

2019 Annual Parish Meeting Thursday April 4th

The core issues concerning the TPC are pretty similar year on year. Planning, Parking, Pot holes, Traffic, Sporting and Recreational activities and where we can, supporting social events and new initiatives. At the same time being mindful of the changing dynamics of our village.

As a consultee, the TPC is involved with the 'Local Plan' and supports other Parish Councils when significant potential developments beyond our boundaries, are considered to have a negative impact on their lives as well as the residents of Trottiscliffe.

Planning can be brimming over with emotions, especially when one has set ones heart on a new extension or alteration only to be dashed by planning rejection. So, to share your ideas with us early in the process, may well help to prevent disappointment later.

However, the TPC is only a consultative body not the decision maker. This is usually TMBC. In the past year, we have dealt with a large number of planning applications, and as always, some of them quite complex and controversial. This is not easy in a small close knit community, but your councillors always considered the issues very carefully. We assess all the information available to us and aim to be consistent with each application. We are mindful that much of Trottiscliffe is in ANOB and a conservation area, with several listed buildings and some trees having Tree Preservation orders on them. Nevertheless, we do consider the impact on the village and within the parameters of the Planning System, form the Parish view.

As was mentioned last year, the TPC has started to embrace ACV's (Amenity of Community Value). This can assist in preserving our heritage. The Plough has been designated as an ACV, and one possibility for its future, is to become a community venture, with a remit of being much greater than just a traditional village Pub.

TPC continues to support many of the key elements of our community, by having link Councillors: including the School,(Jenny Dixon) the Church, the Village Hall (Terry Baker) the Tennis Club,(Richard Wallis & David Goodworth) Recreation ground, Allotments,(David Jones) and Charities. We provide the Christmas Tree, which I know brings much pleasure to so many and becomes a focal point during the festive season. I would like to thank fellow councillors, especially David Goodworth, who is the main stay in this activity, the landlord of the George and members of the village who helped to install and decorate the tree.

It's great to see the significant numbers of children enjoying the play equipment in the Recreation Ground. This has to be kept up to its very high standard, with regular safety inspections and the replacement of damaged equipment. Soon, it could be adults too, as plans are being explored to create an Adult Outdoor Gym facility on the Recreation Ground. So, if all goes well, all the family can have healthy exercise outside together.

The allotments have once again been well used and form an important part of our village. David Jones, a keen allotment holder himself, keeps a watchful eye on them. He collects the rents and deals with any concerns.

A new venture, the School and Community Farm, on part of the allotment land, continues to have the full support of TPC (Link Councillor David Goodworth). It is a popular feature embraced by residents, friends of the village and especially the school. Indeed, school children are regular visitors.

There continues to be an increasing thirst to learn more about the flora in our village. The TPC arranged for another tree walk by our tree warden. It was very successful, and we hope another similar event will occur this year.

Terry Baker is our new representative on the Village Hall Committee and keeps us up to date with planned improvements to the hall and future events.

The Tennis Club is very buoyant, with a strong and active membership. They enjoy the facilities, even more so now, as the courts have been resurfaced.

More teams than ever before, are playing at both club level and inter club matches. There are active coaching sessions for all. Also, the School have their own bespoke sessions.

Many years have passed since netball was played on the courts. This is planned to change, as school intend to play their netball on the courts.

There are many informal groups who meet, focussed around common interests. Table tennis, Yoga, Pilates, Bridge, Ballroom dancing, Dog training and many more. Such groups provide the social network that stimulates a strong community spirit. There is a lot going on, so check the web sites, noticeboards, Pilgrim for more information.

In spite of several traffic calming measures, we continue to have an increasing number of inconsiderate drivers who do not respond to the road conditions and drive irresponsibly and at inappropriate speeds and or park in dangerous places. As a more radical solution is required to prevent vehicles from mounting the pavements and endangering lives, we are currently working with KCC Highways to install physical constraints.

Another reminder, although Trottiscliffe is regarded as a safe place to live, criminal activities do take place. So, we all need to do, all we can, to ensure our homes and possessions are secure.

Trottiscliffe is a special village. Let's all try and keep it so.

One person who for many years has sought this quest is Ann Kemp, a past Parish Councillor and currently a Borough Councillor. Ann has worked tirelessly for the benefit our Village Community and following on from this AGM there will be a presentation of a special Community Award to her.

As ever, it has been a privilege and pleasure to serve as the chairman of TPC. Although sometimes, it is quite daunting, but this is eased by the knowledge that all of the councillors are working together to make our very special village better.

Thank you

Richard Wallis Chairman