

Chairman's Report 2022/2023

Introduction

This report covers the twelve months period since the last Annual Parish Meeting which took place on the 9th May 2022. It is my sixteenth report to you as Chairman of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council is composed of 10 members. The four-yearly cycle of District and Parish Council elections due to be held on the 4th May 2023 to elect representatives to fill the 10 seats on the Parish Council and for the Yapton ward on the District Council. On the 5th April 2023 the results of the nomination process for a new Parish Council highlighted that only six persons had been nominated and that these six persons would be elected unopposed to the Parish Council. There would be no need for an election for the Parish Council on the 4th May 2023. The remaining 4 places will be filled by co-option in due course.

Over the last 12 months there have been five meetings of the full Parish Council and the Planning Committee. The meetings scheduled to take place on the 15th September 2022, were cancelled out of respect to the late HM the Queen who had died the previous week. At the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2022, I was re-elected as Chairman with Peter Dunkley being re-elected as Vice-Chairman.

Yapton is represented at the County Council by two members. Jacky Pendleton who was elected in May 2021, for a four-year term, to represent the Middleton Division (which includes Yapton) and following the death of John Charles in July 2022, a by-election was held on the 8th September 2022 with Jaine Wild being elected to represent the Felpham Division (which includes Hoe Lane, Flansham). The District Councillors elected for the Yapton ward of the Arun District Council in May 2019 for a four-year term of office were Amanda Worne and Henry Jones. District Councillor's are being elected on the 4th May 2023.

What do we do?

The Parish Council has responsibility for and maintains the King George V Playing Field on Main Road, the two village car parks, the skate park, the children's play area, a range of outdoor exercise equipment, the all-purpose floodlit sports enclosure and adjacent youth shelter, the picnic tables and seats on the playing field, the litter collection service, the allotments at Cinders Lane, bus shelters, as well as some street lighting. It also provides some limited financial support for the village hall and to local voluntary organisations.

Your Council has representatives on outside bodies which oversee and manage various functions and activities impacting on the local area. A key role, which is discussed later, is the Council's role in the planning function, particularly with regard to the vetting of all planning applications for the parish.

The Council also maintains a website www.yaptonpc.gov.uk which contains information about the Parish, the Council and its meetings and your local parish councillors. The Council also publishes, after each Parish Council meeting, the *Yapton News*, a bi-monthly magazine for all residents, which not only includes information about the Parish Council's activities but also includes, amongst other things, reports from local clubs and organisations which operate in the village. *Yapton News* is delivered free of charge, by a team of volunteers and councillors, to over 2,100 households in the parish.

The Parish Council operates its own Social Media accounts on Facebook and Twitter. One of our Councillor's operates the accounts in conjunction with the Clerk, and over the past year we have been regularly posting information on Facebook and Twitter, and also monitoring the sites, responding to any queries or requests posted by residents.

Civility and Respect Pledge

The Parish Council considered correspondence from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) with updates from the Civility and Respect Project Team regarding the adoption of the Civility and Respect pledge. The Parish Council resolved to sign up to The Pledge and to produce a Dignity at Work Policy, which is designed to help define the right behaviours within the council, to prevent bullying and to support the council in demonstrating high standards of conduct.

Yapton Eco Group

The Parish Council has endorsed the setting up of a Yapton Eco Group and agreed a Terms of Reference for the Group to operate under. Councillor Mark Andrews who is leading this initiative, had identified number of issues which had been discussed at the first meeting of the group in October. Further meetings have been held with a growing group of people becoming involved. A number of these issues had been raised as part of the Infrastructure Working Group.

Recreational facilities in Yapton

The Parish Council operates a contract for grass cutting on the playing field which was performed during the last year by Idverde Ltd formerly George Burley & Sons Ltd of Dorking. The contract provided for the field to be cut on a fortnightly basis (weather permitting) from the start of April to mid-October, normally on Thursdays, although there is provision for extra cuts and for it to be rolled if these are needed.

Regular inspections of both the play area equipment and the gym equipment is undertaken to ensure the equipment remains safe and fit for purpose. The skate park continues to be hugely popular with local youngsters from Yapton and neighbouring areas.

