

WHITEPARISH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 16th MARCH 2017

I am really sorry to have to miss the Annual Parish Meeting. Unfortunately the date coincides with a meeting of the Southern Planning Committee which is due to consider an application in Whiteparish which I called to committee so I must attend and speak on the matter.

I attend nearly all meetings of the three Parish Councils in my Division: Alderbury, Whiteparish and Grimstead. They are all very different – which is perhaps not surprising since the villages themselves are very different. But some matters are common: speeding through the village, maintenance of the rural footpath network, litter and fly-tipping and the usual highways maintenance problems. Whiteparish Parish Council is very vigorous in addressing these issues: it has an active Community Speedwatch group, it has a Lead member for footpaths (in fact several councillors actively walk the network and report on problem areas) and it adopts a fairly aggressive stance towards Wiltshire Council in trying to get highways problems attended to. Of course, I support the council's efforts if/when required – not that Whiteparish Parish Council needs much support!

These are all healthy signs of an active parish council doing what it can to look after the village. Its meetings are always well attended by your councillors who are all active in village affairs in some way or another. Meetings are always well managed and the council's administration is highly competent.

Whiteparish affairs occasionally keep me awake at nights - but nowhere near as often as other parishes!

Well done Whiteparish – I'm sorry to miss your meeting.

Richard

Wiltshire Councillor Richard Britton
Alderbury & Whiteparish Division

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Finance Committee

The committee has responsibility for overseeing the financial aspects of the Parish Council including providing proposals for the annual Budget.

The Budget for the year starting April 2017 shows a significant increase of £9,300 comprised of:

- £5,000 election expenses – as advised and requested by Wiltshire Council
- £1,200 projected maintenance for the football pitch, the skateboard ramp & hoop and the village benches
- £2,600 estimated cost of two new Noticeboards (improved quotes continue to be sought)
- £500 impact of inflation on costs e.g. insurance, audit expenses

The Finance Committee considered an increase in the Parish Precept to cover all these additional expenses but decided to only recommend a small increase of 3.8% - which translates as an increase of £1.50 for the whole year on a band D house. This compares to an average Parish Precept increase of 9.35% across the whole county.

Planning

The Parish Council continues to consider at Parish Council meetings every application for development within the Parish. These are primarily considered in the context of the planning requirements under the Wiltshire Core Strategy but also where relevant those for the New Forest since part of Whiteparish is within the New Forest National Park. We welcome contributions from members of the public in writing, email or in person at our meetings, as this will help to inform us when making our decision.

Over the past 12 months for Whiteparish there have been 40 planning applications to consider and there were also 10 applications for tree works.

Environment, Transport and Highways

Wiltshire Council have re-introduced the parish steward scheme and you may have seen our steward working in the village, his distinctive green and yellow vehicle cannot be missed! He carries out minor highways works which are set for him by the Parish Council, and as he gets to know Whiteparish he also undertakes tasks as he identifies them. If you become aware of aspects of highway maintenance that will improve the safety and environment of our village please inform the Clerk. Works he can carry out include maintenance on roads (minor potholes), pathways, verges (highway strimming) and drainage areas. The steward is allocated to us for one day a month and over the winter he has worked hard clearing the leaves off the footpath and layby by the Church, along the pseudo footpath as well as clearing and cleaning road signs, clearing of small grips, culverts and road gully tops. There are no visits scheduled during May as parish stewards will be engaged in safety related activities such as clearing grass around sight-lines at junctions.

The 20mph speed limit in Common Road is now in operation and a metro count has been undertaken within the 20mph limit of Common Road which has indicated that Common Road is eligible as a Community Speedwatch area but more volunteers are needed in order to effectively cover all the locations.

Further to requests from residents the Parish Council has continued to look into village concerns regarding traffic management in The Street (A27). Various concerns have been raised regarding traffic speed, size of vehicles, courtesy of drivers and the risk to pedestrians particularly those walking to and from the school and using Whiteparish Village Store. In the past 3 years traffic surveys in The Street have indicated that the number of heavy goods vehicles are low and that even if a weight restriction were placed on commercial vehicles, the majority of the vehicles would still be allowed to use The Street as they are buses, farm vehicles or HGVs travelling to or from local businesses. The Wiltshire Council Senior Traffic Engineer has visited Whiteparish on several occasions and we have asked the Engineer to consider a traffic light system along the Street to include the village end of Common Road, highways engineering to provide calming measures or to produce a 'Give way to oncoming vehicles' system, a pedestrian crossing by the village shop and bollards along the pavement. All of these might be possible but Wiltshire Council has advised they do not have the budget therefore it would require considerable financial outlay from the Parish Council and all would result in significant loss of parking for residents and passing custom for the Village Shop. Discussions with members of the public at the Parish Council meetings have indicated that all feel that the presence of parked cars along The Street does provide a significant deterrent to speeding cars and that the loss of parking and risk of loss of trade to the shop means that we should not proceed to investigate these options further at this time.

