

ABBOTTS ANN
ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Held on Thursday 6th May Time: 18:00 via Zoom Platform

Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Patrick Roberts

Introduction and Welcome by the Parish Council Chairman, Cllr Andy Jordan.

Cllr Jordan welcomed every-one to the meeting. He confirmed that this was the first meeting since the election as last year due to the pandemic one could not be held.

Chairman's Report – Cllr Andy Jordan

1. Introduction. Despite having been elected 2 years ago this is the first Annual Report we have delivered as a Council due to impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Elected in May 2019, the current Parish Council comprises seven newly elected Councillors, many of whom stood for local election for the first time.

2. As with any new appointment it can take time to discover how things work and identify the priorities that need to be addressed. The wholesale change-over of a council is not a common occurrence and the lack of 'corporate memory' and having inherited a budget set prior to the election meant that some of our initial work was constrained as we took the time to understand what had been set in motion by the previous Council.

3. Identification of priorities, tasks and targets. As Chairman, one of the first actions I asked Councillors to undertake was a detailed review of what the Parish council was actually required to do and what we were already committed to undertake in terms of extant contracts. We set out to analysis and identify what we must, should and could do as a Council. In this respect it is important to note the only items that come within the 'must do' category are those statutory obligations we are required to meet and the fulfilment of any extant contractual arrangements. All other activity is effectively discretionary and could fall in either 'should do' or 'could do', depending on the degree of importance to the community and our ability to afford it. This work led us to the identification and creation of a range of portfolios that we now use to structure our service delivery to the community a. Adoption of a portfolio structure. The outcome of our work led us to identify a range of portfolios which needed to be addressed. For each portfolio we: i. identified what we must, should and could do. ii. Identified the stakeholders for each portfolio. iii. Examined whether portfolios should be grouped together or operate in isolation.

4. The outcome of this work was a portfolio structure as follows: Policy Finance Budget Contracts Communications Sports & Recreation Sports Pitches Sports Pavilion Play Areas Tennis Courts New places for recreation Skate Park Development & Infrastructure Planning Affordable Housing Sustainable growth Highways / pavements Traffic Environment Conservation Footpaths Green Spaces Grounds Maintenance Wildflower meadow River Dog Bins Amenities Parish Hall Shop Church Pubs x 2 School Nursery Burial Ground Wellbeing Safety and security Policing Watch Initiatives Local Interest Groups Youth Groups Abbotts Ann Parish Council Councillor Reports

5. As the portfolio work has matured, we have amended the original outcome, with Play Areas moving from Sports and Recreation to become part of the Amenities portfolio. The portfolio structure also assisted our future budgetary forecasting, ensuring that those areas we have identified as being part of our strategy are correctly funded, with expenditure being forecast out over a 5-year period.

6. Budgeting and financial forecasting. The way we organized our finances was the second major piece of reform work we undertook. We now have a budgetary system where we clearly allocate funds for specific activities that support each of the portfolios. Councillors are required to forecast ahead each year to try and set a budget that will deliver the services that we know we either have to deliver or wish to deliver. Of equal importance, we have also adopted a 5-year rolling forecast to alleviate overly large increases in the precept by trying to predict expenditure and where prudent to so, accrue funds in advance or spread the funding income over several years. We aim to keep our annual increase to the precept around 2.5% per annum. This annual increase reflects the type of forecasting undertaken by numerous Government departments and various levels of local Government. This system not only encourages us to plan properly for service delivery, but it also offers the community real insight as to how we are spending your money and how we intend to spend it going forward. The final aspect of our attempts to overhaul our finances has been the adoption of a new accounting package and our thanks go to our Locum Clerk, Mrs Karen Ross, for driving forward the adoption of the system in time for the new financial year.

7. Parish Clerk. As Parishioners may well be aware our Clerk of 5 years standing, Clare Cotterell, decided to move on in January of this year. I would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation of all the work Clare undertook on behalf of the Council and the Parish, we wish her well for the future. We have been able to recruit both a Locum Clerk to ensure Council can remain operative in the short term and at the same time we launched a recruitment campaign for a new Clerk. Ms Amanda Owen was successful in her application and joined the team on 14th April this year. Amanda is new to role of a Parish Clerk and therefore we have arranged for the Locum to remain in situ for a short while to undertake training. We also intend to make provision for an ongoing 'reach back' service to be available from the Locum for the Clerk as she settles in.