New Play Area on King George V Play Area

In September 2021, the Parish Council considered and agreed a report on the creation of a project to replace the play area equipment and associated landscaping works, together with technical support in line with the agreed brief. A budget of £100,000 together with an additional £10,500 allocated to landscaping, seating and other ancillary items inside and within the immediate vicinity of the play area was agreed. The budget would cover professional fees, incidental costs, design and installation of the equipment. The project has been funded by the use of the £84,193 of Section 106 monies and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies totalling £13,125 have been allocated for this purpose from new housing developments in the Parish, and the balance of £12,682 coming from Parish Council funds.

The Parish Council confirmed the award of the following contract after a full public tendering exercise:

- (i) Contract: Replacement of Children's Play Area, King George V Playing Field;
- (ii) Successful Tenderer: HAGS UK;
- (iii) Tender Value: £110,000 excluding VAT;
- (iv) Contract Period: 1st April – 31st May 2022;
- (v) Order Placed: 1st February 2022.

The work to remove the existing play equipment and install the new equipment and associated landscaping was scheduled to start on the 25th April and completed in time for it to be opened to coincide with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on the bank holiday weekend of 2nd - 5th June 2022.

The Parish Council held a special event on the afternoon of Thursday 2nd June to mark the completion and opening of the new Play Area on the King George V Playing Field. The Chairman of the Parish Council and Kim Huggett the Headteacher from the local school performed the opening ceremony.

The outstanding landscaping works (installation of 4 trees and seeding with wildflowers in the area adjacent to the enclosed play area) which had been delayed for various reasons was completed in late April 2023.

Installation of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)

The Parish Council had been aware for some time that there had been much discussion locally on the pros and cons of introducing a CCTV system in Yapton, particularly in the vicinity of the newly installed play area and the other recreational and exercise areas on the King George V Playing Field. The Parish Council had discussed the matter in full at its meeting in November 2022 and again in January 2023. 3 companies had submitted a quotation and the Parish Council identified the preferred supplier for the installation. A number of cameras are now in place covering the areas mentioned above with constant recording of images which can be stored for a period of time should they need to be reviewed in the light of an incident occurring in that area.

West Sussex Chargepoint Network

The Council received an update on how the Chargepoint Network (electric vehicle charging points) is progressing across the County on-street and in car parks in Mid Sussex and Horsham. Connected Kerb are looking to discuss with Town & Parish Councils the chargepoint network, and site selection process with the aim of identifying where chargepoint locations could be introduced across West Sussex. Following a wide-ranging discussion, it was confirmed that the Parish Council would look at a possible installation in the Village Hall Car Park and that further discussions be held with Connected Kerb on that basis.

Planning matters

Over the past year the Council, through the Planning Committee, has carefully vetted all the planning applications which have been submitted for Yapton - some 50 in total (compared to 53 in the previous year). The majority of these were relatively straightforward household applications, but as in the previous years a number of major applications were submitted on behalf of developers. These applications potentially would result in an additional 153 dwellings being constructed in the Parish. The following major applications have been considered and the outcome is shown against each application:

- **Y/10/22/PL, Land to the south of Ford Lane and east of North End Road Yapton** - Erection of 15 No dwellings (including 4 No affordable units) with associated access, parking, landscaping, drainage and public open space (additional units to those approved under application Y/123/21/PL). This application may affect the setting of a listed building, affects the character & appearance of the Church Lane Conservation area, affects a Public Right of Way and is in CIL Zone 2 and is CIL Liable as new dwellings. Applicant: Redrow Homes Ltd. **Withdrawn on 26/05/2022.**
- **Y/186/21/PL, Bonhams Field, Main Road, Yapton** - Erection of 32 No dwellings with associated works including access, landscaping and parking. This application may affect the setting of a listed buildings, may affect the Main Road/Church Road Conservation Area. This application is in CIL Zone 2 and is CIL Liable as new dwellings. Applicant: Seaward Properties Ltd. **Application Refused on 24/06/2022.**
- **Application Y/77/22/PL – Bonhams, Hoe Lane, Flansham** - Erection of 4 No dwellings with access from Hoe Lane and associated landscaping, including native orchards and wildflower meadows (resubmission following Y/7/22/PL. **This application is a Departure from the Development Plan and is in CIL Zone 3 and is CIL Liable as new dwellings. Approved Conditionally at Committee on 24/08/2022.**

