

WELLOW

Wellow Parish Council Annual Report 2020

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1. Introduction

This report highlights the main activities of the Parish Council for the period April 2019 to the end of March 2020.

Your Wellow Parish Councillors are:

Cllr Gaye Chesterton-Kay (Chair)
Cllr Edmund Chesterton-Kay
Cllr Alan Clark
Cllr Christopher Craig
Cllr Mike Jones (Vice Chair)
Cllr Sue Jones
Cllr Richard Light
Cllr Rich Millard
Cllr Charles Payne
Cllr Philip Stehr

A full list of Councillor responsibilities is attached to this report and can also be viewed on the Parish website at www.wellowparish.org.uk

Following Parish Council elections held last May 2019 Cllrs Christopher Craig and Charles Payne were duly elected as new Parish Councillors with the remaining Council Members being re-elected. Aly Jones joined the Parish Council later in the year as a co-opted Councillor but regrettably, recently made the decision to resign from the Council for personal reasons. This leaves a vacancy on the Council currently which will be filled via co-option as soon as is practicable. All Councillors would like to thank Aly for her hard work and commitment during her time on Wellow Parish Council. Likewise, we would like to take this opportunity to thank both Trevor Grant and John Sampson who left the Council in May 2019, for their personal contributions and hard work for the community during their terms as Parish Councillors.

2. Parish Council Activities

Wellow Neighbourhood Plan

Work has continued on the Neighbourhood Plan throughout the year with our dedicated team of volunteers giving many hours of work to support the Parish with this project. We have drafted a set of objectives from the results of the community survey and other evidence gathering activities and are now working on the policies to support those objectives. We were looking forward to sharing progress with you at the community event planned for the end of March. After a lot of work had been put into organising the event it was very disappointing that it had to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

We have also had to cancel all our face to face meetings for the foreseeable future, but we are continuing to progress the work where we can and will be sharing more with you in the community through our dedicated web site and Facebook Pages. We value your feedback so please continue to keep in touch.

Web site <https://www.wellownhp.org.uk/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pg/Wellowneighbourhoodplan/posts>

Re-design/renovation of Hatches Farm Sports Ground Car Park

The major renovation programme at Hatches Farm Sports Ground is progressing well.

Some months ago, the wooden gates at the entrance to the car park were removed and replaced with an overhead barrier which has made the car park more accessible, and in response to residents' comments, more recently the Parish Council paid for the erection of the brown sign to direct visitors to Hatches Farm Sports Ground.

Improvements have been completed to the club house leased by Wellow Youth Football Club. The building has been fully re-clad, asbestos removed from the roof and a completely new roof and guttering fitted.

A contractor has been appointed to complete the re-design and resurfacing of the car park following the official tendering process, although due to the current Coronavirus pandemic, a commencement date for this project cannot be set. The works will include re-designing the whole area to facilitate approximately 25-30 extra parking spaces, the installation of a path leading from the lower tennis courts to the upper courts, drainage measures, resurfacing of the entire area and soft landscaping. The installation of a Petanque facility has also been incorporated into the plans.

A grant application was submitted to Test Valley Borough Council's Community Asset Fund and we are pleased to report that the Parish Council was successful in securing a grant of £23,500 towards the car park element of the project. Our thanks go to TVBC for their support and also to those Councillors who managed to obtain around 800 signatures in forty-eight hours in support of the grant application. This was achieved through a variety of methods, including online forms via various social media outlets and Parish Councillors physically standing outside Wellow Primary School and inviting parents to sign as they dropped off their children! Demonstrating that the Parish Council has 'support' for the project is critical to a successful outcome, which very much proved to be the case here. A big thank you to all those residents who took the time to sign in support of the project – it made a difference.

As most residents will be aware, the intention, once the car park is finished, is to open it up to parents dropping off and collecting their children from the School each day,

thus hopefully alleviating some of the problems being experienced on a daily basis along that stretch of Romsey Road.

The final part of the overall project at Hatches Farm Sports Ground will be to deal with the drainage problems on the pitches themselves. This will be looked at in due course and is dependent on funding.

Village Speeding Initiatives

Following a very long and protracted period of consultation with Hampshire Highways, a series of speeding measures have been installed in and around the village.

Together with road traffic engineers from Hampshire's Highways Department, we looked at all the options available within our budget. Funding for these speeding measures was secured from Hampshire County Council, using S106 funds and a total of £17,000 was eventually made available which had to encompass measures for Whinwhistle Road, Romsey Road, Lower Common Road/Buttons Lane, Maurys Lane and Canada Road. Following technical advice provided by Hampshire Highways, the decision was taken to install Village Gateways, 30mph posts and 30mph roundels on the roads throughout these areas.