8. Website. You will all be aware that we have separated our website from the Village website. This change was a requirement placed upon us in order to comply with the standards and security policies that are mandated for local Government.

9. Meetings. The Parish Council meets on the first Thursday of each month, however the impact of the pandemic fundamentally altered the way we have to conduct business. a. Impact of the pandemic. All public meetings were suspended in late March 2020 and to date have not resumed. At the time legislation did not allow Councils to meet online and it wasn't until legislation changed that we were able to recommence public meetings. Aside from the frequent technical glitches of people dropping off line during a meeting our experience of conducting business in a modern manner has been extremely positive and perhaps the best of all online meetings has seen a far greater uptake from members of the community seeking to engage with us. Unfortunately, the legislation that allows us to work online lapses on 7th May and as restrictions still remain in place there is no legal way for us to conduct business in a 'public forum' until such time as either all restrictions on public meetings are lifted or new legislation is introduced to allow online working. As Chairman I really do hope the online option is returned to us so we can continue to reach more widely across the community. Abbotts Ann Parish Council Councillor Reports

10. Contracts. Many of you may have noticed we have changed our grounds maintenance contractors: a. Larkstel are a Basingstoke based firm who now look after our footpaths, the War Memorial Hall Grounds, Churchyard and Burial Ground and also undertake numerous ad-hoc additional works as we try and improve the arbicultural state of the Parish. b. TVBC Grounds Maintenance are now looking after both the Bulbery Sports Field and The Green.

11. I consider both our new contracts to be a 'win, win'. We enjoy a good quality of service from reliable contractors whilst at the same time reducing what we were spending on the previous contracts.

12. Support to community groups. Our support to the many community groups across the Parish has suffered a little during the pandemic, primarily because we have had very few requests for grant funding. That said, we received a one off grant of £10k from central Government to assist with community activity during and post pandemic and we have been able to encourage several of our community groups to apply for grants to help them start back up as the restrictions ease or to improve how they are operating under the restrictions.

Projects

13. There are numerous projects ongoing, the details of which can always be found either on our website, through the minutes of our meetings or by contacting the portfolio leads. The following is just a sample of what's in the pipeline: a. Sports pavilion funding application. The Abbotts Ann Sports Field Group (AASEG) have submitted a grant application that is currently under consideration by Test Valley for a New pavilion. AASFG are also pursuing a number of other possible sources of funding to support this project going forward. b. The Church. The Churchyard Northern boundary fence is being replaced, with the help of a grant from Test Valley. Planning permission has also been granted for the refurbishment of the footpaths within the churchyard. c. War Memorial Hall (WMH). The WMH has a new drain to prevent water flowing in from Duck Street and the blocked soak-away in the car park is also being cleared. d. Tree maintenance. We've started to increase our tree maintenance and will continue to do so within our funding parameters. e. Bus shelters. Our two bus shelters are being replaced and will then come under our ownership and maintenance. Ongoing community issues

14. Community Land Trust (CLT). The CLT is continuing to develop its housing scheme in response to comments from the consultation and to discussions with planning officers Abbotts Ann Parish Council Councillor Reports and others. In April they updated the Parish Council on a few changes, the main ones being:

a. The omission of one Affordable bungalow. This is a response to a request from planning officers that the density of the layout be reduced. The ratio of Private/Affordable now changes to 50/50 (ie. 12 private, 3 affordable shared ownership and 9 affordable rented).

b. Car parking. 2 uncovered spaces are shown for each plot except the apartments which have 1 each. Some plots have, additionally, a covered store or car port inboard of the parking spaces. There are 5 visitor spaces shown around the site. This complies with TVBC standards.

c. A second "farmstead" grouping has been formed at the south end of the site balancing that at the entrance. d. Ecology strips on the south and north boundaries connect the existing Duck Street hedgerow and the tree belt on the south-west boundary.

