

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - PARISH ASSEMBLY APRIL 2021

Welcome to the Parish Assembly. My name is Archie Forbes. I am Chairman of the Parish Council so it is my pleasure to Chair this Parish Assembly. Lynne Rampton, our Parish Clerk, will be taking the Minutes and she will also be working the technology.

Please keep to your allotted time and also mute if it is not your turn to speak. Questions asked in advance will be answered and also any extra questions at the end, should we have time.

During the last twelve months, the Parish Council has welcomed four new members. Sadly, John Westlake passed away after serving as a Parish Councillor for over 50 years.

Because of the Covid 19 problems we did not have a Parish Assembly last year as the Country was in the first lockdown. However, Parish Council meetings have carried on throughout the time by using Zoom. Here we are, over a year later, and we still have Covid problems. Thanks must go to Lynne and Catherine, our Deputy Clerk, for setting up the use of Zoom and the training of many users.

Covid has affected every family in our Parish with schools and businesses closed and many others furloughed or working from home with only key workers allowed to go into their places of work. Many volunteers have helped with any amount of different tasks and they have been a huge asset to the Parish. Many thanks go to them all.

Things eased a little during the summer with our pubs and shops and other businesses opening but there were more restrictions in the Autumn so we were not able to have the late-night Christmas shopping event. However, the Christmas trees were put up, one outside The Woodborough and one outside the Spar in Sandford, and they looked absolutely lovely. These were paid for by the Parish Council and also the generosity of the Winscombe shop-keepers.

The other big issue concerning the Parish is North Somerset Council deciding to stop the school buses from Winscombe and Sandford to Churchill School. This was supposed to happen in September 2020 but now we are told that there will be no school buses after 28 May 2021. This has caused anger, worry and frustration. To expect students, some as young as 11 years old, to walk up to three miles to school and back again, on a 'so-called safe-route' in winter darkness and in all weathers is beyond belief. Mostly all Parishioners, including this Parish Council oppose this decision. We all hope for a reasonable and sensible conclusion to this matter.

We now look forward with optimism to life in the Parish with less restrictions on everyday living. It is pleasing to see so many walking and cycling in our lovely Parish and I hope that this will continue.

Safer Stronger Neighbourhoods



Sandford & Winscombe Parish Council

Police Beat Report



22/03/2021 to 04/04/2021

Calls from the Parish of Winscombe & Sandford 15

During the above period 15 calls were made to Police by residents of the Parish of Winscombe and Sandford, Below are selection of calls received

ABANDONED 999 CALLS	4
ASB	1
ANIMAL RELATED	1
SUSPICIOUS	1
THREATS	2

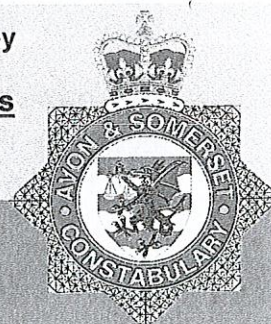
It has only been a few weeks since the monthly beat report was published so today's figures are low, we have seen many changes over the year and what a year it has been, policing has changed massively due to covid but we are pleased to see things are slowly returning to normal, we look forward to being able to return to offering beat surgeries and attending local events as well as the usual police business.

This year we have also seen some staff changes, the village now as a new PC, Sophie Bailey has joined the village's team as well as a new Sgt Phil Rudden, your local PCOS's remain the same PCSO Kayley Anderson and PCSO Mike Benfield. As always you can find out more information about the team by visiting the Avon and Somerset Constabulary website (in your area) or follow us on Facebook "Weston and Worle police" please follow our page to see what is happening in the area, we are also on Twitter! You can still contact us the old fashion way by picking up the phone and giving us a call on 101 for non-emergencies or 999 for urgent in progress concerns. The police website also gives up to date crime information for the area so please check it out.

#Bikeregister. #Farmwatch. #Horsewatch. #Neighbourhood watch.

You can contact your Beat Team – PS Philip RUDDEN, PC Sophie BAILEY, PCSO Kayley ANDERSON, and PCSO Mike BENFIELD on 101 or via our email addresses.

If you require Police attendance or wish to contact one of the officers call 101 – if it's an emergency call 999



Making the communities of Avon and Somerset feel safe and be safe

It is now almost two years since I was elected ward councillor for this parish and others, thank you to those who placed their trust in me.

It has been a steep learning curve, sometimes frustrating, sometimes exhilarating and sometimes quite scary. This is my first parish assembly meeting, so please forgive me if I am not slick or political enough.