Wiltshire Council has confirmed that it is the council's policy not to introduce 20mph speed limits on 'A' class roads. In accordance with this policy it is not possible to introduce a 20mph speed limit on the A27 in Whiteparish. However, it has been indicated that a 20mph speed limit may, in exceptional circumstances only, be considered for an 'A' class road. Those circumstances are considered to be a busy 'A' class road in an urban town centre environment with high numbers of vulnerable road users (such as pedestrians and cyclists). Wiltshire Council advise that it is considered that such circumstances do not exist in respect of the A27 in Whiteparish and if such a speed limit were to be implemented that there would need to be a reduction in the number of car parking spaces in The Street, and as such a 20mph speed limit will not be introduced.

The Parish Council submitted a report to the Community Area Transport Group (CATG) regarding issues of ice at the junction of Miles Lane and the A27. This is continuing to be investigated by Wiltshire Council who have also now advised us that Miles Lane will be put forward for the Velocity Patching programme. Land owners are being reminded to keep their ditches clear in order to prevent excessive water build up with inadequate drainage.

The condition of our narrow lanes is not helped by the larger vehicles used within local farming operations that are continually overrunning the edges of the road and damaging the verges and edges and thereby further weakening the structure of the road.

Further to the Wiltshire Council Passenger Transport Review 2016 to date no further changes have been made to the X7 and X7R buses servicing Whiteparish.

The Mobile Library continues to have visits to Ashmore Close as follows:

- Thursdays 10.35am – 11.05am: Apr 6, May 4, June 1, June 29, July 27
- Saturdays 11.45am – 12.15pm: Apr 22, May 20, Jun 17, July 15

Wiltshire Council continue to make budget constraints and therefore more pressure is being placed on local parish councils to cover areas which Wiltshire Council will not.

Rights of Way

There are over 30 Rights of Way (footpaths and bridleways) throughout the Parish. These range from the short paths within the village itself which are no doubt familiar to most villagers, to the longer routes up to Pepperbox and Dean Hill and to the east to the Sherfield English/County boundary. It is easy to combine these paths into circular walks through and around the village. A map showing all these paths is attached.

A Parish Councillor inspects all these Rights of Way at least once a year to ensure there are no problems such as blockages or broken stiles or gates. We contact the land owner where problems do occur as they are responsible for ensuring that there are no obstructions to the paths across their land. We are grateful to those land owners who maintain their paths without prompting!

As a consequence of budget cuts, Wiltshire Council no longer undertakes improvements to Rights of Way nor clearance work. It will however provide new gates and clearance equipment if the manpower is provided by volunteers. So our village paths will now only be maintained if enough villagers volunteer to help. Path 26 was cleared on this basis by a small volunteer group last year with help from the River Bourne Community Farm who provided the strimmer. Similarly we are currently in contact with New Forest National Park as they have offered to provide new gates to replace broken stiles along path 5 (parts of paths 4, 5, 6 are in the National Park). If you are able to join the volunteer group to help install these gates or undertake other work to keep our paths maintained please contact Councillor John Herrett.

Rights of Way in the countryside are inevitably prone to becoming overgrown if they are not used regularly. Please make full use of this free local amenity and if you do come across a problem report it to Councillor Richard Burr or the Parish Clerk.

New Forest National Park, Consultative Panel

The Panel is made up of representatives from local interest groups, local authorities and every Parish Council within the National Park Area. The majority of time is spent sharing issues that affect some or all of the areas within the National Park. During the last year, these have included:

- The need to protect the tranquillity of the National Park – and how noise from unofficial campsites, traffic and drones can be mitigated or even avoided.
- The damage caused by increased persistent parking on verges – usually close to domestic properties and measures to prevent and/or mitigate any damage.
- Continued issue of dog mess, especially around popular car parks – and the incidence of dog mess collected into a bag – and then hung on a nearby tree or bush!
- Ongoing measures to protect wildlife, flora and fauna – including continued education of people who live in, near or use the National Park.

