



## Chairman's report April 2020/March 2021

**Welcome to my Annual Report for the year 2020/2021 – and what a year it's been for all of us.**

We sadly lost our friend and fellow Councillor, Ken Morris, after a lengthy period of poor health. Ken was one of the original members of Wootton Bridge Parish Council and served on it, without a break, right up until his passing. Ken was a great mentor and inspiration to me in taking on the Chairman's role from him.

I would also like to thank Mike Waddleton and Ross Edmunds who stood down and welcome Lynda Strange and Dave Burley as their replacements.

I would also like to give our thanks and very best wishes to our Assistant Clerk, Madge Reeves, who is retiring after many years of loyal service.

The pandemic has meant that we have had no face to face meetings but have kept things going by using Zoom for official and informal meetings. As soon as regulations allow and it is safe to do so, monthly meetings will resume at the Old School in New Road.

I would like to thank our Clerk, Liz Kingston, Councillors Daryll Pitcher and Trish Evans as well as the team of local volunteers for their sterling efforts in providing assistance and co-ordination during the pandemic. I know that all their effort has been really appreciated by the local community.

Whilst the functions of the PC have been limited, we have continued to comment on planning applications, work with the Isle of Wight Council over the recreation ground, (including the planned upgrade to the pathway) as well as Island Roads on highway issues. We are currently in discussion with Community Action regarding the possible provision of limited Post Office services again in the village which we hope will be supported by residents.

You will know that the local elections will take place on the 6 May and I would urge anyone who is

serious about the village and its residents to stand as a councillor – Wootton has ten councillors, so plenty of opportunity. Please note that the Polling Station has moved to the Old School in New Road as a temporary measure.

As this will be my last Chairman's Report, I will sign off by wishing the councillors past, present and future my very best wishes and to offer my assistance to the PC (if wanted) for specific projects and events.

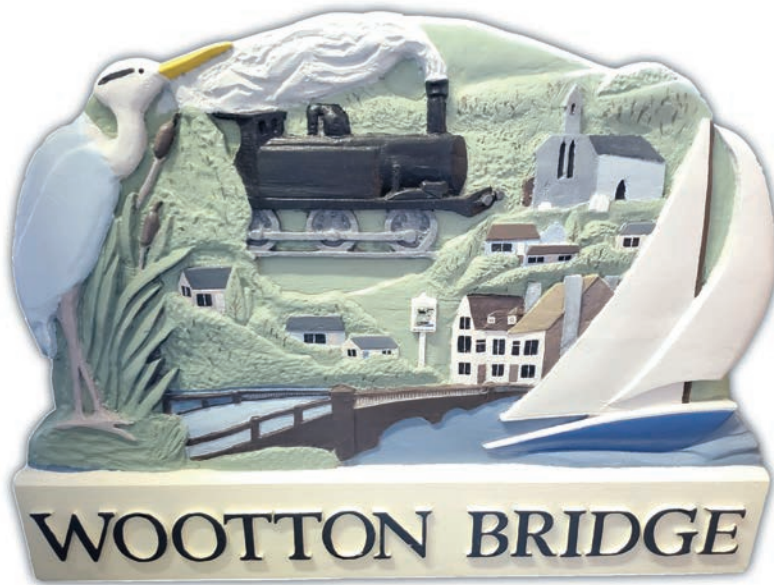
**Steve Porter, Chairman WBPC**

### **COUNCILLOR BARRY ABRAHAM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL REPORT**

By any stretch of the imagination the last year has been the most strange and difficult times that most of us have ever lived through and it has brought out the best of people. Despite some early setbacks at the start of the pandemic and shortages of PPE the council did manage to buy in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of those partners that required it and several local businesses switched production to produce PPE locally and small scale distilleries switched to producing hand sanitiser, as they say necessity is the mother of invention. The Chancellor made funding available for grants to support local businesses and the council distributed this, unfortunately the system was not perfect and some traders have struggled and I have helped where I have been able.

