

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL BARTESTREE PARISH MEETING
HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM
AT 7.00pm ON TUESDAY 4 MAY 2021**

Zoom ID Code: 827 5317 7701

Present: Mrs Wendy Soilleux – Chair - as Chair of the Parish Council

In attendance: Emma Thomas – Parish Clerk

Parishioners: 6

1. **To Accept Apologies for Absence**
None
2. **To Receive Declarations of Interest**
None

1 further parishioner joined the meeting

3. **To Receive the Chairman's Report**
The Chair's report was received – Appendix 1
4. **To Receive a Report from the Diana Caroline Hopton Charity**
The Diana Caroline Hopton Charity report was received – Appendix 2
5. **To Receive Questions from the General Public**
It was not thought that the responses regarding the crossing consultation were in large enough numbers to make a decision.

The meeting closed at 19.11

Signed: _____ Dated: 13-07-21

Appendix 1 – Chair’s Report

COVID-19 and Lockdown:

2020 was the most unusual year with the Play Areas, the Village Hall, and all group activities closed and the Parish Council and Planning Committee meeting via Zoom from May onwards.

Housing Developments:

The three main housing developments have been completed. Of the three, Bartestree Grange was the least problematic and was completed on time by the Summer of 2020. After initial problems with the flooding of the gardens of existing properties alongside the A438 to the South, Quarry Field was completed at a similar time. Malvern View gave rise to the most problems, which included dangerous pedestrian access, particularly for children on bicycles and skateboards, on to the A438 and on to Lower Bartestree Lane; an unemptied dog poo bin that had to be removed; most of the newly planted trees blowing over and dying through lack of care and attention and a section of road sinking. After some persistence, all these issues have now been resolved. The number of new dwellings approved since April 2011 now stands at 169 and a small number with a decision pending.

Play Areas:

The transfer of ownership of the Frome Park open space from Herefordshire Council to the Parish Council was completed in late 2019. The new play equipment was installed by Creative Play during a very wet February in 2020. Once the new trees had been planted, we had one of the driest Springs on record and they had to be watered by Scot, Geoff and some of the local residents. All the trees survived, the reseeded grass grew, the area is now looking very good, is well used and really appreciated by its users. There were problems with the quality of some fixtures and fixings but, after an inspection by RoSPA and a great deal of pushing by us, everything is now as it should be.

Two new pieces of equipment, a basket swing and a mini-jungle climber, were installed at the Village Hall Play Area at the same time. Now that restrictions have been relaxed, this play area is also being very well used. The original equipment is being closely monitored and will need to have parts replaced relatively soon.

Thank you to Rob Francis, who very stringently checks the equipment on both sites every week.

Highways:

With more children being collected by car, the traffic congestion outside St. Mary’s School has been horrendous, with traffic stacked over long stretches of the A438 in both directions at the end of the school day. As many as 130+ pupils cross the main road amidst all this chaos, creating a potentially very dangerous situation. Herefordshire Highways carried out a formal, full Group Parish consultation regarding the potential installation of a pedestrian crossing on the A438, either just West of the entrance to the school or just East of the Lugwardine Court Orchard bus-stop. This consultation was deemed to be so urgent that it was carried out at the most inappropriate time that spanned both Christmas and New Year. However, the ‘urgent’ aspect has since disappeared as today, 4th May, we still await the formal results. We have, however, received the results informally from Councillor John Harrington:

Option A (Crossing at Lugwardine Court Orchard bus-stop):	37
Option B (Crossing near to St. Mary’s School):	70
No Preference:	8
Opposed:	6

As there are about 990 households and about 1840 electors, a total number of 121 is a very meagre response.

I would like to record our thanks to Councillor John Harrington for being very active in achieving solutions to several of our long-standing highway problems. He always responds to emails and calls; found time to meet us via Zoom to answer our questions and listen to our concerns and, best of all, managed to get some things done. Thank you, John!

Planning:

Several issues have arisen with planning applications that have shown the need for us to be rigorous in dealing with them. It is a demanding role and reading the documents, visiting the sites and engaging with local people are essential elements to do the job effectively.

The Community field:

With the COVID-19 restrictions, it has not been possible for the Community Recreation Group to move forward with the development of the field. However, the delay has allowed for a period of reflection that has resulted in the decision to embark upon a less ambitious, less expensive project than was first envisaged. Work on this is expected to progress during the coming year.

The Eco-Friendly Working Group:

Thanks to the hard work put in by this group, the recycling of aluminium foil and crisp packets continues to be well-supported. We look forward to its new project of introducing wildflower verges to parts of the two parishes.

Lengthsman, Andy Thomas:

Thank you for all the good work that you do for us always very cheerfully.

Parish Clerk and RFO:

Emma, thank you very much for the very wide range of things that you do, always providing good advice, keeping our finances in excellent shape, arranging all those Zoom meetings and teaching us how to access them.

Parish Councillors:

Thank you for all that you do in such a variety of different ways. Please keep a look out for some dynamic people who could be potential future Parish Councillors. This might well be my last year on the Council.

Appendix 2 – Diana Caroline Hopton Charity Report

The Diana Caroline Hopton Charity owns two almshouses, which continue to provide accommodation for two sets of tenants who have been in occupation for some years. The Charity's reserves remain high and the financial base is sound. Dr Geoffrey Barnes, a capable and influential trustee for many years, sadly died in October 2020. We welcome Revd Simon Tarlton as a new Trustee.

The Trustees are:	Dr. Richard Henderson	Chairman
	Mr. J F Baldwin	Treasurer
	Mrs. S W Soilleux	Secretary
	Revd. Simon J D Tarlton	

Richard Henderson
April 2021