

Minutes Pembridge Annual Meeting 2016

Held Wednesday 2nd March 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present:

Cllr. Evans Chairman, Cllrs. Pace, Owens, Bennetto, Purslow, Thomas, Rogers, Hancock.

Mrs P. Stokes, Mr Hollis – School Head teacher, PC Alford, Mr B Pierce, Mr & Mrs Baker.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Cllr Fothergill, Cllr Duggan, Cllr Mifflin, Cllr Stokes, Cllr Phillips, Rev. B. Jacobs, Mrs M. Albright.

2. Minutes of the meeting 22nd April 2015

The minutes were approved. No matters arising.

3. Parish Council Chairman's report 2015/16. – Cllr Evans

This year the Council has again held eleven ordinary meetings. The Parish Council meets every month (other than August) and a notice and agenda are always posted on the Parish Council notice board (on the wall of the Red Lion) at least three days before each meeting. Members of the Parish are more than welcome to attend and although they may not be permitted to take part in any debate, there is always a session for Parishioners to comment or ask questions. Everyone please note that Parish Council meetings now commence at 7p.m. in the village hall.

This is my first report since local council elections of May 2015. With only 12 candidates for the 13 available vacancies, Pembridge did not need to hold an election and at the first meeting, the new councillors will formally accept office. The council then had to co-opt a further member and with only one person expressing an interest, he was duly appointed. I would like to thank all the councillors who have served in the last year.

A Parish Council cannot function without a clerk and at Pembridge we are very fortunate to have Rebecca Bissell as our clerk. We are an active and relatively busy Parish Council, who place a heavy workload on our Parish clerk and Becky has coped admirably with all that has been asked of her. Additionally, Becky has taken on the role of lengthsman co-ordinator and been studying for her Certificate in Local Council Administration, which she recently obtained. My congratulations and thanks go to Becky for all her hard work and support during the year.

In the year which ends on 31 March 2016 the Council held the precept at £18,000 and details of the income and expenditure figures will appear on the Council website (www.pembridgeparishcouncil.gov.uk) after the external audit has been completed. For the year to 31 March 2017, the Council will be increasing the precept to £21,000 and more detail will be made available on the website. This is the first increase since 2010 and reflects the changes that are taking place in local government. Reductions in central government funding mean that more and more services are going to have to be funded at parish level. In the year to March 2017, Herefordshire

Council have decided not to pass on any central government funding to parishes. In the year to March 2016 the amount passed down was £1,104 of the precept, meaning that only £16,896 was collected from the parish. In the year to March 2017 the whole of the £21,000 will be collected from the parish, so a band D property within the parish will pay £46.38 compared to £37.76 in the current year.

As well as the precept payment, the Parish Council currently receives payments under the lengthsman grant scheme and the P3 (public rights of way) grant scheme. We currently receive £4,560 under the lengthsman scheme and £2,450 under the P3 scheme. However, to quote from Balfour Beatty: "during the budget consultation last year, the scheme was not seen as a strategic priority for Herefordshire and indication was given that parishes should be encouraged to take on more responsibility for delivery of services". In monetary terms this means that for the year to March 2017, we will receive the same grants for both schemes. In the year to March 2018 the lengthsman grant will be reduced to 25% of its current level, with the P3 unchanged. However, from March 2018 the lengthsman grants will be reduced to nil, while P3 continues. Finally, from March 2019 P3 (footpaths) will also disappear, so all work will have to be funded by the parish.

Each year, before being submitted for external audit, the Parish Council records undergo an internal audit. Mr Keith Douglas has accepted the position as internal auditor for a number of years but the year to March 2015 was the last to be undertaken by him. Keith has now moved away from the Parish and felt that it was an appropriate time for him to relinquish the post. On behalf of the Council I thank Keith for his services over the last few years. The Parish Council needs an internal auditor and I am very pleased to announce that Mrs Carrie Pierce has agreed to take up the reins.

The Parish Council has had another busy year, dealing with a number of planning applications and other routine matters. We continue to make progress towards producing a neighbourhood plan and Councillor Andrew Pace will be giving an update a little later. We maintain links with the local police, who regularly attend meetings and report to the Parish Council. The Parish Council were pleased to be invited to join the 150-year anniversary of Pembridge school and wherever possible to offer support to school for the excellent education that it provides to young people within and adjacent to the Parish.