15. Southern Water. Perhaps the single greatest problem we face is with Southern Water and their failing sewer system. This is a complex and emotive issue that has impacts across the community and all our neighbouring parishes. At present, we estimate that Southern Water's emergency pumping operations at Foundry Road and Manor Farm are costing in excess of £1.4M a year. The over pumping in to the Pillhill Brook is already impacting upstream of Abbotts Ann and the situation shows no sign of early resolution. We have joined forces with the other parishes in an attempt to hold Southern Water to account; this is a relatively new initiative and we will do our best to keep residents informed as we go forward.

2. Reports by Portfolio Holders.

Annual Environment Portfolio Report - Cllr Anne Jones

During the year the work of the Environment Portfolio team has been dedicated to maintaining and improving the environment of the Abbotts Ann community. Regular upkeep of the church yard and burial ground, War Memorial Hall grounds, Jubilee Oak and footpaths as well as grass cutting of green spaces such as the Green and the Sports & Recreation ground were undertaken by our grounds maintenance contractors, Larkstel and Test Valley Borough Council. Any issues raised by parishioners during the year have been taken on board by Abbotts Ann Parish Council with the aim to resolve where possible.



Bulbs were planted in the Green and throughout the village during the autumn months resulting in a wonderful spring display, as shown above.



The Green is used by many dog walkers and two new signs have been put up reminding owners to clear up after their dogs



For Health and Safety reasons two broken and rotten benches on the Green were removed. Plans to replace them is in hand.



Abbotts Ann Parish Council agreed that a new Interpretation Board for the Wildflower Meadow could be installed to help people identify flowers and grasses when they appear. The new sign was officially unveiled by the Chairman of Abbotts Ann Parish Council on Saturday 27th February.



To enable children to play safely in the copse quotes were obtained from various contractors to open up, tidy and level this area on the Green.



In agreement with Hampshire County Council the old kissing gate on the Green has been removed and a new DDA compliant gate will replace it

Wellbeing - Cllr Anne Jones

There was a Covid Village group established which helped residents during the pandemic. Neighbourhood Watch is run within the Village which is very well run.

Sports and Recreation update – Cllr Chris Wallis

In August the Sports Field Group submitted detailed recommendations to the Parish Council for improving the facilities at the sports field. These included plans for a fit-for-purpose, accessible community clubhouse, better and broader activity-related facilities and enhanced storage spaces. Following approval by the Parish Council the Group commissioned a viability study to identify a development plan for the sports field and in particular the replacement and possible relocation of the current pavilion with a more appropriate and flexible facility to meet the demand of the village community. The study was carried out by Hampshire County Council (HCC) and paid for by the Friends of Abbotts Ann Sports Field. The Group then looked at various options for funding the project, it applied for an HCC Community Infrastructure Levy grant and discussed the possibility of applying for other grants and also for Section 106 funding should the Community Land Trust proposed new housing development come to fruition. The pavilion has now been cleared out and is in the process of undergoing repairs and remedial works to enable the changing rooms and function room to be used again. The trees on the sports field have been crown lifted and pruned and the areas from the pavilion to the shed and around the bench and bin on the far side of the field have been tidied up. Following easing of the lockdown restrictions football matches have restarted and the pitches are booked for most weekends until the end of July.

Amenities Portfolio Report – Cllr Gordon Howard St Mary's Church Abbotts Ann

Closed Churchyard Abbott Ann Parish Council (AAPC) is responsible for the maintenance of the closed churchyard of St Mary's. In addition to keeping the area tidy and ensuring that the grass is cut regularly the responsibility includes the upkeep of its boundaries, trees and footpaths. The general maintenance is done by Larkstel as part of the Parish maintenance contract and they have done a good job. In addition, two projects have been progressed; one for the replacement of the metal fence alongside Church Path, the churchyard's Northern boundary, and one for the refurbishment of the footpaths inside the churchyard.

Church Path Fence We were advised that state of the fence was such that it would be better to replace it than have it repaired. So, with the help of St Mary's Fabric Committee, a project was carried out to specify the new fence, obtain quotes for the work and select a contractor for installing it, getting the necessary permissions from Test Valley and the Winchester Diocese and then having the Fence installed. The Diocese approved a Faculty for the fence and Test Valley Borough Council gave planning permission, and very kindly also gave a grant from their Community Asset Fund to help pay for it. The installation start date was delayed for a month to enable the contractor, Philip Grob from Middle Wallop, to move his workshop, but the work is now underway and should be completed just in time for our Parish Assembly.

