

STEDHAM WITH IPING

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 24 APRIL 2019

SIPC CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations are in force, giving a right to members of the public to record (film, photograph and audio-record) and report on proceedings at this meeting.

Members of the Council

Chair: Lucy Petrie
Vice Chair and Chair of Planning: John Wheelhouse
Chair of Finance & General Purposes: Olia Mitskevich
Chair Environment & Amenities: Martin Perry
Members: Simon Barnard, David Edmonson, Anthony Grocott & Ruth Cooper
Clerk: Morag Birch 814575 clerk@stedhamwithiping-pc.gov.uk

This year brings to the end the four-year term for Councillors and those who have decided not to stand for re-election are John Wheelhouse, Martin Perry and Olia Mitskevich. I would like to pay tribute to all of them.

The parish has been very fortunate to have the professional expertise of John. From regular planning meetings to the work involved in site assessments for the Neighbourhood Plan he has given us the benefit of his clear and expert views. He has also been a wonderful vice-chair, appreciated particularly for his grasp of correct procedure. Moving on he is a founder board member of START and they are lucky to have him.

I am very sorry too to lose Martin who has juggled his commitments to family, work and sport with the parish council and provided all of us with so much time and good sense.

Olia and I joined the parish council at the same time, more than 5 years ago and she has been with us while she has completed a business degree as well as holding down a full-time job. The past year she has been an exemplary Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee as you will see from her budget presentation later on tonight.

Rowly Page also retired from the Parish Council last year after many years particularly in relation to the allotments and the concerns of fellow residents of Common View, which was invaluable to the whole organisation. Finally, Elizabeth Griffiths who has served two separate terms on the Parish Council moved to Somerset and we lost her involvement in the Commons and her valuable legal advice. They will be missed and we would all like to thank them very much indeed.

During the past year, the Parish Council has met 11 times and there have been 11 planning meetings at which 28 applications were considered.

**For information
about the Council
vacancies and what
is involved, please
contact the Clerk.**

Issues and Achievements of the Past Year:

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

In May 2018 our longstanding clerk, Jane Crawford resigned. As you are probably all aware there is an Employment Tribunal pending and as such neither I nor any other parish councillors can engage in discussion about this. When the hearing takes place this will be in public and the judgement will be published subsequent to the hearing. In Jane's place as clerk we were very fortunate that Morag Birch came forward and has made the role her own. Morag has lived in Stedham for over 20 years and retired in 2016. As clerk during a difficult time for the parish council she has remained a calm voice of reason and is very thorough in her approach to our statutory procedures. We also appointed a separate Responsible Financial Officer, Catherine Myres who currently lives in Trotton, though she has lived in both Iping and Stedham in the past. Catherine has brought a professional rigour to our accounts processes, and moved us into the digital age, with online accounts and internet banking.

Neighbourhood Plan

This year the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan went out to residents and Statutory Consultees for comment. We received 43 responses and although these were generally supportive and appreciative of the huge amount of time and work which the Steering Group had put into the Evidence papers and the Draft plan, we also took on board many of the considered responses, to make changes. The most major of these was to remove the suggested development site West of West Lodge and after much discussion SDNPA agreed to modify their Draft Local Plan to reduce the housing provision on the Sawmills site to a maximum of 16, half of which would be for community housing. This is important because, using a Community Housing model such as START we can ensure that those with a local connection can access this housing in perpetuity. I would like to be able to report that the Neighbourhood Plan has been examined, but currently the hold-up on the SDNPA Local Plan has had a knock-on effect on our plan and we are now anticipating that it will be summer time before we can proceed to the final referendum of the Parish. Until that time we cannot be sure that the Community Housing, or any of the Green Space or other provisions will be included. All the documents, evidence and responses are available on our website, should you wish to have more detail.

Parking in Stedham

By far and away the biggest complaint received on our survey concerned the parking in Common View, and there are also problems in Queen Street. This year some of our new Councillors have taken this on board and have been seeking the views of those

who are affected to try to find some solutions. This is clearly an ongoing process and provision has been made in the budget for a start in the year ahead.

Minerals planning

The Minsted Residents Group, with the support of the Parish Council, have made strong representations against the expansion of the Minsted pit, as well as the proposed new sand extraction in the Severals. At the same time, we are endeavouring to get SDNPA to deal with the longstanding breaches of planning at the Minerals pit. The MRG submitted a report to the WSCC/SDNPA Soft Sand Review Issues & Options consultation in March. WSCC will use received comments to help inform the preparation of a Proposed Submission Draft Soft Sand Review. This will then be subject to representations on legal & procedural compliance & the soundness of the Review before submitting it for independent examination by a Government Inspector.

“At risk” volunteers

Thank you to all those who have joined the volunteers which cover the whole parish if there are emergency conditions.

Defibrillator

Provision of a defibrillator has happened. It is now wired up and on the wall of the Memorial Hall. We have an invitation to parishioners to join in First Aid training at Lodsworth on 28th May at 7:30pm. We will also be providing training in Stedham in CPR and use of the defibrillator. Additionally, we have notified the emergency services of its location so that they can direct those calling them, who may need it.

A personal word of thanks

I would also like to thank Kate O’Kelly our County Councillor and Caroline Neville our District Councillor, who is stepping down this year and to my fellow Councillors for all the work they do for the parish.

Finally, a big “thank you” to all those involved in running our village organisations and those who support them, many of whom have spoken at this Annual Parish Meeting tonight.

Lucy Petrie