

**Chitterne Parish Council Annual Meeting of the Parish Electorate**  
**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

Interim Chairman's Report 2018-2019

This is a brief resume of the works of Chitterne Parish Council for the year 2018 to 2019. Sadly, the resignation of Barry Ricketts as Chairman in February this year means we have no Chairman to officially compile a report. There was no succession to the Chairmanship as the Vice Chairman had laid out his stall back in 2018. It was decided by all Councillors that until a replacement Chairman could be found the chairing of our meetings would be done so by rotation of all the Councillors. So back to the report, compiled by the Vice Chairman and in no particular order the Council achieved the following:

The reduction of various trees on the playing field that had become a safety hazard, the trimming of trees and bushes along the length of the Cut by means of an excellent turn out of villagers on two occasions to complete the task, which has to be said is akin to painting the Forth Bridge. After many years of badgering SSE were persuaded to trim trees along the Cut that were in danger of snagging the electricity line that runs up to Townsend. Remaining on the subject of trees the dead Chestnut tree on the Village Green, planted to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Queen Victoria was removed with the help of various villagers and on November 11<sup>th</sup> a ceremony was held with the planting of an Elm tree to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the end of World War One. With the backing of the Parish Council this was facilitated by a small group of villagers, The Chitterne 100, and was attended by a large proportion of the village, it was a fitting tribute to our fallen from the village and to the millions of others who made the ultimate sacrifice. The planting ceremony was carried out by George Unsworth-White, George being our most senior ex-serviceman. Those present then enjoyed a buffet lunch and also a superb display of military memorabilia laid out in the Church and Village Hall by Kevin Foster. The fund raising was so successful that the cost of the entire proceedings were covered and no charges made. It must also be noted the achievement of Andy and Lorna Cameron and Jim who the night before ran the entire Imber Trail arriving back in time to join the rest of the villagers for the tree planting. The money raised went to the Royal British Legion.

The allotments, under the stewardship of Councillor Wilkinson, received a financial makeover in the guise of a rental increase that was long overdue. It still represents excellent value for money and there are still vacancies. Hopefully the issue of providing water to the allotments will soon come to fruition.

Two items of the playground equipment were deemed unsafe and needed replacement. The climbing frame and the see saw have been quoted for and hopefully the scheme will receive final blessing tonight. A grant of £4408.00 was obtained from the Area Board and further fundraising came to £7120.00. If all goes well installation will commence in early June in time for the summer holidays. Thank you to all those who donated and a list of donors will be posted on the Village notice board in due course.

Village maintenance is aided and abetted with a monthly visit by the Village Steward liaising with Councillor Emmerson, the playing field and Chancel are well maintained through the auspices of the Cricket Club under the guidance of Councillor Horsfall and funded by the Parish Council, the verges and footpaths are maintained and cut by a small group of volunteers using the Council's heavy duty mower and their own equipment and the general well being of the village is achieved on Village Tidy Days and Cut Clearing Days. A debt of gratitude is due to all those involved.

The flooding risk has been minimal this year. Suffice to say no progress has been made in our efforts to get the build up of debris and silt cleared at the various pinch points along the Cut by Wiltshire Highways, we live in hope.

The speed indicator devices (SIDs) have, depending on whom you talk to, had a positive effect on traffic speed. Unfortunately, one solar panel was damaged either by a stone flicked up by a car or more maliciously. The replacement has cost the Parish Council £306.00.

During the year the Parish Council reviewed 11 planning applications. Unfortunately, even some of those we supported were rejected.

Precept 2018/19 was £8,095 and although £12,019 remained in the bank account at the end of the financial year, £11,443 of this has been allocated or earmarked. The increased precept to £9,800 for 2019/20 is to build some general reserves and play park reserves.

There are two Councillor vacancies, the third vacancy will be filled by Jo Booth at the appropriate time. She will be co-opted as the Village Hall Committee representative replacing Paul Pike.

Finally a thank you to our clerk, Nikki Spreadbury-Clews for her guidance throughout the year, to Barry Ricketts for his tenure where his skills at raising funds were utilised to the full and appreciated, to all the Councillors remaining and resigned, and to all the villagers for whatever they do to make this village a remarkable and delightful place to live. Unique is a strong word but Chitterne is nearly there and we must continue to carve our own path through the jungle of officialdom that surround us.

Cllr Murray Kent  
Vice Chairman