

Woodborough Parish Annual Report April 2022

Chairman's Report – Cllr Andrew Gough

Woodborough continues to be a thriving and vibrant village, and I am grateful to be part of this proactive Parish Council which is supported by the professional abilities of Averil Marczak, our Parish Clerk. I would like to thank all of our Parish Councillors for their complete support over the last year and welcome 2 new Councillors, Cllr Liz Anderson and Cllr Adam Wylie who will bring a new perspective to the Parish Council.

Our village continues to be well-maintained, and the fields, footpaths, playing fields are well-tended and our village facilities also continue to be well-maintained. We have provided bags on bins for dog owners to ensure that they pick up and remove any deposits left by their pets. At Christmas we had a Christmas Tree and lights in the trees, which provided a festive greeting to those who travelled through the village.

Our green spaces and cemeteries have been maintained to a high standard throughout. We have a good understanding of maintenance matters throughout the village and we continue to have funding for, and the support of, our Lengthsman who keeps our village clean and tidy. Flooding continues to provide challenges, and particular thanks go to the volunteers and Councillors who go out in all weathers to ensure that our risks are minimised and water is managed as far as practicable. Whilst we do not have any direct responsibilities for flooding, we have continued to work with the Environment Agency and volunteer groups to look at possible mitigation schemes.

We have ensured that our footpaths have mostly remained open this year – and they have been well used by many every day. The Sam Middup Field continues to be farmed by our tenant farmer, which is an interim arrangement until future plans are developed. We have a permissive footpath around part of the field which provides a link to other footpaths in the parish, this footpath was closed during the very bad weather to protect it for future use.

Seating around the village continues to be upgraded and maintained, and we also continue to support the Woodborough In Bloom team. We have had some success with repairs to road surfacing, and we continue to lobby for improvements to road surfaces and pavements throughout the village.

I would like to end my report by thanking Michael Dobbs who has made a huge contribution to our community through establishing and running the Woodborough Web for 9 years. Michael also organised an event for the various groups and clubs in the village to showcase what they do and recruit new members. Thank you Michael – and enjoy your retirement.

Flooding Report – Cllr Margaret Briggs

Fortunately for the village we've had no flooding events this year. We've had a couple of 'near misses' but that's all.

The culverts along Main Street have been inspected by CCTV and will be de-silted in May hopefully. The EA has installed a water level gauge in the stream at the West End of Main Street which is an early warning system for when the water reaches a certain level.

NCC, as Lead Local Flood Authority, is preparing plans for an integrated flood management scheme on the land surrounding the village.

The Parish Council would like to thank Woodborough FLAG (Flood Action Group) for the many hours they have spent liaising and working with the EA and NCC to help prevent future flooding of the village. Thank you to all the flood wardens in the village.

Anyone interested in becoming a flood warden please contact:

cllr.briggs@woodboroughpc.org.uk

Village Hall & Village Maintenance Report – Cllr Charles Wardle

Last year Covid-19 continued to affect bookings and activities at the Village Hall, with Preschool being the only ever present hirer. We were pleased to welcome some of our regular users back when restrictions receded, but members of other groups remained cautious about socialising and have deferred their return. We have been in regular touch with our hirers to try to juggle the diary and maximise our hire income.

We have been pleased to welcome some new users to the Village Hall, in particular “Just Sing”, our local community choir. We also took the decision to hire the hall to Preschool on a Wednesday, so they now operate from Monday to Friday. Overall, however, the bookings and hire income were still some way below pre-Covid levels.

The “headline” maintenance items this year has been the re-flooring of the Entrance Hall and Committee Room of the Village Hall as well as the upgrading of the disabled loo to include baby changing facilities and match the previously re-furbered gents and ladies loos as far as decoration is concerned.

Following the earlier error of not angling the parking spaces by the tennis courts and their subsequent painting out, which had worn away, the “wrong” lines were burnt off to eliminate any confusion!

Other items of maintenance have included the refurbishment of the Millenium Beacon in the Governors’ Field and the Replacement of the gate post in the Pinfold which had caused the gate to drop.

Thanks must go to Cllr Charles Jones who has been very pro-active in the refurbishment and replacement of a number of benches around the parish.

Once again the contribution made by our village hall caretaker has been invaluable. She has continued to keep it spick and span to her usual high standards and we now await an increase in bookings now that the pandemic restrictions have been relaxed!

We are also very grateful to Tim Tritton of Gardenscape our village groundsman who has continued to keep the foliage of the parish under control and also Rob Dixon of New Leaf who has been employed to do various ad-hoc jobs as and when required. Tom Wiles, our Lengthsman, continues to wage war against the litter louts, emptying bins, clearing drains, and identifying any other things needing attention. Without the labours of these gentlemen our village would not be the attractive village we are all so used to. Thank you.

Governors' Field Report – Cllr Colin Starke

In summary, the Governors' Field has continued to provide outdoor fun and relaxation in beautiful surroundings for many Woodborough parishioners and visitors.

With the Government relaxation of Covid social distancing measures last May, the Field has been open all hours and all play equipment has been in use.

The Christmas lights were again a lovely sight and again were complemented by a large spruce festooned with coloured lights.

