



ABBOTTS ANN PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr Andrew Hayter

Clerk: Mrs Clare Cotterell

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Friday 21st April 2017

Abbotts Ann Parish Council Annual Assembly

Chairman's speech

Andrew Hayter

First of all a big thank-you for coming along tonight, and a special thank-you to the exhibitors for making this an enjoyable Parish Assembly.

In addition to Susie and I, since last year we have 5 new councillors and me as the new Parish Chairman. I would like to thank those who stepped down for all their work on the council.

Introducing our councillors we have:

Tim Abram – who is also Vice Chairman.

Lorna Haigh

Colin Teasdale – our first councillor who lives in Burghclere down.

Mike Doherty

Dale Wells- who sends his apologies for this evening.

In terms of budgets, we spent the same this year as we did last year and did not increase your taxes.

One thing the Parish Council are known for is commenting on Planning matters. Although we have no objection to most planning and tree applications, Parish Council objections act as an early warning system for our Borough Councillors.

One of our major projects this year was to fix a problem with footpaths around the village, we've received a number of complaints about blocked and overgrown paths, and reacted to the complaints rather than having a schedule of planned maintenance.

We took the opportunity to market test the Burial Ground and Churchyard maintenance as well and have now chosen a sub-contractor to provide both through an anonymous bidding process. The contractor stepped in at short notice to carry out an initial cut in the Churchyard when the Bishop visited and our existing contractor let us down.

We have also introduced a deal with a contractor to annually inspect the Play equipment in the War Memorial Hall and at Bulbery, together with quarterly inspections and cleaning. Some bolts and straps have been replaced, I'm sure you'd all agree its important to ensure equipment is well maintained.

In terms of ongoing projects:

We purchased the Red Telephone Box, and Lorna has been leading its renovation – after wide consultation we'll be using it as an information kiosk.

The management of the Sports Field hasn't been resolved for years blocking replacement of the Pavilion. We have now agreed a joint plan covering the Sports Field Committee becoming a Charity and the Parish Council arranging a long term lease which will allow longer term planning to progress. Our target is to get a lease with the Charity established before the end of 2017.

We have been having an ongoing problem with the ANPR system that fines lorries from the Andover Business Park that drive through surrounding villages. The system generated £400

thousand pounds in 2013, however its not been working since. We've been pressing Hampshire County Council who run the system and Test Valley Borough Council who enforce planning conditions to sort this out.

We have a large number of trees in the village, those in the Conservation area are protected together with a large number of Tree Preservation Orders. We have no central database of these and so cannot strategically plan or effectively respond to planning request. The aim is to get a better handle on that.

We have decided to introduce Portfolio's to help focus on specific area's. We announced these recently and these will develop going forward.

Finally our vibrant community has many groups and we're always please to consider applications for support. Do feel free to approach us.