



# SAPPERTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019

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## Membership

In March 2018 the Council was fortunate to have the full complement of seven Councillors. However, during the following few months, Paul Lane resigned, having moved out of the Parish. So, then there



were six. Cllr Kath Sanderson stepped in as Clerk and resolutely continued to serve despite both she and her husband sustaining injuries from separate accidents that compromised their health for many months. The Council appointed a new Clerk, Babs Maloney, in June, to take over the administrative tasks of the Parish Council from Kath and Kath continued as an excellent source of support and training in this transition period. However, in August Kath decided that she could no longer sustain both her commitment to the Parish Council as well as

Chair the Village Hall Committee and it was with great regret that she resigned from the Parish Council. She does however continue to Chair the Village Hall Committee and continues to support the Council in any way she can. So, then there were 5!

As the Council was not within the last 6 months of the 4-year term when these resignations occurred, we were eligible to recruit new Councillors via co-option, where residents can be invited to fill vacant seats on a Parish Council without the need for any formal election process. However, despite the efforts of the remaining Councillors to find willing candidates, no-one stepped forward.

Efforts to recruit new Councillors included notices in the Notice Boards and on the website and more recently a flyer in the 'Watershed' Parish Magazine. To date, it is very disappointing that we have found no one able to assist us to return to full capacity. We will however continue to search!

Councillors serve a four-year term of office and the current term came to an end in May 2019. As we approached the May 2 Election date, another long-standing member of the Council resigned. Sheila Dingley has served the Council for many years but due to ill health and time constraints decided in the lead up to the Election, not to re-nominate herself for a further 4 years of office. It was again, with great regret that we have lost another member and we thank Sheila for her efforts on behalf of the Council. And then there were 4!

## Policy and Legislative Changes

In June 2018, as previously stated, the Parish Council employed Barbara (Babs) Maloney as Parish



Clerk. Babs works 12 hours per month and is responsible for various administrative tasks, predominantly updating the website and ensuring the Council is compliant with legislative requirements and changes as they occur. There have been significant changes to data protection with the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Council website needed to be brought up to date with the statutory regulations and requirements for Parish Councils to publish their financial and other significant documentation. The Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities (those whose precept is below £20,000) can now be viewed on the website at <http://www.sapfmpc.uk/>. Babs is a member of the Society of Local Council

Clerks (SLCC) and has undertaken the 'Introduction to Local Council Assessment' to familiarise herself with all aspects of her role. It is envisaged that Babs will continue her 'education' and complete the Certificate course offered through SLCC.

## Traffic Calming

As most residents in the Parish will know, there has been a long-standing issue regarding the safety of traffic on the A419 through the village of Frampton Mansell.



Gloucestershire Highways has been approached many times by the Parish Council in recent years to put forward residents' concerns. In July 2018 the Jolly Nice Café and Farm Shop submitted a planning application to expand their business enterprise which included changes to the entry and exit points already in use. The Parish Council lodged an objection to this application on the grounds of the impact it would have on the already hazardous 5-way junction on the A419, with Rodmarton Lane (Long Lane), Frampton Mansell Road and the Downs. This planning application included some traffic calming suggestions, some of which GCC Highways agreed to consider and maps of proposed measures were provided to the Council by Gloucestershire County (GCC) Councillor Stephen Hirst at the December 2018 meeting. The Parish Council strongly supported these proposed measures which included Vehicle Activated Signs on the approach to the junction in both directions and extra road markings and signage. The Parish Council is also strongly in favour of the 'White Gating' option adopted by other villages in the area and Councillor Hirst agreed to advocate for this on our behalf with GCC Highways. It was moved at the December meeting that Councillor Hirst would also take the map provided by GCC Highways and the proposals put forward by the Applicant in the planning submission and for these to be amalgamated. However, despite the Parish Council's strong representations and Councillor Hirst's support, we have subsequently been informed that any progress regarding traffic calming has been put on hold due to subsequent amendments to the planning applications they were in consideration of. The Parish Council, however, remains committed to representing the views of the community on this matter.

With the advent of new development at Beacon Farm, and new residents negotiating difficult access onto the A419, these concerns regarding the speed of traffic through the village of Frampton Mansell have even sharper focus now. Several residents have written to the Police and Crime Commissioner to request that this section of the A419 be placed on the list of sites for the Long-Ranger Speed Camera. Supportive responses have been received from the Office of the Commissioner and we are hopeful that some action will occur, however, despite continued pressure this section of the A419 appears to remain a lower priority. The Council continues to campaign for these measures and updates on progress will continue to be published in the Minutes of Parish Council meetings.



The A419 Through Frampton Mansell



## Defibrillators



This year, the disused telephone box near the Church in Frampton Mansell and the disused Bus Shelter in Sapperton, became locations for Defibrillators. Each of the two defibrillators was purchased with a grant of £625 from Cotswold District Council.