A few other points of note.

The impact of traffic is a perennial problem and the Parish Council continue to pursue improvements to the pavements, especially the raised pavement in High Street, the road surface and a solution to the unlawful use of Bridge Street by heavy goods vehicles. In July, we were visited by Bob Haynes of West Mercia Police who is the local traffic management officer. Whilst he acknowledged the problems that we face, especially in Bridge Street, he was unable to offer any real solutions, largely because of the cost of enforcement.

During the year, the Parish Council have funded and overseen the refurbishment of the public toilet block and we are currently considering taking over ownership of the toilet block car park from Herefordshire Council. With only a relatively short lease period left on the car park, taking ownership would safeguard the area for the future. Currently, Herefordshire Council are prepared to transfer ownership to the Parish

Council at no cost other than we have to pay our own legal fees.

The Parish Council owns the children's play area sited on the Millennium Meadow (although the site itself is occupied under licence from the Pembridge amenity Trust). A recent inspection has confirmed that the aging equipment is reaching the end of its useful life and we have now set up a group to investigate the funding and provision of new equipment. The Parish Council hopes to be able to fund a large proportion of these costs from grant money but it is almost inevitable that a contribution from Parish Council fund will be required.

Details relating to all of these items and more can be found in the minutes of Parish Council meetings, which are posted on the parish council website (at www.pembridgeparishcouncil.gov.uk). The website has been well maintained on behalf of the Parish Council by Bob Pierce and it contains a wealth of information, which is sadly underused. The impact of the transparency code which was introduced in December 2014 is now being felt and the Parish Council now has to regularly update the information on the website. This has meant changes to the way in which the website is constructed and training for the Parish Clerk, who is soon to take over the updating of the site. Bob Pierce has agreed to continue to support the site and we thank him for his help.

It would be wrong of me to make my report without a mention of the work done by the Pride in Pembridge volunteers. They continue to work tirelessly to make the village attractive to locals and tourists alike and on behalf of the Parish Council I thank them for all that they do.

As usual, I will conclude with some further thanks. Thank you to the volunteers who help to keep the Parish running smoothly; to the teams of parishioners who involve themselves in the erection of Christmas trees and lights; to the Good Neighbour Scheme for providing such a valuable service and to the gang that look after the speed indicator device. Thank you to Tony Norman who continues as tree warden and importantly, as our flood warden. Thank you to Clare Evans, the volunteer editor of Pembridge Parish News and thanks to Bob Pierce for looking after the Parish Council website. Thanks to Philip Rogers, who is our local correspondent for the Hereford Times.

Last but not least, my personal thanks go to the vice-chairman, Andrew Pace, and to all my fellow Councillors for the many hours that they dedicate each year to Parish matters.

4. Parish Matters raised

None

5. Police report - CSO Allford

Crime figures 12.4.15-2.3.16

1 x attempted burglary

1 x burglary dwelling

5 x burglary non-dwelling

11 x theft

18 Crimes for the rolling year, under two a month, making Herefordshire a very low crime area and a safe place to live.

The local policing team consists of three members, PC Jo Ellis, CSP Dick Allford & CSO Davis Bowen covering Kington town and 27 surrounding parishes.

PACT surgeries continue each month providing useful information. Thanks to The Steppes shop where we use their facilities. Next surgeries are 10th March & 14th April.

There was a property marking session in the Parish Hall at the coffee morning in February.

Continued warning of scammers after banking details, some even pretend to be the police. The police do offer advice on how to deal with scams and information is available through the monthly messenger service.

Thanks to the neighbourhood watch team for their commitment. Switches and timers have been made freely available to worried homeowner to use to time their lights coming on whilst they are out.

6. Head teachers report – Mr Rob Hollis

The school continues to go from strength to strength whilst the Government shifts the goal-posts so that the curriculum is now more demanding, national assessment levels have disappeared and financial pressures begin to constrain how we look ahead to the future.

