



STROUD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Tuesday 4th April 2017
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Parish Councillor Update

There have been no changes to the Parish Council since last year's Annual Parish Meeting.

Your Parish Councillors are:

- Alan Burges, Vice Chairman, with responsibility for Langrish School, bus shelters and planning;
- Ony Rogers, with responsibility for footpaths;
- Carl Foulston is our tree warden with responsibility for the Recreation Ground;
- Dave Paul, with responsibility for Communications (website and newsletters);
- Oliver Howe with responsibility for the Community Forum;
- David McKinney, Chairman, with responsibility for the Parish Plan;
- Liz Foulston is the Parish Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking our County Councillor, Vaughan Clarke, and District Councillor, Nick Drew, for their support during the last year. I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors and the Clerk for their support and work they have done on behalf of the community.

Finance

The precept, which is the amount of money requested to run the affairs of the Parish, was £12,733 in the financial year 2015/16, and there has been a decrease of 1.48% to £12,545 for the forthcoming financial year. This is the second year in a row that the precept has been reduced (0.50% 2014/15).

The precept covers the salary of the Clerk, hire of halls for Council meetings, training courses for the Clerk and Councillors, mowing contracts for the recreation ground, dog waste bins, cleaning of the bus shelters, playground safety inspections and for general maintenance and repair of Parish assets. Under the new 'Transparency Code' regulations, further information regarding the Parish Council's accounts are available on the website (www.stroud-pc.gov.uk) or can be requested from the Clerk.

Grants

In the last financial year, the Parish Council applied for grants totalling of £650 from East Hampshire District Council towards the costs of a new village marque and footpath improvements between North Stroud Lane and Ramsdean Road. Further grants totalling £273 from Hampshire County Council for the new kissing gate on the A272 opposite Finchmead Lane were also obtained.

The Parish Council are always keen to look for alternative sources of funding to reduce increases in the precept while still making enhancements to the Parish.

Footpaths

This year has focussed on ground improvements on Footpaths 4 and 703. On Footpath 4 the surface around two stiles had become eroded over the years so that the ground level

had dropped considerably. This, in association with deep mud, had meant the two stiles had become tricky to negotiate. Lots of discussion with the landowners Col and Mrs Obbard took place, and they finally agreed to allow some planings on their fields, and have even kindly put a vertical hand rail in on the two stiles which, together with the firmer footing provided by the planings, makes crossing these stiles much easier.

Thanks go to Col and Mrs Obbard for their kind co-operation and to District Councillor Nick Drew for a grant of £150 to make this possible.

More planings have been delivered to some wet and muddy parts of Footpath 703, and now that the ground is drying out, we are planning a work party soon to spread these – all offers of help gratefully received!

The annual Stroud Litter pick took place on Sunday 2nd April and a record attendance of 23 volunteers did a great job of tidying up our village. Coffee, tea and cake were provided, and we enjoyed a good catch up with our neighbours in the sunshine. Special thanks to Cllr Ony Rogers for organising this event.

Planning

The Council reviews every planning application submitted in the Parish. The Council would encourage anyone who is considering applying to engage in early dialogue with the Council.

In the last year, there have been 14 applications.

There are several Tree Preservation Orders in the Parish. The large oak tree on the land next to the 7 Stars Public House on the A272 and the tree line separating the two paddocks on the proposed development land in Ramsdean Road.

In response to the Cala Homes Planning application for housing development in Ramsdean Road, the Parish Council has setup a subcommittee with 7 residents from across the Parish including Ramsdean Road. The subcommittee will provide the Parish Council with responses and feedback for submission to the planning authority, the South Downs National Park.

Lengthsman scheme

Stroud has joined other local parishes in sharing a Parish Lengthsman which is paid for by Hampshire County Council. In the last year, the Lengthsman has been cutting hedges and verges, cleaned road signs and cut back vegetation around road signs. If anyone has any ideas for future community projects or works, please let Liz our clerk knows.

Traffic speeds in the village

We have been successful in obtaining grant funding for a 30MPH repeater Road sign for the A272 and this will be in place later this year. Other improvements which I am sure you have all seen have been the removal of white lines and cat's eyes on the A272.

David McKinney
Chairman of Stroud Parish Council.