Whilst we are very aware that these measures will not completely solve the speeding problem in the village or satisfy all residents, with limited finances available it was not possible to take a more radical approach or consider more expensive options. However, we hope these measures will go some way towards improving the situation and persuade inconsiderate drivers to take more care when driving through the village. We constantly hear that many other rural villages are suffering similar problems, but unfortunately, as with litter, dog fouling etc, some people will continue to ignore any pleas to be more considerate and there is very little that the Parish Council can do to change the behaviour of such individuals.

Other Activities

Hampshire's Clerk of the Year Award

Hampshire Association of Local Councils runs an annual competition to find Hampshire's Clerk of the Year and I am delighted to say that Wellow Parish Council's Clerk, Mrs Sharon Whitehouse, very deservedly won the Award in 2019. Many congratulations to Sharon who beat off strong competition from other Parish Councils although she didn't actually know that she had been entered until the winner was announced!

Wellow Common SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest)

Wellow Parish Council owns and is responsible for the management of Wellow Common which is part of the New Forest National Park and a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). The land was deeded to the Parish in the 1880's for the use and benefit of all Parishioners. A detailed Management Plan covering the years 2010 to 2019 was approved by Natural England and the grant we receive from them is approximately £18,000 per annum to implement it.

As the grant is EU funded there was some uncertainty about whether it would continue following Brexit. However Natural England has confirmed continuation for a further year, to include 2020. What happens after this year is yet to be decided.

During the financial year 2019/2020, work continued on gorse, birch and bracken removal with significant areas being cleared, all in accordance with Natural England recommended practices. All work at the Common was undertaken outside the bird nesting season (March – July) and is required to maintain the designation of the common as lowland heathland. If this work is not completed the common will revert to dense woodland which would mean its social and community benefits (as well as environmental biodiversity) will become limited.

Other smaller projects were also completed including ditch clearance and maintenance to the Monkey Jump cattle grid. Ragwort was kept at bay by a Councillor and volunteers without the need to employ a contractor. If anyone is interested in helping pull ragwort this summer, please contact the Parish Office.

Footpaths

Wellow Parish is very lucky to have a total of 24 Public Rights of Way, more commonly referred to as footpaths. These paths are designated with a unique number for each Parish by Hampshire County Council and a map showing them is available from the Parish Office.

Wellow Parish Council normally spends around £1,000 a year on footpath maintenance which is matched by Hampshire County Council through the "Lengthsman Scheme".

Works undertaken this year included:-

Footpath 8 (Broad Woods Lane) – cut back of brambles completely obscuring the entrance to this path adjacent to Cross Oak Farm.

Footpath 9 (Dandy's Ford Lane to Mill Lane) – provision of new "Footpath" sign to replace dilapidated and rotten one.

Footpath 16 (Romsey Road to Hackleys Lane) – cut back of summer vegetation.

Footpath 17 (Gazing Lane to footpath 18) – ditch clearance in the summer followed by vegetation cutback and general tidy during January.

Footpath 18 (Buttons Lane to Romsey Road) – tree and vegetation cut back during January.

Footpath 22 (Foxes Lane to Scallows Lane) – the wooden boardwalk on this footpath needs major repair or replacement. Its condition has been reported to Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service which is now taking the project forward.

Parish Council Finances 2019/2020

Wellow Parish Council's financial position as at the end of March 2020 is presented in the attached Income and Expenditure Statement (Appendix 1) and Balance Sheet (Appendix 2).

The Balance Sheet for 2019/2020 shows that Wellow Parish Council has total Assets, less Current Liabilities of £167,486. This includes a general reserve of £46,147, an increase of just under £18,500 compared to last year. The remaining reserves are earmarked for future projects as listed.

The overall level of reserves has been boosted by the receipt of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funds from Test Valley Borough Council in relation to building schemes in the Parish – these totalled £31,663 in 2019/2020. The CIL fund was used to offset one-off costs which included items such as the re-location/installation of the horse-holding area opposite Maurys Lane and the new barrier and brown sign at Hatches Farm Sports Ground. The net closing balance on the CIL reserve is £31,648, allowing for in-year expenditure of £8,098. Some of the CIL money (non-precept funding) has been earmarked for elements of the Hatches Farm Improvements.

The 2019/2020 figures used to produce these reports have been audited by the Internal Auditor to the end of February 2020. Final accounts are due to be inspected by the Internal Auditor in May and accounts will be finalised in time to meet the statutory requirement for submission of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the External Auditor.