During the year, the school made two bids for funding to ensure that the safety of children and other adults is a priority. We were successful. Tenders were put out to replace the most dangerous section of the bulging front wall on the A44. We were pleased that Mr Lloyd made a very competitive quote and subsequently dug out, rebuilt and made safe the wall. I was pleased as I am sure the village was, that traffic flow was not compromised during the three-week construction and was completed in time for Remembrance Sunday. The other half of the wall does not look in any danger of falling into the road, though it will need replacing in the next few years. We have also installed fencing around the car park area and along the boundary of Suckley Lane. This ensures we know who is on the premises and that children cannot go beyond the safety of the gates. Visitors to the school are a little envious of the spaces and good repair of the buildings we have – for a small school, we are very lucky. Our East School House was fully completed and now has a tenant who is making an excellent neighbour.

Groundworks have just been completed for the Adventure Trail installation to extend our playground and provide various equipment for all children to enjoy. The school is very grateful to all those who have contributed to funding it and I would like to thank the Council for their donation. This should be completed just after Easter. Further funding is being sought through the National Lottery and the company who is installing the equipment to provide an outside classroom area near the Forest School.

We continue to make the curriculum inspiring and enjoyable, making use of visits to Hereford Cathedral, Hay Book festival, Chester Zoo, London, Red Ridge Outdoor Centre, Ludlow Castle, Swindon to name but a few venues. The children continue to display excellent learning behaviours, showing resilience in the face of challenges, co-operation by working together and peer assessing, and compassion in the ways they (and their families) support charity days.

Last year, the school had its Church School Inspection which judges how well the school is living up to its Christian character. We were awarded an outstanding grade and this is

reflected in our commitment to support the relationships between ourselves and the church and the wider community. We have a lovely spiritual area at the heart of the school which was developed during the year with plants and seats where children regularly sit to read or work. Our results were again well above National average with some significant maths and reading results at the end of Key Stage 2.

Earlier this year, the school celebrated its 150th anniversary with a service in church with Bishop Richard, many invited guests including five previous heads and most importantly, past students with all their memories. The children acted out some of the entries in the 1866 log book to illustrate how school and their home lives have changed – or not in so many cases.

Our numbers of children are stable at 89. We have the capacity for more children which will help fund how we support their learning to make the most impact. However, Pembridge lacks any housing development in the very near future to make this reality. We continue to work with Pembridge Pre-School to find the best way to increase the number of sessions open to younger children. The Local Authority are assessing the viability of all schools in Herefordshire in diverse ways. Rather than make decisions themselves, there is a move to more locally-based outcomes through joint discussions. It is inevitable that schools around the county will look to shared headships or find ways of educating children in ways that may not be one school for all children in one village. The educational landscape is likely to change considerably in the next few years.

7. Village Hall Report

The Village Hall remains a busy village facility with regular hirers including Pre-School, The Parish Council, Pembridge Auction, WI, Messy Church and Fitness Club. Exciting new additions include a Spanish Class.

We also have a wide range of parishioner bookings throughout the year such as birthday parties, funerals, the occasional wedding reception and other events.

The Pembridge Auction team are retiring shortly, but have sold the business to a local family who hope to continue the auction. The VH committee have recently met with the new owners to ensure a smooth transition and to agree some fundamental ground rules.

The committee remain mindful that we must balance the needs of parishioners with some level of regular income from 'commercial' hirers to remain entirely self-funded - and endeavour to maintain this balance for the benefit of the parish and to facilitate some reinvestment into the building.

Special thanks should go to Sarah, Chris and Joyce, for their commitment to the running of the hall. As always, they have given endless volunteer hours to ensure the hall remains viable and open. Sarah Parkinson dedicates unfathomable amounts of personal time to the hall with a job description that is endlessly varied and mind boggling.

It should be noted (once again) that Joyce did tender her resignation as Treasurer three years ago but agreed to stay until a replacement was appointed – any willing (or reluctant) candidate would be made most welcome.....

The committee continue to invest into the fabric of the building - over the past 12 months we have fitted new floor coverings to the loos and lobby area, installed new kitchen ceiling tiles,

and redecorated throughout.

In the coming year, we hope to purchase replacement tables and chairs, possibly upgrade the kitchen and undertake other general works. We are always keen to hear what improvements people feel are necessary and work hard to make sure the building remains 'fit for purpose'.