There are also regular meetings of Parish Councillors and the National Park Authority to ensure that information is exchanged in both directions.

Community Speedwatch

The Whiteparish Community Speedwatch (CSW) team volunteers have been in action since February 2014. We are one of over 135 teams operating across Wiltshire. The team now operates at four speed check sites, nominated by Wiltshire Police after road speed tests. Three are on the A27 within the 30 mph limit, the other is in the 40mph zone to the east of the village on the A27.

Whiteparish now shares the speed device with Landford only, instead of with Landford and Alderbury. This means we have the speed device more frequently and for longer periods. As a result 11,175 vehicles have been measured this year compared with 8,455 in 2014 and 8,831 last year. Of these 398 (3.6%) were recorded as speeding (36 plus mph within the 30 limit or 47 mph plus within the 40 mph limit); this is well down on last year's figure of 497 (5.6%). Vehicles measured at excessive speeds (45mph plus in the 30 limit or 60mph plus in the 40 limit) totalled 43 (0.4%) this year, again down on the 58 (0.7%) reported last year.

The CSW objective is to reduce the speed of traffic within Whiteparish by raising awareness and educating drivers. Statistics gathered indicate that the Whiteparish scheme is continuing to reduce overall traffic speed in the village as the overall annual ratio of speeders has declined year on year.

2014										
	February	March/April	May	June	July/August	October	Nov/Dec	January	February	Annual
Reported for Speeding	13.5%	10.1%	9.90%	9.6%	4.1%	5.8%	4.8%	3.4%	5.5%	6.59%
Excessive Speeding	1.9%	1.2%	1.44%	1.5%	1.1%	0.6%	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.82%

2015										
	April	May	June/July	August	September	November	December	January/February	Annual	
Reported for Speeding	8.7%	4.3%	5.1%	6.7%	2.8%	5.2%	5.9%	6.5%	5.6%	
Excessive Speeding	0.7%	0.5%	1.0%	0.8%	0.2%	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	

2016										
	April/May	May/June	July	August/September	October	November	January	February	Annual	
Reported for Speeding	3.8%	3.3%	4.2%	3.7%	4.4%	2.8%	3.2%	4.3%	3.6%	
Excessive Speeding	0.7%	0.1%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%	0.5%	0.4%	

This is an encouraging sign that traffic is slowing through the village.

We have added a few new volunteers over the course of the year, unfortunately some volunteers are no longer able to help us so we need more active volunteers. Wiltshire police experience is that traffic speed will rise again if activity is not maintained. Furthermore it has become clear that police activity will gravitate to areas where a CSW team is active as they can use the data gained to maximise their own results. The Parish Council has received frequent pleas for action on cars speeding through the village. Whilst the existence of a Community Speed Watch is no guarantee of any action by higher authorities on this issue, it appears that no action would be considered if there is no Community Speedwatch in place. It was for this reason that the scheme was introduced to Whiteparish. We need more volunteers for the effective running of the team. If we cannot keep an active team operating we will endanger the great support we have been getting from Wiltshire Police in helping to control speed in the village.

Driving down speed will drive up safety for Whiteparish residents especially children.

- **80% of children** hit by a car travelling at **40mph** will **die**
- **80% of children** hit by a car travelling at **30mph** will **live**

If you can spare some time to help keep Whiteparish a safe place to walk, ride and drive through, contact Mike Hayday, CSW coordinator, or Maria Pennington, Parish Clerk, for more details.

Area Board

Whiteparish sits within the South Wilts Area Board, one of 18 Boards in Wiltshire which seek solutions for local issues such as road repairs, traffic problems, footpaths, speeding in villages, litter and facilities for young people.

The Board is the communication channel to Wiltshire Council and an information forum for police, fire service and highways authorities. It has at its disposal £80,000 per year, a combination of capital spending, revenue spending and CATG with sums allocated for spending on such as youth, old people, footpaths etc. Whiteparish's active youth group have benefited from an Area Board grant in the past year as well as the Memorial Centre. The Board has several initiatives - maintenance of footpaths, help for the aged and help for those suffering from dementia. Grants are available for these activities if volunteers are found within the Parish to run the activity. Please contact the Clerk to the Parish Council for further information. New priorities may be set for the Area Board after up-coming Board elections.