- **Application Y/72/22/PL – Silverdale, Yapton Road, Barnham** - Change of use from dwelling house (Class C3 (a)) to Residential Care Home for adults with learning difficulties / autism and with physical and complex health needs (Class C2) to include minor internal alterations and conversion of existing garage to form additional en-suite bedroom and office. This application is a Departure from the Development Plan is in CIL Zone 3 (Zero Rated) as other development. - **Approved Conditionally on 26/08/2022.**
- **Y/3/22/OUT - Land West of Bilsham Road, Yapton** - Hybrid Application comprising of Full application for Phase 1 for 30 No residential dwellings, new access from Bilsham Road, public open space, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage and associated works; and Outline planning application for further phases of up to 110 No dwellings and associated infrastructure (with all matters reserved). This application is a Departure from the Development Plan and is in CIL Zone 3 and is CIL Liable as new dwellings. Applicant: Landlink Estates Ltd. **Approved on 09/01/2023.**
- **Y/124/22/PL - Barns South of Stakers Farm, North End Road, Yapton** - Erection of 9 No dwellings with associated access, car ports, parking and landscaping. This application may affect the setting of a listed building, may affect the character and appearance of the Main Road/Church Road Conservation Area, is a Departure from the Development Plan and is in CIL Zone 3 and is CIL Liable as new dwellings. **Approved Conditionally on 11/01/2023.**
- **Y/149/22/PL - Land West of Drove Lane, Main Road, Yapton** - Erection of 20 dwellings (including 6 affordable units) with new access, open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage, biodiversity mitigation and associated works. This application is in CIL Zone 3 and is CIL liable as new dwellings and is a Departure from the Development Plan. The proposal may affect the setting of the Main Road/Church Road, Yapton Conservation Area. **Refused on 04/04/2023.**
- **Y/7/23/PL - Paddock adjoining Stakers Farm, North End Road, Yapton** - Erection of 4. No dwellings comprising 2 x 3-bed and 2 x 4-bed detached houses with associated garages, parking, landscaping and internal access road. This application affects the setting of listed buildings, affects the character and appearance of the Main Road/Church Road Conservation Area and is in CIL Zone 2 and is CIL Liable as new dwellings. **Refused on 04/04/2023.**

Latest Applications

If you have a concern about a particular planning application in the village please do contact the Chairman of the Planning Committee or the Clerk of the Council or Arun District Council direct. In this connection residents may also be interested to know that the Parish Council has published on its website guidance about the procedure to follow when responding to planning applications.

Yapton Infrastructure Plan

The Infrastructure Questionnaire had been published in the September edition of the Yapton News and 57 residents responded to the questionnaire which sought resident's views on the infrastructure needs of the Parish. A significant number of comments had also been made and these had been considered at a meeting of the Yapton Infrastructure Working Group to review the scores which each issue had received and also the detail contained in the comments received.

The top issues which had been highlighted by the resident's returns were as follows:

- a. Develop Traffic Calming Measures around the village i.e. illuminated speed signs / restrictions – 37 points
- b. Develop a place to meet in the village - Café/ Community Hub – 31 points
- c. Secure the future of Burndell Bridge – (an important piece of our village heritage) – 30 points
- d. Plant more trees / bushes and wild-flower meadow / orchard – 24 points
- e. Provide a pelican crossing outside the Primary School – 23 points
- f. The other 12 issues received between 4 and 22 points each

Yapton Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council submitted its modification proposals to the Yapton Neighbourhood Plan 2 to Arun District Council under Reg 15 of the Regulations on the 18th October 2021. Arun District Council held a public consultation on the proposed modifications to the Yapton Neighbourhood Plan under Regulation 16 between the 4th November 2021 and 6th January 2022 at 5pm.

Following closure of the consultation and the receipt of responses, the local planning authority (Arun District Council) is required to make the modified plan within 5 weeks following receipt of the independent examiner's report, or such later date as agreed in writing between the local planning authority and the qualifying body (Yapton Parish Council).

