable design to maintain the integrity of the Grade II listed building and the plans were submitted, unfortunately the Victorian Society rejected the modification to the rear lobby roof, which as you know shoots the storm water all over you when it's raining.

Back to the drawing board and modified the roof design and finally on the 31st October it was passed by Basingstoke & Deane. All system's go you might think but no it wasn't to be. As this is a project with several elements. We treated the removal and replacement of the large Club Room Window as a separate item as it was specialist work, to the main project so that this could be started by the specialist contractors. This has resulted in a handmade wooden window to the original design but fitted with gas filled doubled glazing. This part of the project is complete.

We went back to the three builders that had original supplied quotes back in 2017, only to find one had gone out of business, one said he had too much work on, leaving just one.

We set about locating other builders which turned out to be no mean task. To date I have made contact with 43 builders with varying results from ignoring phone call & emails, to

polite “Too Busy” no shows for agreed site visits, site visits I get back to you with the quote !!!! despite chasing no response to the guys who think that that Oak Tree out there is in actual fact A Money Tree !!!! This has resulted in a great waste of time and effort.

To highlight this, the one builder who had Quoted previously less the large Window at £27,380.00 came back in at £ 48,920.00 almost double in the space of 18 months.

Thankfully we are working with a builder who is quoting sensible and we will be submitting this along with all the other quotes received to date to Basingstoke & Deane for approval.

It is planned that the work will take place during the school summer holidays.

Another project that was completed during the summer of 2018 was to replace some of the panel fencing in the village playground and at the back of the hall creating a locked compound for the Oil Tank etc.

We also were given a small shed which was erected in the compound which now provides storage for items.

It has been agreed by the management committee that we will go ahead with new curtains for the main hall.

We are very fortunate to have such a lovely and historic building in the midst of our village, and it is up to us all to make this a successful venue to be enjoyed by future generations to come.

4. Co. Cllr. Tom Thacker

Co. Thacker explained the responsibilities of the County Council covering a wide spectrum of services. He circulated a report (attached) detailing the responsibilities the County have, and the costs involved in Adult Social Care, Children’s Services amongst other items.

Roads continue to be an issue. He questioned why traffic through Newbury was being diverted left at the Swan Pub, he advised this should not happen even with the roadworks in the centre of town. However he did advise that when roads are classified, such as the B4640, then there is a limit to how much action can be taken to deter traffic. He will however continue to look into this and help if he can.

The recycling centre is still a bit topic and there is no solution at present. The permits are still being used and Cllrs would like to see a reciprocal arrangement but this looks unlikely and it may be that a fee is charged for ‘out of County’ use of the centre. Cllr Thacker will keep us up to date.

5. Bor. Cllr. Graham Falconer

Cllr. Falconer serves Highclere, Ashmansworth and St. Marybourne. He kindly attending the meeting in place of Borough Cllr Izett who was unable to attend.

He advised that himself and Cllr Izett liaise on planning applications and many other subjects discussed at the Parish Council meetings.

Some local elections have just taken place and the Borough have lost 2 seats. Final replacements and area leaders are still to be confirmed.

Cllr Falconer advised the Borough are doing a lot of work relating to large developments that are planned in Basing View and at Manydown. These developments will create more problems regarding traffic on the A339 and this is a cause of real concern; possible solutions are being discussed but there will be no action until the developments are in progress. There has been a re-organisation on the Council which results in 6 Cllrs being culled and the remaining Cllrs being organised into 18 wards. There should be very little impact to this ward which will be called Evingar.

There are 'all out' elections taking place next May.

The Basingstoke Local Plan is beginning to be reviewed; it is done every 5 years and currently the process is starting. The number of houses to be provided by the Borough is increasing from 850 to 950 per annum.

The Government are introducing a new project aimed at 16-34 year olds; there are various initiatives to help young people starting out in life. Full details will be forthcoming over the next few months.

Fly tipping continues to be a problem. The Borough deal with it as quickly and effectively as they can but any incidents should be reported.

Finances are looking healthy and the area is the 6th richest district in England, with £500m in assets. This is the first year there has been no funding from Central Government at all.

Cllr Falconer was thanked for his presentation.

6. Burghclere Sports Club – Geoff Morton

Andy Timbrell and Rob Moss were unable to attend the Annual Assembly so Cllr Morton presented a short section on the Sports Club.