Community Area Transport Group (CATG)

Community Area Transport Group (CATG) is a forum for entry level consideration of transport issues and schemes within South Wilts. With the support of highways officers it makes recommendations to the Area Board.

The current budget was circa £30,000 but there is no guarantee that it will continue at this level. Parishes are expected to contribute to any project awarded a grant by the Area Board/CATG. Whiteparish Parish Council has received no funds in the past year. The A27 was not selected by Wiltshire Council to be progressed further under Wiltshire Councils Freight Assessment and Priority Mechanism (freight study) though encouragement was given to apply again.

The Southern Area Board has made available a Speed Indication Device (SID) for which the Parish pays maintenance for each week of use. After the demise of the old machine a new one has been purchased by the Area Board and will appear in the village when the turn of Whiteparish comes around.

Memorial Centre and the Memorial Ground

2016 was a successful year for the Memorial Centre and Ground. The Trustees were able to report at the AGM that overall bookings for the centre and the sports grounds were better than the previous year. Hire income increased by 16% for the centre and 50% for outdoor sports hire. We generated an overall surplus of £5,000, in large part due to the funds transferred when the 100+ club came in house.

A number of key projects have been completed this year. The new cricket square irrigation system and the renewal of the MUGA surface and tennis nets were both major sports ground expenditure items. We also installed a new practice Rugby goal to encourage young rugby players. In the Memorial Centre, we installed a new outside notice board and replaced a damaged light bollard. Internally, with the generous help of Raymond Brown, we acquired a projector, screen and sound system. All of these activities require funding and this year we have been very active in both seeking funding and raising funds for future projects to improve the facilities both in the centre and the Memorial Ground.

We are very grateful to all the 100+ club members who have helped via their donations. We are also indebted to the ladies of the Breakaway Club who as well as being one of our regular hirers, also contributed by providing a magnificent buffet and all the organisation for the 100+ club party which raised a significant amount of money this year. Not satisfied with all those efforts the ladies also donated money to provide a new bench for the play area. The Trustees also ran a Winter Ball to raise funds this year for the first time. The total funds raised and donated this year came to over £7,000.

Looking forward to 2017 we plan to work with the surgery to resurface the car park, hopefully in the spring. We also need to carry out the survey and maintenance of the Newt Pond required under our planning consent. Our other major project is to replace and renew as many play items in the children's play area as we can afford. We will finance this using any grants we can obtain, our own reserve funds, the funds raised in the events we have had in 2016 and hope to raise in events during 2017 and funds generously donated by the Parish Council.

Youth

Whiteparish Youth Group is about to celebrate five successful years of operation, during which it has provided a range of trips and events for children from Year 7 (age 11) as well as regular Friday evening meetings in the Memorial Centre. Membership is stable in the range of 60 to 70.

