

# BARNWELL PARISH COUNCIL

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

AGM/PARISH MEETING TUESDAY 15 MAY 2018

It has been another busy year for our council with several projects ongoing.

Firstly, the Neighbourhood Plan. After a period of inactivity due to lack of volunteers, the plan was regenerated last year with the help of a new group of volunteers and the engagement of an independent planning consultant. A new, more comprehensive survey has been devised and circulated to the parish and is required to be completed by Friday 18 May. The steering group is hopeful that there will be a good response to the questionnaire. The results will then be analysed by the consultant and in line with these findings a draft plan will be drawn up which will then be presented to the parish for approval.

The playground project is progressing. We have been successful in gaining grants from the Community Facilities Fund, Awards for All, St. Wilfred's Lodge Oundle and Waitrose Green Token Scheme in addition to generous donations from their empowerment funds by Councillor Wendy Brackenbury and Councillor Geoff

Shacklock. We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to helping us achieve our goal. In agreement with Ian Simmons, the landlord of the Montagu Arms, a 15 year lease is being drawn up for the part of the garden where the play area will be situated. A planning application has been submitted to ENC and I have been advised that this can take up to 8 weeks to be processed. If everything goes to plan we could maybe start installation in August.

A few weeks ago we were advised by Jay that he and his wife, Vicky, no longer felt able to run our village shop and Post Office. He is hoping to let the shop and PO whilst retaining the house for his own occupation. He advised us at this early stage in case we, as a community, would be interested in renting off him and running the business as a community shop.

In order to inform the village of, and gauge their reaction to, these developments we called an Extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 01 May. It was encouraging that over 60 residents attended. We appreciated the advice of Peter James who was instrumental in setting up Titchmarsh Community shop. There was a lively exchange of views and it was decided that an advisory group should be formed to evaluate the viability of a community shop,

either in its present location or somewhere else in the village. It was also suggested that a survey of the village would be useful in determining what people would like to see for sale, and, indeed, would buy in a village shop.

It was emphasised that the Parish Council can only help in a supportive role with a community shop as Parish Councils cannot by law be involved in any commercial enterprises.

The council has decided to replace the street lighting in the village as the fittings have now become old and difficult to replace. The replacement lights will be white LED lanterns similar to those already installed at Castle View. The capital cost of the replacement will be spread over a number of years and that annual cost should be covered by the savings we make on the cost of electricity. Designs are being considered at the moment and we should soon be able to proceed with the replacement process.

Our thanks must go to Councillor David Brown for his dogged ( no pun intended!) persistence in getting a waste bin installed at the Recreation/Cricket Field to try to alleviate the very real problem of dog fouling there. He is also constantly encouraging the dog warden to do patrols in the hope of discouraging dog

walkers from allowing their animals to foul in the village.

Our thanks go to Councillor Holden who organised another productive litter pick this year. Despite the dreadful weather that evening volunteers turned up and did a wonderful job. Thank you to everyone involved. We should also say thank you to Hazel Shacklock who recently did a sterling job clearing litter from the old Barnwell to Oundle road.

After many years of doing a marvellous job cutting the Recreational Field grass, George Marriott decided that, sadly, he could no longer continue. We would like to convey our thanks to George for his invaluable help over the years.

Turneys are now contracted to mow the Recreation Field <sup>THREE</sup> ~~four~~ times this year. We will then assess whether this is a suitable amount of cuts and liaise with Turneys for next year.

Councillor Wendy Brackenbury donated money from her empowerment fund to enable us to purchase new bollards for the junction with the A605. Unfortunately, Highways no longer has funds to install them and we have been advised that it could be difficult and costly to do the installation ourselves. I am in contact with

Sarah Barnwell of Kierwsp and we are trying to find a solution.

Now a big thank you to Councillor Bould for first of all overseeing the installation of the defibrillator in the telephone box, and secondly for arranging the restoration of the box. I think you will all agree that it looks very smart.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has helped with the Neighbourhood Plan, all our Councillors, Wendy and Geoff for their various financial contributions and last, but by no means least, Nicki, for all her hard work in keeping us out of trouble!

Thank you.