

CHAIRMANS REPORT 2017

Good evening everyone and welcome to the Sutton by Dover Annual Parish meeting. For those amongst who do not know the Parish Councilors I will start by introducing them to you.

- Chairman - Myself, Barbara Merriman
- Vice-Chairman - Graeme Akhurst. Unfortunately Graeme is unable to be with us tonight.
- Hugh Densham - County Lengthsman.
- Ron Little - looks after the Allotments/Orchard
- Charles Hogben – looks after the Memorial Gardens
- Graham Smith – leads on planning issues, although unfortunately Graham is unable to be with us tonight.
- Angie Calthorpe – Finance

Sue Smith is the Parish Clerk and was appointed in September of last year.

The Parish Year

The Parish Council appointed Sue Smith as Parish Clerk in September 2016 and were also pleased to welcome Charles Hogbin as a co-opted member to the Council in November 2016 the position having been vacant for over a year.

I am happy to report the end of year accounts for 2016/17, internal audit and Annual Report have all been completed and will be presented at the June PC meeting for approval. Also that the Parish are fully compliant with the Transparency Regulations.

The Parish website has been upgraded and there will be a short presentation later in the meeting regarding the new format.

There have been a number of planning applications dealt with during the year which on the whole have been supported by the PC. Planning

application and resulting decisions can be viewed on the Parish Website. There is ongoing concern regarding the impact on the Parish from major developments taking place Whitfield and especially Archers Road and Shepherds Cross and the Parish Council are making every effort to ensure these developments have as little as possible impact on this Parish.

On 1 October 2016 the Parish Council held an 'Apple Day' (or should I say apple morning) giving an opportunity for Parishioners to enjoy a glass of fresh apple juice pressed from our own apples and to take home some apples. It was planned to hold the event in the Community Orchard but due to inclement weather the venue was changed to Cllr Ron Little's garage. Thanks to Ron for hosting the event and local residents for the use of their apple presses.

Following last years APM when Dawn Audsley, resident from Ashley raised the issue of litter around the Parish, two Litter Picks have taken place, one last September and one last month. Thanks goes to the volunteer organizer, Claire Inglin and to everyone who took part. From feedback it appears residents are keen for this event to continue.

Following a number of complaints about the broadband service received in the Parish from Vfast. Mr Chris Barber from Orbit Net (Vfast) attended the February PC meeting, to listen to and discuss with Parishioners concerns over the current service.

In April a number of Parishioners met in the Community Orchard for the positioning of a plaque to Ray Odell who died last year and who had been instrumental in choosing the ancient fruit trees. It was a bright and sunny morning and Anne Harrison-Nayes spoke about Ray's love of the Parish and commitment to the community.

Due to the lack of rain over the winter and spring months thankfully there have been no instances of flooding. The lagoon at East Studdal Farm was dredged at the beginning of this year to increase its capacity. Cllr Ron Little will be meeting with Louise Smith from KCC to discuss natural flood management in the villages of Ashley and Studdal.

The speeding of vehicles through the Parish continue to be a topic regularly raised by Parishioners at the monthly PC Meeting. After discussion regarding a possible Speed Watch Program, it was decided not to proceed with this line of action. The Parish Council have however commissioned a Traffic Survey to be taken at six sites around the Parish during May 2017. The outcome of this survey will give vital information on the volume, speed and type of vehicles travelling through our Parish on which to base any future speed calming actions. As we approach the most prolific growing time of the year, we would request that residents keep hedgerows and banks on their boundaries clipped back to aid safe visibility for all road users.

To Conclude

On behalf of my fellow Parish Councilors I would like to thank Sue our Parish Clerk for all her hard work especially with all the current demands in legislation.

Claire Inglin for acting as our internal auditor

Colin Stokes for his work as Tree Warden

Steve Manion for short circuiting matters relating to KCC and acting in our best interests.

Nick Kenton for keeping us informed as to DDC matters affecting our Parish and the wider picture in general.

Last but by no means least, I would like to thank my fellow Councilors not only for their support to me but their continued commitment to this community.