However, in March 2022 the Chairman of the Planning Committee referred to a letter which had been sent by the Agents of Landlink Limited complaining that certain aspects of the Regulation 16 consultation had not been complied with. Consequently, this complaint had delayed the submission of the modified plan to the Independent Examiner for their consideration and report and advice was being sought concerning its impact on the update to the Neighbourhood Plan. The advice concluded that the cumulative effect of the Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB) changes accommodating both Local Plan and recent planning permissions is significant enough to warrant a re-screening of the Yapton Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Following this legal advice, Arun District Council started the re-screening exercise with the statutory consultees from 7th April to 11th May. The re-screening was to ascertain if the conclusions provided previously had changed. The reason for this is that it was stated that the Neighbourhood Plan was not allocating new housing sites but merely carrying forward existing allocations and accommodating recent planning permissions granted (and subject to EIA) since adoption of the Arun Local Plan. However, the proposed Neighbourhood Plan is amending the BUAB policy to accommodate a significant number of recent planning permissions and housing increases and is therefore effectively an allocation of those permitted sites and so their individual and cumulative impact should be addressed as part of the SEA screening.

On 30 June 2022 the District Council was advised that Landlink Estates Limited had requested that the Secretary of State directs under Regulation 10 (3) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 that the Plan was likely to have significant environmental effects. Landlink Estates Limited had previously made a representation to the Plan during the Regulation 16 consultation process.

The Independent Examiner, Mr Andrew Ashcroft, therefore delayed the substantive start of the examination. The examination of the Plan would take account of the Secretary of State's determination on the screening report. Under the circumstances, it was now down to the District Council to chase matters with the Secretary of State.

The Planning Committee noted an e-mail dated 3rd March 2023 from Arun District informing the Parish Council that the application by Landlink Estates to the Secretary of State to issue a screening direction on the modified Yapton Neighbourhood Plan had been declined. After almost a year of delays Arun District Council are now able to progress to the Independent Examination of the modified Neighbourhood Plan as soon as possible.

Yapton CE Primary School

The Parish Council has endeavoured to maintain its links with the local primary school in Yapton which the majority of children in the village attend. The school has supplied articles for inclusion in the Yapton News over the past year as appropriate. The Children had also been involved in the planting of trees and hedges on the Bund on the Playing Field during the year.

Allotments

The Council continues to provide Allotments at its site in Cinders Lane, Yapton. Mr Mick Caiger continues in his role of managing and overseeing the Parish Council's Allotments, and we thank him for all the work he does behind the scenes to ensure everything runs smoothly.

The Parish Council noted at its January 2022 meeting that the legal transfer of the ownership of the Cinders Lane Allotment Site in Cinders Lane, Yapton to the Parish Council had been completed on the 6th January 2022. The transfer of the land was completed at no cost to the Parish Council. The Allotments continue to be managed in the same way as present and annual fees will be payable to the Parish Council. The Council agreed to fix the allotment annual rentals for the financial year commencing on 1st April 2023 at the same rental charged in the previous year (£36.00 for a 5-rod plot).

Grants to Voluntary Organisations 2022/23

The Council considered a number of applications received from local voluntary and charitable organisations for grant-aid in the financial year 2022/23. The Budget for 2022/23 was £960 and grants were allocated as follows:

Arun Community Transport - £100; Burndell Bridge Society - £50; 4 Sight Vision Support - £50; West Sussex Mediation Service - £50; Yapton & District Cottage Gardeners' Society - £100; Yapton & Ford Local History Group - £100; Yapton Evergreens Over 50's Club - £75; Yapton & Ford Parochial Church Council - £100 (towards the maintenance of the closed churchyard); Yapton Free Church (towards Children's holiday club) - £235; and Home-Start Arun, Worthing & Adur - £100.

Yapton Community Emergency and Resilience Plan

Clymping, Ford, Walberton and Yapton Parish Councils have established a resilience hub in the first floor Emergency Planning & Resilience Room at the Yapton & Ford Village Hall. The four Parish Councils have also located their emergency stocks of equipment in the hub and agreed to the making of a financial contribution to the Village Hall Management Committee for the use of the resilience room.

Yapton & Ford Village Hall

The Parish Council appointed three representatives to serve on the Management Committee during the past year, Derek Ambler, Mrs Pam Evans and Michael O'Dell. One meeting of the trustees has taken place during the last year.

The Council has been pleased to note that the village hall's financial position has been maintained as it recovers from periods of lockdown and from Covid restrictions. It will be recognised however that maintenance of the ageing premises and facilities, both internally and externally, and the need to ensure that these public premises conform to strict regulatory and safety requirements, remain a drain on resources and is one which the Management Committee constantly has under review.

For many years now the Parish Councils of Yapton and Ford have accepted financial responsibility for the maintenance of the external fabric of the building and Yapton has made provision in its budget should any significant maintenance issues arise.