As the year has progressed and lockdowns have come and gone I think the biggest issue for me has been the closure of Schools and with any emergency it always is the young who have most to lose and it's true with this pandemic a lot of time and effort has been put in place for the needs for education and personal wellbeing, and only time will tell if we have got it right.

Last week most children went back for the first time this year, as my excited 5 year old great nephew said to his father as he went out the door "I can't believe I've seen no kids this year." That says it all.



Sign made by Ken White

We are now a year on and hopefully things are changing with the rollout of the vaccine and I've now had mine and we all must do our bit and get vaccinated, so hopefully it might be almost over by Christmas, fingers crossed.

I have not been in County Hall since last March, no loss there, all meetings are online via Teams or Zoom and I am told there have been over 22,000 online meetings across the Council. Many staff are working from home which in itself is challenging and is likely to bring changes the way the Council works in the future.

On a personal note I thank the Parish Councillors for all the work you do, as a parish we work well for our community without the infighting that seems to inflict some. To Steve, who has been our Chairman and commits so much time to the community not just the Parish Council, thank you.

And then there's Liz who keeps us all going in the right direction and has to deal with things from afar and I sometimes think it must be like herding sheep when we go off track, (we may yet make a decision on what to do about a Christmas tree or not).

**Councillor Barry Abraham**

## **WOOTTON BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE (HELP AND INFORMATION CENTRE (HIC))**

The Parish Council office continues to be well used. Issues we deal with are very varied, from potholes in the road to coastal erosion. The office has been open for 19 years this November and it has become an established part of our village life. We are proud of all the very positive feedback received from our residents.

The office provides us with a very good way of communicating with the village and is invaluable for carrying out our consultation exercises. These exercises are vital in the process for securing grant funding.

### **Our facilities include:-**

- The Beat Officer and PCSO are always calling in either to hold a surgery or pick up messages.
- The Environmental Officers pop into the office to collect messages.
- CCTV coverage of the square and the toilets.
- Photocopying and laminating service.

### **We continue to provide assistance where possible on general issues including:-**

- Advice on local issues.
- Signposting of services.
- Comprehensive walks leaflets.

### **HIC OPENING TIMES:-**

#### **Parish Council**

Mon – Closed

Tues and Wed 9.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m.

Thur Closed

Friday 9.00am – 2.00 pm

#### **Beat Officer & PCSO**

Messages can be left.

**Liz Kingston, Clerk**



**PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 19/20**

The following report shows the income and expenditure for 2019/2020, which have been audited by PKF Littlejohn LLP on behalf of The National Audit Office. No matters giving cause for concern came to the attention of either the Internal Auditor or the External Auditor and the books were successfully signed off by PKF Littlejohn LLP on 13 November 2020. Local government electors have the opportunity to question the auditor about the accounts and have the right to attend to the auditor and make objections to the accounts or any item in them. Full details on how this can be done are posted on the Village Notice Board and at the Parish Council office prior to each annual audit, usually in the summer.

The council tax precept for 2019/2020 was £69,451 and represents approx. £49.12 per annum per household at band D or 94p per week.

Any questions or a request for copies of the accounts can be directed to me at the Parish Council office.

