

Chairmans Update – January

Let me start by wishing everyone a Happy New Year. Hopefully those of you who opted to follow New Year's resolutions have all made good progress so far and have not done my usual trick of giving up almost straightaway. For my part things will be different this year I hope and having taken a break from distance running for a couple of years due a variety of injuries, I have decided to put it all behind me and work towards running the Reading Half Marathon in April with more to follow if the training goes OK. So..... if you see someone looking fed up and plodding around the Parish there is a fair chance it's me.....

Back to Parish business and despite Christmas coming and going, there are a few things to report.

Firstly, we have a new litter bin at the top of Bethesda Street which will hopefully reduce the litter in the area and give people walking in the village another stop off to deposit wrappers etc. Additionally, we've kicked off a couple of orders for new noticeboards - one for Wakemans and one to replace the old one at the Triangle. These will be in place in the next month or two.

Elsewhere, we've had replacement road signage installed on the Aldworth Road and a request accepted for new road signs at the bottom of Gardeners Lane. There has also been progress with the latest fly tipping issues finally cleared. Lastly, West Berkshire Council have agreed to sweep Hook End Lane due to the large amounts of dirt and debris across the road and we've requested that the council consider the speed limit at the top of Kiln Hill.

Vaguely carrying on with a traffic theme - on the 14th January I attended a meeting at Goring Village Hall with Network Rail to discuss the effect of the electrification on the AONB in which we reside. Network Rail have agreed to engage in a period of consultation where alternatives for the 20km stretch between (roughly) Pangbourne and Cholsey will be explored and shared with residents before reaching a decision later in the year. It's difficult to know currently how this will all go, however, for now at least there is dialogue and the opportunity to highlight the strength of feeling to Network Rail.

During January, we have kicked off a handful of new projects:

Book replacement at the Phone Box Library. The library will be emptied in the next month and replaced with new books. We are currently collecting new books – if you have any you plan to get rid of please let me know.

Revisit of the Triangle phone box information point. Whilst this area has some useful stuff it needs a general tidy up and some new bits and pieces adding.

Clubs and Societies Day – we have contacted the Church with a view to running another day as per 2015.

Litter Picking Session - As per 2015, we are planning a litter picking event across the Parish.

Completion of the Village Design Statement - following review is ready to formatted and sent for final review.

As a final note, I'd like to mention again the bus service for Upper Basildon. A petition is in circulation to ensure West Berks Council are fully aware of the Parish's thoughts towards it. Additionally, the Parish Council continue to lobby for the continuation of the service and a thorough understanding of current costs incurred by West Berks Council. We will also be in attendance at a number of meetings in Newbury over the next couple of months to ensure that the council is in no doubt as to our strength of feeling. As it stands we have no idea either way what will happen but have opted to be proactive rather than reactive. If you would like to sign the petition please contact any of the Parish Council and we will put you in touch with the organiser.

Best wishes