We aim to pay for improvements and 'day to day' running costs through income (to protect our dwindling reserves), but this can make more significant changes very difficult to implement. However, we would be keen to be part of any 'infrastructure' delivery plan that may come about through contributions from potential large new developments or the NDP process.

8. Pride in Pembridge Report

2015 was another very successful year for the Pride in Pembridge group.

We spent more than 600 volunteer hours on a wide variety of work, litter picking, mowing, strimming, tidying and cleaning street furniture, planting, and generally very much enjoying ourselves in doing all of this.

Behind the scenes, we successfully completed a grant application to the Herefordshire Council enabling us to purchase our own mower and strimmer, both needed to replace our personal equipment which is now showing its age.

We hope that you will agree that the work of the group helps to make Pembridge both, for all of us residents, and visitors a very attractive place.

The RHS certainly think so, we were awarded gold in the Heart of England 'In Bloom' campaign for the fourth year running. We feel that we must now give other villages a chance, so have taken the decision not to enter the 'In Bloom' campaign for 2016.

Our work will continue as before, and we will build on previous years by giving more time to the village green riverside area, we are applying for funding from the Big Lottery to extend the boardwalk in the conservation area.

My thanks go to all the members of the group who have given up so much of their time, thanks also to the Parish Council for their very generous support.

My thanks also to all those parishioners and businesses who have given us both financial and moral support.

9. Pembridge Amenity Trust Report

The Charity was set up in 1996 to handle the Car Park & toilets, by using a charity umbrella it saved rates being charged by Herefordshire Council as charities are exempt. The lease of the car park and toilets from Herefordshire Council is scheduled to run for another 10 years, with an expiry date of 15 March, 2025. The running costs of the car park and toilets are underwritten by the Parish Council

Bell Tower is owned by the Parish Council who leases it to the Amenity trust. The running costs of the Bell tower are underwritten by the Parish Council.

The Millennium meadow is managed by a sub group.

The Market Hall is also leased to the Amenity Trust and kept in good order.

The Amenity trust holds watercolour paintings from 1840

The Amenity Trust has 7 trustees including the Rector, I would like to thank them for their input and support throughout the year.

10. Parish footpaths report. – FPO – Cllr Hancock

There are 42km of public footpaths and Bridleways in the parish of Pembridge. Since taking over responsibility for the paths in May 2015 I have walked all the paths and will walk the paths again before the summer season is fully upon us. The parish is a member of the P3 scheme and has an allocated budget of £2450. Our current lengthsman Richard Mills is also our P3 contractor.

I have met with many of the larger landowners in the parish and talked about the paths that cross their land. We discussed how I can best support them in ensuring ease of access to these public rights of way without encouraging, or rather to discourage, trespassing. I have also been able to bring several dangerous situations to their attention (rotten foot bridges, trenches and drains blocking access to stiles and gates, rotten stiles, inappropriate fencing hindering the proper use of stiles, insufficient or incorrect way markers, bulls in fields with paths). In this way, it is hoped that avoid any potential injury to members of the public – and the resulting financial penalties to landowners. Despite this there are still several bridges over ditches that remain in a parlous state. We await action.

During the last 6 months, several complaints and comments have been received and action was taken bringing the situation to the attention of the landowners concerned. Where necessary return visits to the paths were undertaken to check, the problems were addressed. Maintenance carried out during the last year:

- Work has been undertaken on several paths: PM22, PM26, PM54, PM59, PM19
- Further work will be undertaken on PM59, PM60 and PM29 before the end of March 2016.
- Balfour Beatty have been notified of work required on: PM52, PM16.
- The closure on PM29 has now been in force for 2 years and capital works are planned in 2016 to make the bridge over the Curl Brook safe - allowing this path to be fully opened and giving access to the A44.
- At the time of writing notifications to landowners are pending on: PM51, PM17, PM48, PM55, PM39, PM38, PM57
- To date PM62 and PM63 have not been completely walked.

Currently, the Herefordshire Council has a policy of increasing ease of access to our public footpaths and has supplied us with 10 kissing and/or self-closing gates. Before the end of March, we will have installed these gates and have created an easier access circular path around the village of Pembridge. This project will use our remaining P3 2016 budget in accordance with Herefordshire Councils policies and put us in a good position to retain our level of funding in the coming 2016/17 year.