First Aid courses for residents to learn to use these were provided, however, several requests have been received to run a further course and the Parish Council is currently arranging for the GCC Adult Education Unit to come and run two sessions on a date which has yet to be finalised as it depends on the availability of a tutor and sufficient time to ensure an adequate number of attendees. This will be advertised in due course.

## Sapperton Church of England Primary School

The Head Teacher of Sapperton Church of England Primary School, Ms Dawn Thomas, provided an annual report to the Parish Council Annual Meeting which was held on 21 May 2019. It was especially gratifying to see that the school topped the KS2 SATs League Tables for Gloucestershire and came 33<sup>rd</sup> in the Country. The full report can be viewed by clicking on the link below which will open in a new window.

### [Head Teacher Annual Report to Sapperton Parish Council May 2019](#)

Ms Thomas is retiring at the end of this school year after 23 years as Head Teacher at the School and Mr Matt Blacker will be taking over in September. We would like to take this opportunity to wish Ms Thomas all the very best for whatever adventures lie ahead and extend a warm welcome to her successor

## Frampton Mansell Village Hall Playground

The annual safety review of the play equipment in the playground was undertaken by RoSPA in July 2018 and several items were repaired to relevant specifications. The RoSPA review was undertaken again in April 2019 and no equipment required repair this time, although some weeding was recommended.



In response to the changing needs of the younger residents and visitors in the Parish, the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee joined forces to purchase a 'Kicking Wall' at a cost of £1,023.19 including VAT. We hope that this will save the walls of the Village Hall itself from being used for ball practice!

The Bathurst Estate owns the land on which the Frampton Mansell Village playground sits and to date the Estate has been very community minded, keeping the rent at the very affordable amount of £100 per year. The 25-year lease is due to expire in September 2019 and following a site meeting between the Estate and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Parish Council, it is understood we are to expect a new lease shortly, hopefully on similarly supportive terms.

## Footpaths

In May 2018, a visitor to Sapperton fell and injured herself on the BSA/25 footpath in the village. As a result of that unfortunate accident, the Parish Council contacted the Gloucestershire County Council Public Rights of Way Officer (GCC/PRWO) to request a handrail. At the time, we were told that various bridges needing repair were a priority and that the handrail would have to wait to be included in the 2019/2020 budget. We have since received confirmation that the handrail will be installed this financial year.



Parking continues to be at a premium in Sapperton and various signs have been purchased by the Parish Council to assist residents in keeping areas clear of parked cars. Residents reported that the



footpath which exits opposite the school is often blocked by vehicles. A request for 'Keep Clear' on-road signage was made to GCC/Highways and the Parish Council has received confirmation that the GCC Highways Area Representative has visited the site and approved the request. We are hopeful this will be put in place shortly.

Parishioners are encouraged to report issues encountered on Public footpaths in the Parish, such as overgrown vegetation, obstructions etc to Gloucester County Council (GCC) online via [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/public-rights-of-way](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/public-rights-of-way)

## Litter Picking and Fly Tipping



Parishioners regularly pick litter around the Parish and it was decided this year to arrange litter picking as needed throughout the year rather than participate in the National Litter Picking week in March. At the Parish Council meeting in April, special thanks were given to Nell Maydew who works tirelessly litter picking all year round.

Fly tipping continues to be an ongoing issue in the area and residents are also encouraged to report any incidents of this illegal activity to the Clerk or Councillors. Cotswold District Council have released a 'Fly Tipping Map' which identifies several local 'hotspots'. This can be viewed on the Cotswold District Council website and local residents to monitor these areas and report any illegal activity.

## Grass Cutting and General Maintenance

Contracts continue for regular maintenance and grass cutting for the Village Green in Sapperton and verges and other open spaces in the Parish. (Contractors are not using scissors to our knowledge!).

Cutting of grass near the junction of the A419 with Frampton Mansell Road and also at the junction of Pike Lane with the A419 in Frampton Mansell, continues to be a priority throughout the summer months in order to afford motorists the greatest amount of visibility when entering the increasingly busy A419.



## Salt and Grit – Winter Preparations

In preparation for the 2018/2019 winter months, the Parish Council ordered a pallet of bags of salt in case another 'Beast from the East' brought heavy snowfalls, however, as is often the case when well prepared, little was needed this winter!



The snow plough and its volunteer operator Mark Franklin was called upon to clear the roads after one good fall of snow and we thank Mark for his continued support.

In rural areas such as ours, it is vital to keep access open for residents as well as any emergency services which might be required.

## Super-Fast Broadband

In early 2016 people living in the Parish were approached to find out if they were interested in the installation of superfast broadband in the Parish. In order to do this, Gigaclear, the Oxfordshire-based company that would be responsible for the installation, required 30% of the residents to sign up to one of its packages to make it financially viable for them.



The threshold was passed in early 2017 and installation was started later that year. The roadworks associated with this were at times disruptive for residents but the community, on the whole, was optimistic that the benefits outweighed the inconvenience and by November 2017 the first residents were connected to the service.

