

Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council 22nd May 2023

This is the first report I have had to write as Chairman of Stoodleigh Parish Council. We have had many issues to address in the past 12 months, some of which are still ongoing.

Planning:- We have been involved in many planning issues, the most contentious being Stoodleigh Cross. A great number of concerns were voiced by parishioners which we have put forward to MDDC. Currently, there appears to be no further works on site at this time. In all planning requests and concerns we do our best as a parish council to look at every case objectively and to proceed as a collective accordingly.

Budget:- With reference to the budget, we raised our precept to £6k in 2022, a portion of this for works required to the playground. We requested and received £500 from the Devon Locality Budget for the church flag fund, which came into fruition in January. The St George's flag can now be seen flying from the church tower.

Footpaths & Bridleways:- The track between the bottom of Wormsworthy and Iron Mill, referred to as "Footpath 10", with kind permission of Mr Cheeseman and Amanda Barratt, owners of some of the woodland, can now be used by horses as well as walkers for hacking purposes only. I have been involved in extensive negotiations, and providing this permission is not abused, we can all enjoy this beautiful valley. They have clearly stipulated that no hunting is to take place through the wood, all relative hunt masters have been formally informed. I would like to thank Roger Hill for his work to adjust the church path gates and for trimming back the hedge on the church path.

Definitive Map Review:- This leads me onto the Definitive Map review which we have been looking at with Washfield. The main subject being the track which runs between Park House Water and Lower Dryhill. There is currently a Section 14 underway to restore the track for public use. The forms required to support this can be found on Stoodleigh Web and need to be submitted by 1st June 2023.

Playground:- Some new equipment has been installed in the playground, and some extensive hedge trimming and clearing carried out. The damaged wall is

something we must look at this year, it's eyesore from both sides as well as a danger issue for adventurous children.

The defibrillator has had a repair, thanks to John Widdowson for undertaking this.

Thank you to the garden club for their work, planning and planting to maintain the lovely display of flowers on Stoodleigh Drive, and for the beautiful planters at Kissing Gates.

The Litter Pickers as ever maintain a clean and tidy village, well done and thank you to all those involved.

Lizzie at the Stoodleigh Inn has worked very hard in hosting events to bring the community together, and has also helped with fund raising, so thank you to Lizzie and Mike for their continued efforts.

The community email, Stoodleigh Web, has continued to be a real asset and an extremely valuable means of communication throughout the parish, thanks to Geraldine and her team for keeping this updated. There is also a Face Book page, "Stoodleigh Post", for any interesting snippets of news or photographs, anyone in the parish is welcome to join this group.

The Stoodleigh Watch WhatsApp Group has proved a useful tool in crime prevention for reporting any suspicious behaviour, being that any such activity can be shared very quickly with a large number of people.

We are all aware of the situation as regards potholes. We have been informed that the budget for repairs has been reduced by ~~Mid Devon~~ County Council. We will be raising our concerns with our new ~~County~~ District Councillor, Rachel Gilmour.

I would like to thank my fellow Parish Councillors for their continued support during the past year, and I particularly want to say a very big thank you to our Parish Clerk, Sandra Phillips for her hard work, help and advice, without whom I would not be able to fulfil my role as Chairman.

William H.J.Knowles