We have received a verbal commitment to create a new footpath as part of the small development currently planned for the last meadow on the north side of the A44 as the road exits the village in the direction of Leominster. This is very good news as it will connect the PM60 footpath emerging 200m into the village with the stile entering footpath PM61. This is

very good news and together with an extension of the speed limit from its current position at the bottom of the dip to the top of the rise on the A44 (to include the stile entering PM61) will make walking in the village so much safer for all.

As a point of interest, there is a deadline looming to ensure that current footpaths, green lanes, and other historic ways currently unregistered on the definitive map should be so registered with Herefordshire Council as a change to the definitive map. If not registered they will be lost FOREVER.

I would be very grateful for any information about paths in the parish and am available on via my cell phone at: 07956 815943

We are planning a second circular walk in the outlying parish to be completed in 2016/17. Our intention is that both paths will have a dedicated leaflet detailing the walks and sites/area of interest to be viewed.

sites/areas of interest to be viewed from the paths.

11. Pembridge Charities report. – Cllr Owens

Alms house Occupancy:

There are currently 10 properties available to let Duppa have 5 let and Trafford have 2 let. The homes at Duppa have are having refurbishment undertaken soon hence the low occupancy. There have been some problems with the listed buildings officer at Herefordshire Council delaying the works but work is expected to start soon.

Alms house Charges:

Trafford Single Bedroom £27.50 per week

Trafford Large room £165.00 per week for tenants (non alms).

Tenants need to qualify to rent a property, living or working in the parish/surrounding parish of pensionable age with a need.

Trustees:-

There are currently 8 trustees

Clerk: Mr. Michael Coleburn continued as clerk to the trustees.

Charity Address: Mr. M. Coleburn, Jubilee Cottage, Upper Hardwick, Pembridge. HR6 9HE
Telephone: 01544 320115 Email: pembridgecharities@live.co.uk

Charity Registration:

Registered Number: 216294.

Thanks to Rev Jacobs who we will be sad to see leave, however looking forward to welcoming a new rector. Thanks to PiPs for all their work at the front of Duppa.

Future plans are hoping to build new homes – still awaiting funding on this project.

12. Parish Council website report. – Mr Bob Pierce

I maintain the website at pembridgeparishcouncil.gov.uk which, as its name suggests, is primarily concerned with Parish Council matters. For those who haven't seen it, the home page gives some statistics for the Parish and a map showing the boundary, a notice board section and a diary section with any local events for which I have been sent details.

Although there are also pages devoted to local services and groups, the main intention of the site is to provide access to Council minutes, agendas and other reports. Minutes are available going back to January 2007 and are much quicker to access on the website than from a paper filing system.

In terms of activity, there has been minor change from last year. The statistics from the server logs are not able to distinguish between automated and human visitors but it does

seem that access by real people might be up to 30 per day although I suspect that many don't have a genuine interest in the site.

There has been an interesting change in the origin of search requests. The top search engine has consistently been google.co.uk, with google.com featuring highly as well. Three years ago, the Chinese search site baidu.com was in second place, dropping to fifth the following year. Last year it hardly featured at all while the Russian site yandex.ru has jumped in at number four! Most of these hits are of dubious origin or intent and anything from Russia can be assumed nefarious or worse.

In September, last year I was invited to a meeting with the Council Chairman and the Clerk to discuss the impact my death would have on the website! This was prompted by a new requirement that Parish Councils should be capable of handling the day-to-day management of their website, for example by posting minutes and reports. When I first took over the website in 2008 I was a member of the Council which would probably have met the requirement but my death would still have caused a problem. There was also a requirement to show agendas, year-end accounts and asset registers which we were not doing at the time.

It was decided at a subsequent Council meeting that I would create a facility to allow the Clerk and any other authorized person to manage the various reports and notices on the website. I would also add the other reports. The basic version of this was delivered during February, with some extras still to come. So now, in the event of my death or serious incapacitation, our Clerk can continue to update the website until my replacement is found. Apart from the extra reports, the site looks very little different except that you may notice the green padlock symbol indicating a secure connection between your computer and the server. Apart from allowing the Clerk to send her password securely it also means that any messages you send from the site to the Council will not be intercepted by Russians.

