

North Crawley Parish Bulletin - May 2021

Hi Folks, Steve here with another update on the news from our Parish Council.

I'm delighted to say that we now have a new Parish Councillor, Gary Baxter, who was co-opted on to the Council at our meeting on 4th May. Gary has recently moved to East End - welcome Gary! That now brings our Council up to full membership for the first time in a long time.

There was no report from our new Crime Correspondent (Roz Hatton) mainly because there had been no crime! However Roz is hoping to set up a new Neighbourhood Watch Scheme if enough people are willing to participate. Look out for notices in SCAN. As with most things in our community, we rely on volunteers so please try to support this scheme if you can.

We had a good look at the process of nominating The Cock Inn (and other village amenities) as Assets Of Community Value. This would result in the owner being obliged to allow a group of residents up to 6 months to raise the funds to purchase the Asset. It doesn't guarantee the group will be chosen nor does it reduce the cost of the purchase. The application process is sufficiently detailed that we would need to form a working group to manage the process. After some debate, we felt there were already plenty of projects underway and that we will not pursue it further at this time.

Following the sad news of the death of HRH Prince Phillip, The Duke of Edinburgh, the Parish Council have purchased (via our Church) a book of condolence. We know some residents would prefer to write their thoughts in a physical book rather than the online version which is currently available. Once the COVID restrictions are lifted, we will let you know when the book will be in the Church should you wish to write in it.

You may have noticed we have purchased a smart new "Union Flag" that is fluttering proudly from the flagpole on our Village Green (aka the "waste ground" (I don't like that name!!))

It was sad to see the damage to the triangular island at the entrance to Chicheley Rd caused by a lorry making a poor job of turning around! As it is MK Council's responsibility we have reported it but quite when it will be repaired we cannot be sure.

Some traffic signs were blown down during the strong gales we had recently and again, they are MK Council's responsibility (and have been reported) apart from the "Kill your Speed" sign which we are hoping our village warden (Kevin) can re-affix. Incidentally Kevin recently made a cracking job of refurbishing the PC's notice board outside the Village Hall - thanks Kevin.

The bus shelter is looking smart with its new coat of varnish thanks to Mick Chilton's final contribution to Parish Council's job list following his retirement. Mick needed to wait until the weather had improved a little. Thanks Mick.

The School children will be back up at the wildflower area in Nixey's Walk to help us plant 50 pollinating plants at the front of the border to help boost insect life. We are also looking to leave a small section of the grass uncut which, again, helps insects. We will make sure it isn't in a prominent place so the Walk still looks well looked after. Thanks to Di Morris for setting up NC Wildlife group who will work with the PC advising what wildlife friendly projects we could consider.

30th August - Save the Date!!! The village fun day is shaping up nicely and notices will be appearing from June onward. It will be at the park from 12 noon until 5pm and there will be lots of fun stuff for all ages. Come and join us for one of the first opportunities for the village to get together just like we used to!!

We hope to have 3 new “kissing gates” installed along local footpaths soon. Terry Smith has been badgering (or even hedgehoging) MK Council for over a year to get these done and is prioritising the stiles in worst condition - thanks Terry.

We have started an inspection of the cemetery to check whether any of the monuments are unstable and therefore potentially dangerous. We have looked at the Eastern third of the area and found one (very heavy) monument stone that could have been pushed over by a child!! We had no choice other than to lay the stone down (which is the recommended action in this sort of case). We are trying to make contact with any family members who may still live in the village.

We are still bothered by the Archery Club that has set up at the copse at the East End side of the Ford. We have received correspondence from residents expressing concern over the potential danger of arrows being fired parallel to a public right of way (which is regularly used by walkers). Also parked cars can sometimes restrict access to the Ford. It would appear that planning consent is required for this type of operation to take place as regularly as it does so we will continue to engage with the Club and MK Council.

We had representatives of the Play Park Committee join us at the PC meeting on 4th May to give us an update on progress - and, goodness, have they been busy!! In less than a year they have raised £45,000 to spend on play park equipment and safety netting (to protect children on the play park from cricket balls). That is fantastic! - well done and thank you to Claire Odell, Emily Tompkins and Anna Shotton. A substantial part of the funds raised will be donated to the Parish Council to be specifically “ring fenced” for spending on projects recommended by the Committee. To support the Play Park Committee, the PC has set up a working group of Councillors (Jan Weatherley and myself) who will liaise with them to agree the priorities and projects prior to proposing the expenditure by the PC from the “ring fenced” fund.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is grateful for all the feedback from residents and we used this to help challenge the conclusions the consultants had drawn. After a meeting with them, the Steering Group was persuaded that the Plan would fail examination by the MK Planning team if additional sites were included which did not meet the planning policies and regulations. As no other sites did meet these conditions, it was reluctantly accepted that only the sites which appeared as acceptable in the Update booklet (recently circulated) would be included in the final Plan document. The Steering Group is very keen to hold a public meeting as soon as restrictions allow - probably in June/July - to answer questions and receive feedback.

Well, that’s about it for now - and, for the first time since I’ve been on the Parish Council, the next meeting (1st June) will be a physical meeting and not on Zoom! It will be held at the Institute to allow plenty of room for social distancing. Another sign of getting back to normality!

Notes from the Clerk:

As Steve has mentioned above, we would like to set up a new Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Neighbourhood Watch Schemes can only function with the help of residents volunteering to keep an eye out for suspicious activities. Therefore, if you would be interested in being involved in this, please contact either me on clerk@northcrawley-pc.gov.uk or Roz Hatton on 07932 683372.

As a result of carrying out a health and safety cemetery inspection recently, the memorial to Henry Benjamin Morgan had to be laid down because it was dangerously unstable. If you are the owner of this memorial or know who this might be, could you please contact me at clerk@northcrawley-pc.gov.uk or on 01234 391501.

Thank you.

Sheila Bushnell