

Issue no. 63

How your council is
spending your money,
news of Council Meetings
and forthcoming events
in YOUR village
in your newsletter



The POST⁶³

Letter from the Chair

Dear Resident

What a year this has been! However, despite the pandemic, the Parish Council has still managed to meet every month, via Zoom meetings and this has meant that we have still been able to discuss and resolve the various issues arising during the year and move forward on so many of its actions despite the challenges of the year. The PC have started to meet again, and we look forward to meeting face-to-face with residents of the village.

We have continued with our work, representing you on issues affecting the community such as planning applications which included extensions, alterations to existing properties and new builds. Maintaining our open spaces remains a key objective and will continue to be one of our priorities going forward. We are also looking at new play equipment for the Recreation Ground.

The shop and the pub have given a wonderful service and help throughout this pandemic - please keep supporting them.

We are looking to update the website, making it more accessible and user-friendly. Councillor Jamie Bathmaker is heading this project.

The village response to the pandemic has been fantastic. Thank you to the residents who help with keeping the village free of litter and all the supporters who made sure that all vulnerable residents receive the support they need.

I would like to remind all residents that the Parish Council meet on the second Tuesday of every month, at 1915 or 1930, in the village hall (except in August). The public are always welcome and may address the council on current matters or issues of concern in the Open Forum, which is always at the start of the meeting. Any matters raised for decision would become a future agenda item.

Lisa Wiltshire
Chair of the Parish Council

Dog Fouling

Lisa Wiltshire

Regretfully, despite facilities (DOG BINS) that have been provided for residents and non-residents to use, the dog fouling situation has been reported as unacceptable by some villagers. The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to remind all dog-owners and dog-walkers that it is an offence to allow their dog to foul and not to remove the faeces from any land in the district of Cambridgeshire (unless the owner of the land in question has given them permission not to remove it). Dog-walkers are abusing the beautiful footpaths around the outskirts of the village: please remember that families with children would also like to enjoy the countryside footpaths, and not have to 'tiptoe through the poo'.

Please keep your dogs on leads when walking the footpaths near arable fields. You have the right to walk public footpaths but your dogs must be under close control. At this time of year dogs running free cause damage to growing crops. Many of the paths around the village (for example, the track from the top of Cockhall Lane to the clunchpit) are in fact not public rights of way but 'permissive paths' – private tracks that members of the public are allowed to use, but this permission may be withdrawn at any time. Please keep your dogs on the lead and collect the dog 'poo'.

It is an absolute shame that the attitude and behaviour of a few is giving dog-walkers of the village such bad press.

and while on the subject...

The Parish Council has recently received a report of an unfortunate incident at the clunchpit involving a dog that was being exercised off its leash. The dog apparently chased and harassed two horse-riders, causing the horses to unseat their riders. One rider suffered a broken leg, the other concussion.

Please note that it is a legal offence to let a dog be dangerously out of control anywhere. A dog is considered dangerously out of control if it injures someone or makes someone worried that it might injure them. A court could also decide that your dog is dangerously out of control if it attacks someone's animal or causes the owner of another animal to think they could be injured if they tried to stop your dog attacking their animal.

Please also be aware that the clunchpit is not a public space: the public right of way runs in a straight line from the metal kissing gate to the foot of the face of the pit and does not include any other area. The surrounding land is private, and the public are currently allowed to walk in it provided they behave in a responsible manner. This includes:

- keeping their dogs under control at all times
- picking up and removing all dog waste. There is a dog waste bin situated nearby, at the junction of Royston Road and Ashwell Stret: please use it.

Speed monitoring display update

We would like to advise that the original batteries providing power to the monitor have expired, hence for a period the monitor was not functioning. New batteries have arrived, and one was installed a short time ago. The new battery is being monitored to see how long it lasts before requiring charging. Once we understand its working period the camera will be positioned around the village when the substitute battery is installed.

We have noticed that one of the lampposts with brackets for the monitor has since been replaced with a new post. Unfortunately the old post was taken away without the brackets being removed so new ones have been ordered and will be installed.