13. Parish Lengthsman report – Cllr Stokes

Herefordshire Council are working with Balfour Beatty and offer a Lengthsman scheme to all parishes. The scheme covers drainage, ditching, verge cutting etc. Pembridge Parish Council have opted out of the pot holing part of the scheme.

Pembridge Parish has 17.4km of C roads and 20.6 km of U roads, making 38km in total. We will be able to claim £120 per km, giving a total grant of £4560.

The parish clerk carries out administrative duties in relation to the Lengthsman work.

The P3 Public Rights of Way scheme is now included with the new Lengthsman Scheme, we have in the parish 49km of prowl (footpaths) which is funded at the rate of £50 per km, which equates to £2450.00.

Previously the Parish Council were paid in advance of work being completed up to the grant limit, now we will be reimbursed on receipt of invoices from the lengthsman.

We have produced an Annual Maintenance Plan for 2016 which shows expected spend against several work types, both routine and reactive.

We will be working more closely with our 'localities officer' from Balfour Beatty to make sure that our Parish is maintained to best possible standards with the help of our lengthsman, Richard Mills. Richard continues to complete the routine works and parishioners are asked to report any requests.

14. Church report – Rev Jacobs

This was a very successful year for the church. The highlight was the Flower festival held in May to celebrate the Pembridge tapestries. This was a wonderful community event, a great social gathering which also made a significant financial contribution to much needed church funds. Many people worked enormously hard to make the festival a success and we are very thankful to you all. Each year we have to raise nearly £17,000 to be paid to the Diocese as well as find £4000 for the insurance.

St Mary's is a medieval masterpiece but it is very expensive to maintain and preserve for future generations. The St Mary's project group continue to seek funding to provide modern heating, cooking and toilet facilities. Several grant applications have been submitted, but progress can be frustratingly slow. We are indebted to Meryl Griffiths in her determination to keep on with the project and putting in hours of administrative time.

In November, we had the first Woodcock fayre which was also a great success and we hope to make it an annual event. We continue to have the benefit of the work of our two wonderful churchwardens Gill Smith and Jacqui Thomas who work tirelessly for our parish. Our treasurer and Secretary Catherine and Marguerite Fothergill are also an amazing duo who do so much for our life here in Pembridge. I also want to express thanks to Bob and Lindsey Anderson for their work in interpreting the history of the church, producing the Arrowvale Messenger, maintaining the website and producing excellent publicity materials.

The church and churchyard are lovingly cleaned and tided demonstrating the way the members of the community feel about their church of which they are rightly proud. The church always looks resplendent at festivals and we particularly thank Joyce Williams for her role in co-ordinating church flowers.

Our services in church are well attended and we are a growing congregation, an unusual occurrence in the church today and one to give thanks for. Tim Hollinghurst has done an amazing job as organist and director of the Arrowvale singers who have contributed so much to our worshipping life.

Many children from the parish and across the group have attended our Arrowvale Messy Church sessions held at Pembridge Village Hall. These have been a great success and are proving popular with families attracting around 25 children each time. We have a hardworking and dedicated team but we could always do with more volunteers. We continue to value our close relationship with the school and enjoy hosting many special school services.

As ever I would also like to publically thank our retired priests Revd Canon Nick Horton and Revd. Robin Rogers, our reader Ian Smith for all their support with leading services. Without this support, it would not be possible to maintain the ministry in these parishes.

Pembridge is wonderful caring community and the church is at its heart. It is supported by churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike. We are truly blessed.

Finally, on a personal note Paul and I have very much enjoyed being part of the community here at Pembridge and as we leave for North Devon we thank you all for making us feel so at home here. We will miss you all.

With every blessing.

15. Good neighbour scheme - Mrs P Stokes

The Pembridge Good Neighbour Scheme continues to be successful and has managed to still have a robust volunteer force. We have had a diverse number of requests from befriending,

hospital visiting to help clearing a house for decorating.

As I reported last year we have had a decline in parishioners requesting help and this has continued over the last few months. The good winter conditions have helped people who normally would need assistance and we would expect numbers to increase when and if the weather becomes more difficult.

We have had our leaflet reprinted to bring it up to date and this was circulated via the Pembridge News to all parishioners.