Churchyard Footpaths This project, the need for which was first identified in 2014, has proved to be more complicated. When we were elected in 2019, we found that no progress had been made, so once again we asked the church for their help. They have a qualified architect who inspects the church at intervals and works for them on their fabric projects. He was contacted and employed by us to produce a detailed specification. This was then used by the church to obtain a Faculty for the work and AAPC's Clerk to apply for planning permission. Both have now been granted and we hope to be able to go out to tender in the next couple of months.

Play Areas & Skate Park Plans for improving our Play Areas have been delayed by the pandemic and the several Lockdowns. We followed the Test Valley guidelines on the safe use of unsupervised play areas and their warning notices have been posted at the War Memorial Hall and at Bulbery. It has not been possible, however, to complete a planned consultation to identify any play areas development requirements. Your Council has not therefore discussed any proposals for the development of the play area, been able to approve a project to carry out any works found necessary or,

whilst a budget has been included for the maintenance and inspection of the current facilities, to include funds for Play Areas development in the 21/22 budget. Telephone Kiosk
The telephone kiosk outside the War Memorial Hall was purchased by AAPC and set up as a village information site. It has however been shut for the whole of the past year because of the pandemic as it was not possible for it to be used safely. If matters progress as planned, we will look to opening it in July. A volunteer to run the Kiosk would be most welcome.

Development Portfolio – Cllr Patrick Roberts Abbotts Ann Parish Council

1. To represent the Parish Council on all Planning matters involving developments within the Parish. This includes Public Enquiries, Borough Council briefings and any other matters associated with development. It should be noted that the Portfolio Lead does not decide Abbott's Ann PC's policy on such matters but will follow the decisions reached at the Council meetings.
2. To liaise with the Community Land Trust on matters associated with the proposed new development where they impact the role of the Parish Council. This is likely to include developing the proposals for community benefit and working together to get the best benefit from S.106 funds.
3. To work with the Parish Council on any matter involving development and infrastructure as required.

Reports by Borough and County Councillors.

2020/21 Annual Report by Cllr David Coole, Anna Ward

TVBC has successfully faced a challenging year, dealing with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, whilst continuing to provide the essential services it is responsible for. Officers and Members have worked tirelessly to ensure residents and businesses were supported during what has been a difficult time for all. Millions of pounds of Covid-19 grant schemes have been paid to local businesses, helping them survive during the lockdowns and prepare for re-opening as restrictions are lifted. Funding has been provided to Parish Councils and community groups to help them support their residents and to support the vaccination programme. Free parking was also provided during the lockdowns. Work has continued to tackle the Solent nutrient neutrality issue (specifically nitrates), which is impacting on planning applications and causing a backlog of housing development. Plans are in place to enable developers to purchase credits so they can start building. The development of the next Local Plan is progressing following the consultation on the Refined Options last year. Progress has been made on the Council's climate emergency declaration and the Council is further refining its targets and commitments to becoming carbon neutral before 2050. The Council is also working with other organisations to help businesses access support to undertake energy audits and access grants to deliver low carbon projects. The Council's waste collection service continued throughout the pandemic without interruption and it has increased its garden waste collection service that now supports over 18,000 households. Glass recycling has also been brought in-house. The Council has continued its active targeting of fly-tippers and has successfully prosecuted those it has identified. The Andover and Romsey Masterplans have been approved and following the appointment of Paul Ramshaw as the Regeneration Manager in January, work is underway to take these plans forward. Work on the Andover Town Mills Riverside Park development continued throughout the pandemic and it is now open to residents

Cllr Jordan thanked the Borough Councillors for all their hard work and support to the Parish Council.

2020/21 Annual Report by Cllr Maureen Flood

2020 and 2021 have been challenging for everyone including TVBC. Our challenge has been and is to support the community our residents and businesses through this pandemic.

