

# TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

*Serving the Communities of Birch Copse, Calcot, Denefield and Westwood*

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## PARISH ASSEMBLY – Tuesday 14 May 2019

Welcome and thank you to everyone for attending.

It was very sad for the parish when Mrs Jean Gardner passed away in February. Jean was a generous and selfless lady who will be greatly missed by all her friends and colleagues.



Jean had worked tirelessly for the local community as a member of Tilehurst Parish Council since 1973 and prior to this as a member of the District Council and County Council. Jean had the honour of being Chairman of Council from 1997 to 1998, the year that saw Newbury District Council become a unitary authority and something that she was very proud of. For the past 33 years Jean has held the position of Chair to Tilehurst Parish Council having been elected unanimously year on year.

Jean gave a lot to her community and had been a dedicated and strong campaigner for Tilehurst and its residents. She was not only a fantastic spokesperson for the area but she regularly assisted with schools appeals in the areas of Reading and Wokingham.

She was instrumental in the planning and development of both the Cotswold Sports Centre and the Westwood Farm Community Association. In more recent years Jean was heavily involved in delivering the Little Heath Skate Park project, listening to the youngsters involved and ensuring that they got the facility they wanted.

### **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Parish:**

This year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the present Tilehurst Parish and which was created on the extension of the Reading Borough boundary in 1919.

It has been a busy year for the Parish Council and a lot has been achieved. I would like to convey my thanks to all involved (Members and residents alike) for keeping Tilehurst Parish a nice place to live.

### **Council precept:**

The Parish Council precept is the part of your Council Tax bill that funds the services provided by Tilehurst Parish Council. This year, the precept (annual charge) for a Band D household will be £52.07, which represents a modest increase on 2018/19 of 1.7%.

Miss J Major, Clerk of the Council  
Parish Office, Highview, Calcot, Reading RG31 4XD

Tilehurst Parish Council Budget details 2018/19:

| <b>Expenditure:</b>             |         | <b>Income:</b>      |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| St Michael's churchyard         | 7,273   | Precept             | 284,345 |
| Salt bins, lighting etc         | 14,708  | CIL monies          | 26,506  |
| Hall maintenance                | 101,719 | Football pitch hire | 4,490   |
| Grants & Donations              | 1,231   | Hall hire           | 72,675  |
| Cotswold Sports Centre donation | 11,622  |                     |         |
| Upkeep of open spaces           | 77,237  |                     |         |
| Council admin exl staff costs   | 28,531  |                     |         |
| S137 expenditure                | 2,241   |                     |         |

Most of our surplus funds have been ear-marked for future projects, as outlined below.

**Upkeep of the Parish**

Over the last year we have been working hard to improve facilities within the parish boundaries. Our three community halls are regularly used by a variety of hirers (both during the week and at weekends) including playgroup, yoga, dance classes, keep fit, Weight Watchers, Blood Donors, NHS, scouts, brownies and senior citizen clubs. The Calcot Centre is also regularly used by West Berkshire Council. They are also used for child and adult parties at weekends. During this year there have been a total of 117 parties and 111 general meetings.

The recreation grounds are used for various activities including the hiring of our eight football pitches to local football clubs, which are a mixture of adults and children. Over the past year we have enabled 107 matches to take place. The recreation grounds are also used for a number of community events, which are detailed below.

Below is a summary of what has been happening over the past year -

**Calcot:**

- The new website is now up and running, although there are still some refinements to be made i.e. new photos.
- A new administration assistant is now in post.
- All the outside doors have now been replaced.
- Various works of maintenance have been carried out by the parish's contractors, including replacing part of the roof and guttering.
- There were problems with the drains, part of which had to be relined, and part had collapsed and had to be replaced.

**Calcot Community Association (CCA):**

- The fire door has been replaced.
- Extensive works have had to be carried out in the CCA building, following problems with the electrics, and also various plumbing issues including a replacement boiler.
- Members of the CCA have set up a new football team, who are playing on Calcot recreation ground.

**Calcot recreation ground:**

- Several new seats have been purchased. One was damaged shortly after being installed, and was repaired by the parish's maintenance officers; one seat was set on fire, with the fire brigade having to be called out by a resident.
- A large area of the safety surface in the play area has recently been damaged, which will need to be replaced.

**Cornwell Centre:**

- The rear fire doors had to be replaced as they were deteriorating badly.
- Five new benches have been purchased and need to be installed in the recreation ground.
- A crack has been discovered in the floor at the hall – ongoing investigations are taking place.
- The field gate at the Cornwell Centre has been replaced.

**Turnhams Farm Hall:**

- Kitchen – a new worktop has been installed, together with a new sink, and the few remaining old tiles have been replaced. New insulation had to be put in place as it was discovered, while doing the work in the kitchen, that there was no insulation in the walls. This work was carried out by the parish's maintenance officers over the Christmas period while regular hirers were not using the hall.
- The hall has recently been redecorated by the parish's maintenance officers, one section at a time. This has avoided the need to close the hall for a period of time, thus not disrupting regular hirers, and also saving on the cost of hiring a contractor.
- Heaters have been installed in the toilets.

