

MANNINGFORD PARISH COUNCIL (MPC)

www.themanningfords.co.uk

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2016 - 2017

This is my fifth annual report and endeavours to summarise the key issues that are ongoing or have arisen during the year in order that all residents of the Parish can have a view of the work and progress.

It is important to remember that MPC is a voluntary body and I am pleased that, in these increasingly busy times, there are always residents prepared to give up their time, be it as Councillors or helpers. Their time and effort is much appreciated and a big thank you is due to all who have helped during the year. In fact we are currently 1 councillor under our normal strength and would appreciate it if any residents interested in joining the Parish Council would let me or the Parish Clerk know.

The MPC meets every two months in the Village Hall, and all residents are welcome to attend. Meeting dates and agendas will be posted on the Notice Board outside the Village Hall in Manningford Bruce and in the Messenger and on the MPC website.

As ever in the Manningfords, the last year has been a relatively peaceful although the subjects of flooding, highways, planning and footpaths tend to be the main areas that continue to take up most time and discussion. Issues and actions are noted in the relevant sections below.

Finance/Projects – MPC Contact – Bernard Gaskin – bernard.gaskin@btinternet.com - 01980 630917

As ever the main expenditure during the year has been on grass, hedge cutting and path clearing as well as maintaining the Bus Shelter at Indigo. The new beech hedge on the sides of the Playing field has settled in and the “communal” areas are looking well maintained and presentable. It is good to see that it is regularly used by children of the Village.

We also, in conjunction with 6 other local Parishes, have invested in a Speed Indication Device that will be erected in the Village at various times of the year (see Highways section). MPC is acting as treasurer for this project on behalf of all the parishes involved.

We have now received the precept for this year and continue to have a healthy surplus and the Parish Council is currently engaged in identifying projects that could best utilise the funds to the maximum advantage. The Parish Council will ensure that the money spent is appropriate to the Village requirements and funds available.

Highways – MPC Contact David Proto – david@protostudios.co.uk - 01980 635225

With safety being the main priority on the parishes roads both RN and DP have been active in trying to make improvements.

The results of the survey for the C52 prepared by Wiltshire Highways have been discussed at length over the last 6 months at several CATG meetings plus a couple at Trowbridge and It has been concluded that once 'through traffic' or 'rat-runners' have entered the C52 there is no satisfactory solution on the table to disrupt and ultimately deter these drivers without serious implications and objections to surrounding roads and parishes.

Given this we are now exploring the possibility of having the C52 removed from the satnav software whilst, at the same time, continuing with other control measures like the ongoing CSW (community speed watch) programme. Thanks must go to Sandi Proto for her work as the Coordinator and to Jacqui Burgess who has now taken over. Additionally we have now invested in a Speed Indicator Device in conjunction with 6 other parishes. It will be positioned in various locations on the C52 through the village and we will have the device on a rota system, 4 times per year for a period of 2 weeks each time. The locations are within the 30mph zone and the device shows each driver passing, the speed that they are doing. The hoped for outcome is that drivers will be more aware of their speed and thus help to reduce speeding.

Finally, concerns have been raised regarding parishioners attending the Chapel on the A345 opposite Wick Lane together with the residents of the adjacent cottages and their need to walk on the road to access the two car parks and also the nearby bus stop.

This is a fresh look at an existing problem which has remained an unresolved risk for many years - hopefully a solution can be found.

Police - MPC Contact – Richard Netherclift – richard@netherclift.com – 01672 562777

We are lucky enough to live in a rural area and as such crime is normally at a low level, and luckily this year has been quiet. However, there has been evidence of thieves targeting garden machinery in the Pewsey area and, as ever it re-inforces the need to be vigilant, noting anything “unusual” in the village.

Warnings about the potential risk from break-ins to cars at the various local rural parking areas continue to be issued from time to time. It is important to ensure when leaving a car at these places that any valuable are left out of sight. We continue to be enrolled in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

Planning – MPC Contact - Reg Sampson – regandmyffy@btinternet.com - 01672 563736

There were only two significant planning applications the period, both of which are in Dragon Lane.

First, ownership of land on which the owner of Aero View has constructed a rear wall/fence line following the removal of a grass bank and hedge on Council property is ongoing. The matter is to be the subject of a Public Inquiry on 23 May to decide whether an order made under section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which would stop up part of the highway in dispute should be granted. If made the order would enable the owner to implement the planning permission he has been given. The Area Highways Engineer on behalf of Wiltshire Council has reviewed the situation and opposes the proposed order on the grounds that the part of the highway concerned is needed for public use. The issue of the wall and fence has caused widespread local concern.

Second, an appeal by the owners of land in Dragon Lane against refusal by Wiltshire Council to allow construction of a dwelling on the site of an existing building has been dismissed. The Inspector formed the view that the open nature of the site within an area of outstanding natural beauty made an important contribution to the open and spacious setting of the village; he also felt that it was not a clear case of infill development due to its awkward and sporadic positioning.

