

# WEST ILSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Meeting of the West Ilsley Parish Council (“WIPC”) followed by Assembly held at the West Ilsley Village Hall, West Ilsley on Monday 8 May 2017 at 7.30pm (the “Meeting”)

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**Present:** Rollo Duckworth (Chair)  
Alan Bloor  
Inna Fauler (Secretary)  
Justin Gilbert  
Alan Beaumont (Deputy Chair)  
Justin Pilditch  
Anna Sugden

**Apologies:** Graham Woods

**In attendance:** District Councillor Clive Hooker (latterly, after a previous engagement)  
Seven members of the public

### 1 Chair and Apologies

1.1 Rollo Duckworth (“RD”) acted as Chair of the Meeting. Inna Fauler (“IF”) agreed to act as Secretary and take the minutes. RD thanked everybody for attending the Meeting, especially the representatives of the various Village Committees who had kindly come to present their annual reports. RD said that we would hold a shorter WIPC Meeting in order to allow plenty of time for the annual reports.

### 2 Changes to Declarations of Interest and Councillors

2.1 No changes to the Declarations of Interest of the Councillors were received, nor were there any changes to the Councillors.

### 3 Minutes of the Meeting of the West Ilsley Parish Council held on Monday 13 March 2017

3.1 The draft minutes of the meeting of the WIPC held on Monday 13 March 2017 (the “Minutes”) had been circulated prior to the Meeting. The draft Minutes were approved and signed by RD as a true record.

### 4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 RD asked IF whether all the actions that had arisen from the Minutes of the previous Meeting had been completed. IF confirmed that most of the action items had been completed, as per the following notes:

- Dog Waste Bins: Alan Beaumont (“ABe”) informed the Meeting that he had investigated the question regarding the installation of dog waste bins in the Village. He reported that dog bins could be installed in the Village and that it was currently relevantly cheap, but that the charges were subject to renewing the WBC Ground Maintenance contract in 2017 on favourable terms, and the cost could therefore increase. There was some discussion among the Councillors and the public as to whether the installation of dog waste bins would help reduce the problem of dog faeces being left in various locations in and around the Village. It was decided to canvass Village opinion on this matter through WIN. It was agreed that the signage on the sides of ordinary

### Actions

**IF to file the Minutes from the March 2017 Meeting in the WIPC archives.**

**ABe, via a WIN request, to invite comments and views from villagers on the issue of installing dog waste bins whilst reminding all that other bins can also be used for dog waste.**

bins was misleading.

- Footpaths and Bridleways: ABe confirmed to the Meeting that the “Triangle”, located between Church Way and The Old Chapel, was the responsibility of Highways Maintenance. They had confirmed to him that this patch of unsealed road had been added to their machine patching programme for the 2017 financial year, with work to resurface the area and repair potholes due to commence from August 2017.

5

## Correspondence

5.1

IF noted the following items of correspondence received:

- IF informed the Meeting that she had received a letter from the Community Council for Berkshire requesting that the WIPC renew its annual membership. It was agreed that the WIPC does not get any particular from membership of this organization, and it was decided to decline the offer to contribute.
- IF also informed the Meeting that she had received a charitable request for a donation to contribute towards the cost of a cancer and dialysis unit in Thatcham Hospital. It was agreed that the WIPC could not spend public money on such charity appeals.
- RD informed the Meeting that he had received a report from the Thames Valley Police, a short version of which should be posted in WIN.

**RD / IF to arrange for the Thames Valley Police report to be circulated in WIN.**

6

## Community Matters

6.1

Finance: IF confirmed that she had submitted the WIPC annual return form for the year ended 31 March 2017.

6.2

RD told the Meeting that all other issues arising in “Community Matters” would be discussed during the reports presented at the Annual Assembly.

7

## Environment and Upkeep

7.1

Planning Applications: There had been one new planning application relating to Match Box house, on Main Street. There had been no objections from the Councillors.

7.2

RD informed the Meeting that there was a delay in the construction of the houses next to the Harrow Pub. He was going to investigate what was going on there and the reasons for the delay.

**RD to contact Building Control regarding the houses next to the Harrow Pub.**

7.3

Footpaths and Bridleways: RD informed the meeting, that he had received a request from one concerned villager regarding the footpath behind The Maltings. IF had written to the WBC on the issue, and they had promised to investigate the issue raised.

