

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 18th MAY 2017

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

There have been no changes in the Parish Councillors this year.

Diane Lamb, Ward Councillor has attended as many meetings as her busy schedule allows. The Parish Council has been grateful for her advice, support and friendship over the past year.

Disappointingly, attendance at meetings by Police Representatives has been non-existent this year as the PCSOs have failed to attend any meeting. Thankfully the level of crime in the village is low.

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 motorists parking vehicles dangerously.

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

The Parish Council has worked closely with the Wittering Action Group who were set up following a Public Meeting held on 9th August 2016 to discuss Larkfleet Homes' Planning Application to build 190 properties on land to the south of Lawrence Road. The Parish Council rejected the Planning Application.

A meeting was held on 17th March 2017 to discuss further the proposal by Larkfleet Homes to build 190 properties on land off Lawrence Road, Wittering. The meeting was attended by the Chairman, the Clerk, Shailesh Vara, MP and his Executive Office Manager, two representatives from Larkfleet Homes and four representatives from Wittering Action Group. Mr Vara strongly expressed his objection to the 190 Houses and asked Larkfleet Homes to 'actively' look at an amendment to the current Planning Application to reduce the overall numbers to 50-60; however, Mr Mann of Larkfleet Homes told the meeting that the land has been registered as development land by Peterborough City Council and Larkfleet Homes are simply implementing PCC's requirement to build 190 properties on this land. The Parish Council was very strong in its objection and highlighted the Further Draft of the Peterborough Local Plan 2016 to 2036, stating that any development would need to come with a development of the A1/Townsend Road Junction. There was no indication from Larkfleet Homes that they would contribute to the development of the Junction. Larkfleet Homes have still not purchased the land and have no Planning Permission but say they have made amendments to the plans taking into account the planning objections that have been made.

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 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.

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 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.

A new War Memorial was officially unveiled on 5th May 2016 and the ceremony was attended by representatives of the Parish Council, RAF Wittering and village residents. Four benches were sponsored by Barnack & Wittering Branch RBL, Wittering Parish Room Fund, RAF Wittering and Wittering Primary School. I would like to thank everyone involved with this, particularly Geoff Dunkley and Roger Paull.

Shailesh Vara, MP had confirmed his support for the A1/Wittering Flyover Group and has stated that he will attend as many meetings as he can. Although the Minister for Transport is willing to meet the Group, this will have to be at Westminster not at Wittering. John Bradshaw has agreed to become Chairman of the Group. The RAF will check to see if the archived paperwork from the previous meetings can be located. The RAF will allow the Group to meet at RAF Wittering. Representatives of RAF Wittering will attend the meetings as will representatives from Peterborough City Council and Wittering Parish Council.

Wg Cdr M Ainsworth, Officer Commanding Support Wing, RAF Wittering has attended several Parish Council Meetings. Mr M Davies, Community Devt Officer, RAF Wittering has also attended the Parish Council Meetings and his commitment and involvement to working with the Parish Council and village residents has been much appreciated. The Youth Drop-in Centre and the Community Learning Centre are a welcome asset to the village.

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 2017