Keeping the village tidy

Will Cronin has been carrying out the litter picking and cleansing contract, and my grateful thanks to him for his excellent work he has done on our behalf to keep the village playing field looking so tidy. He will be continuing this work in the current year.

Despite many reminders there is, unfortunately, the on-going issue with dog fouling on the field. It is unacceptable that this should be left for our litter pickers to clear up. It is a most unpleasant task for anyone and if left on the field could well be a serious health issue for our children. The Parish Council once again urges all dog owners to act responsibly, to keep their dogs on a lead whilst exercising them on the field and take their dog's mess away or use the bins provided. However, dog excrement should definitely not be put in the general waste bins but taken to the red bins on the field.

Yapton News

The *Yapton News*, is usually published 6 times a year and aims is to provide an eclectic mix of articles as well as some 'interesting' information on what the Council itself is doing for and in the community. The Editor strives to keep each issue of the magazine 'local' so that all the articles, pictures and features relate to and will be of interest to Yapton residents. The Editor always welcomes more contributions.

For those local businesses who may have considered using *Yapton News* to advertise and promote their services, the cost of advertising is very reasonable for the 6 editions published each year, and it is delivered to around 2100 (and increasing) homes in the parish as well as being posted on the parish council's own website. Information on how to advertise is available from the Editor (Clerk of the Council).

My grateful thanks go to all those who regularly send in contributions for the magazine and to the increasing team of volunteers and Councillors who help with delivering the Parish Council's magazine to an ever increasing number of households in the village.

The late Queen's Platinum Jubilee – A local resident volunteered and worked with Councillor Andrews to arrange a "Big Jubilee Picnic" on Saturday 4th June from 1 to 3pm on the Yapton Playing Field to celebrate the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee over the special bank holiday weekend. I would like to place on record my thanks to Councillor Mark Andrews for the co-ordinating role he had agreed to with a local resident in arranging the event on the playing field.

King Charles III Coronation – May 6th 2023

The Council agreed that it would be good to organise a local event to celebrate this significant national event. Councillor Phillipa Greenan agreed to co-ordinate an event to be held in the Village Hall on Monday 8th May 2023. A £1,000 budget was agreed to provide some funding for the activities to be provided on the day, including further activities over and above those held on the late Queen's Jubilee celebration in June 2022. A small group of volunteers have been working on the event and including the possibility of obtaining sponsorship for the day. My thanks go to Pippa and her team for all their efforts in arranging this event.

Our finances

Funding for the running of Parish Council services comes mostly from the parish precept, which is included in your annual council tax bill, and is levied on every household in the parish. The Council also relies on other income from charges for services and its reserves. The Parish Council finances are becoming more stretched each year, having to cope with increasing costs, and the need to make appropriate provision for maintaining the ageing facilities in the village. Where appropriate, the Council has, and will continue to supplement its income, particularly for one-off projects, by seeking grants and using receipts from planning developers where these become available. This was the case for the provision of the new play area facilities on the playing field.

The increasing number of property completions does bring with it additional council tax receipts, and the Parish Council agreed no increase in its share of the council tax for 2023/24 in order to help keep the overall tax bill down for residents. A financial statement setting out the Parish Council's income and expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2023 will be found at the end of this report.

Conclusion

This is my last Chairman's report for the Parish Council, after around 40 years, the last 16 as Chairman I have decided to step down. I should like to take the opportunity of recording my personal thanks to all past and present members of the Parish Council for their support and interest in the village over those years. My thanks go especially to Mick Caiger who has looked after the Cinders Lane Allotments over many years. I would also like to thank the Clerks of the Council, David Tansley, and latterly Andrew Gardiner, for the work they have done in supporting me and in furthering the work of the Council.

Following the local elections in May 2023, the coming 12 months will be a challenging time for the new the Council, as it looks to find 4 candidates to fill the vacancies on the Council, and continue with its aim of delivering a quality and efficient service for the people of Yapton. The Council will work hard to ensure that the facilities and services for which it is responsible are maintained to a high standard. The Council will also aim to keep the community well informed through continuing the publication of the *Yapton News* and regularly updating of the Council's website and through its social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter.

I hope all residents will keep well and safe in 2023.

Stephen Haymes

Chairman of the Parish Council 2022/23

15th May 2023