I will restrict my report only to issues which directly affect Winscombe and Sandford.

1. The most challenging issue for me has been the issue of H2S transport. I have worked and am still working hard on undoing the serious loss of trust this issue has caused. I totally understand parents concern. Although I support encouraging and facilitating walking and cycling, this can only be done by involving parents and the school, and sadly this has not happened here. It cannot be done by forcing children either onto a flawed route or into parents cars. I have had many exchanges with officers and executive councillors, and am still in conversation. My biggest concerns were the state of the so-called footpath, the safeguarding issues on the Strawberry Line and the suggestion to cycle along the A371, amongst others.

I can report a small amount of progress. I have been assured that the footpath will be improved and fenced, but last Thursday there were no signs of any work at all. The time table for withdrawing the free school bus has been pushed back several times, it is currently the 28th of May. I have also challenged the assumption that all of Winscombe is within the 3 mile cut off point set by central government. This is inaccurate, my car display jumps to 3 miles from the school to Winscombe Hill when I get to the junction with Barton Road. My position is that although legally there may emerge a route eventually which can be classified as safe using official government guidelines, morally there is an obligation to facilitate alternatives. So I have also pushed very hard to get acceptance that NSC needs to facilitate public transport to Churchill Academy, at affordable rates. This is probably a step forward, there is now a 51 bus which fulfils this role, replacing the A5. It leaves Browns Corner at 8:09 and 8:25 and gets to Churchill Academy at 8:15 and again at 8:35. There are two similar return journeys in the afternoon, leaving at 3:15 and 3:50. All students will travel at child rates.

The bonus Winscombe and Sandford get from this new bus service is that it goes from Langford all the way to Weston, so there is a second bus to supplement the 126. However, I still feel that on balance, although the walking route from Sandford and the North of Winscombe may be safer in future, the current plans for walking from the rest of Winscombe or the cycling route are not and am continuing to work on this.

2. The Banwell bypass will affect not just Banwell, but all surrounding villages including Winscombe and Sandford , especially Sandford . I am working hard to try and make its impact as low as possible, but also to get my parish to benefit from funding available for creating more active travel options.
3. From the time the modification to the Triangle junction at Church Road were made, I got emails from worried residents about it. The complaints started in the summer and have continued till March. As I understand it, this new layout started as a traffic calming measure to stop vehicles speeding around the corner as well as to protect walkers emerging from a footpath straight onto the highway.
The initial design was an ordinary T junction, but when it emerged that two buses used this junction to turn around, the current compromise layout was designed in cooperation between the parish and NSC highways.

The issue is that cars, tractors and cyclists keep using the one way section from the village into Church Road the wrong way round. This has been reported about 20 times, I have seen it twice myself when on a site visit with councillors and officers.

I have worked very hard with the officer to try and remedy this, and new signs were added to the site. Unfortunately the problem seems to continue, and in total I have received reports of five near misses.

Ironically, the school bus driver has confirmed to me that he cannot use the one way section to turn and the A5 bus is now withdrawn.

On a more positive note, there were initial issues with a lack of a walkway round the corner, because the ownership of the verge was unclear. I managed to clear this up and a walkway is now there.

4. Two other small successes, the verges along the A38 were completely overgrown and after some pressure on the relevant highways office, they were cleared last year and this year. The gullies on the dip in the A38 near Sidcot were blocked, creating a huge dangerous flood on the highway. These have now been cleared by jetting and now function properly.
5. I am also working with various residents groups on exploring if our parish would benefit from a 20 mph zone either parish wide or for certain zones. Although personally I would favour a parish wide scheme, I feel strongly that this can only succeed if our residents support this. I therefore welcome the current consultation by the parish and would encourage all Winscombe and Sandford residents to make their voices heard.

