



PIRBRIGHT PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2016-17

This is my 9th Chairman's report to the Annual Parish Meeting and sadly will be my last, because of my forthcoming move to Devon this summer. The new chairman of the Parish Council and the Lord Pirbright's Hall charity will be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 16th May.

Much of the Parish Council's work over the years remains unchanged, with topics that continue as strong priorities —planning & development, road safety and community cohesion, all of which involve liaison with other local authorities and organisations.

We began the year collaborating with the church and schools to organise parish celebrations for HM The Queen's 90th birthday, with such success that the surplus funds raised could be shared between LPH, the church & schools. This summer we are again joining forces with the church to hold the first ever Community Games—there will be more about this later in the meeting.

Working with the borough council, we are now required to review planning applications online on the GBC website (in order to cut the printing costs of receiving paper versions), for which we have been provided with a lap top computer, projector and screen. We still have a Planning Committee, but have moved to reviewing most applications at our monthly meetings because all members like to be involved in the discussions and also to hear the views of neighbours on proposals that could affect them and our parish.

Speeding through the village, is still posing a problem as well as parking outside Pirbright School and we have been working with SCC and GBC to resolve these issues. Measures have been put in place to make the school area safer to drop off & pick up children at certain times of the day while further works have recently been done to improve the crossing near Cowshot Bridge, Gole Road for pedestrians after a resident was badly injured in 2015.

Maintenance of the village green and playing fields is another important part of our work and drainage was carried out this year, with much success. Other projects include the installation of a fence at the Sandpits to divide the right of way from the parking area and we also installed a parking layby in Church Lane for use by disabled drivers. All these successful projects were financed by the parish with contributions from SCC, GBC and the Lemprière Trust.

Rhoda Nevins

Parish Accounts

The Parish accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2017 show a cash balance of £50,462.86, slightly less than last year but in line with the official advice about keeping reserves to meet emergencies, unexpected litigation or local election. Reserves will be allocated for treeworks to be carried out on parish land this year, a second picnic table and repairs to the seesaw & safety surfacing in the playground.

The Precept for the new financial year is £52443.00, adding 2.99% to Band D council tax. To this is added £1197 of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

Grant-aided projects planned include two replacement benches for the Green and installation of gates with hydraulic hinges at the children's playground, for which GBC will contribute 50% of the cost.

Lord Pirbright's Hall

The Hall continues to be busy with its usual mix of activities, club meetings and social functions from children's parties to wedding receptions. Last year, the external clock was repaired, to which the Parish Council made a grant of £726 (50% of the cost). Earlier this year the Clubroom floor was refurbished and the Main Hall will be done in August, during which time the whole hall will be closed for a week because of fumes from the chemicals.

The LPH accounts for the year ended March 2017 show a surplus of £5243, contributing to the reserve funds of £13,017.

Some LPH Costs

	2015-16	2016-17
Electricity	1752.62	2177.78
Gas	4987.56	3210.57
Water	317.18	240.28
Phone	267.61	426.78
Refuse	791.46	823.36
Rates	<u>749.36</u>	<u>833.22</u>
	£8,865.79	£7,711.99
Routine maintenance	£2790.74	£2861.36
Non-routine maintenance	£4037.60	£4467.11
New Green Hut	£61,751.48	£0.00

PC costs for 2016-17

Essential expenditure included:	£540.00
Independent Internal Audit	£300.00
External Audit	£3706.80
Insurance	<u>£1100.83</u>
Sub & fees	£5647.63

Parish Maintenance

Grasscutting	£4304.00
Playground	£3418.13
Groundsman	£1636.15
Other	<u>£255.40</u>
	£9613.68

Special Projects

Church Lane—layby	£5239.00
Sandpits car park—resurfacing & fence	£8150.00
The Green—vertidrainage of surface	£1185.00
Benches for the Green & playground	£1529.78
Playing fields—ditching	£2000.00
Blind Lane—ditching	£750.00
Noticeboards—replacement	<u>£1355.00</u>
	£20208.78

Events

The cost of the Annual Parish Meeting in last year was £190.99, including hall hire & refreshments, and PPC paid for hire of LPH for events & meetings, including:

Community Games inaugural meeting	£26.84
Flower Show	£284.05
Macmillan coffee morning	£42.32
Police muster on Remembrance Sunday	<u>£44.32</u>
	£397.53

PC Donations Made in 2016-17

Royal British Legion	£120.00
Twinning Association	£180.00

Grass-cutting on the playing fields & insurance cover for the cricket pavilion were paid by the Parish, plus 50% of the cost for printing PeriNews.

