



SHERE PARISH COUNCIL

Serving the villages of Gomshall,
Holmbury St Mary, Peaslake, Shere
and a large part of Abinger Hammer

ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019

Chairman's Report

What has changed – and what has not changed - since my last Annual Report was sent to all households in the Parish?

Well, the Council's main objectives remained the same – 'To guard and maintain those features of the Parish felt to be most valued by the Community and to identify and sponsor community-supported changes that will enhance the Parish as a place in which to live and work.'

But there have been changes in 'the team' working to deliver on these objectives.

At Tanyard Hall the 'team' - who do the vast majority of the organising and day-to-day work to ensure the Parish runs smoothly changed during the year. The year began with Joy Millet as Clerk and Suzanne Hoyland as Assistant Clerk. But mid-year Joy surprised all Councillors by expressing a strong wish to resign, to take up the opportunity of a place she had been offered on a Fine Arts Degree course beginning in September 2018. An ambition which the Council could respect and wished her all success in pursuing.

The experience that Suzanne Hoyland had built up working as Assistant Clerk, meant when she confirmed her willingness to take on the role of Parish Clerk, we were able to move quickly and ensure a near seamless change. This was helped in no small part by the following appointment, of Clare Smith as Assistant to the Clerk.

A second change in people came shortly after the end of the Council year when there were Council elections. Two of the Council team - Alissa Collingwood representing Shere and Gomshall and Adrienne Golightly representing Peaslake - decided not to stand again. Their contributions over the previous four years were much appreciated and we have since been fortunate to be able, by 'co-option', to welcome to the Council team Alex Case for North Ward and welcome back Marion Taylor Cotter to the vacant South West Ward seat.

The challenges and ever-increasing costs of maintaining and adding to the basic fabric of the Parish were another constant over the last year.

The Parish Precept for 2018/19 was held at the same level as the previous year. However, Council felt its reserves were still sufficient to sustain a further year, where planned spending could exceed the anticipated income, still leaving sufficient reserves to respond to the unexpected. This would allow continued discretionary spending in response to needs and priorities identified for each of the villages.

In Holmbury St Mary the Council granted a telecoms company a lease for a new telephone mast, sited on the verge at Horsham Road. This will improve mobile reception in the area. With this permission came a capital payment to the Council which can be used in support of the proposed changes to the road layout and parking opportunities along this stretch of road, into the centre of Holmbury; aimed at encouraging motorists to reduce their speed.

There was also direct financial support for Holmbury St Mary Village Hall, with a contribution towards the costs of guttering works that were needed and the provision of more tables specifically for hire for outside community events.

Peaslake Village Hall received a Council donation towards the costs of flooring work in the hall and as in Holmbury some more tables to be used for outside community events, such as Peaslake Fair. The Council also funded the extension of the walk-way to the steps at the Peaslake Stores and the installation of a handrail at the store for the benefit of customers.

In Gomshall a substantial sum was spent to remove asbestos discovered in the Goose Green Pavilion. This work was a necessary precursor to the Council's intention to refurbish the Pavilion, to again make it suitable for use as a Sports Pavilion, to support Goose Green as an active games field.

In Shere the 30-year-old slide on the children's play area needed to be replaced and a running/walking circuit was marked out with yellow 'tufts' on the perimeter of the field; adding to the free community exercise resources intended to encourage us all to keep fit!



In November 2018 the Country remembered the ending of WWI, one hundred years ago. The Council supported this special centenary commemoration by purchasing and erecting memorial silhouettes for the villages and by supporting a special WWI event organised by the Peaslake Royal British Legion, held in Peaslake Village Hall.

The Council was also pleased to underwrite the costs of publishing 'Lest we Forget'; a fine book, put together by Keith Childs and his team of helpers, recording the

lives of the soldiers from the Parish who died in the conflict. Copies of this book were given to each of the children in the top classes at Shere and Peaslake schools, so that they and their families would have a permanent record of the sacrifice made by men of the Parish.

In addition to the spend on the above 'one-offs' there has of course been the oversight and management of ongoing services across the Parish. This entails the maintenance and safety management of land and buildings in the Parish which the Council owns or leases, including four village centres, five play areas, five recreational areas, four car parks, Tanyard Hall, and the public toilets in Shere. Plus of course the care of bus shelters, seats, notice boards and village signs and the grass cutting of 34 areas including river banks. The Parish Council has also carried out works to some verges, paths, ditches and drains (the responsibility of Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council), as these often make the most difference to the community.

Finally, the year has seen the Council continuing its efforts to make progress in respect of three major 'projects and issues' carried forward from the previous year: addressing the problems arising from 'traffic and tourism' within the Parish, progressing the affordable housing development at Peaslake Farm and anticipating the 'rebuild' of Shere Swimming Pool.