**IF keep the council informed of future developments.**

7.4

Anna Sugden (“**AS**”) also raised a concern about the condition of the footpath behind the Harrow Pub, questioning exact ownership of the land and the state of the trees overhanging it.

**AS to investigate this matter.**

7.5

Village Hall: RD noticed that the notice board in the front of the Village Hall had been “invaded” by non-village-related material. He felt that the purpose of this board was to inform villagers and not be a bill-board for others. He raised the

question how this could be managed. A member of the public, Tony Elliot, suggested that we could buy a notice board which could be locked by a key. It was mentioned that WIN still had some "ring-fenced" funds which could be used for this purpose.

## 8 Safety and Services

8.1 Speeding: Justin Gilbert ("JG") informed the Meeting that Highways Maintenance had agreed to renew the "Children" sign outside the playground. Unfortunately, there was a delay in the installation of the data checking (SDR speed check) from both ends of the Village as the equipment, which WBC had purchased, happened to be faulty and did not work. JG confirmed that there will be a cleaning party to clean all the road signs in the Village.

8.2 A member of public raised a question regarding the potholes in the new patches in the front of Old Chapel.

**IF to contact WBC re this matter.**

## 9 Date of Next Meeting

9.1 The next Parish Council meeting to be held on Monday 10 July 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

**All to attend.**

9.2 RD concluded the Meeting and declared the Annual Assembly open. He invited the representatives of the various Village organisations to read their annual reports.

## 10 AOB

10.1 A question was asked about Fete insurance which the Fete committee representative agreed to look into.

## 11 West Ilsley Annual Assembly

11.1 RD thanked all representatives of the Committees for coming. With respect to the WIPC, he informed the Assembly that, over the last year, there were three new Councillors on the WIPC. He also thanked the Clerk, Inna Fauler, for her work during the last year.

The following annual reports were presented:

1. **Chairman's Report** (*Attachment 1*).
2. **WIN**, read by Liz Dray (*Attachment 2*).
3. **Tennis Club**, read by Liz Dray (*Attachment 3*).
4. **Cricket Club**, presented by Neil Fowler & Justin Pilditch (*Attachment 4*).
5. **Under 5s**, read by Rollo Duckworth (*Attachment 5*).
6. **Fete Committee**, read by Dan Hudson (*Attachment 6*).
7. **Play Area** (*Attachment 7*).
8. **Evergreens**, read by Tony Elliot (*Attachment 8*).
9. **Church Committee**, read by Ian Fewtrell-Smith (*Attachment 9*).
10. **Village Hall**, read by Alan Bloor (*Attachment 10*).

The Downlands Ward Councillor's report was read out by Rollo Duckworth

## 12 Open Forum

12.1 It was noticed that the speed limit in East Ilsley had been reduced to 20 mph. A member of public asked whether it would be possible to reduce the speed limit in West Ilsley village similarly. Clive Hooker noted that it had taken East Ilsley

almost a year to work this change. The main justification for the change had been the presence of the primary school in East Ilsley village. Any request to reduce a speed limit had to be approved by a special committee, and he thought that it would be very unlikely that West Ilsley village could secure the same approval as there was no school.

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**Chair**

## **Attachment 1 (Chairman report)**

Chairman's remarks for the AGM on 8 May 2017

This is a fabulous village to be part of. It has a vibrancy with its facilities and amenities which many people across the village work hard to create and maintain. An occasional visitor may think it all looks effortless – and that a great look, in my view. However, as we about to hear there are many and varied parts to this jigsaw.

This council has, I hope, also played its part. We have new councillors bring fresh eyes and energy to the council's work sitting alongside stalwarts of many years standing. We have been organised by our Clerk, Inna, who has done a great job in keeping us on top of our paperwork and dealings with West Berkshire Council.

I would follow the published agenda; however, it unfortunately omits one lead item, which might be the one of the most important contributors to village life and the glue that binds many facets of the community together. I refer of course to the WIN.

Without further ado, I ask Liz to report on the WIN.

## **Attachment 2&3 (WIN and Tennis Committee)**

### **West Ilsley News**

Andrea Cook and Liz Dray

Once again we would like to extend our thanks to villagers who continue to print the monthly West Ilsley News for neighbours who do not have internet access.

