

Annual report of Tarvin Parish Council

The Parish Council (PC) year has been one with more positives than negatives. Many of the negatives are familiar, and two of them – overgrown hedges and inconsiderate parking – are wholly within the control of Tarvin residents.

My report is divided into two main headings: Satisfactions and Disappointments

1. Satisfactions

1.1 The Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was completed during the year, independently reviewed, and overwhelmingly approved in a public referendum held in September. The policies in the NP have already been referred to by the PC in its response to a number of planning applications. The PC is pursuing the aspirations included in the NP, albeit with mixed success – see paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 below. The other aspirations, for an extension to the Community Woodland as far as the Tarvin roundabout, a permanent car park on land owned by the Diocese of Chester on Church Street, and a safe cycle route between Tarvin and Oscroft, will be more difficult to progress but are not forgotten

1.2 A51 Improvement Scheme

The PC strongly supported the proposed improvements to the A51 between the Tarvin roundabout and the A55. These will not solve the congestion problems on the road, but will reduce them. There will be a period of disruption but it is hoped this will be well managed. As part of the PC's response to the proposals, Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) was asked to consider incorporating into their design a footpath on the south side of the A54 between The Cottage and the Tarvin roundabout, as this was an NP aspiration

1.3 The PC was delighted when CWaC decided not to pursue the production of a **Traveller Development Plan**. It now seems that the land owned by CWaC on Tarporley Road will not be needed for a traveller site. In pursuing this outcome, the PC took the opportunity to press CWaC to invest in recreation provision on this land at a future date when the land may be available. Such provision is also an NP aspiration

1.4 There was **no PC election** in May 2019, as only 10 people were nominated for the 11 seats on the Council. Of the 10, one (Sarah Dutton) was a new Councillor, and James Norrie was subsequently co-opted to fill the remaining seat. Both new Councillors are already making a valuable contribution. Not only does the PC have a full complement of members, it also has a good range of ages, which is important for the future. In December the PC was 125 years old, and it looks forward to the next 125 years

1.5 After a very long wait, CWaC installed, on behalf of the PC, a **new refuge on the A54**, better placed to enable residents of Millside Close to cross safely to the village centre

1.6 **New gym equipment** was installed on the King George Playing Field. A defibrillator is also now available on the outside of the Scout Hut A total of four defibrillators are now available in Tarvin, plus one in Oscroft

1.7 The PC is supporting the recommendations made to the CWaC Cabinet by a Working Party chaired by one of our local Borough Councillors, Harry Tonge. If implemented, the recommendations would lead to **changes in school transport** which will benefit Tarvin

residents wanting to send their children to Tarporley High School. We hope that the Cabinet will adopt the recommendations and make the necessary changes

2. Disappointments

2.1 The PC had envisaged that when the former Top Farm site at the top of The Ridgeway was developed there would be a **pedestrian access into Forge Way**. Sadly, this did not happen. The PC tried to persuade the residents of the new development to agree to open the gate, but a majority did not agree. The PC hopes to mitigate this disappointing outcome, by making the informal path through the hedge between the A54 and The Ridgeway into a permanent safe access. Neighbouring residents have been consulted and it only remains for CWaC Highways to agree, as it will be necessary to erect a safety barrier on the grass verge alongside the A54

2.2 During the winter months the condition of Platts Lane between the junction with Broomheath Lane and the path to the Roman Bridges has been an issue where flooding, (exacerbated by the exceptional surface water runoff) and deep rutting (caused by heavy agricultural traffic) have combined to make the route inaccessible. Meetings were held with CWaC Highways in January to establish what remedial work could be done to:

- Resolve the flooding, caused by surface the surface water run off
- Make good the surface condition of the road surface.

It has since been established that a culvert beneath Platts Lane is blocked, by the landowner, and the existing road drainage system requires further jetting and modifications, which CWaC Highways have in hand. However, since the Corvid 19 Lockdown CWaC Highways Contractors are committed to maintaining the road network for use by key workers and unfortunately, Platts Lane does not fall into this category.

The PC will continue to maintain a dialogue with CWaC Highways until the matter is resolved.

2.3 The PC has continued to receive regular complaints about **speeding traffic**, especially on the High Street and on Cross Lanes/Broomheath Lane. The PC has asked our Police Community Support Officer to act on speeding traffic on the High Street, and has asked CWaC Highways to carry out a speed assessment on Cross Lanes/Broomheath Lane

2.4 There are also regular complaints about **inconsiderate parking**, particularly around the school. The PC has raised the matter with the school and has also encouraged to CWaC to send parking enforcement officers from time to time

3. Conclusion

Overall, it has not been a bad year for the PC. However, the emergence of **COVID-19** in February has had a dramatic effect on normal life in our community. The PC has been much encouraged by the various initiatives to make life easier for those most at risk, whether through individuals helping out their neighbours or through the combined initiative of the churches in Tarvin. The PC is pleased to see that social distancing seems to have been generally accepted and to be working well. Of course, having easy access to open countryside and the Community Woodland gives Tarvin a huge advantage over larger urban areas.

Despite the pandemic, the PC was able to meet in March via Video Conference using the Zoom app. The online work was arranged by one of our “tech-savvy” Councillors, Steve

Wiley. Despite the short notice and unfamiliarity, the meeting went very well, and even if some of the camera angles were a bit jaunty, I can report that all Councillors were able to participate easily and many of them are surprisingly photogenic! In the coming weeks and months, I hope everyone stays well and safe, and I hope that we will finally be able to look back with pride at our community's resilience

Ted Lush
Chairman, Tarvin Parish Council
April 2020