Any person interested has the right to inspect the accounts and all related documents. The period for public inspection has yet to be confirmed, but details will be published on our website in due course. Detailed accounts are available on request from the Clerk. However, monthly Income and Expenditure Reports can be viewed on the Parish website along with the Council's Minutes.

Grants

The Parish Council sets aside a small budget each year to award grants to local organisations who operate in support of Parish residents. During 2019/2020 the Parish Council awarded small grants to the following organisations:

Rainbow Tots
St Margaret's PCC
Wellow Lunch Club
Wellow Methodist Church
Wellow School
Victim Support
Youth in Romsey

Further details including our grant funding policy and application forms are available on our website. Alternatively, contact the Clerk.

And thank you.....

Finally, I would like to thank the following for their hard work, commitment and enthusiasm during the past year(s):

My fellow Councillors – it is very easy to forget that they are ALL unpaid volunteers who claim no expenses whatsoever whilst carrying out Council business. Their enthusiasm and willingness to take on so many projects and their can-do attitude makes all the difference when it comes to achieving outcomes for the village. We don't always get it right (as often observed on the various social media outlets) but we do always try!

Huge thanks to Sharon and Karen who keep the office running so well – not always an easy task!

A massive thank you to Mike Freeman and his hard-working team for their superb work on the Wellow Neighbourhood Plan. I am constantly amazed at how complex this whole process is and what continuous effort is required to keep it moving forward. Again, these are volunteers who are freely giving of their time for the long-term benefit of Wellow's residents – thank you all from everyone on the Parish Council!

I would also like to thank Cllr Roy Perry and Cllrs Nick Adams-King and Gordon Bailey for all their hard work and commitment to Wellow and, in particular, to TVBC's Community Asset Fund administrators for awarding the Council £23,500 towards the Hatches Farm renovation project. Your support is invaluable and goes a long way towards making the work of the Parish Council easier.

Finally, thank you to all of you for your input. As always, it is really helpful to hear your views and to get a better understanding of how you feel about the village and what can be done to improve it.

Mrs Gaye Chesterton-Kay
Chair
Wellow Parish Council

3. Representation on External Committees and Bodies

Wellow Primary School	Gaye Chesterton-Kay
Test Valley Association of Parish Councils	Chris Craig
Village Hall Committee	Gaye Chesterton-Kay
Roke Manor & Squabb Wood Liaison Panels	Mike Jones/Sue Jones
New Forest Association/North East Quadrant	Charles Payne / Alan Clark
New Forest Consultative Panel	Charles Payne / Alan Clark

4. Parish Council Members and Officers

4.1 Parish Council Members' Responsibilities 2019/2020

Please see attached Appendix 3.

4.2 Parish Council Officers

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer: Mrs Sharon Whitehouse

Parish Office, Wellow Village Hall, Buttons Lane, West Wellow, SO51 6BR
Tel: 01794 323275
Email: clerk@wellowparish.org.uk

Reports from Wellow Sports Clubs

WELLOW & PLAITFORD CRICKET CLUB

Men's Cricket

W&PCC won the Regional North West Division 1 in style having played 12 games and lost none, therefore gaining automatic promotion to County Division 4 with an average of 22.67.

The Tuesday night side (Border League) came third in their respective league, narrowly missing out on promotion. The last game was a real nail biter with the result deciding the league winners.

Ladies Winter Cricket

Hythe and Dibden agreed to run a softball league with 8 teams participating, including Wellow. W&PCC Ladies came a very respectable 3rd in the league winning 4 of the 7 games.

Ladies Friendly Results

Paultons Ladies 301, W&PCC Ladies 294
W&PCC Ladies 304, Hursley Park Ladies 278
W&PCC Ladies 309, Totton & Eling Ladies 270
W&PCC Ladies 309, Paultons Ladies 246

W&PCC Youth

All Stars – with a total of 18 signed up for ECB led 'All Stars Cricket' which is aimed at 5-8 year olds. Children outside of this age range are still welcome but we ask that a parent or guardian gets involved as a parent helper and supports their involvement in the programme. This is a fun way to introduce children to the sport, information is just a click away <https://www.ecb.co.uk/play/all-stars/faqs>

U9s – Our U0s this season played in non-competitive matches and had a mixed season due to the lack of structure within the league set up. However, they enjoyed their season and we look forward to some of the All Stars coming up with this category.

U11s – Ran out comprehensive winners of the U11 New Forest Junior Cricket League having played and won all 17 matches with a finishing average of 15. They went on to win the overall U11s title due to their opponents not attending the arranged final day due to communication error.

