

Some of you will have heard my full year's round up at the Annual Parish Meeting last month. I feel that the event was a success, with quite a few speakers, and it benefited from being held away from the Parish Council meeting. It would probably have attracted more people if we had had food on offer!

So, in less than a year we have gone from celebrating the Queen's Jubilee, followed by her death in September, and now we have come full circle with the Coronation of the King last week. I think people appreciated the Coronation event which was held in the village hall on Saturday and I think there were also some private parties held around the village on Sunday.

As our one bid for funding for the Coronation bench was unsuccessful, we need to pursue other avenues in order to get this project up and running and we need to decide a PC lead for this.

We need to check what our responsibilities are with the new play area on Portway, as I have noticed that the basket ball nets are now missing. It may be simply a question of chasing Falcon up for replacements but I don't know if it's down to us to pay for these.

We will be choosing an LCN representative today as well, and this may or may not prove to be an important role for our village. There has already been so much discussion but little decision and I expect more of the same in the lead up to a final determination of how it will work. Our priority will be to ensure Holford is always represented where it counts.

Personally, I have been very interested in following the discussions at the AONB JAC meetings, particularly about their attitude to nature and conservation. I do find their progress very slow but I think this might be down to the funding and bureaucracy of such a body but also the nature of the landowners and commoners responsible for the land.

I think it is important for us to work with such authorities to ensure that the large area of protected land within our Parish is kept in excellent condition, for instance by preventing illegal driving off road, ensuring mountain bikers stick to the bridleways and encouraging walkers to keep their dogs on a lead during the Spring and Summer months.

I haven't heard anything more since the complaints about mountain bikers last autumn, so I hope things have settled down a bit. However, since our meeting in November with the QSH, there has been a continuing problem with hunt associated vehicles driving off road and, more recently, dangerous behaviour on the A39, about which we have had complaints. Karen has duly replied to the emails and also sent a letter of complaint to the QSH and police. We need to keep up pressure on the authorities to ensure this sort of crime in our parish is taken more seriously by the police, because my experience in the past is that they tend to turn a blind eye to this.

Now that we won't be adding new saplings to the memorial trees, we will work with QLPS to get a memorial event in the village set up this autumn. This should be at no cost to the Parish Council.

Mike has also contacted the LPS to see if they can fund the repair and restoration of the fingerpost signs in our parish.

We have also agreed with the AONB that they will organise to fill the potholes at the entrance to the Bowling Green carpark for free, but I will chase them up for a date as I have had a complaint

from the resident who uses this access route to get to their house and thinks that it needs to happen sooner than they are promising.

The lack of response from the Police Trust about our proposed changes to the plan on the A39 is very frustrating and I hope that our special motion today will enable us to press on more quickly with the installation of SIDs in the short term, while we wait for approval for the digital speedwatch cameras.

The new village signs have been installed by Highways on the A39, as well as a no through sign on Combe Lane, but I have had to chase them for the North facing camera logos as well as lowering the no through sign which is much too high.

I made an attempt to get a bit of feedback from those who attended the Parish Meeting and have circulated the results of the small survey I handed out. You will see that the two requests for the PC to action is solving the problem with parked car in the summer and following through with our commitments. Other perceived problems in the village are the hunt, a lack of affordable housing, poor wifi and speeding traffic. No one offered to help. It was such small sample though that I suggest we try and get a more comprehensive survey of the village organised.

Finally, I would like to say how grateful I am to Karen, who took up the reins as Clerk in November and has had to lead a changing group of inexperienced councillors and is spending a lot of time ensuring we are ticking every box we need to be able to operate legally and transparently. Thank you, Karen.

On a side note about our inexperience as councillors, can I please ask all those who haven't yet, to sign up to and attend the online essential training course, dated for which Karen has circulated.

Emily Heckscher