

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 9th MAY 2013

During the past year, the Parish Council met six times in Wittering Bowls' Club.

The Parish Councillor vacancy left by the resignation of Deirdre McCumiskey was filled by Philip Portess but the vacancy left by the resignation of Sam Cooper is unfilled to date.

John Holdich and Diane Lamb, Ward Councillors have attended as many meetings as their busy schedules allow. The Parish Council has been grateful for their advice, support and friendship over the past year.

PCSO Aimee Hunter attended a number of meetings to keep the Parish Council up-to-date with police matters.

Several members of the public attended meetings throughout the year and they are always very welcome. Various issues were brought to the Parish Council's attention which varied from dog fouling, overgrown footpaths and parking vehicles dangerously.

Throughout the year, several planning applications were considered and approved.

The winter weather proved to be again quite harsh for a period of time but, as it continued, people became more used to dealing with it.

Flight operations will recommence at RAF Wittering next year following decisions announced in the Defence Estate Rationalisation program.

Cambridge University Air Squadron and No 5 Air Experience Flight currently based at RAF Wyton and East Midlands University Air Squadron and No 115 (R) Squadron currently based at RAF Cranwell, will relocate to Wittering in mid-2014. All of the Squadrons currently operate the Grob Tutor aircraft.

Just two years short of its centenary, Wittering will return to its origins of being a training unit for aspiring pilots whilst maintaining its core function of being the home of the RAF's Expeditionary Logistic Force.

In addition to the flying squadrons relocating to Wittering, it has also been announced that No 71(IR) Squadron, will relocate from MOD St Athan to Wittering.

The Wittering Parish Council Website (www.witteringparishcouncil.co.uk) has proved ideal for people to keep up with the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings and for other matters that affect the village.

Simon Hurn continues to keep the playing field in a neat and tidy condition. The Parish Council has purchased a number of trees and bulbs which have been planted in various locations throughout the village.

The Sports Pavilion and Bowls Club Pavilion are well used and much appreciated by residents and visiting football teams and bowls' teams alike. I would like to thank Jon Warters and Roger Paull for their commitment to the Wittering Harriers Junior Football Club.

The Allotments provide a popular amenity in the village. The Allotments are all rented out and there is a small waiting list for people wanting to rent out an Allotment. I would like to thank Geoff Dunkley for his commitment to the Allotments.

A Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebration Party took place on 4th June 2012 on the playing field. It included a hog roast, bouncy castle, disco and free drinks for children. A lot of people put in a great deal of time and effort in organising this event and it was a successful and entertaining day.

The Parish Council's finances remain on a sound footing, audits are now in progress and suggestions from parishioners to improve or add anything to the village are always welcome.

The Sports & Social Club Rent was reviewed and reduced to £3,000 per annum. The Football Club and Bowls' Club Rent was set at a £1.00 per annum peppercorn rent, fixed for ten years.

The Parish Hall and Sports & Social Club received a 5 Star Hygiene Rating by the Environmental Health Inspector. The Sports & Social Club has been decorated and the Parish Hall curtains have been replaced. Plumbing and electrical work has been undertaken to ensure the Parish Hall is maintained in a safe and satisfactory condition. The boilers in the Parish Hall will have to be replaced in the next year. The car-park will be repaired and a new layer of tarmac laid in the next few months.

The Parish Hall is hired out on a permanent basis on four evenings per week. In addition, it is hired out for wedding receptions, christening parties, children's parties and other social functions at the weekends.

Hubert Warren retired as Parish Clerk after twenty-two years in the role and he was thanked for his diligent and meticulous service at a small gathering of Parish Councillors in December. His successor is Deirdre McCumiskey who moved to the village in 2008.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their interest and commitment to the village over the past year.

Richard Roffe
Chairman
May 2013