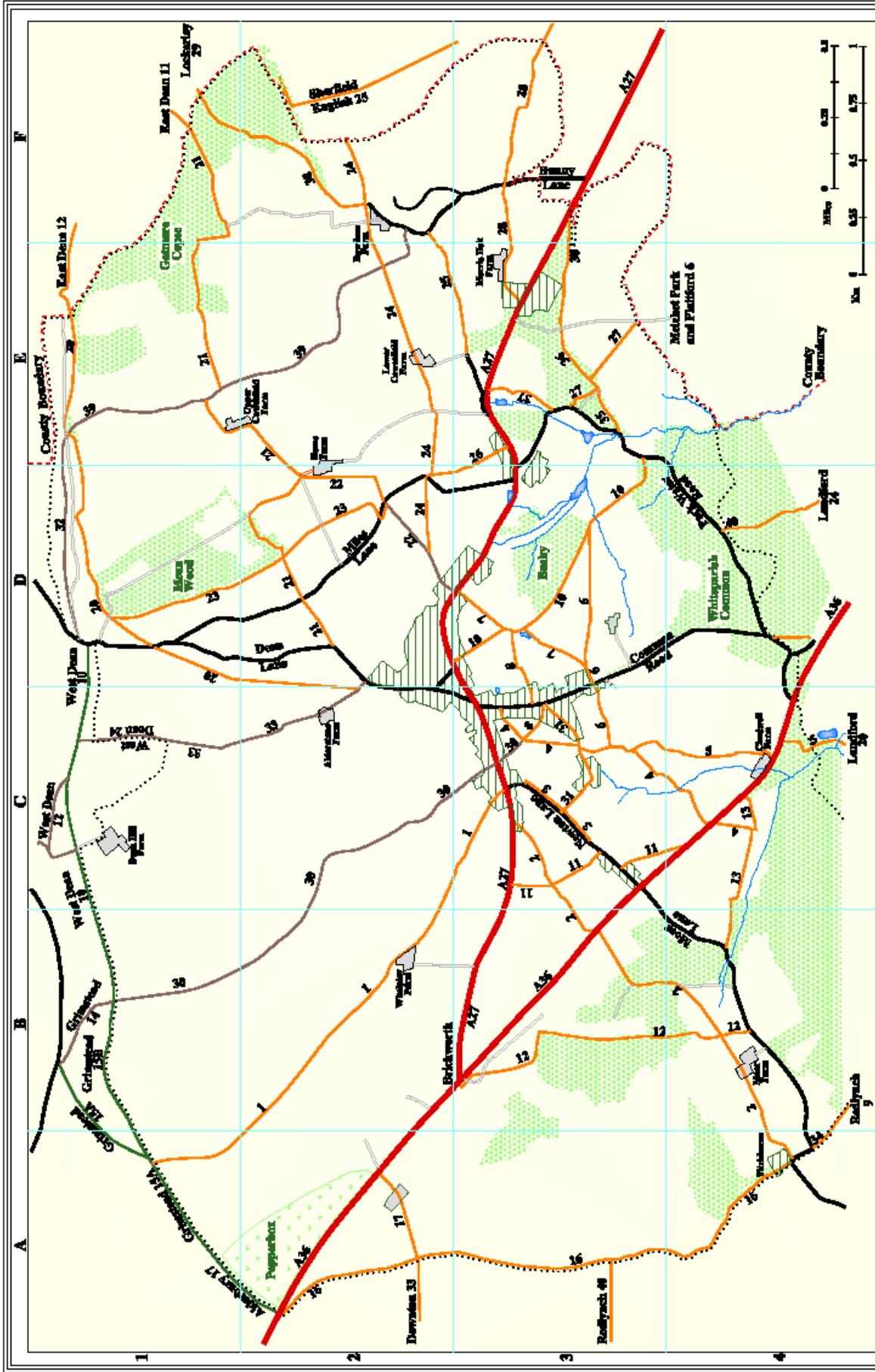
Among this year's events have been trips to Thorpe Park, New Forest Water Park, Golden Gecko climbing wall and a Pool Disco at Romsey Rapids. Twenty members travelled to the Isle of Wight for a second residential weekend at PGL Little Canada, where their behaviour was a credit to the village.

The regular Friday meetings have featured activities organised by Go Active and Boomsatsuma, which included zorb footballing, street surfing, graffiti painting and music sessions as well as cookery sessions and sexual health talks.

Fundraising activities have again been well supported. They included an ice-lolly stall at the village fete, another successful Music Quiz run by Martin Fisher before Christmas, and a Race Night in February. Donations were gratefully received from the May Ball Committee and Hampshire Constabulary's tuck shop. WYG has also been a beneficiary of the Waitrose 'green tokens' scheme this year. Additional funding for DBS checks and new equipment was provided by the Area Board, which made a further grant for trips and activities on the understanding that members would undertake some Community Volunteering. WYG members stepped up to the challenge on four occasions: twice helping to clear up the churchyard and using two further sessions to weed/de-moss the MUGA.

In addition to an effective committee the group benefits from no fewer than 55 volunteers who run the Friday evening meetings. Volunteers are required to undergo DBS checks and a qualified first aider is always on hand during meetings. Eleven volunteers passed the Emergency First Aid at Work course in January.

The only cloud on the horizon at present is that the group no longer has access to support from a Community Youth Officer, previously provided by Wiltshire Council.



- A class roads
- Byways
- Minor roads
- Bridleways
- Private tracks
- Footpaths
- Parish boundary
- Streams

Whiteparish Rights of Way

Notes - Number only indicates a Whiteparish right of way.
 Adjacent and adjacent rights of way shown for information.