The play equipment has been inspected weekly by Mr Richard Whincup and myself. No major safety issues have been found and there have been no recorded accidents. The equipment is currently due for its annual RoSPA safety inspection.

The one safety issue that continues to concern us is the parking by visitors on Lingwood Lane too close to its junction with Main Street and directly opposite the bus stop. This has become more of a problem with the increased popularity of Governors' Field. Recent discussion with NCC Highways Dept has resulted in a decision to install enforceable parking restrictions on Lingwood Lane from the Main Street junction up to the Village Hall, at the same time addressing the road safety issues at the School.

The operation of the zip wire was much improved by HAG's adjustment of the rate of descent at our request. The safe surface under one end of the seesaw was repaired by DCM. Both these jobs were done at no cost to us under warranty.

We now grease the roundabout bearings annually to maintain free and smooth rotation.

One of the old benches has been refurbished by Cllr Charles-Jones and installed on a new concrete plinth. Another old bench (nearest to the entrance gate) has been removed to be refurbished and installed elsewhere. Its place will be taken later this year by a new high quality bench to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Another quality commemorative bench has been purchased to mark the life of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, to be sited on the far side of the Field, looking across to the Church.

The Millennium Beacon has been restored to its former glory by Cllr Wardle, who is now doing the same for the round picnic table.

Finally, the increased popularity of the Field has resulted in trampling of the area of grass between the two mounds, the trampolines and the palisade, making it muddy and slippery. We have discussed the possibility of laying safe surface over this area to alleviate this problem and, if funding can be found, doing this in 2023.

Sam Middup Field Report – Cllr Daniel Raynor

Over the past year, the Sam Middup field has stood up well in all weathers and the ditch has done its job in removing the volume of rainwater away from the properties along the northern boundary.

The field is visited once a month to check if any issues have arisen and if so that they can be resolved as quickly as possible. The field will continue to be used by its current tenant, whose tenancy has recently been renewed. The footpath had to be closed for a short amount of time at the start of the year due to the footpath being water logged, but was soon back open and being enjoyed by the

residents of Woodborough. When the footpath is closed, please don't jump the fence to use the path and please remember to keep dogs on their leads.

Playing Field Report – Cllr Paul Berrisford

The field continues to be a valuable asset for the village being used for football, cricket and exercise. It has also contributed as a venue for the Woodborough Community Association's summer fair and bonfire night, both events drawing large crowds.

The field is open all year to the general public, any clubs, groups, organisations wishing to hold matches, sessions or events need to book such activities through WPC and the parish clerk.

Allotments Report – Cllr Paul Berrisford

Allotments continue to be fully occupied providing exercise and produce for the tenants. Annual rent to stay at £32.

Cemetery Report – Cllr Andrew Gough

Throughout the year we have worked with our contractors to maintain and improve the environment in the cemetery and I hope that you will agree that when you visit the cemetery now, it is, whilst still a country cemetery, a tidy and peaceful environment fit for its purpose.

We responded to a DEFRA consultation which threatened to reduce the capacity of our cemetery by requiring burial plots to be larger. Thank you to the residents who contacted Mark Spencer MP to object to this. We are optimistic that this part of the proposal will be dropped.

We also regularly update the cemetery regulations, these can be seen on the Parish Council website.

Planning Report – Averil Marczak (Clerk)

In the past year we have considered 27 planning applications, some 10 of which related to TPOs or TCAs (trees in the conservation area). The PC is pleased that Gedling are inviting its views on TCA applications.

The majority of planning applications considered have been for modest home extensions. There have been no applications for new builds this year.

We continue to notify GBC's planning department if we hear of potential breaches of planning consent so that they can be properly investigated.

Finance Report – Averil Marczak (Clerk)

Our receipts exceeded payments by £31,474 this year. We continue to build reserves for the purpose of developing the Sam Middup Field.

Our Village Hall income started to recover and was up by more than £11,000 vs the previous year. However we still find ourselves more than £7,000 below the 2019/20 takings. We anticipate further recovery in the year ahead. Some of our long term group hirers have sadly either closed altogether

or moved to other venues, but the loss of hire income is offset somewhat by Preschool's usage of the hall on a Wednesday.

Our playing field income recovered to a more normal level as sporting activities returned, and it was also a busier year for the cemetery with cemetery fees up on last year.

We continue to benefit from the County Council's scheme which part funds our lengthsman. We are grateful to GBC Cllr Helen Greensmith and NCC Cllr Boyd Elliott who both made a contribution towards our Christmas tree.

Our total expenditure this year was lower than recent previous years with our key projects in the Village Hall being of lower monetary value and, happily, no costly repairs have been needed across our facilities!

We have purchased 3 high quality benches for the Governors' Field, 2 of which will shortly be installed to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and also to commemorate the life of the Prince Philip. The third bench will be kept back and used one day to commemorate the life of our Queen.

The balance of the loan, which was taken out to purchase the Sam Middup Field, is £205,303. Our loan repayment to the Public Works Loan Board remains constant at £8,536 per year, with a fixed interest rate of 3.13%.

The accounts which follow have been signed off by our internal auditor.