We currently have 13 paid annual advertisements and various ad hoc ones. Unfortunately our email system failed at the end of 2016. Thanks to technical help from Martin B-W we are now up and running with a much improved and more flexible system. With Martin's guidance and training we were able to use our advertising revenue to pay for this new system.

We have periodic checks of the database and try to capture new residents but we still have 2 or 3 residents who are not on the system. However, we feel this is probably because they are here for a short time only and it is therefore not of interest.

### **Tennis Club**

Alison Banks, Louise Beaumont, Martin B-W, Andrea Cook, Liz Dray, Amanda Knight, Katie Simpson

This year we have 25 members - 22 families and 3 single memberships which is down on last year's number of 31. This is partly due to an ageing population! – the children growing older and using the court less (albeit mainly due to other interests!). 21 members live within the village.

The online booking system seems to be working well for members and also for those using the pay and play system where they can pay a £6.50 court fee via PayPal.

Louise Beaumont once again organised some very successful coaching sessions for 22 junior players in the Easter holidays and hopes to offer this again in the May half term. We have a great coach who we have also successfully put in touch with Pay and Play members from outside the village. All of this means that finances continue to be healthy and enabled us recently to have some patch repairs done on the court surface. We are grateful that we can keep maintenance costs as low as possible thanks to Alan Beaumont who has kindly taken on the huge task of strimming and weedkilling the banks around the court. We have also now put in place a small paid arrangement with the cricket club to mow the piece of the land to the left of the court.

In September Amanda Knight will stand down from the committee after many years of service including fundraising for the total refurbishment of the court and fences. We will be joined by new members Anna Sugden and Elisa Ferguson.

If anyone who hasn't joined would like to do so or to pay and play please contact Liz Dray on 281688.

## **Attachment 4 (Cricket Club Committee)**

### **Annual Report for purposes of West Ilsley Village Assembly 8 May 2017**

This is the annual report for the West Ilsley Cricket Club. It covers developments during the 2016 playing season, together with recent events from the beginning of the 2017 season.

#### **Cricket**

During the 2016 season, the Senior XI had coped admirably with promotion to Level Four in the Oxford Cricket Association league, finishing in the middle of the league table. The introduction of Wednesday night T20 cricket had been very successful, with the team (which was made up entirely of villagers) enjoying a 100% success rate over 12 matches. It was excellent to see mid-week cricket returning to West Ilsley village. Unfortunately, the cricket schedule for the Seniors Sunday team had to be disbanded early in the season, due to a lack of player numbers.

#### **Juniors Cricket**

Good continuity with the Juniors had been maintained into the 2016 season, with the various age groups remaining viable after some initial concern. The Under 11s team were runners-up in the Berkshire Youth Cricket League for their age group, and the Girls had won their league.

#### **Membership**

There had been a substantial increase in the membership for the 2016 year as compared to the 2015 year.

#### **Finances**

The Club had made an annual profit of £1725.

#### **Grounds**

The Cricket Club had secured an interest free loan from the England Cricket Board, together with a grant from the Greenham Trust, which had enabled the Club to fit a new artificial pitch on the ground, and remove the old artificial pitch to refurbish the pitch in the nets practice area. This was the flagship event for the Club in 2016, and a significant step in updating the facilities at the Club.

#### **Village Life**

It is always a pleasure to see Club members and wider village participation at the Club's Friday night barbeques. Various teams also appreciated having spectators watch their games, particularly on Saturday afternoons and Wednesday evenings. All villagers are social members of the Club.

#### **Developments for 2017**

A major focus for the Club's activities in 2017 will be to raise funds for the refurbishment of the nets practice areas. The Club has also secured the services of a groundsman (on a part time basis) who is now primarily responsible for pitch preparation in advance of each home game. This is a great resource, and is alleviating a lot of pressure and extra work that had previously been imposed on the small group of Club members who assisted in pitch preparation.

Cricket across all the age groups has started and membership is looking solid. Sunday Seniors cricket will resume again from mid-July for a shorter (and more focussed) season.

### Prospects

In the face of continued pressure on village Clubs generally – Brightwalton had been forced to liquidate its cricket club this season – the Club is working on a number of fund raising initiatives to ensure that it remains in a strong financial position to support continued growth in membership and provide cricketing pleasure to its full membership and West Ilsley villagers. You will hear of these during the year, and – as always – we would welcome your continued support.

