

## **CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018**

### **DEFIBRILLATOR**

Our defibrillator was fitted during last summer on the parish rooms wall. The electricity supply needed for the defibrillator is just to light up the directional lights and keep the equipment warm in the winter and we pay the Parish Rooms Management Committee £10.00 per annum for the electricity usage.

The CPR training that was included in the total cost of the defibrillator took place in early September last year.

### **HOLYWELL LAKE ROAD**

As parishioners will know, this saga has been going on for 15+ years and apart from some new directional road signs nothing has changed.

### **GRASS CUTTING AND MAINTAINING THE OPEN SPACES OF THE PARISH**

We pay Taunton Deane Borough Council to cut the grass on the village green during the summer and in addition to that, we engage a local contractor to regularly cut the grass on the Jubilee Green and cut back vegetation flanking the A38 for road safety reasons.

### **FOOTPATHS**

The footpath and bridge at Millmoor that has been closed for some time under the direction of Somerset Council for health and safety reasons remains closed but the landowners and the Rights of Way Officer at Somerset County Council have held meetings to try to resolve the issue and re-open the access. Discussions are still taking place with the two parties and the County Council has asked if the parish council would make a contribution towards the cost of the work. We are now waiting for more information from the parties involved.

Last year I reported that some cars had gained access to the cricket field via the five-bar gate and had been setting fires and leaving rubbish at the club. This was reported to the police and the police have also been involved again this year. In one instance a car registration number was taken and passed to the police. The kissing gate that I also mentioned last year has been fitted by members of the cricket club and the five-bar gate will have a coded lock fitted to it.

Unfortunately, when members of the cricket club went to prepare for the cricket season, they discovered that further vandalism has occurred at the cricket pavilion with windows and doors being smashed, crockery from the kitchen thrown and smashed, etc, etc. Nobody seems to have seen or heard anything and we do not know who was responsible for this wanton vandalism.

## **GRIT BINS**

I reported last year that Somerset County Council would no longer supply parishes with grit bins but they will fill them up at the start of the winter so last year, we bought three bins, one for Whiteball, one for Greenway Lane and one for Slaughterhouse Hill. Unfortunately, due to the County Council changing their mind at the last minute as to whether they would or would not fill the grit bins for one last winter, our grit bins were not filled until well after the snow had been and gone!!!! In the future, the parish council will have to purchase grit for our bins.

One unfortunate occurrence regarding the grit bins was that the first two that we purchased did not have sloping lids and the consequence was that the bins filled with rain water. This was reported to the council by a parishioner and her husband very kindly went out and drilled holes in the bins to let the water run out. Thank you very much Mr Middleton on behalf of the parish council.

## **HOLY CROSS ILLUMINATION**

The Parish Council continues to pay for the cost of flood lighting the church. Taunton Deane Borough Council invoice us and we pay the bill.

## **CHALLENGES FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL**

There are some challenges on the horizon for our Parish Council and these are:-

- **The merger of Taunton Deane and West Somerset Councils.**

This was effective as of 1 April 2019 and the merger led to a reduction in the number of councillors and the boundaries of the constituencies changing.

We as parish councils we still wait to see how the merger will affect us.

At the District Council elections last week there was a local ground-swell as well as a national one and the make-up and control of the District Council has changed completely with many new councillors being elected and some long-standing ones losing their seats.

- **Changes in the Data Protection Legislation from May 2018**

These changes affected what information the parish council holds and how it is stored. Training courses were arranged by the Somerset Association for Local Councils which the Parish Clerk and I attended.

I will close now by thanking my fellow councillors who undertake little tasks for the parish during the year and to Christine, for keeping us on the straight and narrow regarding the finances and procedures. Thank you all.

**Janet Lloyd**  
**Chair**  
**Sampford Arundel Parish Council**  
**7th May 2019**