

Swanmore Parish Council ANNUAL REPORT



Chairman's Report

This year we saw Councillor Giles Pateman step down from the Council after almost 7 years, and Nigel Sloper co-opted onto the Council in December 2018, bringing us up to a full quota of 10 councillors. Councillor Pete Ansty was voted in as Vice-Chairman, and the Council officers remain unchanged with Tracey Molloy as the Council's Executive Officer, and Lynsey Sutcliffe and Liz Manship supporting as Responsible Finance Officer and Projects and Contracts Officer.

Since my report last year we have been working hard to make Swanmore an efficient and effective Parish Council. I think it is fair to say that we are certainly heading in the right direction. You tell us we are engaging better with residents, getting things done quicker (well as quickly as you can in local government), and we are listening to feedback and focusing our budget and resources accordingly.

You will see the year's highlights noted throughout this report. For me personally, I can't not mention the completion of the New Road Playing Field project. This project was first discussed back in 2013 and there were many times when it felt like it just was not going to be possible, however with the hard work of officers and councillors, we did it. And we did it without spending any of your precept. We hope that it continues to be well received and we plan to celebrate our milestone by running an event in the summer, so please keep an eye out for further information.

For this year we have the village car park extension which should be complete by the summer. We are trying to time any works to minimise any disruption to daily life and not make a bad situation any worse for the school day. In addition, we are looking at the current provision of play and exercise equipment around the village. Are there enough locations? What would children/youths/adults like. Again, we will be trying to maximise our budget for this with additional grants and funding sources so if you here of any then please let us know.

Lastly, we are trying to keep track of the Winchester future housing plans and any larger developments that might come our way. If you hear of anything on the grapevine then please let us know so we can investigate.

Jon

Highlights from the year

- New Road Playing Field upgrade
- LED Street Lighting upgrade
- Pavilion exterior refurbishment
- Broad Lane Recreation Ground CCTV upgrade
- Broad Lane Recreation Ground kick-wall fencing installed
- New Road MUGA resurface
- 6 new dual-use litter bins
- Green's Wood fence replacement
- Village centre benches refurbishment
- New Road Bus Stop upgrade
- Village Beautification planting restarted
- Recycling bottle banks reinstalled
- Christmas Lights Switch-On
- Village Survey
- Speed data surveys

In Progress

- Gravel Hill / Forest Road Junction Safety Improvements
- Village Centre Car Park Extension
- Allotments
- Village entrance gates on Hill Pound
- 5 new dropped kerbs
- New village sign on Swanmore Road
- College entrance / New Road Improvements
- Rights of Way / Paths Improvements

Highways and Planning Committee

Chairman: Councillor David Newberry

Vice Chairman: Councillor Jon Woodman

Committee Members: Councillor Pete Ansty, Councillor Kimberley Barber, Councillor Penny Clive, Councillor Nigel Sloper

The Planning and Highways Committee meet every month and is kept busy with a range of responsibilities including: commenting on planning applications; highways maintenance – in conjunction with Winchester and Hampshire Councils; road safety; footways; street lighting; and street environment. This year has been a particularly busy one, with lots going on.

Planning

- The committee reviews all planning applications in the parish. While it may support planning applications or oppose them, it has no delegated powers from Winchester City Council or South Downs National Park to grant permission, therefore its views carry no more, or less weight than any other comments. This often causes confusion, therefore one of our Councillors has compiled a leaflet explaining how individual residents can make their views on planning applications known, and how to ensure that their comments are valid and useful. Copies are available in the Parish Office and on the SPC website.
- The Committee has been updating the Village Design Statement (VDS), which provides design guidance for developments in Swanmore Parish. Approval of the VDS by Winchester City Council and the South Downs National Park authority, so it can become part of planning policy has taken some time but we are extremely pleased that the end is now in sight. The VDS is currently out for public consultation. If you would like to comment on it, then copies are available at the Parish Office. Once consultation closes, all comments will be reviewed, changes will be made and the document will be adopted by Winchester City Council and South Downs National Park.