Neil Fowler

Secretary

West Ilsley Cricket Club

## **Attachment 5 (Under 5's Club)**

### **Ilsey Under 5's**

#### **Update Report to West Ilsey Parish Council**

**Monday 24th April 2017**

Since the last report, the committee members for Ilsey Under 5's remain the same with some additional support for secretarial duties from Robyn Harrison and Natasha Tombs as Leah McGrath (Secretary) has needed to step back temporarily following the arrival of her third baby in February. Rebecca Hartley remains as Treasurer, Victoria Britton as Chair and Natasha Tombs responsible for Fundraising/Social activities.

The Ilsey Under 5's continue to meet weekly on Wednesdays and this year the committee have continued to work really hard to ensure that the group runs smoothly and offers a friendly and supportive environment to parents and carers in our villages and surrounding areas. In light of the closure of a number of children's centres in the area, the committee are very aware of the importance of the role the toddler group plays for parents and carers and also the link it provides between those parents/carers and the health visitors working through the new Wellbeing Hub model that has replaced the former children's centres.

Whilst last year we were operating with a number of external activities due to the low number of attendees (in order to lessen the burden on a small committee and the set up rota), we have seen a very healthy increase in numbers through growing families and new families moving to the area and therefore we have opted to return to the format of running weekly in West Ilsey Village Hall. We do have more regular attendees now willing to help out on the rota, although there is still a heavy reliance upon the committee members and so our thanks goes to them for their time and commitment to the group.

We continue to use social media networks such as Facebook (we have a private group and a page) to maintain contact with our members about activities and this is working really well, although we are mindful that not all families are using Facebook so we continue to promote on local noticeboards, village communications and through the local Wellbeing Hubs.

Financially, this year the new committee's strategy was to review existing arrangements and costs to identify opportunities for savings and where we can improve efficiencies as opposed to a great deal of fundraising. The Ilsey Under 5's are benefitting from improved attendance. We have managed to reduce our outgoings by giving up the garage previously used to store our equipment. We have streamlined the equipment, with new packaway tables (which can be stored within the hall), toys and activities which are also stored in a locked cupboard in the hall and we also offer the opportunity for this equipment to be hired for a fee to those renting the hall as another means of income. As our finances have remained stable we have not had to focus too much on fundraising although we still plan to run our annual fundraising stall at the west ilsey village fete.

On a final note, the group decided that they wanted to make a charitable donation for Christmas and so this year we invited attendees to donate to a local food bank. This turned out to be a real success with many donations made and gratefully received by the Didcot Emergency food bank.

**Leah McGrath**  
**Secretary to IIsley Under 5's**

## Attachment 6 (Fete Committee)

### West Ilsley Fete - Annual Report

The 2016 fete was held on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2016 and was preceded by the usual Friday night organised by a small group of volunteers from the village with a formal black tie theme.

Highlights of last year's show included the climbing wall, Mark Fairchild's helicopter, Punch and Judy show, the highly competitive West v East tug of war, which was again won by West. The ever popular produce show, including the hugely competitive male and female baking categories last year won by Roger Sinclair and Louise Beaumont respectively.

Amongst the other favourites were the West Ilsley dog show, welly wanging, bottle stall, raffle, crockery smashing, BBQ, teas and cakes, clothing and 'bric a brac' stall.

Highlights of the raffle and auction this year included the Tim Henman signed tennis racquet kindly donated by the Gilberts and the helicopter trip won by Channon Junior on behalf of JV.

The 2016 attendance was up on previous years with almost 500 paying entrants with the overall fete well supported from those within the village and those from further afield. As a result we raised more than we have done for many years.

In summary....

Gross Profit - £5,726.97

Outgoings - £2,776.00

Donations - £2,000.00

Retained profit for this year £950.97

Donations made included All Saints Church, Evergreens, Tennis Club, The Illseys School, Village Hall, Village Fire Works, Air Ambulance. The amount we managed to donate was up on previous years which is always our aim and is testament to all those who supported the weekend.

This year the fete is to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017 with the pre-fete dance to once again be held on the Friday night. The planning for the fete this year is well advanced with the produce show and the usual range of stalls and entertainment.

Finally, I would like to thank all the village organisations, local businesses, sponsors and individuals for their continued support every year to make the fete weekend a hugely successful and enjoyable event for the whole village to enjoy. It is no exaggeration that without this support the fete would not happen.