The miniature railway continues to be progressed, the aim is that it will circle the sports ground wholly and it is hoped this will be achieved by the next fun day on the May bank holiday weekend.

The railways has brought new members to the club over the past 2 years and has been a success.

The sports club finances have turned around. Having been on the verge of closing it has transformed and is now a successful enterprise which makes a profit; the Parish Council have been paid rent this year so it is a positive story.

7. Herbert Plantation Report – Neill Bruce

Neill Bruce's report was read out by the Chair, per item 2 above. His report said the following:

My apologies for not coming to give my annual Herbert Plantation report, but I'm trying to recover from the coughing flu that is going the rounds.

As usual I'd like to thank my team of volunteers, who do all the physical work. Namely Harry Dove who does the felling and all chainsaw work, and Ian Findlay. This last winter we were

joined by Fred Taylor, who is also a great worker, and extremely strong, so a great team to 'organise' for that's all I do nowadays!

We started in September 2018, by coppicing all the holly that was growing under the oaks at the bottom of the wood, where path 2 joins path 3. It's best to wait until leaf fall for main thinning, so coppicing holly is something that can be done early autumn.

We then moved back up to Cpt 1A, which runs alongside the road, to the north of the main gates, and finished the 1/3rd thinning, there.

As you will all know, Hampshire County Council owns Herbert Plantation, and via English Nature and DEFRA they obtain grant money for doing certain works, most of which the volunteers do. Many of the Compartments are scheduled for thinning during the next 7 years, and we have now completed 1A.

Compartment 4E is the stretch of wood that runs alongside the south side of the main track, and this was then completed in the coppicing of birch regrowth, in order to open up the young oaks that we are encouraging there.

Before last Christmas, contractors came in and flailed a large area of rhododendron at the bottom end of the wood. This has caused some criticism of the mess that it caused, and I have written an explanation in the June Village News, but flailing does mean that no burning has to be carried out, and thus traps the carbon, which as you all know is most important these days.

Neill Bruce. Management Committee Chairman.

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8. Neighbourhood Plan – Richard Carrow

At the 2017 Assembly Andrew Rushmer from B&BDC introduced neighbourhood planning. 2 years later we are now over half way through ours. I will speak about Why, What is happening now and What next. I will conclude talking about Community Led Housing (CLH).

Apologies if I slip into planning 'speak' - will attempt to avoid acronyms.

Reminder: Why a NP?

The 2011 Localism Act enabled communities to have more say in where new houses, businesses, shops & community facilities might go, and to define what size, how many and how they should look. As a statutory plan, linked to the Local Plan, it allows us a greater say over our future rather than being reactive to development proposals, as now. Nevertheless we are still subject to decisions by B&DBC. Over the lifetime of the Local Plan (2011-2029) B&DBC has given Burghclere a development target of 10 houses. To help future-proof against an uplift - quite possible given the political pressure to build more houses - we have opted for 10-15. The Parish Council (PC) took a decision that it was better to have a plan than no plan and we are about half-way through.

What has happened and what's happening now?

We first drew up background material in 4 areas: housing, environment, business and infrastructure. To help consideration of where houses might go we developed criteria for a 'spatial strategy': 1) protect integrity of village rural character (principally Key Views), 2)

minimise local traffic congestion, 3) allow access from existing infrastructure (to avoid the need for new roads or expansion of existing ones).

Where? Local Plan policy states that development has to be within or adjacent to the Settlement Policy Boundary (SPB). Burghclere has seen 44 houses built in its SPB in last 25 years. As there is no room inside, the condition that has to apply is: 'adjacent to the SPB'. The next step was to examine what sites had been promoted by landowners through the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). We also considered some sites that met the condition and criteria but were not on the SHELAA - these we referred to as 'possible' sites. We ultimately came up with 9 sites, of which 4 best met the criteria. The criteria and sites were endorsed at the Dec 18 Drop In sessions. Consultation has continued since with interested parties: landowners, businesses, schools, etc. Many thanks to all who have contributed and Burghclere Primary School, particularly Lottie Baker, whose logo was selected for the NP. Further drafts for the plan have been drawn up alongside a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) undertaken by AECOM (independently appointed consultants), who have engaged with external bodies such as the Environment Agency, Historic England & Natural England, and whose work runs in parallel and is closely linked with ours.

