



SHERE PARISH COUNCIL

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

ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020

Chairman's Report

It is sad, but inevitable, that this year's Annual Report should begin by talking about the coronavirus pandemic.

I would like to begin by thanking you, all our residents, for all the support you have been giving to each other – collecting prescriptions, keeping in touch, helping with shopping etc, while maintain social distancing. Your spirit of friendship and co-operation has been outstanding.

The Parish Council began planning our response to the impending situation early. So as the lockdown was announced you will all have received our letter urging and supporting the formation of neighbour and community support groups. This proposed structure positioned the Council, with its limited resources, as the 'contact point of last resort' - to get practical help, food, emergency assistance etc.

Your response has meant that, to date, direct recourse to the Council has thankfully been very limited. Thank you.

Huge thanks also go to Shere Surgery for adapting and continuing to provide exceptional services to our community and to the local food stores who have managed to keep operating and providing a local service of essential supplies. Also, our thanks go to those thoughtful and creative volunteers who have established the Village Larder and PPE support initiatives that are being administered

through the Henry Smith Fund, to which the Parish Council has made a £400 donation.

Looking at the year as a whole, the most significant 'investment' decision the Council took was implemented when Clare Smith, assistant to our Clerk Suzanne Hoyland, unexpectedly decided to move to a new job towards the end of October.

The Council then decided to employ two members of staff, to support Suzanne and to enable the launch of a 'project' that the Council had had in mind for some time. This was to open and 'host', two mornings each week, a free 'Drop-In' Centre and Social Hub in the ground floor of Tanyard Hall in Gomshall. Samantha Robins was engaged as Assistant to the Clerk and Melody Barnett as Drop-in Coordinator and Parish Assistant.

Starting in January the drop-in mornings were an immediate success, showing its provision was fulfilling a clear and valuable social benefit.



Again, thanks go to the volunteers who then came forward to help in hosting the mornings and transporting anyone with mobility problems, to and from the mornings. And to Kingfisher Farm shop, Hilly's and the Dabbling Duck who each undertook to provide a free cake each week, to help make it a regular 'tea shop and chat' experience.



Although currently suspended whilst we are in lockdown, it will resume as soon as circumstances allow and, in the meantime, Melody has been keeping in touch with our participants throughout the crisis, by telephone.

The Council has continued to be involved in two major 'work in progress' projects carried forward into 2019/2020 – the project of refurbishing and enhancing the Shere Swimming Pool and the progressing of the Peaslake Farm Affordable Housing development.

At this point in time both are still 'works in progress'.

The Swimming Pool Club and the Parish Council began the year disappointed that their joint application for a major grant from the London Marathon Trust had not been successful. This had been sought to fund the bulk of the work planned for the swimming pool. Spirits were lifted when a significant grant from Sport England was awarded. This was sufficient along with a £20,000 contribution from the Shere Parish Council, for the Pool Committee to begin stage one of the planned works. This phase is nearing completion, hopefully

enabling the pool to be able to open later this year, once lockdown permits.

Furthermore, the Council was pleased to be able to offer a substantial interest free loan from this year's budgeted reserves, to enable the club to immediately move onto the next phase of renovations, the changing rooms and disabled access, at the end of this year's season. So substantial progress can now be seen with this project.

Progress on the Peaslake Farm Project has been frustratingly slow; legal papers seeming to endlessly pass between lawyers, for adjustments and amendments, before a final signed contract could be exchanged. However, contracts have now been exchanged and Greenoak Housing Association has submitted detailed agreed plans to the Guildford Planning Authority, for approval. But current best estimates are, that we are now running approximately twelve months behind the hoped-for date for occupation, approximately late 2021.

The challenges, tasks, and costs, of maintaining and adding to the basic fabric of the Parish constitutes much of the 'hidden work' the team at Tanyard Hall does for us all – it is what essentially your Parish Precept is spent on and if you want to see the details of how this is spent you can look on the council website, under financial information and transparency.

Within this budget we again supported Holmbury Village Hall, with a contribution towards the cost of a boiler replacement and Peaslake Village Hall with a contribution towards the purchase of a shed. We also spent, or have reserved money, to fund three 'fabric repair' projects; to improve the landscaping around the Peaslake telephone kiosk and to then install a donated bench (now completed) and to work with Surrey County Council to undertake footway repairs outside Shere Surgery and along the flood damaged stretch in Peaslake between Crest hill and Rad Lane (both yet to be done).

The council is also constantly looking at ways to manage traffic in the villages and as a result has purchased a VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) which will be moved between different locations in the villages to remind drivers of their speed. Surrey County Council are lending the council an additional unit to cover two sites at once. Data from both VAS will be collected and analysed.



There was also the unexpected challenge and cost of the unauthorised encampment on Goose Green, along with the subsequent installation of additional barriers and security measures for the council's fields and open spaces within the Parish.

We hope therefore that Residents feel that the Precept is money being well used, and that the modest increase in the precept for 2020/2021 is acceptable in order to keep our Parish a safe and pleasant environment in which to live.

Roy Davey (Chairman)

Thanks to:

Parish Councillors; Suzanne Hoyland Parish Clerk & RFO, Samantha Robins Assistant to the Clerk and Melody Barnett Drop-in Coordinator and Parish Assistant, for their time, hard work and dedication; Mayor Richard Billington, Guildford Borough Councillor Diana Jones 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 tourists, 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 (currently via Zoom). 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

Website – www.shereparishcouncil.gov.uk

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



Shere Parish Council Councillors (as at May 2020):

North Ward (Shere & Gomshall)

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South East Ward (Holmbury St. Mary & a large part of Abinger Hammer)

Bob Andrews - Ansells Cottage, Pitland Street, Holmbury St. Mary, RH5 6NP 01306 730693

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Christopher Carlisle - Upfolds House, Holmbury Lane, Holmbury RH5 6ND. 01306 621209

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Raymond Smith - 7 Felday Houses, Holmbury St. Mary, RH5 6N

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South West Ward (Peaslake)

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