As always the committee is always keen to receive any comments or suggestions for this year's event, if you have any suggestions or would like to get involved please contact any one of the fete committee. The fete just would not happen with the volunteers.

Daniel Hudson – May 2017

## **Attachment 7 (Play Area)**

I have an update on the Play Area which is relevant to Monday's meeting.

The toddler slide has recently been replaced due to the original slide being damaged.

The 2017 ROSPA report is available. Certain areas carry a lower risk rating than last year due to the remedial works performed last July. That said, there are areas that still carry a medium risk rating, these should be addressed this year before they worsen. Most of the medium risk ratings are due to rotting wood.

I have submitted the ROSPA report to three companies who specialize in playground equipment supply and repair so they can quote for the work. I also plan to discuss the work needed with Ed Ryder in case he can help. Once I have the quotes we can discuss each one.

Users of the playground have also reported problems due to weed and nettle growth. I would aim to address these at the same time the repair works are completed unless the growth becomes too aggressive and requires attention sooner.

The new Play Area sign should be produced and fitted in the next two weeks.

If any questions or comments relating to the Play Area come up during the meeting, please let me know.

Regards

Graham

## **Attachment 9 (Church Committee)**

### **1. REPORT ON BEHALF OF ALL SAINTS' CHURCH FOR THE**

#### **1.1 WEST ILSLEY PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017**

Over the last year, our rector Revd. John Toogood has continued to be supported by Revd. Lady (Denise) Brown, Revd Douglas Dales, and also Revd William McDowell who was ordained as priest last July.

At our recent annual parochial church meeting, Alexandra Axtell was again re-elected churchwarden with Ian Fewtrell-Smith, together with the appointment of one new PCC member. The electoral role membership now stands at 41.

As it has done so over many years, All Saints' continues to hold three services every month on the first, second and fourth Sundays. Two of the services are specifically aimed at families and children. We continue to be one of 9 churches in the East Downland Benefice, with united services held in Chieveley every third Sunday in the month. One of these services is Café Church which is extremely popular with younger children, with members of our church actively involved in the planning of, and playing music for, this service. Some from our church have been actively helping in the completion and fitting out of the new benefice office which is sited on the Vicarage drive in Chieveley.

At the beginning of 2017, a Café was started in All Saints and is held for one hour during the morning of the second Sunday in the month. It has proved increasingly popular as a relaxed venue for meeting and having a chat, whilst children are kept busy with craft activities. There is no charge for the excellent coffee and delicious cakes, but all donations go to support a different charity each month.

Outgoings have been significant this last year. An asbestos survey had to be carried out for insurance purposes and all was satisfactory. Damage to the stained glass east window was repaired and the organ was professionally tuned. Earlier this year, we installed a new boiler as the existing one was over 33 years old and getting increasingly noisy and temperamental. The engineer who had been keeping it going finally refused to touch it as the necessary spares were no longer available.

We continue to be very grateful for the support of various volunteers within the village, looking after the church and churchyard by keeping the grass cut, cleaning the church or providing and arranging flowers. Recently we held our usual working party prior to Easter Sunday as well as the autumn one prior to Remembrance Sunday.

All Saints' was very fortunate to again receive grants from the Fete Committee and donations from Christmas greetings in the WIN, as well as a bequest on the death of a long serving member of the church. There were also a number of individual donations, all of which are much appreciated, as well as gifts from our regular donors.

As well as our usual Harvest Lunch, in 2016 we also held a popular Rock Choir Concert and a very well attended party meal celebrating our Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, both held in church. Earlier this year, we held a Winter Warmer in the village hall and hosted a well-supported Clay Pigeon Shoot, kindly organised by Richard Gore and a core of villagers. We are extremely grateful to all those involved in making all these enjoyable community events happen.

As usual, the collection of our Remembrance Sunday service went directly to the British Legion and we also donated the collection from our Carol service to the Church Urban Fund (a charity that gives a practical response to unmet need in the community) and our local charity Recovery in Mind. Also, gifts of toiletries and sachets of drinks, brought to our Carol service were delivered to the John Radcliffe Hospital for families with sick children.

All Saints' hosted 4 funerals in 2016 and also one wedding and one baptism.

In 2016, although financial receipts were down significantly and outgoings were up from the previous year, we were still able to cover our costs with a small excess. As ever, we are grateful to Andrea Cook for examining the accounts.

Our church continues to be active, playing its part within the village and the wider community.

