**WIXFORD PARISH COUNCIL – CHAIRMAN’S ANNUAL REPORT 2017 – 2018**

**(Appendix 1 to Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 8th May 2018)**

This report is a summary of the activities that the Council has undertaken over the last year, April 2017 to March 2018.

Membership

Your Councillors are Cllrs Jack Fryer, Colin Hales, Andrew Reekes, Jon Haworth and Dean Morris. Jon Haworth and Dean Morris were appointed as rotating Chairmen in May 2017 and Colin Hales Vice Chairman.

Our Parish Clerk, Simone Bush, notified us during the course of 2017 that she would be moving on to focus on other priorities. The Parish Council offers our sincere thanks for the help and organisational skill that Simone provided and we wish her success in the future.

We are fortunate that Lynne Reekes – a Wixford resident and wife of Cllr Andrew Reeks – has offered her services as Parish Clerk. Lynne brings a host of experience to the role and we welcome her to the Wixford PC fold.

Meetings

The Council has continued to meet every 2 or 3 months, usually on the second Tuesday of the month.

The schedule for actual dates is posted on the village notice board and on the Parish Council website [https://www.wixford-pc.gov.uk](https://www.wixford-pc.gov.uk/)

Minutes of the meetings are published on the Parish Council website

<https://wixford-pc.gov.uk/category/council-minutes/>

Our meetings are well supported by District Councillor, Sue Adams and by County Councillor Mark Cargill who attend regularly and impart knowledge and advice.

The Council meetings are open to the public and provide an opportunity to ask questions on any issue relating to the village and generally to find out what is going on in the area. We look forward to more people from the village making use of this facility in the future including the new residents.

**Key activities and achievements for 2017 to 2018**

**Village Maintenance**

Village maintenance has been assessed continuously and a number of projects are underway or have been completed. Highway maintenance issues are frequently assessed and the Parish Council has a good and communicative relationship with the District and County Councils.

Highway maintenance has been a mixed success. After repeated requests the road through the village was finally resurfaced, but the resulting surface is sub-standard. The temporary signs indicating a skid risk are a reflection of the poor quality of the road surface and the PC continues to petition to have the surface re-surfaced to an appropriate standard. In addition the cat’s eye reflectors that were removed during the resurfacing have not been replaced but we anticipate that this will be done when the road surface is fixed.

More successful has been the (eventual) repairs to the crash barriers on the tight bend over the A46 dual carriageway.

**Traffic calming**

Traffic calming continues to be a priority issue for your Council. After a period of non-operation, the PC arranged for the 30 MPH “active” warning sign to be repaired.

The 30 MPH speed limits as drivers enter the village were also extended so that they come into force further from the village centre – and all signage relating to this move has been adjusted and relocated.

The PC continues to investigate additional options for reducing the speed that traffic travels at through the village.

The parking of vehicles on the footpaths which block or restrict free movement along the footpaths continues to be an issue.

**Police Speed checks**

Police attend to randomly carry out speed checks but usually during the middle part of the day. We are told this is because of the distance they have to travel to get to Wixford.

**A46 resurfacing**

One side of the A46 dual carriageway was resurfaced with quiet tarmac. The PC are petitioning for the other side of the dual carriageway to be upgraded also.

**Notice board revamp**

After consideration of all of the options the notice board refurbishment project was successfully commissioned and undertaken. We hope to get many more years of service from this central village fixture.

**Gateway signs**

3 years ago, we embarked upon a programme to upgrade the Wixford signs at the entrances to the village to “gateway” type signs which more closely resemble those in other villages such as Arrow. It is a costly undertaking and we elected to spread the cost over 3 years. The third and final sign was installed during this year and aligned with the new 30 MPH speed limit.

**Village Hall**

The village hall is important to village life and the Parish Council fully support the village hall committee in their efforts to upgrade the building and promote activities which utilise it more fully. The Village Hall committee schedule regular meetings and the Parish Council endeavour to send a representative to attend whenever feasible.

**Website**

[https://www.wixford-pc.gov.uk](https://www.wixford-pc.gov.uk/)

The Wixford Parish Council web site has undergone a significant makeover. The site is now easier to navigate, faster (and more reliable) and hosts a lot more content.

**Broadband**

The speed and quality of the broadband service to the village has improved over the last decade especially with the provision of a “fibre to the cabinet” service. However the ultimate speed of this service is handicapped by the distance to “the cabinet”. In the case of Wixford the cabinet that supplies our broadband is either in Bidford or Broom so there is a long run of traditional copper cable between us and the very high speed fibre connection.

The good news is that this may change in the near future. We understand that there is a fibre termination point just across the road from the 3 Horseshoes pub – and last year BT OpenReach submitted a planning application to put a DSLAM by the 3 Horseshoes pub. (A DSLAM is basically the green cabinet that you see at the side of the road). If that happens then there is potential for Wixford residents to see a significant increase in broadband speeds.

**Planning**

We have assessed and provided local input on a number of planning applications.

1. No 2 Wixford submitted a request to install a 2100 litre underground Calor propane gas tank in the front garden. The PC supported the application. Granted.
2. Wixford Grange. The park home infrastructure has been completed for some time and there is a gradual arrival of park homes. We welcome the new occupants to the Village. The application to change the planning permission conditions from 32 park homes over 10 months to 25 park homes over 12 months, restricted to the over 55’s, was refused, despite the support of the PC .

Another notable area of development is Oversley Castle. It is understood that the original developer, Paul Harvey, has sold his interests in the castle site to another development company. We await further news on their plans.

**Finance**

The precept was set in November 2017 at £7000. The budget has been set for 2018 – 2019.

The 2016 / 2017 external audit was completed successfully

Statement of Accounts

Balance brought forward 01/04/17: 16269

Add Receipts in the year: 7989

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Total 24258

Deduct Payments in the year 8595

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Closing balance as at 31/03/18 (balance at Lloyds Bank) 15663

Communication with Parishioners

It is very important that the Parish Council communicates well with the Parish. Over the last year the Parish Council has done this in the following ways:

Public participation in meetings

Regularly updated information on the notice board and Website, including agendas for meetings: The website is the most up to date communication from the Parish Council and community forums and police newsletters are added as soon as the information becomes available, as are planning decisions.

Newsletters published at least four times a year. Shirley Talboys and Jain Drinkwater do an excellent job as Editor and the professional looking publication promotes many local activities and news stories. Input is sought from residents prior to publication.

**Contact details**

The Clerk’s postal address, email address and telephone number are publicised on the noticeboard and on newsletters, as are the Councillors’.

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| Councillors Details: | Telephone: | E Mail: |
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| Clerks Details: |  |  |
| Lynne Reekes |  | wixfordpcclerk@gmail.com |

Your Parish Council and Clerk are here to help. Do not hesitate to contact us.

Signed: *Dean Morris and Jon Haworth* Co-Chairman – Wixford Parish Council

April 2018