The connection speeds are amongst the fastest available in the whole of the UK, topping out at 900 Mb/s. The vast majority of the Parish has access to the service and take-up has been high. The service has proved to be very reliable during the eighteen months of operation and general feedback by residents has been very positive. There were some initial issues with Wi-Fi speeds in certain properties, due to the location of the router, but on the whole, this has been handled well through advice on how to improve this provided by the company.

## Financial Report

The Parish Council is funded by a portion of Residents' Council Tax known as the Precept paid in two instalments each year. The precept for 2018/2019 was £11,000 and the Council also received a VAT refund of £2,051 and a grant for the installation of a defibrillator in each village, making the total income for the 2018/2019 financial year, £13,680.



The accounts are managed by the Responsible Financial Officer and monitored by Councillors at each Parish Council Meeting. The major expenses for this financial year have been the grass cutting in Frampton Mansell and Sapperton, the Clerk's salary, the Kicking Wall jointly funded with the Village Hall Committee, and donations to the Sapperton Village Hall restoration and other charitable causes including the Air Ambulance, a vital service in a rural community such as ours. Total outgoings for 2018/2019 were £12,913.

The Parish Council voted to increase the precept for 2019/2020 to £11,500 in light of two large expenses which may occur this financial year. One is the possible issue with the Chestnuts in Frampton Mansell which may require attention and the other is in relation to the Parish Council's commitment to securing traffic calming measures for the A419. In pursuing residents' long-standing concerns regarding the A419 outlined earlier in this report, and in order to secure traffic calming measures for the Parish, the Parish Council may be required to make a contribution towards the cost and have therefore created a small contingency fund for this eventuality.

The public have the right to inspect the Parish Council accounts during a 30-day period each year which, by law, must include the first 10 working days of July. The Inspection Period will be publicised on the Parish Council website at [www.SapFMPC.uk/councillors/](http://www.SapFMPC.uk/councillors/) and in the Notice Boards. A guide for residents on how to exercise their rights is also available on the website.

## Cotswold District Council – Ermin Ward

Nicholas Parsons attended several meetings of the Parish Council as Ward Councillor for Cotswold District Council's Ermin Ward during the year and provided a report for Spring 2019 outlining various CDC activities and commitments. A copy of this report can be viewed online via the following link which will open in a new window.

[CDC Ermin Ward Councillor Report Spring 2019 – Nicholas Parsons](#)

Following the Cotswold District Council Elections in May 2019, Julia Judd was duly elected and replaced Nicholas Parsons as Ward Councillor for Ermin Ward. The Parish Council welcomed her at the Annual Parish Meeting on May 21 and found her approachable and interested in local issues which bodes well for liaising with her to put forward residents' concerns to the District Council.

## Cotswold District Council Planning Register

Parishioners and Parish Councillors alike, are able to view and comment on planning applications in the Parish via the online Cotswold District Council Planning Register at <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning/planning-applications-register/>.

We strongly urge residents to view this register and inform the Parish Council of any relevant local knowledge/information which might be helpful to the Parish Council in its role as Consultee in

planning submissions. Local knowledge is a vital component of the Parish Council's influence in local government decision making and its importance cannot be too strongly stressed.

## In Conclusion

All County, District, Town and Parish Councils in Gloucestershire were required to hold elections in May this year. However, for Sapperton Parish Council, less nominations for the role of Councillor were received than places available and therefore the election was uncontested. As we move forward into a new term of office, three Councillors nominated to return for another term of office and will continue to serve the community as best they can until other candidates come forward to assist.

Looking at the results for local elections it seems an increasing number of parishes or wards are uncontested. Many Parishes are functioning with less than their allocated number of members and this has serious implications. For Sapperton Parish Council, it impacts our ability to be proactive on behalf of the community, represent your views and influence the decisions of other tiers of Government. Parish Councils have a significant role to play as consultee in various local government processes and are an important 'voice' in local affairs. Our ability to canvass local opinion and ensure local issues receive the attention they deserve can be severely compromised if there are not enough Councillors to represent the community in these arenas. What do you think is stopping people from putting themselves forward to be councillors? If you have any thoughts on how we can encourage people to stand and raise awareness for the opportunity, we would be glad to hear from you.

To bring this Annual Report for 2018/2019 to a close, it remains only to thank all Parish Councillors, Village Hall Committee members, Parishioners, contractors, and the network of volunteers, who do so much, including producing our local magazine, the Watershed, and delivering it to almost 200 households and for all their contributions to the community during the last year.

And last but not least, we would like to offer congratulations to our Chair, Sarah Osborne Smith, who was married on May 14 2019. A lovely way to end the 'year'.

Kind regards to all

Barbara (Babs) Maloney, Parish Clerk, on behalf of Sapperton Parish Council

Your Councillors at the present time are:

Sarah Osborn Smith, Chair

Charles Houldsworth, Vice Chair

Sara Taylor, Councillor

Marcel Puyk, Councillor