Our monthly Coffee Morning continues to be successful and once again I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the other groups in the Village, i.e., Pips, WI. Parish Council and the Church for each taking one month a year to run the event. We also have had our Community Police officers attend the Coffee Morning on a couple of occasions to discuss security and to give away security products and this has proved to be very successful.

I would ask everyone to ensure that as many people know about our Scheme and if anyone would like our leaflets please let me know. I would like to thank again this year the Parish Council for their ongoing support and all the volunteers who give up their time so freely.

16. Shobdon Airfield noise abatement group - Cllr Rogers

There have been no official meetings of this group in 2015 but I make regular visits to the airfield to check on the levels of complaints registered at the airfield and have been advised that there are plans to hold a meeting early in 2016

The levels of complaint during the year have been very low.

Three complaints were registered at the airfield during the Shobdon Air Race which produced a different pattern of aircraft movements.

I have been advised that overflying remains an issue in the Noke Lane area. These complaints are registered at the airfield.

I have received no other complaints.

17. Ward Councillors report - Cllr Phillips.

Its 12 months since the General and Local elections and the pressure and pace of reductions and re arrangements of local services continues.

The Council set its medium term financial strategy in March and rose the Council Tax by 1.9% plus the 2% social care levy. The Fire and Police precepts will also rise by 1.9%. In addition, the Parish precepts will also be added.

The Government confirmed its settlement to local Government for the next four years. This will mean that Councils will have all Government grant withdrawn by 2020 and their income will come only from Council Tax, Business rates, fees and charges. Clearly a system of balancing business rates between authorities will need to take place as the likes of Westminster Council income is significantly larger than ours.

Since 2010/11 the Council has had to make £59 million of reductions as a result of cuts in government funding and increased social care costs. From 2016/17 to 2019/20 a further 28 million will need to be found.

The scale of reduction in services, increase in charges and selling off capital assets is concerning. The fact that we are a small authority over a large geographical area with a higher than average mature population puts us in a difficult place. Locally this will mean the PC taking on the lengthsman and footpath schemes, reduction in highway budgets and less financial funding to support local initiatives.

Last Autumn saw the adoption of the Core Strategy and the identification of Pembridge, Shobdon, Lyonshall, Eardisland and Titley together with Staunton on arrow and Holmes Marsh as areas for potential development.

The Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework together with Neighbourhood Plans (NP) form the legal basis for the determination of planning permissions. Four of my Parishes have been involved for some time in developing NPs with Eardisland and Shobdon reaching an advanced stage.

Following recent Appeals this year Inspectors have determined that Herefordshire does not have a 5-year land supply and as such we remain very vulnerable to developers. Recent changes by Govt on rural buildings have also brought a far more flexible approach to residential conversion.

The indicative increase in housing numbers over the period of the strategy from 2011-2031 is 12% across the whole of the parishes. Managing that development will be problematic. If you want to discuss a planning matter please contact simon.rowles@herefordshire.gov.uk If you a planning enforcement concern Debbie.Crowley@herefordshire.gov.uk

HEREFORD BY PASS

Following the planning inquiry in the early 90s which refused the eastern bypass on environmental grounds and the removal of any scheme from Government Programmes in 1998, Herefordshire Council has regularly pushed for a reinstatement of the project. In 2008 when I was Leader we managed to get the Rotherwas access road built to support the Rotherwas and Skylon Business parks with over 2,000 jobs. This had considerable opposition but as a result we gained Enterprise Zone status. The building of any highway around the City still gets enormous protest while I sure the silent majority would wish to support such a project.

The Planning Core Strategy last year confirmed the need to deliver a western route to support the future development of the City. The Strategy requires 6,500 houses to be built in Hereford City by 2031 and new infrastructure will have to be built to support.

In June, the next phase will be going to the planning committee for consideration. This is from the A49 to A465 (Abergavenny) and has the financial backing of the Government. Following this the plan for the delivery of the rest of the road is as follows - Option considerations October 2016; Business Case by February 2017; Alignment consideration June 2017; planning application submitted April 2018; Public examination sept 2018-March 2019; Construction 2020.

The highway will run from Belmont across the river Wye through Breinton, cutting across Kings Acre road and coming between the new Livestock Market and the Mobile Home site at Three Elms, before turning right to the A49. Current cost estimates are £110 and would be financed from Government, Infrastructure Levy and additional revenue from new homes. Without it the City and County will not be able to cope with the extra housing, existing

business could not expand, the large military presence in the county would be frustrated, and the expansion and job creation at Rotherwas restricted severely. Perhaps afterwards we can turn attention to our local villages!