Highways & Environment Committee

The role of this committee continues to link Pirbright parishioners with the Police, GBC & SCC, discussing highways, byways & open spaces to improve and enhance our local community. With the strong working relationship that has been forged with these bodies we are able to discuss, assess and implement requests raised by residents at an easier level. This relationship with the authorities, coupled with the watchful eyes of our Clerk and direction from Cllr Keith Witham (SCC) ensures that PPC continues to receive significant funding from various bodies to make our precept stretch as far as possible to keep Pirbright a safe and enjoyable place to live.

Speeding is a very real issue within the village, Although there has been an absence of the Speed Data Recorder (SDR) and Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) in use around the village, new posts have been erected and funded by SCC Highways on School Lane / Grange Road & Aldershot Road, which will now permit the device to be deployed to a total of six locations throughout the parish. The SDR will be erected in areas of particular concern to help highlight the problem to SCC and the Police. Residents are asked to report any areas of particular concern that experiences regular speeding to the Clerk so that the SDR installation can be prioritised.

Over the last year we have seen several projects come to fruition after much discussion with the associated bodies, including:

- Gole Road crossing & traffic calming scheme
- de-silting & clearing of ditches to the eastern boundary of the playing fields to help with drainage,
- separation of the Sandpits car park from the right of way, to help residents & businesses affected plus
- restrictive parking on School Lane to help ease dangerous and thoughtless parking at school drop-off time.

While the Pirbright Safety Scheme Phase 2 has ended, thoughts are turning to new schemes that could introduce another phase. These include the Avenue De Cagny / A324 junction, which has seen a few accidents and poses a real danger to pedestrians trying to navigate the traffic from a variety of directions; speed reduction measures for Church Lane around the Little Green, where motorists often drive at excessive speeds and in a highly dangerous manner, plus new signage on the Guildford Road junction with Bullswater Lane. These are all subject to the ever decreasing pool of funding available & is where our relationship with the police and SCC really comes into play.

The trees around Pirbright are back on the agenda. PPC has the duty for ensuring that all trees on parish land are kept in a safe state, not only for those walking under them but for visibility from the highway. Following recommendations from two professional bodies and agreed by the GBC tree officer, a number of works will be taking place soon. Although a few smaller weak specimens will be removed, mainly from around the village pond, the majority of works include dead wooding, crown lifting & canopy reducing. This will reduce the risk of falling debris and help improve visibility as well as ensure that the trees are kept in a healthy state. A list of urgent prioritised works has been made and is available for viewing for interested parties.

With a few recent incidents around the village, fly tipping seems to be increasing. As with all landowners, it is the responsibility of PPC and LPH to have debris removed from land held in their trust, and we ask everyone to keep a vigilant eye and feedback any suspicious activity to us, GBC & SCC about who may be involved with this latest bane.

Although our Flood Forum did not meet in December 2016, it remains a very constructive meeting when bodies from various departments come together to discuss issues and agree plans discussed. Headed by our MP, real issues are confronted and solved, so direct results can be seen by the reduced level of flooding experienced over the last year, despite some torrential downpours. By no way does this mean that the Forum will reduce in its role but it could suggest that actions implemented are benefiting the parish. **Mike Hobbs**

Planning

YOUR PARISH COUNCIL DURING 2016-17

Rhoda Nevins: Chairman of Pirbright Parish Council & LPH Managing Trustees
Steve Fiddgett: Planning Committee (Chairman) & member of LPH Managing Trustees
Elaine Eason: Member of Planning and Highways & Environment committees
Mike Hobbs: Highways & Environment Committee (Chairman)
Jon Hallam: Member of PPC & LPH Managing Trustees
Corin Newman: Member of Highways & Environment Committee
Rosemary Richmond: Member of Planning Committee & LPH Managing Trustees

Clerk to the Parish Council and Lord Pirbright's Hall:	Lindsay Graham
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