<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020</b>			
31 March 19		Current year end 31 March 2020	
<b>INCOME</b>			<b>£</b>
70,269	Precept	Precept	69,451
191	Interest on investments/bank interest	Interest on investments/bank interest	544
826	Donations	Donations	0
600	St Marks PCC/Newport PC Grass Cutting	St Marks PCC/Newport PC Grass Cutting	600
911	HIC Income	HIC Income	887
749	Events	Events	142
		Photocopying	29
<b>73,546</b>		<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>71,653</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			<b>£</b>
7,659	Public Conveniences	Public Conveniences	11,165
30,656	General Administration incl. salaries	General Administration incl. salaries	32,474
1,202	Events	Events	70
257	Capital schemes (Play Area & Signs)	Capital schemes (Play Area & Signs)	0
3,824	S137 payments	S137 payments/Grants	15,931
4,730	Help and Information Centre	Help and Information Centre	6,082
7,213	Grass cutting/Recreation Ground	Grass cutting/Recreation Ground	7,118
2,080	Environmental Officers	Environmental Officers	2,080
2,100	Churchyard maintenance	Churchyard maintenance	1,470
877	Christmas Tree	Christmas Tree	1,062
7,250	Housing Needs/Sustainability Reports	Housing Needs/Sustainability Reports	0
35	Training	Training	0
0	Election Expenses	Election Expenses	3,005
6,351	Youth Club	Village Square maintenance	1,924
<b>74,234</b>		<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>82,381</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>			<b>£</b>
137,431	Balance at 1 April 2018	Balance at 1 April 2019	136,743
73,546	Add total income	Add total income	71,653
<u>210,977</u>			<u>208,396</u>
-74,234	Deduct total expenditure	Deduct total expenditure	-82,381
<u>136,743</u>	<b>BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2019</b>	<b>BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2020</b>	<u>126,015</u>

**PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 20/21**

The following report shows the income and expenditure for 2020/2021, which have been audited by PKF Littlejohn LLP on behalf of The National Audit Office. No matters giving cause for concern came to the attention of either the Internal Auditor or the External Auditor and the books were successfully signed off by PKF Littlejohn LLP on 21 September 2020. Local government electors have the opportunity to question the auditor about the accounts and have the right to attend to the auditor and make objections to the accounts or any item in them. Full details on how this can be done are posted on the Village Notice Board and at the Parish Council office prior to each annual audit, usually in the summer.

The council tax precept for 2020/2021 is £71,000 and represents approx. £49.12 per annum per household at band D or 94p per week.

Any questions or a request for copies of the accounts can be directed to me at the Parish Council office.

<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021</b>			
31 March 20		Current year end 31 March 2021	
<b>INCOME</b>			<b>£</b>
69,541	Precept	Precept	71,000
544	Interest on investments/bank interest	Interest on investments/bank interest	185
0	Donations	Donations	150
600	St Marks PCC/Newport PC Grass Cutting	St Marks PCC/Newport PC Grass Cutting	600
29	Photocopying	Photocopying	1
887	HIC Income	HIC Income	0
142	Events	Events	0
		Covid Grant	5,000
		Gravel Pit Road Residents	7,850
<b>71,653</b>		<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>84,786</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			<b>£</b>
11,165	Public Conveniences	Public Conveniences	11,042
32,474	General Administration incl. salaries	General Administration incl. salaries	31,577
70	Events	Events	70
0	Capital schemes (Play Area & Signs)	Gravel Pit Road Residents	7,020
15,931	S137 payments	S137 payments/Grants	1,860
6,082	Help and Information Centre	Help and Information Centre	2,072
7,118	Grass cutting/Recreation Ground	Grass cutting/Recreation Ground	7,862
2,080	Environmental Officers	Environmental Officers	1,872
1,470	Churchyard maintenance	Churchyard maintenance	1,890
1,062	Christmas Tree	Christmas Tree	842
0	Training	Training	0
3,005	Election Expenses	Election Expenses	0
1,924	Village Square maintenance	Village Square maintenance	1,288
<b>82,381</b>		<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>67,395</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>			<b>£</b>
136,743	Balance at 1 April 2019	Balance at 1 April 2020	126,015
71,653	Add total income	Add total income	84,786
<u>208,396</u>			<u>210,801</u>
<u>-82,381</u>	Deduct total expenditure	Deduct total expenditure	<u>67,395</u>
<u>126,015</u>	<b>BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2020</b>	<b>BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2021</b>	<u>143,406</u>



## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **PARISH COUNCILLORS FROM 1 APRIL 2019:-**