WINSCOMBE AND SANDFORD PARISH ASSEMBLY

MONDAY 12TH April 2021

Agenda Item 14

Winscombe and Sandford Tree Wardens

PP slide	Commentary
1	Thanks for the opportunity of a few words. First, who we are and what we do.
2	Tree Wardens were established nationally by the Tree Council of Great Britain. North Somerset has a number of groups who operate in their own parishes in association with the Parish and North Somerset Councils. If you are enthusiastic about trees why not join us. The commitment isn't onerous and the results are rewarding.
3	We have a fair degree of autonomy and can decide upon our own projects. Here are the main things we do in Winscombe and Sandford.
4	Here are examples of some of the many plantings we have made around the parish.
5	We help keep the Community Orchard productive.
6	These are the most recent trees to go in at Winnowing End play area. We look forward to seeing how they have come through the winter and seeing the new growth as summer unfolds.
7	However, the huge challenge that threatens to engulf us is ash dieback. If you have recently been to Kings Wood, Shute Shelve or Cheddar Gorge you will be well aware of the enormous devastation the National Trust has had to cause in the struggle to remove danger from infected ash adjacent to highways and major paths. In a few years experts are confident that the many treescapes of ash we now enjoy will be a thing of the past – just as elms virtually disappeared in the 1970s.
8	Here is what our local Tree Officer is telling us. North Somerset Council is well aware of the issue and we will be hearing their plan later in the year after survey work this summer. However, if you own an ash tree it looks at present as though the responsibility for action will rest with you alone. Search the Tree Council website for excellent information that will keep you completely informed as far as the present position is understood.
9	Here are the signs to look out for. Users of the Millenium Green and the Strawberry line will know that there are many ash trees on these sites. The Millenium Green Trust who are responsible for the Old Station site at Winscombe and NSC who are responsible for the Strawberry Line are actively considering what must be done - the cost implications could be great.
10	A few ash trees will survive and breeding from these will be a hope for the future. It is best not to clear-fell ashes as a precaution. You might unknowingly destroy trees with valuable resistance. However, once dieback is confirmed then the tree should be removed as soon as possible. Dealing with dieback will be a major problem for authorities and private owners alike. Tree wardens have an important role helping replant with suitable trees as soon as we better know the final situation.

Winscombe and Sandford Annual Parish Assembly April 2021

Cemetery and Allotment Report 2019-2021

Our cemetery is a beautiful and peaceful place with lovely views and quiet areas for reflection and remembrance.

The allotments continue to be popular with a substantial waiting list for plots.

The working group of six councillors supported by our Parish Clerk, our orderly Jenny Nichols and Lindsay Lawrence of Gowers has focussed on maintaining and enhancing the beauty of the area.

This work continues the with plans to improve the car park access followed by resurfacing and relining and resurfacing and of the allotment path including new fencing.

Careful and sustainable maintenance ensure our cemetery and allotments continue to be assets to our village.

Cllr Lynne Stephens

Chairman

Cemetery and Allotments Working Group

Winscombe & Sandford Annual Parish Assembly 2021

Employment, Policy and Finance Committee Report

On Personnel matters:

The Parish Office has been closed since the first lockdown in March 2020 with our office-based staff working from home. The pandemic has increased the workload for the Clerk and deputy Clerk resulting in some additional hours worked.

All staff salaries have been reviewed.

On Policy matters:

In August the Parish Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessments were reviewed, updated and readopted for a further 12 months.

The Committee also reviewed, identified and recommended updates to the Parish website to comply with The Public Sector Bodies Accessibility standards prior to the cut off date in September 2020.

On Finance issues:

The Committee reviewed the budget and expenditure at each meeting.

It was noted that the Covid 19 pandemic resulted in additional and unplanned expenditure. The Council received a Covid Small Business Grant payment for increased costs at the public conveniences, although it is still unclear if Parish Councils are eligible.

Fees and charges were reviewed and local grants agreed.

Public consultation is underway on the proposed 20 mph village speed limit. As the expenditure is significant future consultations are likely for the following:

- a request for a loan from Winscombe Community Association to help to fund their new centre,
- a request for a contribution to help fund the Winscombe Community Association building,
- the purchase of the Headmasters House (the current Parish Council office currently owned by Winscombe Community Association).

Precept for 2021/22

The proposed expenditure for 2021/22 was thoroughly challenged and reviewed. This kept the increase in the precept to £6,000, increasing from £149,000 to £155,000. The Local Element of Headline Council Tax per Band D property moves from £71.86 to £73.33 and is the equivalent of a 2.1% increase per Band D property.

Other matters:

The Community Orchard was re-registered as an Asset of Community value.

Environment Working Group

Highways

The ENV have discussed a number of highway related issues. Most recently we have seen NSC carry out the installation of double yellow lines on various parts of Winscombe Hill to combat the current parking problems.

Carriageway resurfacing and various footway repairs have been carried out by NSC on Belmont Road, Brae Road, Brae Rise, Risedale Road and Brimridge road. This is in addition to a number of reactive works such as pothole repairs being carried out by our NSC area officer. We continue to push NSC for resurfacing works to Wimblestone Road.

Myself and our Village orderly, carried out a survey of almost all the road gullies in the parish. Reports were submitted to NSC and resulted in the cleansing of the gullies (where required) last summer.