U13s – Came a very respectable 4th in the U13 New Forest Junior Cricket League having played 6 matches and won 3 finishing with an average of 12.33.

U15s – we did not have a team in this category this season. We will no doubt be looking for players – please see our website for contact details <https://www.wellow-plaitfordcc.com/>

WELLOW YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB

Wellow Youth Football Club continues to provide both team football and regular training sessions for all children in and around the Wellow area.

The club would like to extend a big ‘thank you’ to the Parish Council for all of the support that it has given them over the past year, with the clubhouse being given a complete external facelift, and we look forward to the planned expansion and improvement of the parking facilities at Hatches Farm which will make a significant difference to the ease of running the facility on days where we have multiple games.

We are also pleased, in conjunction with our main club sponsor NISA, to have been able to install a defibrillator at the clubhouse, and this is now available for use, not just by the users of the Hatches Farm Sports Ground, but also by the whole community.

In the past year, the number of regular participants in footballing activities is yet again to over 200, split between nine sides that represent the village at ages ranging from under 8 to under 18's. We continue to prioritise the training and development side of the club, and have expanded the Saturday morning training sessions especially at the younger age groups of 5, 6 and 7-year olds, held both at Hatches Farm, and at our neighbour, Headlands Farm. The club also continues to expand the number of qualified coaches getting their FA Coaching badges and we are proud of the fact that in the last year the club has been awarded the FA Charter Standard.

From a playing point of view this year has been one of quite significant disruption, with first of all the heavy rains leading to many cancelled matches, and then the global health crisis bringing all football activities to a halt. We look forward to the club being able to re-start its activities as soon as the situation allows.

WELLOW TENNIS CLUB

Regular readers of the Romsey Advertiser will have seen many reports on the activities of Wellow Tennis Club during the last 12 months. Those reports have tended to focus on the club's competitive activities in various leagues throughout Hampshire and Wiltshire but there's also been commentary on the various social and internal club competitions which are of equal importance to our members.

Through the efforts of the club's Chair, Paul Feeney, the club has benefitted from the sponsorship of several local businesses that have helped it run a number of tournaments and competitions. Also there have been regular club sessions throughout the summer and winter which attract many members of all abilities. These club sessions have been supplemented by a number of social events including some very successful summer barbecues.

Competitively the club punches above its weight and recently it celebrated three league title wins during the winter in the Sarum and Portsmouth and District leagues - despite the adverse weather and before the impact of Covid-19 was felt. The club ran 11 teams last summer and 7 teams in the winter – an incredible achievement for a club with just over 70 adult members.

The club was formed over 30 years ago and encouragingly the membership continues to grow. The club is always looking for new members – there are no playing standards required – we cater for all abilities and all ages. A recent Danish academic study claimed that active tennis players on average lived for nearly ten years longer than those adopting a sedentary lifestyle so there's an important health and fitness story too.

The club continues to look at developing the facilities at Hatches Farm and with the strong support of the Parish Council submitted plans for floodlights on two courts last year. There have been protracted discussions with the Test Valley Planners but we are hopeful that the plans will receive approval very shortly. With financial assistance from the Parish Council and the LTA we had hoped to have the floodlights in use next winter but clearly at the present time there is some doubt as to whether that time scale is realistic.

Linked to the floodlights the club was also hoping to launch a new coaching regime with an external, LTA qualified coach. Again, those plans have had to be put on hold whilst the courts remain closed due to the virus. The floodlights are essential if we are to have a coach who is active throughout the year. Our aims with the coaching are to focus on children – hopefully through links with the school – and on adults who want to take up the game or want to improve. The club has already run “rusty racket” sessions and had just started cardio tennis sessions on a Friday morning with a qualified instructor when we had to stop.

As mentioned all the courts at Hatches Farm – including the courts open to the public which the Club manages - are currently closed. At the moment we don't know when the courts will reopen – we have to follow guidance from the authorities and the LTA.

The club welcomes new members of all abilities. Our website – <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/WellowTennisClub> provides more information and news on our current and past activities including contact details. Despite the cancellation of Wimbledon, we hope it won't be too long before you'll see tennis being played again at Hatches Farm. Do come and join us.