In addition to providing the vaccination centres and testing centres, Test Valley has supported work with our community services partner Unity and the many volunteer run community groups providing financial aid and staff resources ensuring those in the borough who needed any assistance could receive it

TVBC has faced a loss of income due to the pandemic, primarily from car parking, planning application and leisure centre fees, combined with increased costs, but we have continued to provide our core services throughout the pandemic.

Those services include bin collections, housing and homelessness, planning, licensing, economic development and leisure. TVBC were the only authority in Hampshire not to scale back any of our waste services throughout lockdown

The delivery of the major projects of the redevelopment of Andover and Romsey town centres continues. The Andover first phase: to create a brand-new riverside park at Town Mills has been completed. Since purchasing the Chantry Centre, the tenant service charge has been cut for two years running and there is a good record of encouraging more pop-up

shops. We are also working closely with Andover BID to put together an enhanced programme of town centre events for 2021, to increase footfall.

Test Valley Borough Council has launched a new interim economic development strategy for the next two years to help the local economy recuperate following the Covid-19 pandemic and includes continuing to support local businesses through funding and encouraging those in the town centre to boost their online presence.

The Council continues its focus on maintaining its parks and open spaces in support of people's physical and mental wellbeing, and pushing forward the climate change agenda: reducing paper consumption, driving down energy use and increasing the use of electric vehicles. The potential for renewable and low carbon energy sources in the borough is under review to help future planning policies.

Thank you to all Test Valley residents and businesses for all your efforts over the last difficult year.

Cllr Andrew Gibson – Hampshire County Council, Test Valley Central Division

Introduction

This is my last report as I retire next week from my role as the County Councillor for Test Valley Central. Firstly, I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors and Parish Clerks who have supported me during the last 12 years. In that time I have allocated a total of £96,000 in Councillor Devolved Grants and I have been able to support many local community groups with grant contributions and to leverage significant sums towards Village Hall construction including Longparish, Over Wallop, Nether Wallop and Kings Somborne.

General

Facts and Figures Hampshire's population is **1,376,300** (2018) the third most populous county in England (85% is rural and 15% urban). Hampshire CC maintains **5400** miles of roads, 4300 miles pavements, 133,000 streetlights, **481** schools, **45** libraries, **3 Discovery Centres and 1 e-library, 16 care homes with 960 beds for older people, 9 residential homes for children and young people, 24 Household Waste Centres and 5 Country Parks.** Every year 94% of all household waste is diverted from landfill (40% recycled) is burnt for energy and powers 50,000 homes. Every day 454,000 people travel to work by car or van, 86,000 bus journeys are made, and 4% journeys are by train. More than half of Hampshire's EU citizens have signed up to the Government's EU settlement scheme.

<p>Public Health -Coronavirus (Covid-19) Hampshire County Council continues to play a significant role supporting vulnerable residents and providing local guidance and information. To date over 32 million people in the UK have received their first dose of vaccine.</p>
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<p>The Hampshire County Council helpline is available for frail or vulnerable residents who do not have support from families, friends or their local community, and who need urgent assistance with essential food or household supplies, collection of medication, or who are at risk of loneliness.</p>

HCC approves £2.1 billion spending on local services in 2021/22

Plans for the next financial year focus on the county's ongoing work associated with the **pandemic, support for vulnerable children and adults, investment in Hampshire's roads and infrastructure to support economic recovery, as well as climate change mitigation.**

The annual council tax charge for a Band D property will be £1,350.45 – an increase of £1.23 per week, equating to 4.99%, of which 3% is for adults' social care – a Government request. The budget includes **£13 million** for the maintenance of 5,500 miles of roads and an extra

£1.2 million in carbon reduction measures across the County Council. **HCC's four-year capital programme of £744 million is one of the largest in the country.**

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/25022021HCCbudgetdecisionFeb2021>

The proposed capital programme includes: • **£68 million** in new and extended school buildings to ensure there is a school place for every child in Hampshire • **£118 million** for structural maintenance and improvement of roads and bridges in Hampshire over the next three years • **£91 million** for integrated transport schemes including over **£18 million** specifically focused on walking and cycling improvements • £141 million for major improvement of school and other County Council buildings and land holdings over the next three years • **£33 million** for decarbonisation schemes covering solar PV, single to double glazing window replacements, transition from oil to gas and the implementation of heating controls.