We also have our vehicle activated sign (VAS) which is regularly moved around the parish reminding road users of the speed limit.

The Parish Council also own around 100 of our parish streetlights. The Parish Council is currently replacing these as they fail. The streetlights are then replaced with modern, energy efficient, LED lights. Our streetlight maintenance contractors carry out quarterly checks of all our streetlights at night to ensure they are all working, and subsequent repairs are then made.

If you have any issues to report about the roads or footways around our Parish, such as potholes, broken kerbs or blocked gullies, please report these to North Somerset Council.

Award Land

A group of volunteers continue to maintain and improve the award land. One of our Volunteers, Garry, has kindly written a resume' on the work of the volunteers:

The Award land is an area of mostly scrub and woodland.

Different people have very differing ideas of how the area should be maintained.

From those who think the land should be left to grow into a type of jungle to those who prefer the manicured look.

Others see it as a home for birds and for dormice and food areas for insects and butterflies.

We the volunteers have taken most of this into consideration and for the last year have tried to incorporate as much as possible into our work.

We are only on site for about 2.5 hours and have now got about 7 volunteers. Another constraint is our mindfulness to ensure visitors to the area can pass through safely, so throughout the summer months bramble cut back is always going to take up a lot of time.

Since the passing of John we have embarked on a project to tidy the forest floor, remove ivy from trees and prune to rejuvenate existing trees and shrubs.

It became sadly obvious that this type of work had been neglected for many years as considerable numbers of the ivy entwined trees were in fact dead.

The majority of collected and harvested material has been used to create bug hotels which hopefully will have a positive impact on the wildlife, which incidentally is very sparse.

In 2007 the council employed consultants to advise on a course of action to make the most of the asset. We have recently seen the document and it aligns very closely to our objectives.

The one area where we will be unable to complete on the plan will be in the total destruction of the Quercus Ilex trees. (Holm oaks)

These were originally planted by the quarry to mitigate blasting noise and dust from the quarry.

We have probably completed between a 1/4 and 1/3rd of the forest area. We shall resume towards autumn to complete the next phase.

It is interesting to note that a difference is already noticeable where light can reach the forest floor.

PROW's

We have recently taken part in NSC's 10 yearly consultation on Public Rights of Way. We have put forward a list of 10 PROW'S that require improvement works.

Any issues with our parishes PROW's can be reported directly to NSC.

Public Conveniences

There have been a small number of vandalism incidents to our public conveniences in the past 12-month period. It is a shame to see this after renovation works were carried out in recent years and the public conveniences have been invaluable in remaining open through lockdown periods for those that needed them – especially those delivery drivers that we were all using during lock-down periods.

Local students are continuing to carry out landscaping works to the land behind the public conveniences. Once complete, this will provide a new open space in the parish.

Flower Tubs

Thanks to Councillor Mark Boddy, who leads a team of volunteers who keep the various flower tubs around the Parish planted and watered throughout the year.

Dog Bins

These are provided around the Parish for dog walkers to use. The Parish Council has recently agreed to install a larger dog bin on the Belmont Road Junction.

Speed limit reviews

The Parish Council has been approached by residents regarding vehicles speeding through the Parish. We have launched an initial consultation to see what people think about a reduction in the speed limit within the Parish. The consultation runs until the 1st June and the outcome will be discussed at an Environment Working Group meeting following the close of the consultation.

Finally, thanks to our Deputy Clerk, Catherine, who oversees all of the Environment Working Group activities.

PLANNING REPORT – APRIL 2021

The Planning Committee has been meeting using Zoom as no face-to-face meetings have been possible during the Covid Pandemic. We have considered 60 applications, of which 50 have been approved and 10 have been refused by North Somerset Planners. Three applications were withdrawn. We are only an advisory committee.

The use of Zoom has meant that we have carried on being able to discuss applications fully and we have also been able to have the plans on screen. My thanks to Catherine, our Deputy Clerk, for her assistance and technological help. Thanks also to Kevin, our Planning Vice-Chairman who has been doing drive-by planning evaluations.

In Sandford - the Sandford House development has now been completed.

The Strongvox site will, we are told, be completed by August this year and the 'football pitch' green area is in the process of being leased by North Somerset to the Parish Council for a peppercorn rent. This area will also be used by Sandford School during term time and it will be for community use at other times.

The Aurora site, next to the Strongvox site, was refused by the Planning Inspectorate but Aurora have a second application live, of which we have no news. Also we do not have any news of the site to the East of the Aurora application.