## **Attachment 10 (The Village Hall Committee)**

### **West Ilsley Village Hall Committee**

#### **Chairman's Report**

Progress has continued to be made with the Village Hall following a year of stability with the existing committee.

There has been a significant increase in income during the last financial year resulting from Hall hire some but not all is down to catching up with invoices. At the same time there has been an increase in cleaning costs. An aptly designed advert advertising the hire of the village hall has been placed in various local locations and appears regularly in the WIN. There is a slight degree in the flexibility of some hire charges.

Painting and external renovations to the Hall are almost complete.

Internal renovations including upgrading the toilet facilities are on-going.

The Hall in my view continues to be much more user friendly due mainly to the lighting, acoustics and insulation. Upgrading the toilet facilities will add to the improvements.

The new Village Hall online booking system seems to be working well.

Fund raising included the Fireworks, bingo nights, village walk and bridge afternoon and my thanks to all those concerned.

The Village Hall committee had four meetings during the year and again my thanks to the committee members for their attendance and input. It does seem to me that the Village Hall is in a much stronger position financially due to the efforts of the management committee.

Thank you

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# **Attachment 11**

## **Downlands Ward Report 2017** **Councillor Clive Hooker**

I am now in my second term representing you as Downlands Ward Councillor and I have endeavoured to support the constituents of the Ward in a wide range of issues both for individuals and collectively. This year has been particularly busy with important issues such as agreeing the increase in Council Tax, agreeing the revised Boundary criteria and forwarding to the Boundary Commission for consideration, agreeing the extent of library closures, agreeing car parking increases and making decisions on important Planning considerations.

I was asked to sit on a total of four Council Committees, a reduction of one from the previous year, those being the Western Area Planning Committee, which I was invited to Chair, Planning Advisory Group, District Planning Committee and the Appeals Panel.

I also represented the Council on the Saunders Wynn and Coventry Trust, which is a charitable organisation donating educational funds to worthy children in Chaddleworth.

I attended twelve in house training courses relevant to my committee and representative responsibilities. During the last twelve months, I have represented and Chaired fourteen Western Area Planning Committee meetings and twenty eight associated site planning meetings prior to the main planning meeting itself. I have attended six full Council meetings, eighteen Parish Council meetings, two District Parish Council Conferences, two Sanders Wynn and Coventry Trust meetings and one Appeal Panel meeting regarding Council Tax issues. I have attended two public committee hearings to witness the West Berks Housing Site Allocation Development Plan Document being assessed by HM Government Inspector, which has now been approved. I have attended five Planning Advisory Group meetings. I have attended two A34 Action Group meetings as the Council's representative. I have attended two flood alleviation scheme meetings being considered for parishes in the Ward.

I have also represented the Ward at RAF Welford on two occasions for remembrance services and attended the RAF Fairford Air Show as a guest of the RAF. I have also attended the Summerdown Stables at East Ilsley Open Day as a guest of Mr Hughie Morrison. I attended the opening of the refurbishment of the Newbury Museum. I also attended the Mencap Garden Party in Newbury in August.

With the Government devolving services down to District Councils, it is expected in due course that the District Council will continue to devolve services down to the Parish Councils, but in the rural areas such as ours, it will only be done on a voluntary basis.

I have assisted constituents on a personal level with regards to planning issues, tree preservation order matters and flooding concerns, speeding surveys and a speed camera positioning programme in Brightwalton and finally achieved having the speed limit reduced around the one way system and past the primary school from 30mph to 20mph in East Ilsley.

I have helped two wards in trying to retain their Public Houses, one in its closure and the other in supporting its trade by roadside advertising.

I have also continued liaising with the Council Highways Department to have our rural roads in the Ward maintained by the filling of pot holes and repairing of subsided drainage pipes.

I have also represented the Ward at the presentation of the Community Awards Conference where people in West Berks are recognised for their services both to the community and the Council.

It has again been a most difficult year with regards to the cuts from central government and the knock-on effect of council tax increases to fund the shortfall. A particular issue has been the consideration of the closure of Wash Common Library whilst others remain open only through volunteering of members of the public. It is considered that it requires 50 volunteers to keep each library open, which to date, although difficult, has been encouraging.

Finally, I will endeavour to continue to support the constituents of Downlands Ward over the next two years until the next election in 2019.

Clive Hooker

Downlands Ward Councillor