PCC – MPC Contact – as Planning

St Peter’s Church Manningford continues to thrive with a small loyal congregation supporting the Church routinely but with a fuller Church for Christmas, Easter and Remembrance Sundays. The

Queen's Birthday was celebrated by a Sovereign's Service on 12th June which was attended by many from the village who would not normally have come. This was followed by a Garden Party organised by the Village Hall committee. The popular annual Pet Service was once more a great success with a great turnout of both dogs and humans!

David Blanchard organised a Pig Racing evening in the Village Hall which raised a considerable sum of money. The PCC continues to be grateful to those who contribute generously towards the upkeep of the church. It remains a struggle to meet outgoings in the region of £10K per annum and any further help is always appreciated.

The Church benefitted by initiatives from David Blanchard who organised and implemented extra under seat heaters which have kept the church warmer and dryer throughout the winter months and Angus Palmer who has built a platform round the outside tap which is now metered.

Thanks are due to Stephen Smith who cleaned the War Memorial and to Dennis Godard and his team who continue to maintain the churchyard. The Churchwarden indicated how lucky they are to have Genevieve Benest as the resident organist, who organised the coffee rota, the travelling carol singings and liaison with the village hall committee which fosters better church/village relationships. Thanks are due also to the teams of brass cleaners and flower arrangers organised by Lucy Palmer

Footpaths – MPC contact – Andy Reed – andyreed2525@orange.net

Bridleway 30 is still ongoing, awaiting possible permission from landowner to redirect said bridleway and create a loop with access from existing safe bridleways.

Maintenance and cutting back overgrowth from footpaths continued over the year and are expecting to include paths No 5 to Mullens Farm, No 11 by The Whitehouse and No 33 to Wick Lane going forward.

A survey of nearby footpaths has resulted in six possible sites for timber constructed kissing gates. We are now awaiting permission from landowners and subsequent approval by Wilts Council with possible help from P I G S (path improvement grant scheme) and added help from certified contractors to install said gates.

All gates are part of either Pewsey/Avon trail or the Whitehorse trail and if successful in the PIGS bid, we will review other opportunities in the wider Parish..

Parish Steward

Given the change of "process" last year with Parish Steward visits, it appears that the reporting of issues via the "My Wiltshire" portal on Wiltshire Council's website is proving to work. Once an issue is reported, it is then prioritised against other issues and addressed accordingly.

It is important to remember that this is the ONLY way for an issue to be registered.

Parish Website – MPC Contact – Phil Hossack – phil@skypower.co.uk - 01672 564438

The social media section of the website continues to provide a source of up-to-date information on services, events and matters of interest affecting the parish and is becoming a useful portal to disseminate information in a timely manner. There are now 52 members of the Facebook page and growing, so please pass on the message to join.

A Police and information section has also been added which will be updated with police bulletins on security and policing matters and also includes a link to the latest local crime plan. This is also a photo gallery from the Queens 90th birthday celebrations and the diary is regularly updated with village hall and PCC matters.

We would be delighted to receive any feedback. www.themanningsfords.co.uk

Village Hall/Community - MPC Contact – Sue Lymoss – suelymoss@btinternet.com 01672 564922

The village hall continues to be used to encourage villagers to get together, especially during the winter months. During the course of this last year there have been the usual pub nights, Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations which were well attended and everybody bought picnics and joined in with the various activities including a great number of entries for the "Manningford Bake Off" competition, a Quiz night was held in November, Christmas Party with carol singing was enjoyed by all who came along and a Prize Bingo evening. There was also a successful Pig Race night which was organised by a parishioner to raise funds for both the Village Hall and the Church. In addition a couple of training sessions, run by South West Ambulance Service, were run relating to the defibrillator which is located outside the hall.

A very kind donation was given to the Village Hall in 2016 by the estate of Pete Lewis, formerly of The Ivies. The funds have been used in a variety of ways to enhance the hall such as new hand dryers in all the cloakrooms, internal redecoration as this hasn't been done for over 15 years, tiling etc. in the kitchen, new shelving in the internal store room, purchase of water heater for use at village events and plans are underway for a new teak bench to go on the playing field which will be engraved in memorium, plus daffodil bulbs will be planted opposite the hall as suggested by a parishioner.

The Village Hall committee also had a change of Chairman. Andrew Marshall stepped down after eleven years, for which thanks must be given and Sandra Hossack took over as Chairman. There continues to be regular bookings from the Dog Club and also various Keep Fit/yoga classes, plus children's parties etc but there are always spare dates in the diary for more bookings. For more details please contact Victoria Marshall on 01672 569077 or ajkmarshall@gmail.com

Flooding/Environment – MPC Contact – Bridget Lanyon – bridgetlanyon@gmail.com - 01672 564269

There is little to report on the environment front this year. The flooding issues of the past have been resolved last year and the dry winter certainly helped ensure there was no recurrence. However we need to be watchful when the rain returns as it certainly will at some stage.

The issue of ragwort in a local field that was raised in the past Annual Report has now been resolved.

Allotments

Only 3 allotments are currently occupied, and anyone wishing to take one on, should contact the Parish Clerk: - anne.thompsonashby@btinternet.com

Richard Netherclift,

Chairman, Manningford Parish Council – richard@netherclift.com – 01672 562777