Climate Change

Hampshire County Council has been taking active steps to ensure Hampshire is resilient to climate change and in mitigating further changes through carbon reduction measures. HCC's own emissions have reduced by more than 43%, with more than a 50% reduction by 2025 and carbon neutrality by 2050. The **2050 Hampshire Commission of Enquiry** placed climate change and the environment as its top priority. In the budget HCC pledged £2m towards climate change measures in addition to the capital schemes outlined above. HCC is aware its greatest leadership and influence will be achieved by working in partnership with the District, City and Parish Councils, businesses and communities via the Expert Forum. At a household level HCC is supporting the county-wide Greening Campaign (aims to find simple solutions around reducing and measuring power consumption, insulating housing stock, reducing water usage, sourcing local food, community travel and renewable energy schemes), the Help line, Solar Buy-in scheme and community energy projects.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/climatechange>

Countryside and Country Parks

As I step down as a County Councillor after 12 eventful years I can reflect that my greatest success was the Country Parks Transformation strategy as the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Recreation & Countryside, which included Overseeing a significant investment in the Country Parks which will now make them self sufficient for many years to come. Please visit the newly constructed Lepe Country Park pavilion to experience one of the many projects undertaken. Another of my responsibilities was for the HCC Farming estate which includes the following:

Hampshire County Council Farms Policy 2021-2050 Hampshire County Council has a 1,900-hectare farm estate. Holdings range from 1.8 hectares (4.45 acres) to 114 hectares (282 acres). These provide an affordable first step on the farming ladder for aspiring farmers and makes a significant contribution to the rural economy. The new policy for county farms in Hampshire sets out a clear direction for the management of these public assets in the coming decades.

The council's farm estate features a range of units that support dairy, arable, horticultural and livestock businesses. The new framework is published as the agricultural industry faces significant change following the exit from the EU, the Agriculture Act 2020 and Defra's publication of its Path to Sustainable Farming.

Key features of the new policy include:

- Continuing to support new entrants into farming to build sustainable businesses and offer progression opportunities for existing tenants where possible
- Delivering sustainable, high standard, land management and farming systems, to promote animal welfare and soil health, better air and water quality, a network of thriving wildlife habitats and contribute towards the county council's climate change targets. The authority declared a climate emergency in June 2019 and has pledged to bring carbon emissions in Hampshire down to net zero by 2050.
- Maintaining the scale and diversity of the County Farms estate - encouraging innovation and farm diversification where this brings benefits to the tenants and the surrounding rural communities.

Ticks and Lyme Disease

As spring approaches and more people are outdoors Hampshire residents are urged to be 'tick aware' especially when walking in wooded areas or long grass where ticks attach themselves to people or animals as they pass by. Further information is available here: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20210401ticks>

HWRC - Book your Spring Recycling Slot

The HWRC booking system offers more than 50,000 booking slots each week and, from 1 April, sites will be open for longer: 9am – 6pm every day during the summer months.

A wide range of household items can be taken to one of Hampshire's 24 HWRCs for recycling or disposal and information about what can and cannot be deposited can be found online <https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/recyclingcentres>

Bookings can be made online at www.hants.gov.uk or by telephone 0300 555 1389.

Cancellations - Anyone who is unable to make their booking for whatever reason is asked to please use the link in the confirmation e-mail to cancel it, so it may be made available to another resident. Bookings can also be amended, in this way, to another time if needed.

Highways

The latest Highways report is attached. Over the next 3 weeks I will attempt to resolve the outstanding drainage and pothole issues.

Reports from Community Groups.

Report from Muddy Runners – Kate Bone.

