

Chairman's Report 2021/2022

Introduction

This report covers the twelve months period since the last Annual Parish Meeting took place virtually on the 4th May 2021, due to the restrictions caused by the Coronavirus Pandemic. It is my fifteenth 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 were held on the 2nd May 2019 to elect representatives to fill the 10 seats on the Parish Council and for the Yapton ward on the District Council, However, as only 7 nominations were received for the 10 seats on the Parish Council, these candidates were elected without the need for an election. The remaining 3 seats have been filled by co-option to the Parish Council, although there is currently one vacancy following the resignation of Graham Holden in April 2021.

Over the last 12 months there have been seven meetings of the full Parish Council and the Planning Committee. This included a special meeting in October 2021 to agree the modifications to the Yapton Neighbourhood Plan prior to submission to Arun District for consultation with the public and statutory consultees. At the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2021, I was re-elected as Chairman with Peter Dunkley being re-elected as Vice-Chairman. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic the meetings held on the 4th May 2021 were conducted virtually, but since July 2021 a return to face to face meetings, all socially distanced have resumed in the Village Hall.

Yapton is represented at the County Council by two members. Jacky Pendleton was elected in May 2021, for a four-year term, to represent the Middleton Division (which includes Yapton) and John Charles representing 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.

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.

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.

The Parish Council prides itself in maintaining the play equipment to a high standard and carrying out promptly any repairs which may be needed. It is encouraging therefore, when you look at its overall condition, to realise that it is now over 20 years since the children's play area was opened to mark the Queen's Golden Jubilee. 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

It is very pleasing to report that three local residents applied to join the Yapton Recreation and Leisure Working Group which met for the first time on the 8th of June 2021. The meeting discussed a number of issues concerning the future of leisure and recreation activities in the parish.

Following a general discussion on improvement to or upgrading the Children's play area it was agreed to create a WhatsApp group and produce a questionnaire which could be available online, through social media, on our website and also available in the July Yapton News, to get residents views on how they saw this matter being taken forward. The much-loved children's play area adjacent to the King George V Playing Field in Yapton Village Centre was approaching 20 years old and some elements were coming to the end of their natural life

Two of the residents agreed to lead the group and one produced a draft questionnaire which was worked on so that it could be made available easily through our social media sites and online. The closing date for the questionnaire was set for the end of July and the group met shortly after that to consider any responses and to begin to formulate proposals for the Parish Council to consider.

The Parish Council conducted a public consultation to hear from local residents as to what they would like to see in any future park. The Consultation ran from mid-July and closed on the 31st July. Responses to the questionnaire were submitted online or sent by post or e-mail to the Clerk of the Council. A total of 133 responses were received and a wide variety of views were expressed. In addition, a survey was carried out among the 8 classes at the Yapton Primary School, with children's ages ranging from 4 to 12. The responses received and the types of replacement equipment preferred were used to inform the brief outlined below.

The brief, which was considered further by the working group, set out the initial areas of focus are as follows:

- An extension of the existing area. This will be achieved by reducing the size of the existing car park (whilst retaining the same number of parking spaces) and potentially installing some junior equipment on the greenspace next to the MUGA.
- An inclusive area, with equipment which can be used by a range of ages and abilities including children with disabilities and learning difficulties.
- An area which is designed to reduce the likelihood and impact of vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
- Improved surfacing and fencing.
- No specific theme identified – most popular was 'no preference/no theme' followed by Pirate/Smuggler. However, there does appear to be a small number of parishioners who would like to see a focus on the canal and the heritage of the area. This area needed to be considered further before play companies were approached.
- Equipment choices included: Zip wire, adventure trail/obstacle course, roundabout, new climbing units (junior and toddler), sensory items, basket swing, natural play features.
- A more natural environment which fits in with the village landscape better, balanced with cost of replacement surfacing/all weather surfacing.
- An element of lighting to ensure maximum use in winter months.

It was anticipated that the playground would be constructed and opened to coincide with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on the bank holiday weekend of 2nd - 5th June 2022. This was considered an appropriate target to reflect the construction of the current play area in 2002 which commemorated the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

In September, the Parish Council considered and agreed a report on the creation of a project to replace the existing play area equipment and associated landscaping works, together with technical support in line with the brief outlined above. 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 would be funded by the use of the £84,193 of Section 106 monies and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies £13,125 which have been allocated for this purpose from new housing developments in the Parish and the balance of £12,682 from Parish Council funds.

After a detailed evaluation of the 6 bids received 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. Watch out for details of an opening event sometime over that weekend.

