

KIRTLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall 22nd May 2013

Since our last meeting, Sam Tylor has joined the Council replacing Wendi Brock. Sam is a born and bred Kirtlingtoner and we are delighted to have him on board.

During this past year, your Council has achieved a lot of its original plans as well as some requested in the Parish Plan.

Firstly, the web site is up and running and well worth a visit (www.kirtlingtonvillage.co.uk) and our thanks are due to Cllrs Alex Charlesworth and Anna Kennedy for all their hard work on achieving this goal. Our aim is to have a 21st century village information source that could be constantly updated but in no way replace the Kirtlington Village News. We now need a computer-savvy Villager to volunteer to be the Content Manager to keep the site uploaded with any new and/or changed data from our various Societies, etc.

Secondly, the Games Wall has been built. Our aim was to find something that would occupy the older children in the Village and now that the Play area has been updated and enlarged, both sites are receiving a lot of traffic from a wider age group. Our thanks go to Christopher Powles and John Gardner for their successful felling of the burnt beeches and the crafting of the stumps into a work of art that is both fun and functional. A big thank you to Cllr Shelley van Loen and other Councillors for all the work put in to have made this such a success. We were successful in obtaining various funds, grants and donations totalling approximately £22,000 which has helped pay for these improvements and fund-raising continues.

Thirdly, with the guidance and tenacity of Cllr Helen Macbeth, we have been able to utilise the services of the Probation Office in supplying free labour for groundwork in several jobs not far from the village hall. These men, who are fulfilling Community Service hours, have cleared out the turf from the extended play area and removed layers of mud and weeds from along Molly Minns Lane. The waste earth from both these projects has been recycled to where needed in the recreation field and beside the car park where the cut-back brambles have been uprooted. A team from the Oxford Conservation Volunteers visited us last Autumn and helped clear out the Pond, some of the overgrowth in the Churchyard and cut back the brambles in the car park. To cover their expenses we paid them £100.

Fourthly, distribution of space on the playing field has been configured to have a permanent Senior Football pitch, a permanent Junior pitch and a permanent cricket square and, for that, Cllr Helen Macbeth and Mark Harrison have been the prime movers to obtain this goal. In order to help pay for the upkeep of the Field, pitch fees are to be paid by these sportsmen.

Fifthly, the Council is, this month, submitting a request, on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee, to Viridor for £50,000 to refurbish the Village Hall. This is a much needed project that we hope will come to fruition and this Council has donated £5,000 towards that project. The VHMC are to be thanked for all the detailed work they have put into the planning and the application.

Finally, we had one major planning application that absorbed a great deal of the Council's time: the Manor House on South Green. Only some of the suggestions raised by us, as well as by some residents, have been recognised and incorporated in the Permission Notice.

Nevertheless, this Council is delighted that the old building is being carefully restored and will again be a proud landmark of our Village. The owners have agreed to restore their part of South Green to its original state as and when the project is completed. They have been very cognizant about the need for keeping the roads clear for other users and their contractors have tried very hard to keep damage to a minimum. However, some damage is unavoidable and the owners' future commitment to restoration of damage is appreciated. The Council is very much aware of villagers' concerns about the state of the greens and parking. The Highways Agency, at no cost to us, put bollards in place along Church Lane.

We also found the time to host a very successful Jubilee party and dealt with the logistics of the Olympic Torch being run through the Village.

The bus routes have just been reviewed by Oxfordshire County Council and I'm glad to say that the Oxford and Bicester routes continue as before, while the Woodstock route will now go into Kidlington Centre shops area.

Some of our aims for the upcoming last year of our term of office include:

Having had one tennis court application declined, we have just filed a new planning application for one court to be located in the Quarry Pit Field alongside the Pound.

Didi and Robert Spencer have kindly offered again to organise a Societies Fair in the Autumn which we hope many more villagers will attend and offer their help to follow your lead in keeping our Societies going as some of them are in desperate need of new blood. I look forward to hearing the reports from those Societies that are here tonight.

In November, the Oxford Conservation Volunteers are returning to help again with the Pond clearance work and will be laying the hedge along Tinkers Ditch.

The Council monitored the snow/ice situation this winter, but found that enough salt had been retained from the previous year. However, we feel that an ice plan for future winters needs to be set in place with volunteers clearing various parts of the Village with salt/grit supplied by the Council. One kind resident has already offered his services to be responsible for part of Hatch Way and this needs to be repeated throughout the Village's black spots.

Finally, a special thanks to Cllr Richard Sadler who has kept our finances in good shape and has been extremely helpful in obtaining the grants we have received.

A big thank you to all my co-councillors and, especially, to our Clerk, Ruth Powles without whom this Council would run so smoothly.

David Pratt, Chairman Kirtlington Parish Council