In the next edition we will provide some information regarding the evidence gathered from the monitor. It is evident that speeding does happen in the village. One resident has complained that whilst riding a bike they were overtaken at 38mph on Church Street. Unfortunately, we were not provided with photographic evidence to submit to the authorities.

We have chosen not to reveal the future locations or dates when the monitor will be relocated around the village, as the monitor works on the method of surprise. If you have any reasonable suggestions of additional locations, please contact the Parish Council.

BMX track Update

We are incredibly pleased with work which has previously been completed on the track for the village. Now the weather has started to improve the track will receive some grass cutting attention allowing it to be used again.

Defibrillator Rec Centre Update

We would like to inform you that the defibrillator attached to the Rec Centre is in working order. It is checked for compliance every 2 weeks and a report submitted to the Community Heartbeat Trust on a monthly basis. The Community Heartbeat Trust keeps an online record for the emergency services of all working defibrillators in our local area.

The Rec Playground

We would like to appeal to the village for fundraising ideas to assist in purchasing new play equipment for the playground. All ideas are welcome so please make suggestions to the Parish Council.

The reason for the removal of certain items of play equipment from the playground was a RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) safety check. In of their reports RoSPA highlighted that some of the existing equipment

was now deemed to be unsafe and therefore this equipment has had to be removed.

A quotation for the repair of the Zip wire has been received. Work should commence shortly to repair the equipment.

Mobile Warden Scheme

Mobile and Community Warden Schemes (sometimes called Community Care Schemes) aim to support older people to live independently in their homes and in the community they know, and which knows them. The warden schemes are complementary to statutory care services and do not duplicate or replace the medical or social care services that individuals may also require. They can help to combat loneliness and social isolation and can provide significant benefits to clients at relatively low cost and are seen by clients and their families as a vital community-based service.

The Mordens, Litlington and Bassingbourn have a scheme which employs a mobile warden. It is subsidised by the local Parish Councils and local authority grants but there is also a small cost to people who join the scheme. The warden telephones the clients on four weekdays and visits them at home on the fifth day. She befriends, helps with form-filling and generally takes an interest in the welfare of her clients who are mostly elderly and/or disabled.

If you, or anyone you know, might benefit from this arrangement, please contact David Sharp (852425) who will introduce the mobile warden for a preliminary conversation.

A Note on Nature

It has been wonderful to see so many of you out and about and making the most of the many footpaths and bridleways in the parish during these extraordinary times. Fortunately Mother Nature has continued on her merry way as we have lurched from one lockdown to another. As we approach the second harvest of this pandemic I thought I would give a brief overview of some of the wildlife that many of you have had the pleasure of experiencing and may continue to do so for the rest of the year. Of the many bird species in the parish perhaps the Skylark is the most iconic farmland bird. Between a sparrow and a thrush in size, you will see it flying high above the fields singing its distinctive song with its constant dancing pitch. We are also lucky to have the Corn Bunting which is a similar-looking bird to the skylark although much rarer. It nests between April and June, often in the thick foliage of the cereal crops, making it harder to spot. The early risers amongst you might have glimpsed the beautiful Barn Owls as they gracefully hunt the field margins and hedgerows for voles and mice. Hopefully after harvest you should also be able to see plenty of Grey Partridges feeding on the stubble in family groups known as coveys.

Alongside the wildlife you will also see many wild flowers growing in the banks and hedgerows. You might recognise the vibrant pink flowers of the Common Vetch, the pretty white, strawberry and red Clover and of course the multitudinous Cow Parsley. This year we have also been fortunate to have spotted several Bee Orchids nestled amongst the grasses. Finally the time of year has come when we can sit back and enjoy the amazing poppy display. Here's hoping for a fantastic summer and I hope you continue to enjoy the countryside that surrounds us. I must emphasise that dogs must be kept under control at all times when walking on public rights of way. Not only is this a courtesy to the other users of the footpath and bridleways but also to the ground nesting birds which are so easily disturbed at this time of year.

