**NORTH NEWNTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2018**

I would like to report a busy past year for North Newnton Parish, with a good deal happening throughout the parish in our three villages, North Newnton, Hilcott and Bottlesford. We welcomed a new councillor, Fenella Rouse, who was co-opted in January. We have a vacancy for a councillor to make up our full complement of seven.

As well as posting our agendas and minutes on our three noticeboards, we have a website www.nnpc.org.uk where these and important financial documents and reports are posted, along with notifications and posters of events in the parish. Thanks to David Brisker for his diligent work on the website, which has been well received by parishioners. We have obtained funding for a new updated website – thanks to our clerk Tracey for sourcing and obtaining this. We ordered a new noticeboard for the Broad Street/Beechingstoke corner to complete the locations of noticeboards around the parish (imminently to be erected by David and Malcolm).

In my capacity as Chair, I have been attending whenever possible Pewsey Area Board, Pewsey Community Area Partnership and Community Area Transport Group meetings, to gain knowledge of local priorities and networking with other parishes, also liaising with our local police on NHW. My fellow councillors and clerk have accompanied me to some and have attended meetings on highways, budget and planning, and clerk’s training, They have also got involved in distribution of newsletters/flyers and following up of issues of concern to parishioners.

The Parish Steward programme has improved but as we have the PS for one morning a month, it has only helped to some extent with this important aspect of parish upkeep and tidiness. Verges are now being cut only once a year by WC, so in early April the PC paid for the parish verges to be cut.

The issue raised with CATG for a pavement at North Newnton on the Rushall Road/Upavon Road has now moved forward but unfortunately our bid for substantive funding for 2017/2018 was not successful. We have been pursuing the funding options for 2018/2019 with an amended plan for a shorter distance on the Rushall Road. Progress will be discussed on 6 June at the next CATG meeting. All credit must go to Mac McLean for his pursuit of this important project.

A welcome pack for new parishioners has been well received, both for the new houses in Woodbridge Close and others in the parish. Mac has been pursuing Section 106 monies from WC and the builder for the new houses, which would help with the pavement project mentioned above.

The pavement at Martins Close has now been repaired by WC contractors, although not completely satisfactorily and our Wiltshire councillor Paul Oatway has been pursuing the matter through the Highways department.

Parishioners from the Rushall Road and Hilcott have been out on the Rushall Road and Upavon Road for CSW. Cathy Lang is our Co-ordinator. We now have four trained people but need more. A group of seven parishes including ours got together to obtain a SID for this road and another in the parish last year, at a cost of £220 per parish. SID has been in action on the Rushall Road and at Broad Street/Beechingstoke corner. We were unsuccessful in obtaining Speedwatch for the C38 in Hilcott, as the metrocount results did not justify us having CSW there in the 40mph limit.

Speeding continues to be a concern throughout the parish, and also the number of HGVs on our small rural roads.

Kate Boulter was successful, having contacted three companies who used the Bottlesford Road for deliveries, to ask them to avoid this narrow stretch. We have since had two “not suitable for HGVs” signs erected at the Fair Trade bridge corner and Bottlesford Corner by WC (for which we made a contribution from Parish funds).

The essential repairs on the A345 at the Woodbridge bridge started in September and have just recently been completed.

Everleigh Recycling Centre is remaining open at this stage but we shall have to keep a watchful eye.

A tree planting project in partnership with the WC Community Officer and the Woodland Trust has been taken forward by Kate with updates to follow at future PC meetings.

There was an exciting archaeological find at Cat’s Brain in Hilcott in July by a Reading University team, where a Neolithic house was discovered. More information on our website www.nnpc.org.uk

We obtained funding for the refurbishment of the Bottlesford phone box from Pewsey Area Board and the Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership. The exterior was painted in the proper Heritage red colour, and the interior fitted out with shelving and boards. The defibrillators at the Village Hall and the Woodbridge Inn are monitored and checked monthly and this past year an external company carried out a comprehensive check for us at a very reasonable cost.

We have had a few planning applications in the past year, for Bottlesford, Hilcott and North Newnton, most of which were straightforward. For some time, we had been considering a Parish Plan, and after attendance at various meetings by me and other councillors, and discussion with neighbouring parishes including Pewsey, a Neighbourhood Plan was discussed as a possibility for the parish at our 2016 meetings last year. A vote was taken at our January 2017 meeting to go ahead with a Neighbourhood Plan. A Steering Group was formed in March, with Fenella Rouse as our team leader in May, and we have had two awareness raising events, three summary newsletters, a Housing Needs Survey and several Steering Group meetings. (There is a display and update at today’s Annual Parish Meeting to show the latest work done).

We supported a community BBQ at Malcolm and Paula Baker’s house in August and a Quiz Night in October, run by Paula, both of which were great successes, and will be repeated this year. Thanks to them once again.

The precept and budget for 2018/2019 was agreed at the January meeting this year, and thanks to Tracey for her hard work on these important fiscal matters. We have again increased the precept considerably in view of more demands on our budget, and the decrease in contribution from WC.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my fellow councillors – Penny Bond now retired (at the April meeting) from the council after 22 years, Mac McLean, Malcolm Baker, David Brisker, Fenella Rouse and Kate Boulter, for their support this past year; Tracey Pullen in her role of Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer; Keith Lang, our Flood Warden and Weather Warden and Leslie Bond, our CEV; Cathy Lang, our Speedwatch Co-ordinator and last but not least Paul Oatway, Wiltshire Councillor for the Pewsey Vale, who has been supportive of our issues and concerns.

Carolyn Whistler

Chair – NNPC

12 May 2018