

Ferring Parish Council

Chairman's Report 2019

Every year seems to get busier than the preceding one, with new issues for the parish council to deal with. Without the huge efforts put in by individual Councillors the day to day business simply could not be carried out. The new Data Protection Regulations have, as we anticipated, generated a huge amount of work and Councillor Lesley Young has worked hard to ensure that the parish council is fully compliant.

Our new website has proved to be a great success thanks to the efforts of Councillors Geoff Mines, Stephen Abbot and Terry Jackson. The last hurdle was the setting up of new dedicated e-mail addresses for Councillors and after a few minor wobbles this is now working effectively.

We finally signed the heads of terms agreement with WSCC for an option to purchase the Glebelands freehold. Unfortunately, after making this purchase a condition for partnership working, the Village Hall suddenly withdrew from the arrangements set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. The option to buy still stands but the parish council will have to decide whether or not to go ahead on their own. The Glebelands is a popular and well used village facility and shared social spaces are not something to be given up without careful consideration.

The parish council is carrying out ongoing discussions with Persimmon about the possibility of acquiring some allotment land, a key element of the Neighbourhood Plan.

As usual the two events that the parish council organise were successful. Remembrance Day always brings a large crowd to the war memorial to participate in the wreath laying. The Christmas event was ever popular although the weather in 2018 was appalling. The fire eaters bravely put on their show despite the torrential down pour. The Christmas market was well attended despite the weather and the choir and the Salvation Army simply moved into the hall. The new lighting contractor was a big improvement and the change to LED lights meant we could put on a bigger and better show for less cost. The lights can also be left in place all year meaning a big saving in labour costs and better value for money.

We were finally able to recruit a new Administrative Assistant, Amanda Thomas, who has settled in extremely well. Many thanks to Nadine for coping so effectively with the increasing workload on her own before help arrived!

Finally, thank you to all the councillors who have volunteered to take on project work and organise events on behalf of the parish council. We could not manage to do so much without that help.