Heron Self Help Scheme

This is a volunteer scheme for Cambridgeshire residents, offering emergency transport to the doctor, hospital etc. The user pays 30p per mile to the driver and the County Council contributes the balance to bring the total mileage allowance to 44p. Insurance cover is provided.

The Heron scheme is well-used, and volunteer drivers are urgently needed. There is no commitment to a regular day: volunteer drivers are rung on a rota basis and are free to accept or decline a job depending on their availability. So all a driver is contributing, to a worthwhile scheme that makes a real difference to local people attending hospitals and doctors' surgeries, is their own time.

If you can help, please contact Hilary Sharp (01763 852272).

Grass-cutting

The Parish Council organises periodic cutting of the grass in the growing season in the communal areas around the village. Note however that the Parish Council is now prohibited by a directive from above from cutting the grass in the 'cemetery' in Abington Pigotts Road or from helping to fund the cutting of this area. Grass cutting in this area is now the responsibility of the Parochial Church Council, so if you have any questions or comments about this please address them to the churchwardens of St Catherine's.

Highways

Please remember to report Highways issues (potholes etc) direct to Cambridgeshire County Council at highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk where the reported issue is immediately added to the council's worklist. This is by far the quickest way to have an issue recorded for action, and the Parish Council have no way to circumvent or expedite this process. We do of course offer a sympathetic ear!

Footpaths

Footpaths around the parish, and beyond, have been well used over the last 12-18 months which is fantastic – there is plenty of research that concludes walking, even over short distances, is excellent for physical and mental health. We have a wealth of routes that start within the village and wend their way around surrounding fields and woods, giving all of us an opportunity to enjoy the very best of the South Cambridgeshire landscape. Don't forget to take a look at the information boards we installed at the clunchpit a few years ago, where you'll find out more about the local fauna and flora. When you are walking in the countryside, please do remember the Countryside Code which reminds us to 'Respect Everyone' (be considerate to those around you), 'Protect the Environment' (taking away your litter, keeping your dog under control and taking their poo away), and 'Enjoy the outdoors' (have fun!). More details online at www.gov.uk/countryside-code. We hope to post a map of footpaths in our immediate vicinity on the website in due course, but a printed map of the local footpaths and containing some interesting historical information is available free of charge at the shop.

Road closure

To allow the completion of the next phase of safety improvements to the junction of Royston Road and the A505, Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Division have issued advance notice of imminent dates when the Royston Road will be closed to traffic. The work includes resurfacing, kerbing, drainage, road marking, signage and vegetation clearance works at Royston Road to the southeast of level crossing.

The closure will take place between 09 August and 10 September, and will operate 24 hours a day. Diversions in both directions will be clearly signed, and can be checked on the CCC website, but it is fair to assume this will lead to changed traffic movements through some roads in Litlington.

Book Cafe

Covid regulations permitting it is hoped to hold the first Book Café for over a year on Saturday 7 August, in the church, from 10am. You will be able to browse the shelves for some new reading matter, sample the delicious home-made cakes and savouries, enjoy a coffee, have a good chat and admire the new facilities!

Share and Care

Litlington 'Share and Care' scheme is continuing to be run from The Crown, and is available to all the community, young and old.

For more information about how to access the scheme, please contact:
Hailey 07854 458670.

Elections

At the recent elections on 6 May Sebastian Kindersley was re-elected as our County Councillor for the next four years.

The outcome of the County Council elections was that the Conservatives now have 28 seats on the Council, the Liberal Democrats 20, Labour nine, and the Independents four. This means that no one political group has a majority on the Council. The Liberal Democrat, Labour and Independent groups have announced a new Joint Administration for the Council, and published an agreement about its priorities and how it will operate.

Sometimes we are asked "Why bother to vote?" (and many, many people do not). Well – here's one reason why. An Independent won the St Neots East & Gransden division by just nine votes. It wasn't even the smallest margin; in the Hardwick division the Conservatives lost by just five votes. Ely North also passed from the Conservatives to the Liberal Democrats by just 153 votes. Those three results, decided by just 167 votes from the 232,000 cast across the county, were enough to end one-party control of the County Council.