In Winscombe – The Chestnuts development has now been completed and Woodborough Grange is currently under construction. The Bridgwater Road application has gone to the Planning Inspectorate for a decision.

The Banwell Bypass is now in its infancy and this, if completed, will no doubt have an impact on our Parish, especially Sandford.

These are the larger applications but the Planning Committee considers all applications, large and small with due diligence. They are important to the applicant.

PLAY AREA AND SKATE PARK REPORT – APRIL 2021

The Parish owns two play areas, a skate park and some adult keep-fit equipment which are all run by the Parish Council.

The sites at Winnowing End in Sandford and the Recreation Ground in Winscombe have been subject to restrictions due to the Covid Pandemic. The Parish Council have adhered to Government Guidelines on all these restrictions.

At the Recreation Ground the 6 metre high rope pyramid had been constructed and the new half-pipe completed in the skate park before the 2020 lockdown.

Unfortunately, several unruly people decided to party on some Friday evenings in the skate park during the first lockdown. A large amount of litter was left behind for others to clear up although no damage was done to the equipment. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped with the clean-up.

My thanks also to the team who run this Group – to Lynne, Kevin and Peter Keenan, the Recreation Orderly.



Clerk: Mrs L Rampton
Parish Council Office,
Winscombe Community Centre,
11 Sandford Road, Winscombe,
North Somerset BS25 1JA
Tel: 01934 844257 Fax: 01934 844292

WINSCOMBE WAR MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT 2020-21 TO ANNUAL WINSCOMBE AND SANDFORD PARISH ASSEMBLY 2021.

As all will be aware this has being an unusual last two years. The Parish assembly for 2020 was cancelled and so this report covers from April 2019 to April 2021.

Since the lockdowns commenced meetings have been conducted by a mixture of Zoom and actual. A number were cancelled.

Briefly the following has been achieved:

1. Replacement roof for changing rooms (meeting notes 17.06.19)

Tenders were made to replace the flat roof of the changing room which had reached the end of its life, the contract to replace cost £5550+VAT. A slight overspend occurred due to unforeseen issues, however the spread of the spend over the financial period has not caused a budgetary problem.

2. Change of contractor for grounds maintenance (Meeting notes 4.11.29)

A new contractor was appointed for ground maintenance. The Football Club, Parish Councillors, Orderly and Parish Council Staff were totally satisfied with the new ground maintenance contractor

3. Memorial tree planting (Meeting Notes 04.11.2019)

Due to escalating tree maintenance works, no new memorial trees at the recreation ground are permitted, but low maintenance benches welcomed (plastic or steel for example) with a suitable plaque. Ash scattering has not been permitted at the grounds despite requests for this.

4. Great War commemoration. (Meeting Notes 04.11.2019)

The WMRG was developed from public subscription to commentate the Great and subsequent wars therefore a commemorative steel painted seat was purchased at a cost of £781 plus a matching litter bin at a cost of £491.

5. Redecoration of the changing rooms (Meeting Notes 04.11.2019)

Redecoration has been completed and the rooms are now to undergo a deep clean to improve their cleanliness biannually (January and June).

6. Car parking area – patching and kerbing works. (meeting notes 02.11.20)

A further decline to the carpark surface and kerbing had taken place since the end 2019 when original quotations had been obtained. New quotations from three contractors included works to patch the tarmac surface, re-set two sunken manhole covers replacement of damaged kerbing, new tarmac to the area by the gas meter housing, replacement of lining and signs removed during patching work and patching of the concrete path to side . This has recently been completed.

7. Access road to WMRG. Meeting notes 02-11-21)

The Recreation Ground access roadway owned by the Parish Council had been subsiding for a number of years. The double-edged kerb was also breaking up with raised edges that could cause issues for cyclists and pedestrians along with householders from flooding issues. Gulley clearance works and CCTV suggested that there were a number of blockages which would not be cleared by jet washing. A section of pipe was replaced by volunteers early in February. Additional works and investigation are planned.

8. A consideration is being given to the increased installation of CCTV to combat and deter antisocial behaviour. A recommendation to the PC will be made in the near future.

In general this has been a tough year for the WMRG. The majority of sports fixtures have not be played and the clubs are suffering from funding issues as well as membership considerations. The grounds have to be, and have been, maintained to a high standard. The WMRG has experienced a high usage by the villagers during the period of lockdown for exercise and we are fortunate to have such a facility.

Mark Boddy
WMRG Committee Chair
April 2021.