Highways

- The Parish Council is responsible for 66 street lights within the village. All but 9 of these lights were upgraded to LED lights in December 2018. The remaining 9 lights are awaiting connection by SSE. The benefits of LED lighting include:
 - A reduction of approximately 70% on the energy bill;
 - An improvement in energy efficiency which helps reduce the carbon footprint;
 - Minimal maintenance costs due to the robustness of LED lights;
 - Enhanced light quality with the lights dimmed late at night, to reduce light pollution.
- Road Safety in Swanmore is regularly on the Planning and Highways Committee agenda. Issues typically include: residents flagging their concerns about speeding in the village; problems with on-street parking; or accident hot spots. The Council has spent much time this year working with Hampshire County Council and the Police to find ways of making our village safer. The outcome from our work includes:
 - Major safety improvements to the Gravel Hill/Forest Road Junction which start on 21 March including:
 - Upgrading of all the “Give Way” signing;
 - Upgrading the cross road warning signage on Gravel Hill;
 - Providing red coloured surfacing under the existing centre hazard lining on Gravel Hill and changing the colour of the surfacing across the bell mouth to grey;
 - Providing four fluorescent bollards at the junction;
 - Upgrading/renewing the street name plates.
 - The installation of five new dropped kerbs on walk-to-school routes (work to start Summer 2019).
 - The addition of village entrance gates, with new road marking at the Shirrell Heath end of Gravel Hill, to reinforce the 30mph speed limit (work to start Summer 2019).
 - An amendment to the Traffic Order to allow the Police to speed enforcement on Gravel Hill.
 - Undertaking regular speed data surveys on key roads within the village.

Looking ahead

Work in the year ahead will continue on several of these projects alongside the regular need to review and monitor planning applications and future developments. In addition, the Committee hopes to complete road safety improvements outside of Swanmore College. There are limitations on what a Parish Council can do, but we are working closely with both Hampshire County Council and Swanmore College to solve this ongoing problem. The Committee will also continue to work with Winchester City Council and all parties involved so we can progress the planned allotments in Lower Chase Road.

Open Spaces and Amenities Committee

Chairman: Councillor Alex Graft

Vice Chairman: Councillor Rob Selway

Committee Members: Councillor Pete Ansty, Councillor Chris Newhouse, Councillor Andy Rankine

The Swanmore Parish Open Spaces and Amenities (OS&A) Committee is responsible for supporting the quality of life within Swanmore parish by maintaining and developing key recreation facilities and amenities such as:

- Sports facilities: football pitches, Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), BMX track and skate park.
- Recreational facilities: play equipment, play areas, open spaces and meadows Green's Wood.
- Local amenities: car parks, benches, litter/dog bins, and some village signage.
- Rights of Way paths in conjunction with Hampshire County Council.
- The environment: tree maintenance, tree and habitat surveys, hedges and ditches, gates and fences, ponds and footpaths and all other environmental issues.

Every year for the OS&A committee is busy with plenty of ongoing maintenance to ensure that all Parish facilities are safe and well-maintained, however, this year the Committee has also made more significant investments:

- Rotten wooden soffits and fascias on the Pavilion at Broad Lane Recreation Ground have been replaced with UPVC ones which will have a long – and hopefully vandalism-free life.
- CCTV at Broad Lane Recreation Ground, has been upgraded which will improve monitoring and managing anti-social behaviour more effectively.
- Many of you may have noticed that the fence leading into Green's Wood was becoming dangerously unsafe, so that too has been replaced.
- The MUGA at New Road Playing Field has been resurfaced, replacing the old damaged tarmac with a playground safety surface called "EDPM".
- There has been a great deal of feedback about littering and dog fouling, so six new dual-use litter bins have been installed and three existing green bins converted for dual use.
- Working closely with the Swanmore Conservation group including providing funding for tools and equipment so they can continue to help improve the woodland and meadows.