Following two significant years of highway infrastructure investment the Highway budget is now considerably reduced with only 1.5 million for 2016/17 compared to an expenditure of 20 m in 2014/15 and 15/16. We have also benefitted from two exceptionally mild winter with very limited surface damage. I work with my Parish Councillors and our Balfour Beatty steward involved on a weekly basis on such matters, but I am genuinely concerned about the future of our highways.

I have organised a meeting of main haulage users in my ward again and work with the Police and local community on issues of heavy traffic. I continue to have the monitoring of traffic through Pembridge, Shobdon and Lyonshall and use the information to get extra funding for our highways and safety issues. The A44 continues to have an elevated level of accidents and I am arranging a meeting with Monkland PC and dealing with various safety spots issues. Ten years ago, I had monitoring boxes installed in Shobdon, Pembridge and Lyonshall and I enclose the traffic numbers and types of vehicles that went passed the boxes in the month of October in 2015 and 2014. I wasn't representing Eardisland at the time and they do not experience the volume and scale of traffic of the other three. The figures are a seven-day average and during the working week the figures are higher particularly in Shobdon figures. Both the usage and speed figures I share in detail with all my parish councillors.

October 2015

SHOBDON had 3,579 vehicles travelling per day (including motorcycles) on east side of the village.

with 2,896 cars, 506 Ridged lorries, large vans and minibuses, 150 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

PEMBRIDGE 2,626 vehicles per day (incl Motorcycles) on the western exit of the village.

With 2,057 cars, 403 Ridged lorries, large vans and mini buses, 129 Articulated HGVs\Buses

Lyonshall had 2,031 vehicles per day (including motorcycles) at the Curl Bridge.

With 1,608 cars, 324 Ridged lorries, large vans and mini buses, 53 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

OCTOBER 2014 FIGURES

SHOBDON had 4,027 vehicles travelling per day (including motorcycles) on east side of the village.

with 3,243 cars, 552 Ridged lorries, large vans and minibuses, 204 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

PEMBRIDGE had 2,587 vehicles per day (including motorcycles) on the western exit of the village.

With 2,012 cars, 413 Ridged lorries, large vans and mini buses, 135 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

Lyonshall had 1,995 vehicles per day (including motorcycles) at the Curl Bridge.

With 1,585 cars, 308 Ridged lorries, large vans and mini buses, 54 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

Please report any problems on highways or footpaths using the links below

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes>

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/footpaths-byways-and-bridleways/cg-report-prov-problem>

Our local school continue to perform well despite the challenge of reducing budgets and national policies. Both Pembridge and Shobdon are performing well but the lack of affordable property for younger people will continue to be a concern for them.

We recently saw the opening of the recycling centre in Kington on Fri – Sun, which compliments the larger facility in Leominster.

I would like to place on record my thanks to Parish Councillors, Chairman, Clerks and members of the community who have supported me over the last twelve months. I will continue to work on behalf of the community I represent in these very challenging times.

18. NDP Report - Cllr Pace

- Progress slowed during 2015 to await the approval of Herefordshire Council Core Strategy which happened in the last part of the year.
- The Steering Group was refreshed during the latter part of 2015 with the addition of several new members including the Clerk
- The Steering Group is holding meetings on a 6-4 weekly basis and is considering Objectives and Policies under the following Headings
 1. Housing and Development
 2. Enterprise, Local Economy and Business
 3. Community facilities, amenities & services
 4. Environment
 5. Transport

The next meeting is later this month when it is hoped that policies will be drafted ready for consultation.

After consultation on policies a draft NDP will be drawn up and the community will be given the opportunity to comment. Copies will go on the website and a Public meeting will be held.

The Draft will then go to Herefordshire Council for approval and will be sent to an independent inspector for approval and to make sure that it conforms with the NPPF and the Core strategy.

Once over these hurdles the plan will be put to the community for approval on a majority basis by referendum.

Parishioners Questions

None

19. Date of next meeting to be arranged and advertised.

Meeting Closed 8.10pm.