Queen's Green Canopy Initiative

It was particularly pleasing for the Parish Council to support the Queens Green Canopy project by planting seven Oak Trees, one for each decade of the Queen's reign, on the King George V Playing Field. On Saturday 9th April the Parish Council organised a group of councillors and local residents to plant the Oak Trees, a unique initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, which invites people from across the UK to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee". We chose Oaks as we have veteran Oaks in the village, and they have royal association. Oaks are also great for biodiversity.

I would like to thank Councillor's Pippa Greenan and Mark Andrews for researching and organising the purchase and delivery of the trees from the Arundel Arboretum funded by the Parish Council. Grateful thanks are also due to the following who assisted in the tree planting:

Pippa and Gordon Greenan
Mark Andrews
Vicky and Peter Newman
John Knott
Chris and Katie Lowrie
Simon and Frances Crawford
Henry Jones and Sasa Krajnc

I understand that all of the volunteers expressed how much fun it was doing something positive. The Parish Council was very pleased to assist with this project.

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 53 in total (compared to 66 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 245 dwellings being constructed in the Parish. The following major applications have been considered and the outcome is shown against each application:

- **WSCC/011/21, Location: Ford Circular Technology Park, Ford Road, Ford BN18 OXL** - Demolition of existing buildings and structures and construction and operation of an energy recovery facility and a waste sorting and transfer facility for treatment of municipal, commercial and industrial wastes, including ancillary buildings, structures, parking, hardstanding, and landscape works
Location: Ford Circular Technology Park, Ford Road, Ford BN18 OXL Applicant: Ford Energy From Waste, Grundon Waste Management, Viridor Energy. **Application withdrawn on 25th November 2021**
- **Y/49/21/RES, Land East of Drove Lane, Yapton** - Approval of reserved matters following Y/92/17/OUT for 300 No. dwellings covering landscape, layout, scale & external appearance (resubmission following Y/78/20/RES). This application affects the setting of listed buildings, affects the character & appearance of the Main Road/Church Road, Yapton Conservation Area & affects a Right of Way. This site falls within Strategic Site SD7 (Zero Rated). Applicant Barratt David Wilson Southern. **Approved Conditionally by Committee on 27/10/2021**
- **Y/57/21/PL, Sunnymead, North End Road, Yapton** - Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and erection of 5 dwellings comprising 2 No 4 bed houses & 3 No 3 bed house (resubmission following Y/33/20/PL). This site is in CIL Zone 3 & is CIL Liable as new dwellings. This application is a Departure from the Development Plan. Applicant: Mr R. Daniels. **Application Refused on 29/01/2021**
- **Y/71/21/OUT, Land At Little Meadow and East Of Bilsham Road Yapton BN18 0JY** - Outline application with access for up to 73 No. new dwellings (but retaining Oak Trees & Little Meadow dwellings), 405 sqm of new light industrial buildings as part of an enlarged employment site & Public Open Space. The existing junction of Grevatts Lane West & Bilsham Road will be closed & Grevatts Lane West diverted to a new access point to the South. This application may affect the setting of Grade II Listed Buildings & is a Departure from the Development Plan. Applicant: Ms A. Taylor. **Application Refused on 01/07/2021**
- **Y/127/21/RES, Land at Bilsham Road Yapton** - Approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) following the grant of Y/91/17/OUT for 250 No dwellings with associated parking, road/footway/cycleway provision, open space, landscaping, surface water attenuation & ancillary works (resubmission following Y/152/20/RES). this site is not CIL Liable as in Yapton Strategic Site. Applicant: Bilsham Road LLP C/O Nexus Planning. **Approved Conditionally at Development Control Committee on 27/04/2022**
- **Y/158/21/PL, The Steddles North End Road Yapton** - Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and construction of 11 No dwellings (net increase 10 units) with access, landscaping and associated works (alternative to approved Y/121/19/PL). This site is in CIL Zone 3 and is CIL Liable as new dwellings & is a Departure from the Development Plan. Applicant: Smith Simmons & Partners Case. **Approved Conditionally on 02/03/2022**
- **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. **Decision due on 25/04/2022**
- **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. **Target Committee on 25/05/2022**

- **Y/7/22/PL, Land adjacent to Bonhams & Flints, Hoe Lane, Flansham** - Erection of 4 No dwelling with access from Hoe Lane and associated landscaping, including native orchards and wildflower meadows. This application is a Departure from the Development Plan and is in CIL zone 3 and is CIL Liable as new dwellings. Applicant: Mr & Mrs Coutin. **Refused on 29/03/2022**
- **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. **Decision due at Committee on 25/05/2022**

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 Neighbourhood Plan

The Planning Committee received regular updates from the Yapton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on the progress being made in reviewing the “made” Neighbourhood Plan with a view to updating the Plan to take into account the requirement for additional housing numbers in the Arun District and other matters now that the Arun Local Plan (ALP) had been agreed. The Group continued to be advised by Planning Consultants O’Neill Homer, who had been appointed to advise the Council on the work required to proceed with the update. The costs of the consultant’s work has been mainly met from a successful grant application.