Elections were also held for the Police & Crime Commissioner and for the Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. The new Police & Crime Commissioner is Darryl Preston (Conservative), and the new Mayor (replacing James Palmer) is Dr Nik Johnson (Labour). I think we can expect significant changes in direction from both the new County Council and the new Mayor: he has already binned the £4bn CAM Metro and during the campaign was keen to see a fair assessment of the Northern Approach into Cambridge by East West Rail.

Cycling and Walking Routes

Cambridgeshire County Council has begun a consultation on the creation of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Cambridgeshire and are interested in YOUR feedback on the initial proposals. This is an early stage policy document which seeks to outline new and existing walking and cycling routes and consider which routes should be created or improved, as and when funding becomes available. In many cases, it may be several years before monies come forward for these projects and works can take place. However, identifying the best routes and putting a Plan in place means that the County will be in the best position to bid for future Government funding and progress new cycling and walking routes.

Please take a look at the proposals. Are these the right routes for the local area? Are there alternative routes to consider? The consultation closes 13 July 2021 on the Consult Cambridgeshire website. You are invited to complete the survey and/or mark cycle ways and footpaths you would like to see created or prioritised on the map.

South Cambs District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council: Councillors

Your Councillors are always ready to help. If you have any questions about these - or indeed any other - matters, please do not hesitate to contact South Cambs District Councillor Nigel Cathcart (01763 243637 / e: cllr.cathcart@scambs.gov.uk) or County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley (01767 651982 / e: skindersley@hotmail.com) or write to him at The Manor Barn, East Hatley, SG19 3JA).

Your Parish Councillors

Geoff Barlow	01763 852841	Sass Pledger	01763 853615
James Bathmaker	01763 852435	David Sharp	01763 852425
Stephen Gray	07931 706375	Linda Williams	01763 852809
Nick Jones	01763 852037	Ralph Parker	07968 158347
Lisa Wiltshire	01763 852551 (chair)		

Other Useful Numbers (01763- codes unless otherwise stated)

Clerk to the Council	Sally Walmesley	852137
Churchwarden	George Lynn	07767 672770
Congregational Church (secretary)	Peter Shoard	853427
Village Hall Booking Clerk	Linda Williams	852809
Recreation Centre Bookings	Heather Williams	07885 774775
Toy Library (Secretary)	Lorraine Baker	852414
Pre-school	Yvonne Rolfe / Debbie Windsor	07984 935193
L.J.'s (7 to 10yrs Youth Club)	Cathy Smith	853997
L.J.'s Plus (10 to 13yrs Youth Club)	Jonathan Burgess	853365
Badminton Club (Treasurer)	Vera Webster	241022
Football Club (Secretary)	James Evans	07834 813854
Bowls Club	Ann Cannadine	853205
Gardening Club	Sue Davies	852852
Evergreens	Pamela Sharp	852425
Post Office / Shop	Dilshan Johnpillai	852221
Bassingbourn Primary School		242460
Steeple Morden School		852474
Bassingbourn Village College		242344
Bassingbourn Surgery		290555
Ashwell Surgery		01462 417377
Royston Library		243292
Police, Cambridge H.Q.		101

The MP for South Cambridgeshire is Anthony Browne. Contact details are:

Constituency Office
Broadway House
149-151 St Neots Road
Hardwick
CB23 7QJ

t: 01954 211 444 / e: anthony.browne.mp@parliament.uk

If any of the above details are inaccurate and need updating, please advise the editor.

Published by Litlington Parish Council /editor: Geoff Barlow / e: cllrbarlow@litlington.org.uk

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the editor or the Parish Council.

Twitter account ([@litlingtonpc](https://twitter.com/litlingtonpc)) please follow.

Facebook group (Litlington Live <http://tinyurl.com/litlingtonlive>)