**Turnhams Farm recreation ground:**

- Barton Rovers Annual Tournament: continued support for this annual event (with use of the recreation ground for a car parking area)

**Cotswold recreation ground:**

- There have been problems with sink holes. The area affected has been fenced off by the parish's contractors, C & D, and warning notices have been displayed. The original hole is approx. 6 ft x 12 ft, although on the surface appears to be only 1 ft in diameter. Several other smaller depressions in the ground have been identified. There were problems getting access to plans from Thames Water to show where water pipes are. They have now been received, and C & D have been digging down until they hit solid ground; the holes are then being refilled, allowing time for the ground to settle before topping up with topsoil, and reseeding.
- There has been continued support for Westwood Farm Community Association, although they are unfortunately having to be restricted in their use of the recreation ground for their Presentation Day at the beginning of July, because the football pitch is badly in need of reseeding due to being in very poor condition, and it will need to be fenced off to allow the new seeding to germinate and grow.
- Westwood pre-school playgroup: the parish has given support for their use of the recreation ground for their summer fayre, although they have been advised that there could be restricted access because of football pitch maintenance.

- The field gate onto the recreation ground has been replaced.
- The roundabout in the play area has had to be replaced, as it was damaged due to vandalism.

#### **Cotswold Sports Centre:**

- Each year, the Parish Council contributes 50% of the deficit of the running costs for the Cotswold Sports Centre. This contribution for 2018/19 amounted to £11,622 and was paid to West Berkshire Council, in accordance with the Lease Agreement.

#### **Hildens Drive Play area:**

- A replacement seat has been installed in the play area in memory of a local resident who opened and locked up the play area for many years.

#### **St Michael's Churchyard, Tilehurst:**

- A new fence is to be installed on boundary with a neighbouring property, after it was ascertained that the Church were responsible for that boundary.
- We continue to carry out maintenance works at the churchyard, for which we have a budget of £17,500 per annum.

#### **Neighbourhood Plan:**

Local development needs to be better planned which has been recognised by the parish council and a steering group has been created to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. The steering group is made up of a number of local volunteers. Progress has been slower than anticipated despite the valiant efforts of the group, mainly because more volunteers are required. It is expected that significantly more progress will be made in the coming year, starting with a comprehensive survey of residents' opinions to be undertaken in the summer.

#### **General:**

- There are several large developments pending in the parish –
  - Pincents Lane: A planning application is under consideration by WBC for 270 dwellings;
  - Stonehams Farm, Long Lane: Outline planning permission has been granted for 66 dwellings;
  - Land adjacent to Stonehams Farm: The original planning application for 15 dwellings has been replaced with one for a 74 bed care home and four detached dwellings. This application is under consideration by WBC;
  - The Ridings, Clements Mead: Construction is well under way.
- There is a proposal for a new care home in the building formerly known as the Pincents Manor Hotel, in Pincents Lane, Calcot. There is no planning information as yet.
- The level of hall bookings remains consistent, with only a few available slots remaining.
- Football – there have been fewer cancellations this year, due to better weather.
- It was agreed by Members that four memorial benches would be installed in memory of Mrs Jean Gardner, one at each of the recreation grounds including Cotswold recreation ground.

- The parish has been involved in the implementation of the Community Alcohol Partnership with West Berkshire Council Trading Standards, covering Theale, Tilehurst and Calcot areas.
- There have been various instances of vandalism – undergrowth being set alight, seat set alight, bin outside CCA being set alight, damage to safety surface at Calcot recreation ground.
- Several items of equipment have been purchased throughout the year, to enable the parish's maintenance officers to carry out more repairs and maintenance, thus saving the cost of hiring contractors i.e. a generator, a scaffold tower, a backpack vacuum.

#### **Future Projects:**

- Resurfacing of the car park at Turnhams Farm Hall. This had to be delayed because the parish became aware that the shared entrance with WBC would be used during the rebuilding at Little Heath School. As we were hoping to have the car park and the entrance resurfaced at the same time, this had to be put on hold. \*
- New front doors at Turnhams Farm Hall.
- New flooring in the foyer at Turnhams Farm Hall.
- Resurfacing and partial refurbishment of the play area at Cotswold recreation ground. \*
- Redecoration of the Calcot Centre, hall, foyer and office.
- New flooring in front office at the Calcot Centre.
- Replace kitchen worktops at the Cornwell Centre.
- Redecoration of the Cornwell Centre.
- New fence at the Cornwell Centre to stop footballs being kicked against the side of the building. \*
- New footpath down the side of recreation ground at the Cornwell Centre. \*
- New trees at the Cornwell Centre in the area between the building and the new housing. \*
- Replace the existing stile with an Inhibitor at the Sulham Lane end of the Cornwell recreation ground.
- To purchase new covered rubbish bins to stop people putting household waste (incl food) into bins, this being particularly problematic at the Cotswold recreation ground and Cornwell recreation ground. \*

(\* Works subject to Council approval)

**Redecoration of Turnhams Farm Hall:**



**Refurbishment of kitchen at Turnhams Farm Hall:  
Before -**



**After:**



**Replacement fire doors at the Cornwell Centre:  
Before -**



**After -**



**Sink hole at Cotswold recreation ground:**

