

## Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council 27th May 2026

This is the fifth report I have had to write as Chairman of Stoodleigh Parish Council, where has the time gone? This is a brief summary of what has been going on throughout the Parish this year.

**Planning:-** as always, we have been involved in many planning applications. There have been a few concerns expressed by parishioners with regards to some of these which we have put forward to the MDDC planning department.

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.

**Footpaths & Bridleways:-** There is nothing new to report but if any members of the public have anything they wish to report on the byways around the village being on foot or horseback, please do let us know.

**Playground:-** Many thanks to John Widdowson and all others involved for their efforts in keeping the playground maintained, a lot of repairs and replacement timbers have gone in this Spring. The Berrys have done an excellent job keeping it tidy with the hedge trimming and the grass cutting, they also keep the church grounds in order.

### **Defibrillator:-**

We now have two defibrillators, one located outside The Inn, the other in this village hall porch. Both are checked weekly by various members of the parish council on a rota kindly drawn up by John W.

### **Stoodleigh Inn:-**

Lizzie at the Stoodleigh Inn has worked very hard yet again this year, providing all sorts of entertainment, last weekend was a tremendous

---

success, much fun was had and probably a few headaches ensued on Monday morning! The Inn's weekend away trip has become very popular for the locals, and Liz also hosts charity events, and fundraisers for the church and cricket club. The tractor run has become a very popular annual event too. All in all, it's simply a good local pub where you are always made welcome. I know many holiday makers visiting the area who have commented that the pub is one of the many highlights of their stay, while visiting the village, so a huge thank you to both Lizzie and Mike for their continued efforts.

### **Church:-**

The Church PC continues in its' efforts to maintain a traditional English Christian place of worship, and much work goes on behind the scenes to keep our beautiful church in order, and to fund raise in an ever more difficult economic climate, so our thanks to all the members of the Church Committee, to all the ladies involved in the flower arranging throughout the year, and to the bell ringing team led by Phil Turner. It's always good to see the flag flying on the tower too, thank you to Julian and Paul Hemingway who raise and lower the flag as required according to weather conditions.

### **The Garden Club:-**

This little not for profit club organises a number of garden trips and craft events throughout the year, including some charity fundraisers, one was held just this morning at Wheatcroft Barn kindly hosted by "The Fab Four" as they're affectionately known! Members of the club undertake all of the replanting on Stoodleigh drive and other localities around the village, it's a thankless task, but we all enjoy the results, the snowdrops and daffodils are always a welcome sight. Shirley keeps us up to date on the contents of the Swap Box, the old telephone box at Hill Crest. The tubs at Kissing Gates have been delightful, thanks to Jill Chant.

**Cricket Club:-** The grounds are maintained largely by Stephen Partridge, who works hard to keep it immaculate. They are always looking for players so any budding cricketers would be made very welcome. The club kindly allows villagers to walk their dogs around the field, but please can all dog walkers be responsible for picking up after their dogs! There will be a Stoodleigh Cricket Club versus Stoodleigh Inn Rounders match later this summer instead of the usual cricket match so more people can get involved!

**Community:-**

The community email, Stoodleigh Web, has continued to be a real asset, and a useful 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. There is also a very popular Whatsapp group for day-to-day things, from lost pets, to trees across the road and other traffic issues.

The Stoodleigh Watch WhatsApp Group is also useful tool in crime prevention for reporting any suspicious behaviour, being that any such activity can be shared very quickly; luckily that hasn't been very active of late, long may that continue.

**Highways:-**

We are all aware of the situation as regards potholes. We have had a few repairs carried out around the village, but there's a long way to go. MDDC are inviting members of the public from any village to form a team who after a training course, can fill in potholes in the area with materials supplied by the council, this was put forward at the last meeting, it may be worth thinking about.

**Summary:-**

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, Jane Brand for her invaluable hard work, help and advice, without whom I would not be able to fulfil my role as Chairman.

William H.J. Knowles