

Marksbury Annual Parish Meeting 14th May 2024

Chairman's Report

At last, I am very pleased to be able to report that the Parish Council now has a full compliment of Councillors. Phil Evans, and most recently Richard Lord have joined us, and will, I know be contributing to the varied issues and decisions made to benefit this, Parish.

This year has seen many changes and improvements. One of the most significant changes has been the resignation of our Clerk Jane Williams. I must pay tribute to Jane for all her hard work and determined effort on behalf of the Parish. Thank You. Obviously, we are now seeking a replacement.

Once again, the Parish Council has administered approximately 1/3rd of its annual precept returned to the community by way of S137 grants. As well as organisations such as village halls, sporting clubs, and churchyard maintenance, this year has also seen a grant made to Marksbury school PTA. It is worth noting that the money for these grants come from public money by way of the Parish Precept, and it is vital that, for transparency, recipients report back to this meeting. There are penalties for not doing so.

More practical community support has arrived in the form of a fourth parish defibrillator. The cost for which was shared between the parish council, and Roberts Bath, to whom we are very grateful. Another noticeboard has been installed at Westway garage where there is a large footfall and has already helped to let residents know more about the work of the Parish Council.

Communication was a bit of a theme for last year. February saw the new Parish Website go live! It keeps people up to date with not just Parish Council information, but also has a News section, links which enable problems to be reported directly to Banes, e.g. Fix my Street, and other organisations. It also has a section which provides further links to local community organisations. We now have a .gov.uk domain name, and emails. This strengthens our internet security and GDPR requirements. Our heartfelt thanks go to Phil Evans for taking on this challenge and doing a terrific job, producing a website which has won nothing but praise from users.

The Parish council owns and is responsible for the upkeep of 6 streetlights. This year nearly £900 was spent replacing a light in West Tynning. This was the third to be replaced in three years, and no doubt, due to their age, the rest will follow.

The council has largely kept to budget, but the cost of the defibrillator, website, and streetlights have resulted in an end of year deficit figure of £264.00.

Banes Draft Local Plan Options document saw a remarkable response from parishioners. The value of the new website was proved over and over again, as people sought information to formulate a response. The Parish Council's own response reflected the views of parishioners. This was not in favour of the Burnett A39 site proposals, but thought Farrington Gurney, or the West of Bath sites more suitable.

I would like to warmly thank our ward Councillor Matt Mc Cabe for his input at meetings and taking on parish issues. Particularly the provision of a Pedestrian Island at Marksbury to make for a safer crossing. Road safety has been a key issue here for years, and its good to have something positive. Thanks Matt. It is also reassuring to have two ward councillors, so thanks to Fiona Gourlay, for covering when Matt was otherwise engaged.

In closing, I want to say a heartfelt 'Thank you' to each and every one of my fellow councillors. It's not been the easiest of years, and your support has been invaluable.

Sally Collins

Chair

Marksbury Parish Council

13th May 2024