Wellow Parish Council Current Year**Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31st March 2020**

31st March 2019		31st March 2020
	Income Summary	
66,300	Precept	67,626
900	Interest	1,916
<u>67,200</u>	Sub Total	<u>69,542</u>
	Operating Income	
530	Administration	973
40,657	Grants and Projects	41,216
1,259	Lower Common Rd Rec Ground	3,179
2,792	Hatches Farm Sports Field	2,737
17,808	West Wellow Common - HLS Agree	17,808
5,601	Burial Ground	12,970
<u>135,846</u>	Total Income	<u>148,425</u>
	Running Costs	
19,505	Administration	18,133
20,959	Employees	25,986
3,887	Grants and Projects	10,938
45,451	Capital Schemes/Asset Man	8,923
5,268	Lower Common Rd Rec Ground	8,954
3,972	Hatches Farm Sports Field	34,745
7,320	Environmental Schemes	6,119
2,298	Highways	1,931
1,015	War Memorial	50
23,934	West Wellow Common - HLS Agree	17,654
3,922	Burial Ground	3,169
<u>137,531</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>136,602</u>
	General Fund Analysis	
36,012	Opening Balance	27,664
<u>135,846</u>	Plus : Income for Year	<u>148,425</u>
171,859		176,089
<u>137,531</u>	Less : Expenditure for Year	<u>136,602</u>
34,327		39,487
<u>6,663</u>	Transfers TO / FROM Reserves	<u>(6,659)</u>
<u>27,664</u>	Closing Balance	<u>46,146</u>

31st March 2019

31st March 2020

		Current Assets	
18,073	Debtors	225	
3,094	VAT Control	5,775	
0	Prepayments	42	
10,360	Current Bank A/c	17,313	
83,997	Deposit Bank A/c	104,951	
50,008	Fixed Deposit A/c	50,008	
<u>165,532</u>		<u>178,315</u>	
165,532	Total Assets	178,315	
		Current Liabilities	
5,185	Creditors	7,067	
4,684	Lengthsman Scheme	3,762	
<u>9,870</u>		<u>10,829</u>	
155,662	Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	167,486	
Represented By			
27,664	General Reserves	46,147	
25,000	EMR New Burial Land	0	
24,161	EMR HLS	26,809	
7,000	EMR Youth Facilities	7,000	
7,000	Election Costs	4,357	
11,754	EMR Neighbourhood Plan	10,582	
45,000	EMR Hatches Farm	40,943	
8,082	EMR CIL funds	31,648	
<u>155,662</u>		<u>167,486</u>	

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 1st April 2020 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :
Chairman _____ Date : _____

Signed :
Responsible
Financial _____ Date : _____

Chair	Gaye Chesterton Kay
Vice-Chair	Mike Jones
Clerk/Parish Council Officer	Sharon Whitehouse
Environmental Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Common Management/Buxton Land/Trees/Commoners Defence ➤ Flooding ➤ Minerals & Waste Plan - Roke ➤ Burial Ground 	Charles Payne/Mike & Sue Jones Alan Clark Mike & Sue Jones Alan Clark/Phil Stehr
Communication Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Newsletter ➤ Website/Social Media ➤ Community engagement 	Christopher Craig/Richard Light Clerk/Christopher Craig Gaye Chesterton-Kay Christopher Craig
Finance Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Budget Management ➤ Grants 	Gaye Chesterton-Kay/ Ed Chesterton-Kay/Rich Millard/ Phil Stehr
Hatches Farm Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sports Pavilion/Football Pitches & surrounding areas/Trim trail 	Alan Clark/Gaye Chesterton-Kay/Ed Chesterton-Kay/Richard Light/Rich Millard
Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC)	Alan Clark/Christopher Craig
Highways Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Footpaths and Licensed sites ➤ Public transport ➤ Highways Issues/Infrastructure ➤ Lengthsman Scheme 	Mike Jones/Sue Jones /Charles Payne Gaye Chesterton-Kay/Christopher Craig/Charles Payne/Phil Stehr Charles Payne
Lower Common Road Recreation Ground Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recreation Ground/Pavilion ➤ Play Area - ROSPA 	Mike Jones Sue Jones
Planning & General Purposes Committee	Alan Clark/Gaye Chesterton-Kay/Ed Chesterton-Kay/Christopher Craig/Mike Jones/Sue Jones/Rich Millard/Phil Stehr
Neighbourhood Plan	TBA
Staffing Working Group	Gaye Chesterton-Kay/ Mike Jones/Sue Jones/Phil Stehr
New Forest Association New Forest North East Quadrant New Forest Consultative Panel	Alan Clark/Charles Payne
Test Valley Assoc of Parish Councils (TVAPC)	Christopher Craig
Village Hall PC representative	Gaye Chesterton-Kay
Wellow School PC representative	Gaye Chesterton-Kay
Gypsy & Traveller Liaison	Alan Clark/Christopher Craig