At the last Steering Group meeting on 2 May a decision was taken to opt for one site: Site A. This was based on a number of factors and in particular being the favoured choice of those consulted in Dec. We remain very conscious that it sits within North Wessex Downs AONB (NWD AONB), with whom we have been in dialogue since June last year, and who have not raised any objections to the consideration of this site. Nevertheless we are aware that work will be needed to ensure mitigation of any environmental impact. Furthermore we have separated Site G (land to the East of Portal Hall) from work on the NP and hope to pursue it as an independent CLH project. Currently we are developing the Regulation 14 pre-submission plan. This involves engagement with the owner of Site A (Highclere Estate) and more drafting of policies in the plan.

What happens next?

In a couple of months the PC will be asked to approve and launch the Regulation 14 pre-submission plan - aiming for Sep - which will be a 6 week period of formal consultation. The plan will be available for examination in the Portal Hall and on the website for download. Unlike previous consultations no feedback will be sought on the day; submissions can be made in writing by letter or email. In light of comments received, changes will be considered and amendments made, and the comments will be commented upon. The next step during Oct/Nov will be to pull together the draft NP, which B&DBC will review. The PC asked to approve and pass it to the local authority, who then launch the Regulation 16 draft NP consultation, which lasts a further 6 weeks. B&DBC will also appoint an Independent examiner who will ensure that the plan meets the Basic Conditions. Once his/her comments have been acted upon, B&DBC send plan to Referendum, possibly in the early Spring of 2020, and if over 50% voters say 'yes', B&DBC 'make the plan'. I stress this is still a long way off. The plan is 'gelling', but is not a done deal until voted upon.

CLH.

We are considering using a CLH scheme for 5/6 affordable houses for local people to rent or buy on Site G (land adjacent to the Portal Hall in the area of the allotments and Millennium

Garden). A similar project could be undertaken for some houses on Site A. This could also include renovation or rebuilding of Sports Club. We would wish to retain the allotments but may have to consider moving them elsewhere on Parish land. However no detailed consideration has yet been undertaken.

How might this happen? CLH can be delivered through various models; co-housing, self-build, community land trust (CLT) and others. A pamphlet to take away was placed at the back of the Hall and is shown below. To undertake this work volunteers were sought as it had to be carried under separate arrangements from those doing the NP. Please see me if interested. We are currently seeking corn seed funding to set it up.

In conclusion the NP has a webpage on the new Parish website:

<https://www.burghclerepc.co.uk/>

9. Neighbourhood Watch – Bob Hills

Unfortunately there was no report as Bob Hills was unable to attend the meeting.

10. Footpaths – Cllr. Ian Findlay

Cllr. Findlay reported the following:

So, 2018 we had a summer with comparisons to 1976. I know we have short memories but:

- Back in May 2018, you will remember we had already started a very warm and settled period of weather. In fact May Day Bank Holiday was 29c.
- I instigated just one working party last year which was not particularly successful due to low turnout, but we decided to cease work after 10am due to the heat.
- The HCC footpath officers got some work carried out including many new footpath signage posts and they cut through some overgrown footpaths just off the railway line. In addition, they carried out the yearly cutback of 5 footpaths during August.
- Some of the landowners have asked that we stick to the official footpaths and to be mindful of livestock when out walking.
- The Burghclere Rocks, painted stones, has continued which is encouraging locals to get out and use the footpaths. This is a Facebook group where painted stones are hidden on routes around the village and when they are found a photo is taken and the stones re-hidden.
- The byway along the top of Ridgemoor seem to be a problem spot due to littering from used food shopping and MacDonald's. Also, last year there was a persistent nuisance of motorbike racing on the byway and through the fields, which, so far, has not been re-occurring.
- Cllr Carrow will be taking over the role as the parish footpaths representative from now onwards.
- I have set up an email address for parish footpaths to report incidents, problems or to get information including working parties. It is burghclerefootpaths@gmail.com.

11. Open Forum

Cllr James advised that he has been informed by HALC of grant funding available of up to £75k which could possibly be applied for to use towards the replacement of the windows in the Portal Hall. He will continue to look into this and report back with any information.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45 p.m.

Refreshments and wine provided by Sally and Cliff James were enjoyed by all socially following the meeting.