

Chairman's Report 2018

Turville Parish Council has had a turbulent year with many changes.

Due to a loss of one Councillor last year, we ended up interviewing to find a replacement. We chose Dan Wels, we had no representative in Northend and Dan has lived there for many years. He is an experienced tech user so was able to take over from Rob Oldershaw who was responsible for organising Turville.net and was keen to hand it over, as well as setting up Turville Parish Council's very own Facebook page. Huge thanks go to Rob for keeping the community updated with Turville.net, and also for running the parish council website for us for so many years.

At the January meeting David Cairns resigned and Margaret Drage retired, so again we had 2 spaces to fill. We had already interviewed Hector Sants and Deborah Abbot for the previous vacancy so we co-opted Deborah at the March meeting and we will be co-opting Hector at this meeting tonight (May meeting). I would like to welcome these 2 new Councillors.

We now have a good selection of Councillors and I feel there is a good variety of character and age to ensure a balanced opinion when it comes to making decisions to protect and improve one of the most beautiful areas of England.

However the pressure is on, our area is close to London and remains relatively unspoilt. The house prices are high, pricing out any chance of younger residents being able to buy a home to stay in their community. I personally will support any sympathetic initiative that could improve the infrastructure of the parish including commercial enterprise and community homes.

We have looming in the background that the Secretary of State is minded to abolish the County Council and the 4 District Councils in Bucks and replace them with one new unitary council. There is going to be a poll by the 4 District Councils for all parish Councillors to vote individually by the 22nd May, I would hope that all our Councillors consider this carefully and make sure that their vote will count.

On the planning front there has not been a huge amount of activity, some to note are: an application for converting some buildings into art workshops in Turville, there were some objections as the land is very close to the village and the AONB with fears that this will be setting a precedent for future development. It was approved by Wycombe District Council and the PC had no objection. There was an application at Turville Heath House, next door to The Barn Pitstop, the PC had no objection but the application was withdrawn. The PC is waiting for a potential application at The Barn Pitstop, Turville Heath. An application at the Lime Avenue was approved to fell some of the very dead trees, some of which actually did fall in the heavy snow, replanting hopefully with small leaf limes.

I attended a workshop run by Bucks and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils recently entitled Respect, Trust and Better Working Relationships. The theme at the conference was mostly about how difficult the job of the Clerk is, bearing in mind that s/he has anywhere between 5 to 12 employers in the form

of Councillors, who are from all walks of life, some who have maybe never employed anyone, and bosses who have employed hundreds. There was a very clear message running through this conference that the Clerk is subject to employment law and must be treated with respect. I am very grateful that we have Lorna Coldwell as our Clerk, she has done an excellent job particularly when we had some difficulties and I would like to thank her for her support.

Super-fast broadband has been on our agenda for quite a few years, it now seems that we have turned a corner thanks to Rick Scannell and David Cairns who have done a sterling job in monitoring and pressurising BT and more recently Vicky Hollier, Dan Wels and Hector Sants who have set up Turville Broadband Action Group (TB-AG). This gave us the power of a group to put more pressure on BT and it worked! Now most of the parish has got at least a more useable product.

There is one project that has not really got off the ground – Northend Pond, which the PC have allocated £2000 of CIL money to contribute towards. I had a good look at it the other day – it is really more a lake than a pond with the potential to be huge. It could be a beautiful feature in our parish. Ibstone parish have been working on their ponds, they understand that these man-made ponds are a special feature of the very dry Chiltern Hills. Great Marlow Parish Council are also working on their pond at Bovingdon Green. My vision is of a beautiful pond/lake that gives access for children and adults to explore, a haven for wildlife and a water source for many other animals with grassy banks, not the tangle of undergrowth that is there now. Possibly with a bench or two. It just needs our parish to get together and support this as a serious project.

I would like to thank Margaret Drage for her continuous service on the Parish Council, it must be 40 years. Margaret always studied the planning applications and other matters very carefully and her comments were always with thought and consideration.

I would also like to thank David Cairns for his service on the parish council during his years of membership, and for producing the parish information leaflet which will be completed and distributed very soon.

I give thanks to all the Councillors for continuing to put up with me, and all of the public who have attended the meetings, thus providing more action and attention to the running of the Parish Council.

Alice Nuttgens – Chair 09/05/18