

Annual Parish Meeting April 2024
Report from the Chairman Ann Kendall
Malborough Parish Council

The last eleven months have been a swift learning curve for me but with the help and support of Kathy Harrod our Parish Clerk and the new Parish Council I have survived ! In the elections last May we gained five new Councillors and along with the four of us who had been in the previous Council we have a huge range of knowledge and experience and are working well together. Sadly one of our number Ed Hill has had to resign, we shall be taking the normal steps to fill the vacancy but thank Ed for his help whilst he has been with us.

We welcome the support we have from Rufus Gilbert our Country Councillor and Mark Long and Samantha Dennis our District Councillors all of whom attend our meetings when they can. The District Council had big changes in leadership after the May 2023 election and there are already positive signs that planning and enforcement will have a higher profile than previously. Rufus is particularly helpful in following up road problems for us - please remember that anyone can report a pothole on line and they do get sorted !

We have tried to streamline our monthly meetings with them now taking a maximum of 2 hours. This has been achieved by reports from DCC, SHDC and our Clerk being sent out before the meeting which works well and means we can focus on Open Forum where parishioners can raise their concerns and continue to carry on the routine work of the Council reporting on planning applications, making decisions on work to be done, agreeing payments and so on – just check our monthly agendas and minutes on our Council website to keep up to date.

A big change this year in Malborough has been the toilets being looked after by a new team appointed by the Parish Council. This has worked really well and we thank them for keeping them so clean and tidy. Upgrading is now taking place after some vandalism but overall they are in a much better, more cared for state than formerly. We have paid for a new fence to be erected between Great Park and the Burial ground and new fencing at Malborough Park will be shortly completed. Planters have been placed in Collaton Road and look really good with their shrubs and flowers. We have paid for CCTV on the Skate Park and Tennis Courts which will be completed shortly and should deter vandalism in this area. The SMASH group continue work to improve and enhance our environment with litter picks, beach cleans and new planting. Hopefully, their ongoing project of setting up a community composting scheme will happen in the coming months saving tedious trips to Torr Quarry for many.

Looking forward, much planning time has gone into our new projects – these are a revamped Youth Club and upgrading of the playing field facilities. This last project will take time but we have much of the cost already due to Section 106 monies from recent building work in the Parish. We hope the Youth Club will be up and running in the next few weeks and parents will support us and encourage their young people to come along,

A big thank you to all my fellow Councillors and to Kathy Harrod who has been a tower of strength and information. The gritting team, though no longer Councillors, have continued their good work on the roads on freezing nights and we thank them for this useful work and also Graham Hocking who houses all the equipment for us.

Finally thank you too all those other Parishioners who we work with like the members of the Village Hall and Playing Field Committee, the Church, the school and all other groups in the Parish. As well as helping me since I have been Chairman they continue of course also to help me with my other ‘hat’ - editing the Messenger which has been going for more than 38 years – though I have only been with the team for 30 !

We look forward to continuing to work with you all over the coming year.