Traffic and Tourism - past demands and proposals for action made to Surrey County Council (SCC) Highways/Guildford Borough Council (GBC) to reduce the volume of traffic, especially Heavy Goods Vehicles transiting through the Parish and particularly the centre of Shere, remain ignored by 'The Local Committee'. The year has therefore seen no improvement. Rather the amount of roadworks over the last year affecting the Parish road network has exacerbated the problems.

At the same time there has been increasing pressure felt on the car park at Shere Recreation Ground as parking charges at Newlands Corner are very evidently persuading more walkers to meet and park in Shere, to begin their walks into the Surrey Hills. One change that has helped a little in this area is the introduction of a one-way system in the car park. It has helped reduce gridlocking and reversing in the entrance when the car park becomes full.

We have also obtained the agreement of SCC Highways to put some more double yellow lines along Middle Street (non-pavement side) and either side of the road outside the toilets to help traffic to flow more easily through this bottle neck. And we are now seeing an occasional Traffic Warden spending an hour in Shere on route from Guildford to Cranleigh.

On the **Affordable Housing Project** there has now been encouraging progress. In October there was a second public consultation meeting in Peaslake, at which two design and layout concepts were presented by the architects appointed by Greenoak Housing Association. From this presentation and subsequent consideration of written feedback, it was clear that one of the approaches was much preferred to the other.

The preferred approach was then worked on to produce detailed Planning Application Plans which the Council approved for submission at its May Council Meeting. Whilst it has taken longer than anticipated to reach this point, we now believe we are within sight of initiating the planning and build process that should see eight properties ready for occupation by late 2020.



Regarding the **Shere Swimming Pool** and the need for a re-build, as envisaged at the end of last year, there has been both good and bad news.

The disappointing news was that the joint application made by the Swimming Pool Club and the Parish Council to the London Marathon Charitable Trust, for a major Grant to help fund the cost of rebuilding (and enlarging) the pool and its facilities was not successful.

The good news is that the enhanced programme of 'annual repairs' carried out prior to the pool re-opening for the 2018 swimming season proved themselves to be very effective; the season ran without any problems or health and safety issues being encountered. More importantly a more detailed investigation of the pool's

fabric and the reasons for the recent difficulties in maintaining the correct water and chemical levels, established that the pool itself was in fact still essentially sound. There is still an urgent need to rebuild the pump room and replace the pumping, filtration and chemical equipment and upgrading the changing rooms but the build/renewal programme that is necessary, is not as daunting as first thought. There will still be a need to secure grant funding to supplement the amount available from the club's reserves and the £20,000 that the Parish Council has earmarked in its reserves as a contribution to the funding needed. Shere Swimming Pool Club and the Council are now more confident that a way forward is possible which will secure the future of this wonderful and much used Parish asset.



Roy Davey (Chairman)

Thanks to:

Parish Councillors; Suzanne Hoyland, Parish Clerk and Clare Smith, Assistant to the Clerk for their time, hard work and dedication;

Mayor Richard Billington, Guildford Borough Councillor Diana Jones, David Wright (former borough councillor) and Surrey County Councillor Keith Taylor for their advice and regular attendance at meetings;

David Colebrook for ongoing repairs to the playing field in Peaslake;

Christina Gorsuch and the team and caring for the Shere ducks;

Brian Hilsdon, Christopher Rapley and Graham Rapley, the Council contractors;

Annabel Alford-Warren and her team for their gardening around Shere village.

Parish Council Information

Its role - Shere Parish Council is a non-political Council, unlike some others in the Borough and is entirely

voluntary. This means that the Councillors do not claim any remuneration for their work.

Shere Parish is the largest in the area within Guildford Borough. It serves 4 villages: Gomshall, Holmbury St Mary, Peaslake and Shere and a 5th area, being a large part of Abinger Hammer excluding the village centre. The Parish is unique in the amount of land it owns and leases and, in the tourist, and film companies attracted to it. These influence the Parish greatly as regards the facilities it is able to offer and the character of the environment it seeks to preserve.

At least nine full Council Meetings are held each year as well as many other Committee meetings. All Council/Committee meetings are open to the public and there is at least one adjournment during each meeting to enable members of the public to ask questions or to address the Council. Meetings are held around the Parish in the village halls. Dates and times of these meetings are published on the village notice boards and on the Council's website. A short report of each Council meeting is published in the Parish magazines and the full Minutes of all recent Council and Committee meetings are available on the Council's website, together with the contact details of individual Councillors.

Routine Services provided by the Parish Council - much of the Council's work each year involves the management of ongoing services across the Parish and involvement in statutory consultation processes. The Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications in the Parish and liaises with other authorities e.g. Police, Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council. It is also Consultee on a whole range of policy documents from other authorities.

How to contact Shere Parish Council for assistance or information:

Council Office: Tanyard Hall, 30 Station Road, Gomshall, GU5 9LF. Tel: 01483 203431

Email – clerk@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk

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Please note that all correspondence for the Council should be sent to the Clerk, Suzanne Hoyland, at Tanyard Hall.

Shere Parish Council Councillors (as at May 2019):

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