

Teffont Parish Council Chair's Report 2021-22

The last year has seen a return to the Parish Council meeting in person at the village hall as Covid restrictions were eased. While this has been most welcome, the PC's zoom account enables 'hybrid' meetings, allowing members of the public who are unable to come to the hall to attend online. Councillors, however, must attend in person in order to vote on agenda items.

The Parish Council has held 10 meetings and 2 extraordinary meetings.

The annual parish meeting, held two weeks ago, was conducted in a new informal format to encourage residents to share their ideas and concerns. Feedback from the meeting will influence the PC's strategy over the coming year. Turnout was encouraging; exact numbers are not recorded but we believe around 40 residents attended. Reports from the various groups and organisations in Teffont, which in previous years were read out at the annual meeting, were displayed in the village hall, have been uploaded on the village website and will be circulated via the info@ email.

Planning matters continue to rank high on the PC's agenda and are in the foreground of residents' concerns. The Parish Council's legal status with regard to planning matters is as a statutory consultee to the local planning authority. The Clerk and Councillor Ian Johnson met with a Senior Planning Officer and Enforcement Officer from Wiltshire Council to gain insight into the planning process and the role and responsibility of the PC within it.

An innovation this year is that planning application references are uploaded on the website so that the public have a quick way to access an application.

The proposal by the National Trust to lease Phillips House and a large area of the surrounding parkland to a private tenant caused considerable concern, not least because the National Trust had omitted to consider Teffont Parish Council as a stakeholder in its initial communications. Having clarified the position with the National Trust, the Parish Council held an extraordinary meeting, attended by representatives of the Trust, who answered residents' questions and since that time communications have improved.

The volume and speed of traffic and size of vehicles continue to be a major issue. Earlier in the year the PC's HGV sub-committee was dissolved, but has now been re-instated with Councillors Tony Dean, Richard Blamey and Julia Graham forming the committee. A root and branch review of traffic along the C24 has been requested from Wiltshire Council Highways. As a start, speeds are being officially monitored on the C24 and this will be followed by a speed review on the B3089 approaching Teffont from Chilmark. A meeting has taken place with the Chair of Chilmark Parish Council and representatives from the Fonthill Estate to discuss a unified strategy on the concerns arising from the deliveries in HGVs to and from EHD wine storage depot. The Parish Council is also revisiting the proposal for speed indicator devices that was withdrawn in 2018 in favour of 20mph signs.

An ash suffering from die-back on the village green was taken down and a cherry blossom tree planted in memory of Hugh Homan, founder of the Teffont Trust. Two new benches were installed

dedicated to Hugh Homan and Richard Long-Fox (who was this Chair's chairman for many years.)
Thanks to the Teffont Trust for funding these.

The bus shelters are currently being re-thatched. Thanks to Councillor Johnson for organising this and the Teffont Trust for funding.

The grass cutting contractors are in the second year of their contract and performing well. Concerns from the PCC about the grass in Magna graveyard appear to have been resolved.

The wet pavements and blocked drains adjacent to the Paddock continue to be investigated and the PC has registered this as a safety issue with Wiltshire Council.

Residents have raised concerns about the frequency and noise level of clay pigeon shooting and the PC are monitoring.

The PC's finances are in order. Councillors voted to increase the precept by 5%. Madeline will go into detail in her report.

Two site meetings have been held with SSE engineers to survey the overhead cables on poles that could be buried and the poles removed as part of the AONB funding scheme.

Thank you to all parish councillors – James, Pam, Julia, Richard, Ian and Tony - who give so generously of their time and expertise. Thanks to Bridget Wayman, Ward Councillor, for guidance and support. Thanks to Mick Audus for running the info@ email and the village website. And for his role as tree warden. Thanks to Zillah Faulkner for Neighbourhood Watch, Nick Nicholson for speed watch, Flood Warden Harry Button and Don Ridley for auditing the accounts.

Finally thank you to Madeline, clerk and proper officer. Her professionalism and equanimity are invaluable to this council.

Emma Worth
Chair
15.5.2022