Ken Morris  
Steve Porter      **Chairman**  
Barry Abraham  
Peter Mundell      Vice Chair  
Daryll Pitcher  
Linda Pitcher  
Carol Walton      Vice Chair (Resigned in April 19)  
Barbara Port  
Ross Edmunds  
Mike Waddleton      (Resigned in Feb 20)  
Trish Evans      (Took Office July 19)

### **OFFICERS:-**

Liz Kingston      **Parish Clerk**  
Madge Reeves      Assistant Parish Clerk  
Gordon Tutton      Financial Assistant

### **PARISH COUNCILLORS FROM 1 APRIL 2020:-**

Ken Morris      **Passed Away June 20**  
Steve Porter      **Chairman**  
Barry Abraham  
Peter Mundell      Vice Chairman  
Daryll Pitcher  
Linda Pitcher  
Barbara Port  
Ross Edmunds      Resigned Nov 20  
Trish Evans  
Dave Burley      Took Office Nov 20  
Lynda Strange      Took Office Nov 20

### **OFFICERS:-**

Liz Kingston      **Parish Clerk**  
Madge Reeves      Assistant Parish Clerk  
Gordon Tutton      Financial Assistant

## **MEETINGS**

The Parish Council usually meets on the third Tuesday in every month except August when no meeting is held. We meet at 7.00pm in the Old School and members of the public and press are welcome to attend. Members of the public are able to participate in meetings and speak on any agenda item. There is also an Open Forum at the start of every meeting where issues can be raised that are not included on the agenda. Notices and the agendas are posted on the village notice boards, on the web site [www.woottonbridge.org.uk](http://www.woottonbridge.org.uk) and at the Parish Council office. Sometimes extra meetings are held to deal with urgent matters such as planning.

## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Additionally there is a statutory Annual Parish Meeting held during April. The Annual Parish Meeting provides another opportunity for residents to come along and address the Parish Councillors or just to have a say on matters of interest or concern. Additionally reports are given by the Parish Council Chairman, Clerk, Environmental Officers and the Isle of Wight Councillor

## **PARISH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

The following attendance record is in respect of the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 and is in respect of the Parish Councillors who were in office during 2019/20.

Of the 12 scheduled monthly meetings held, Parish Councillor attendance was as follows:-

Barry Abraham 10      Carol Walton 1      Linda Pitcher 12  
Ken Morris 8      Peter Mundell 11      Steve Porter 9      Trish Evans 8  
Daryll Pitcher 9      Barbara Port 10      Mike Waddleton 7      Ross Edmunds 8

The following attendance record is in respect of the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 and is in respect of the Parish Councillors who were in office during 2020/21.

Of the 4 scheduled monthly meetings held, Parish Councillor attendance was as follows:-

Barry Abraham 3      Trish Evans 4      Linda Pitcher 4  
Peter Mundell 2      Steve Porter 4      Daryll Pitcher 4  
Barbara Port 4      Lynda Strange 1      Dave Burley 2

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## **OFFICE OPENING TIMES**

Parish Council Office opening times: 9.00am to 2.00pm on Tuesdays, Wednesday & Friday. Closed all day on Monday & Thursday

## **HOW TO CONTACT YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS**

**Parish Councillors/officers can be contacted at the Wootton Bridge Help and Information Centre on 884555 or by email at [clerk@woottonbridge.org.uk](mailto:clerk@woottonbridge.org.uk)**

Remember that your Parish Councillors give their time for free because they care about the village; they receive no payments or expenses. Also, much of what we achieve is thanks to the many volunteers who help us in all manner of ways. Together we have raised thousands of pounds worth of grant funding for village regeneration projects. It is very rewarding to work together and to see so many projects come to fruition. If you would like to become involved or would like more information please contact any one of your Parish Councillors or the Parish Clerk on 884555.

Questions relating to this report can be addressed to any one of your Parish Councillors or the Parish Clerk at the Parish Council Office in Brannon Way.

This report is also available on the Parish Council's web site at  
**[www.woottonbridge.org.uk](http://www.woottonbridge.org.uk)**



**Wootton Bridge**  
**PARISH COUNCIL**