



ASTON TIRROLD AND ASTON UPTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting 21st May 2018

Chair's Report for 2017 -2018

Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe Parish Council (PC) met on the third Monday of the month for eleven meetings during the year (no meeting in August). There were no additional meetings during the year.

COUNCILLORS

During the year, long standing Councilors, Tim Vallings, Susanna Brunskill and Anna Dillon stepped down from the PC. Their knowledge on planning, village history and tireless effort was appreciated by the PC and villagers alike. The PC thank them both for the incredible effort they have put into the PC to make the villages a better place for all. The PC welcomed Andy McLellan as a Councilor during the year. The remaining Councilors, Joanna Hart (Chair), Simon Young, Justin Keeble, Nigel Hawkey and Jane Knight have continued to serve throughout the year. There are currently four vacant positions on the PC, some of which the PC expects to fill at the May meeting. The PC would like to thank Denes Marffy for all his hard work behind the scenes as Parish Clerk.

PLANNING

Planning has once again proved to be a contentious topic and the PC would like to remind all villagers that it is important to consult neighbours as early as possible about potential planning applications. We are lucky to live in a village with such a strong sense of community, which at times can be tested by development. The PC encourages those planning to do work to their property to understand that building work, no matter how small, will affect neighbouring properties and those in neighbouring properties to appreciate that people wish to adapt their houses to their current needs.

The PC considered 21 Planning applications during the year (several of which were discussed at multiple meetings) and recommended that SODC approve 7 applications, refuse 3 applications and offered 'No strong views' on a further 10 applications. One application was withdrawn (Paddock on Spring Lane). One application has gone to Planning Committee (still to be resolved).

THE ASTONS' RECREATION COMMITTEE (ARC)

There is a separate written report from ARC post its AGM in May. ARC continues its excellent progress, maintaining the recreation ground and pavilion with the help of successful fund-raising events. Once again ARC had a successful year of fundraising with Astonbury, Fireworks evening and Safari Supper, supporting not only the finances of ARC, but also the social fabric of the villages. A large number of the community were involved in the organizing of these events and the PC would like to thank ARC and the volunteers that help, for all of the hard work that goes in to make these events so enjoyable and successful for everyone.

FINANCE

The PC again increased the precept for the coming year (by 2%) to enable it to be in a position to finance recommendations from the CLP working groups, as well as continue to provide grants to village organisations. Last year the PC supported Parochial Church Council (£2,000) for the maintenance of the burial ground, Astons webteam (£150), Village Hall to cover Post Office costs (£500) and Village Hall (£1,000) for maintenance.

THANKS

The PC would like to thank a number of people and groups for all their efforts to help the villages during the year:

- All those involved in CLP Groups taking forward the proposals from the Astons Community Led Plan, including: Environment, Roads and Traffic, Housing and Development Groups. The PC looks forward to supporting proposals from these groups in the coming year.
- The Downlands Village Transport Group (DVTG) for the weekly service to and from Wallingford, which the PC contributes to and Simon Young is Treasurer for.
- Rustic Management for clearing the footpaths and Justin Keeble as the designated Roads and Footpaths Councilor for working hard to deal with issues as they have arisen. The PC would like to remind villagers to use Fixmystreet.com to report any potholes.
- Bruno Brunskill for all his support, advice and guidance regarding the introduction of General Data Protection Regulation.
- The Website team for the new website and helping our Clerk upload all the relevant information.
- Last but most definitely not least, the PC would particularly like to thank Jeremy Imbush for all his hard work over many years, without whom the smooth running of the Pavilion and Rec would have been impossible. Jeremy's tireless support for fundraising events, particularly fireworks night and Astonbury has helped ARC raise thousands of pounds. We are glad that Jeremy is continuing to edit the Astons News, essential reading for all the village with everything anyone needs to know about what is going on in the villages, and helping the cricket club maintain the cricket pitch. Thank you Jeremy.

Joanna Hart

Chair

Aston Tirrold Aston Upthorpe Parish Council