“The last year or so has been very strange indeed for the Muddy Runners, an Abbots Ann based trail running group. We went from being a 200 strong club that organised local running events for charity, attended competitive events, delivered beginner running groups and ran socially in groups of around 30, to running in tiny ‘pods’ of 6, and then running with just one other person during lockdowns. Our work in local secondary schools and Abbots Ann Primary School all had to stop back in March 2020, and we are still waiting to restart these activities for the benefit of local children. Since our inception in 2014 we have encouraged people to try running for the first time, and supported others to keep running, for the benefit of their physical and mental health. Through the pandemic, we knew it was vital to continue supporting our running community, so did this through our online forum, setting fun running based challenges and activities, concentrating on participation, engagement and a sense of connection (you may have even seen some of our members running through the village looking for post boxes, or road names beginning with certain letters!) Prior to the pandemic we were organising up to six running events a year, all for local organisations to help them raise money and awareness. We have worked with several local schools in the area organising fun runs on their behalf, as well as using any surplus in our funds to make donations to our ‘charity of the year’ which so far has included Basingstoke Cardiac Unit, St Michaels and Countess of Brecknock hospices, International Glaucoma Association and Bloodwise to name but a few. All our planned events for 2020 and 2021 have been cancelled due to Covid, but we intend to come back stronger in 2022 with some more running events, including our flagship ‘Abbots Ann Trail Run’ usually held in July. With the generous grant from AAPC, we have invested in some high-tech race timing equipment, and this grant also helped us to secure further funding from TVBC. We purchased a full chip timing set, allowing us to record runners finish times with accuracy, using small tags that attach to the laces. As the runner crosses the finish line, the scanners register the chip and the result is recorded. Our races usually involve a huge amount of volunteers time, so this should mean we can reduce the pressure on manpower allowing more people to run. Moreover, it means we can accept larger numbers of entrants to our races, thereby maximising potential for fundraising. The technology has also allowed us to host our very first ‘virtual’ running event just this month for the Abbots Ann Nursery School. We are very excited about trying out our new equipment as soon as we are able to race again, and are extremely grateful for the support received from Abbots Ann Parish Council.”

Julia Rowling - Abbots Ann Womens Institute

The situation over the last year has made it very difficult for the WI to function in the manner that we would wish. We have not held a ‘face to face’ meeting since February 2020 and, although we have held zoom meetings and kept in touch with members, the anticipated fall in membership is becoming evident. The National Federation of Womens Institutes moved our subscription date from January to April, giving members and extra three months in recognition that we were unable to provide the meetings that they had paid for. However, it has been difficult to encourage members to renew their subscriptions and almost impossible to recruit new members. Finances are now very tight and we could not afford to hold the welcome back event or the recruitment drive without this generous grant from the parish council. We are using the grant as follows: Welcome Back Event We have organised an afternoon tea at Esseborne Manor as a thank you to those members who have renewed their subscription and continue to support the WI. The grant has allowed us to make a substantial contribution to the cost of this tea. Recruitment A recruitment event is being planned for October. We intend to produce a flyer and encourage ladies to come along and meet us at a fun event in the War Memorial Hall.”

The Abbots Ann Community Support Group 2020 – 2021

“The Abbots Ann Community Support Group (AACSG) was formed in March 2020 in response to the COVID crisis and imminent lockdown, to provide a support network and information service for the residents of Abbots Ann and in particular those residents who were self-isolating. The AACSG’s activities were organised and run by a small group of AA villagers, supported by over 250 households across the parish who volunteered to help. The AACSG established a website and a database of those who were self-isolating and the volunteers. The AACSG co-ordinated requests from self-isolators including the collection and delivery of prescriptions and shopping for food and essential supplies. We established a bi-weekly village newsletter which blended Covid-related information with poems, stories, jokes and gardening tips that were contributed from across the parish. A group of children formed a team of ‘Abbots Ann Superhero Penpals’ to write to those residents who were self-isolating. The AACSG also organised a series of Abbots Ann Variety Shows and a Quiz via Zoom to help people feel connected and able to see and chat to each other whilst enjoying a shared, village orientated, experience.”

Cllr Jordan thanked all those who volunteered during this time and praised the group for all their hard work.

Community Land Trust - Ray Lucas

He reported that since April the second stage consultation has been run. There was concern that consultation fatigue would have set in, this hasn’t happened and 127 responses have been received. 82% are in support of their proposals. They will be addressing concerns shortly and they hope that to submit a planning application in due course.

Cllr Jordan thanked the Land Trust and the volunteers on their hard work and thanked them for the amount of consultation that has taken place.

General Q&A with the Parish Council

There were no questions raised.

Cllr Jordan thanked Councillors for their hard work over the last two years and thanked residents for attending.

The Meeting closed at 18.32