Looking ahead

The Committee has a number of key projects which it intends to deliver in the coming year:

- The first is to extend the village centre car park. Many residents are concerned about congestion and inconsiderate parking around the Primary School as well as the safety of pupils during drop off and pick up times. It is hoped that extending the village centre car park will alleviate some of these concerns. Planning consent for the car park extension was given in December 2018 and the Committee has now started the tender process.
- Work is also underway with Hampshire Countryside Services to resurface two major footpaths in the village. Both are well used walk-to-school routes and it is hoped that the improvements will encourage even greater use in all weather.
- The Committee in the initial stages of forming a working group to review all play/outdoor equipment in the Parish to define future requirements. Members of the parish are an essential part of any working group, so the Committee hopes that some of you will want to volunteer – further information will be on the website and parish noticeboards shortly.

West Hoe Cemetery Management Committee

Chairman: Councillor Robin Howe (Bishops Waltham)

Vice Chairman: Councillor Andy Rankine

**Committee Members: Councillor Penny Clive, Councillor Rob Selway,
Councillor Judy Marsh (Bishops Waltham), Councillor Andrew Webb (Bishops Waltham)**

This year the Chairmanship of the Committee changed from Swanmore Parish Council to Bishop's Waltham Parish Council. Cllr Howe was duly elected Chairman and Cllr Rankine Vice Chairman.

The first action of the Committee this year was to approve the works on the area of land selected for the wildflower meadow for the interment of cremation ashes. Rotavating and weedkilling was undertaken before the seeds were planted. The plots in this section will not have grave markers but will be easily identified using grid markers. Relatives will have the option to plant native bulbs on the grave.

The Committee has also been working on the proposal for a pet cemetery on the disused land adjacent to the car park. Councillors felt that while families sometimes bury the bodies of their much-loved pets in their gardens, this is not always a practicable option – especially for flat dwellers or those expecting to move house in the foreseeable future. Pet cremation is thus often the preferred choice. While some may then choose to scatter their pet's ashes, others retain the caskets containing them, and it is not unknown for such caskets ultimately to be interred within the pet owners coffin at cemeteries such as West Hoe. It was, therefore, considered appropriate to offer a dedicated area for the interment of small pets' ashes. At the time of writing, the Committee is awaiting a decision on the planning application.

This year the Committee reviewed the Burial Ground regulations and provided additional information, particularly in relation to headstones and cremation plaques. It is hoped that this will ensure families chose the correct memorial for their loved one.

The contract for the maintenance of the cemetery was awarded to Solent Green Ltd in April. Solent Green is a local company and the Committee has received many compliments on the standard of work.

The Annual Memorial Service was held on Saturday 15th September 2018 and was well attended. The Committee would like to thank the Reverend Keith Wickert for conducting the service, the singers and musicians from St Peter's Church and Bob Metcalfe from Nigel Chamberlain and Partners for covering the cost of the refreshments after the service. The service in 2019 will be held on Saturday 21st September at 2.30pm.

Updated leaflets were designed and printed this year. The leaflet now provides information on the natural burial site. A pet cemetery leaflet will be published in due course if planning permission is granted.

The Committee is now working on new plans for the cemetery which, hopefully, will make provision for the next 20-30 years.

The Parish Councils of Bishop's Waltham and Swanmore continue to support the cemetery although this year it has not been necessary to call on any financial support.

The Committee members and staff are proud to provide a cemetery that remains a peaceful and calm resting place for our loved ones.