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. The consultation period had been extended to account for the Christmas holiday period.

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 is to ascertain if the conclusions provided previously have 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 increase 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.

Arun District Council are planning to issue a final determination on 12th May 2022, and the outcome of this will determine the timescale for resuming the public examination and the examiner’s availability accordingly.

Creation of a Wildflower Meadow on the Bund

The Council agreed to accept a Quotation from a local landscaping company to remove current plants on the bund by the entrance to the field from Downview Close, and to prepare the ground and seed the area with a wildflower and meadow grass seed mix. 2 small signs were erected to explain what is happening. The work was carried out in October 2021.

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.

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.

During the year the Parish Council considered an offer from the 3 landowners of the Allotment Site at Cinders Lane to transfer the site to the Parish Council at nil cost to the Parish Council and agreed to engage a firm of Solicitors to provide appropriate legal support and to conduct the transfer of land to the Parish Council on or before 24th March 2022, noting that the landowners had agreed to pay the Parish Council's expenses incurred in the transfer of ownership.

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 and the process is underway to register the land under the Allotment Acts to ensure it continues to be used as an Allotment Site in the future. The Parish Council is very grateful to the landowners for their generosity in transferring the ownership of the land to the Parish Council.

The Allotments will 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 2022 at the same rental charged in the previous year (£36.00 for a 5-rod plot).

Grants to Voluntary Organisations 2021/22

The Council considered a number of applications received from local voluntary and charitable organisations for grant-aid in the financial year 2021/22. The Budget for 2021/22 was £950 and grants were allocated as follows:

Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice Bureau - £100; 4 Sight Vision Support - £100; 1st Yapton Rangers - £100; Yapton & Ford Parochial Church Council - £100 (towards the maintenance of the closed churchyard); Yapton Evergreens Over 50's Club - £100; Arun Community Transport - £100; Yapton Short Mat Bowls Club - £100 and Yapton Free Church (towards cost of the annual Children's Holiday Club) - £100. Total allocated £800.

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.

The Council received regular updates during the year from Councillor Mrs Philippa Greenan (Temporary Co-ordinator) on the work and initiatives undertaken locally by a group of local volunteers under her direction. During the Pandemic this involved the delivery of food to the vulnerable and those shielding, collecting and distributing prescriptions and assisting those who needed assistance, including directing them to where help was available. A great response was shown by local volunteers, including many new people and much gratitude must be expressed to those individuals and local businesses who adapted quickly to the changing local circumstances. The group has also recently been involved with the vaccination programme rollout.

Dog Waste Bin in Flansham

The Parish Council, in consultation with a member of the Flansham Residents Association, was pleased to place an order with Arun District Council for the supply and installation of a green Dog Waste Bin at a cost of £296.55 to supply and install a bin and an ongoing annual service charge of £290.22. The new green bin has been installed on the verge by the entrance to the Bilsham/Yapton Footpath in Hoe Lane.

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. No meetings of the trustees have taken place during the last year.

The Council has been pleased to note that the village hall's financial position has been maintained despite its closure during 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.

Our finances

Funding for the running of Parish Council services comes 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.

The increasing number of property completions does bring with it additional council tax receipts, however, the Parish Council has agreed to a small increase of 2.0% in its precept for 2022/23 to help keep the overall tax bill down for residents. This is an increase equivalent to approximately 3p per week for the average property in Yapton. A financial statement setting out the Parish Council's income and expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2022 will be found at the end of this report.

Conclusion

In closing, I should like as usual to take this opportunity of recording my personal thanks to all members of the Parish Council for their support and interest in the village throughout the past year. I would also like to thank the Clerk of the Council, Andrew Gardiner, for the work he does in supporting me and in furthering the work of the Council. I know this has been a difficult time for all concerned over the past year as we strive to find the new normal following the Covid Pandemic.

In the coming 12 months the Council will continue 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, hopefully, have completed the project to install a new play area replacing some of its ageing facilities and assets. 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 as we make our way tentatively out of the Pandemic.

Stephen Haymes
Chairman of the Parish Council

9th May 2022