New Road Playing Field Project Committee

Chairman: Councillor Pete Ansty

**Committee Members: Council Alex Graft, Councillor David Newberry, Councillor Chris Newhouse,
Councillor Andy Rankine**

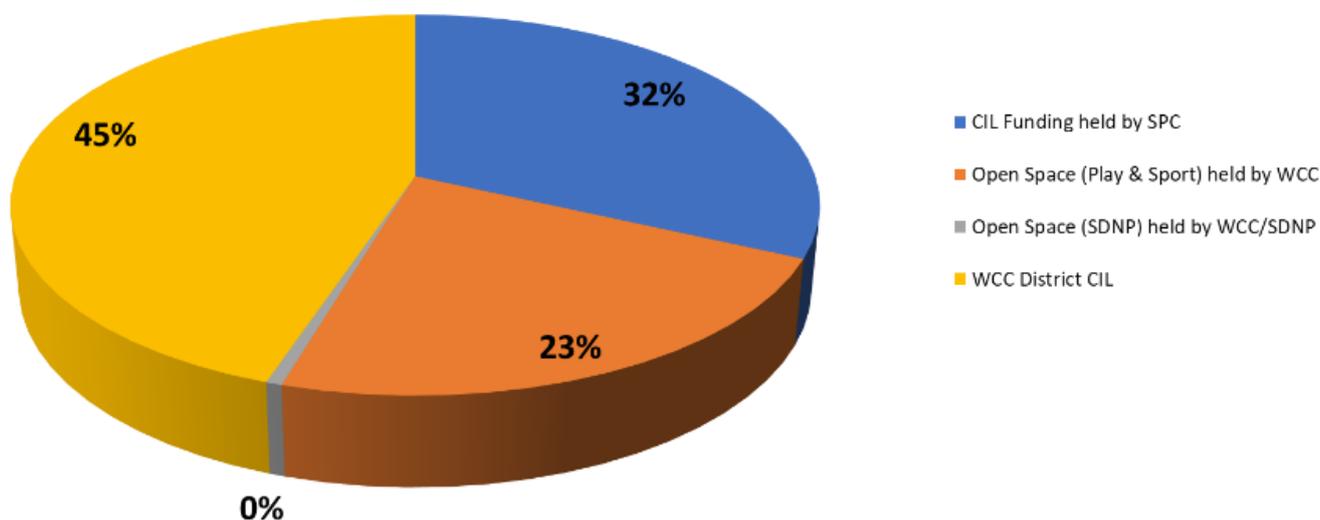
The New Road Playing Field Project Committee was set up to manage the implementation of the improvements to facilities at New Road Playing Field. It's been a long journey with many challenges along the way, however we made it. The project is now complete and the New Road Playing Field Project Committee was disbanded in September 2018. Maintenance of the new facilities now sit within the Open Spaces and Amenities Committee.

The new facilities include:

- A new concrete skatepark
- A 4-lane 100 metre sprint track and 500m jogging / cycle track
- An extended car park; and
- A toilet block, including a Changing Places accessible toilet and baby changing facilities in both the male and female toilets.

The project was wholly funded from grant funds, not from the part of your Council Tax bill which goes to the Parish Council. And we are extremely grateful to Winchester City Council for supporting our applications for funding.

New Road Playing Field Funding



We entered our new facilities at New Road Playing Field into the Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC), Village of The Year Awards. And were thrilled to win three awards; Best Youth Facility, Runner-Up Best Community Initiative and Third in the overall Village of the Year category. The Council decided to spend the prize money on catering for the Annual Meeting of the Parish. So, we hope you enjoy.

Accredited Community Safety Officer Report

This year we've seen a reduction in the number of reports of anti-social behaviour in and around Swanmore, which is a step in the right direction. Anti-social behaviour usually involves groups, so my approach has been and will continue to be 'Disrupt and Deter', which helps me to engage with the younger community.

Dog fouling will always remain a concern however this year I ran a campaign – 'If They Don't Bin It Drop Them In It', which in turn has seen a reduction in the number of reports. I'm also pleased to see that the Parish Council have invested in additional dual-use bins, and further projects to help combat dog fouling in the area have also been planned.

I am aware of the concerns people have with the parking outside both the Primary School and Swanmore College causing safety concerns. There is no quick fix for this, however I am liaising with Winchester City Council Parking Enforcement Officers to monitor and jointly patrol the areas. I'm also aware that the Parish Council are also working with Hampshire County Council to put some road safety measures in place outside the College.

I've seen an increase in the number of welfare visits I have made this year. Although this appears concerning, I have concluded that this is due to getting to know more of the community, which I feel is a good thing. Where possible I try and refer people to supporting agencies if required, however sometimes a cup of tea and chat is all they need.

10 hours of my week are allocated to Swanmore, and I try to be as flexible as possible so I can respond to reports, and to allow for high visibility patrolling in "hot spot" areas. If you have any concerns or need me at any point throughout the year you can call me on 07484 085850 or email me on acso@swanmorepc.org.uk

ACSO Michael Thomas

Swanmore Conservation Group Report

2018 has been a very busy and successful year for the conservation group made easier by the fact that we have acquired a few extra volunteers during the year which has enabled us to get a lot more done. Altogether we have completed nearly 300 volunteer hours which at a nominal £10 per hour means nearly £3000 contributed to the Parish Council. We have established an excellent relationship with the Parish Council who are wonderfully supportive to our group and we now have a good flow of information in both directions.

We have completed some major tasks whilst keeping up with the more run of the mill work such as litter picking, path maintenance and the never ending job of keeping the brambles in check. We finally completed the addition of a sloping path alongside the steps on the path between Foxcombe Close and Broad Lane. Boarding was installed to reinforce the edge of the path, the drainage was improved and a rail was installed. A lot of work was carried out in Green's Wood, self-seeded hollies were removed and yew trees cut down in order to allow more light to reach the woodland floor and to make the pathway more pleasant for walkers.

We have also done a lot of work on the pond and the surrounding area and established a proper maintenance regime which should enable the wildlife to flourish.

More recently we have done work in the plantation to thin the trees and lift the canopy and we have now started work on the areas surrounding Ivydale again lifting the canopy to enable the contractor to mow under the trees and perhaps eventually restore the path through this area which has been overwhelmed by the self-seeded trees in recent years.

We hope the village appreciates our work on its behalf and we have certainly enjoyed our labours but we always have plenty of work for new volunteers to do.

Community Projects Award

The winners of this year's Community Projects Award are **Swanmore Care Group Lunch Club** and **Roynon Dance**.

Finance Report 2018/19

Swanmore Parish Council					
Annual Report Financial Information					
	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18		
	Budget	Budget	Actual	Budget	
<u>Income</u>					
Precept	207,640	200,261	191,483	191,483	
Council Tax Support Grant	-	4,908	9,815	9,815	
CIL Grants	-	-	76,305		
Bank Interest	-	-	290	130	
Other Finance Income	-	-	1,001	100	
OS&A Grants	-	-	370	-	
New Road Pitch Hire	1,352	1,300	1,352	1,300	
Swanmore Recreation Ground Income	2,000	2,000	1,503	-	
	210,992	208,469	282,120	202,828	
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Office Running Costs	72,650	82,146	73,601	78,125	
Council Administration Costs	10,774	10,461	14,066	10,462	
Donations & Awards	8,000	7,600	5,442	7,611	
PWLB Loan Repayments	6,223	6,322	6,222	6,322	
ACSO & Community Costs	14,365	18,000	13,568	18,000	
West Hoe Cemetery	5,000	6,000	4,700	4,000	
Open Spaces & Amenities	51,100	43,550	38,859	43,083	
Planning & Highways	17,300	4,890	12,370	12,277	
Swanmore Recreation Ground	25,580	29,500	12,897	22,950	
	210,992	208,469	181,725	202,828	
Opening General Fund & Reserves	279,189	369,189	268,794	268,794	
Transfer to/(from) Reserves	-	- 90,000	171,436	-	
Transfer to/(from) General Fund	-	-	- 71,041	-	
Closing General Fund & Reserves	279,189	279,189	369,189	268,794	

Members

Jon Woodman – Chairman
Pete Ansty – Vice Chairman
Kimberley Barber
Penny Clive
Alex Graft
David Newberry
Chris Newhouse
Andy Rankine
Rob Selway
Nigel Sloper

The Office

Tracey Molloy, Executive Officer

Liz Manship, Projects and Contracts Officer

Lynsey Sutcliffe, Responsible Finance Officer

Michael Thomas, Accredited Community Safety
Officer

Office open to the public:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
10am – 2pm.

Meeting Calendar

Planning and Highways Committee
23rd April, 28th May, 16th July, 17th September,
22nd October, 26th November

Open Spaces and Amenities Committee
9th April, 21st May, 11th June, 9th July,
10th September, 15th October, 19th November

Finance Committee
30th April, 25th June, 29th October, 10th December

Full Council
14th May, 23rd July, 24th September, 12th November,
17th December

More information...

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Visit our website

www.swanmorepc.org.uk



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