



Chairman's Message

When events that have happened before happen again, and again, in what seems exactly the same way they are known colloquially as 'Groundhog Day' moments. Wisborough Green Parish Council (PC) has a few Groundhog Day issues: parking, hedge cutting, picking up dog poo, traffic on the west road, planning directives from above, etc.; these keep reappearing on the PC's agenda and, despite attempting to address them, they all come back. It's the PC version of Whack-a-Mole.

Dogs, and what they (or rather their owners) leave behind is an issue which should not need to be revisited. I am a cynophile (a.k.a. a dog lover) and our three are some of our best chums; I would never leave their 'deposits' lying on the lawn, would anyone? Why-oh-why do some people not treat public spaces similarly? Observers on Songhurst Meadow explain that one reason, although not an excuse, is that walkers are so glued to their smartphones that they fail to notice when their dog(s) leave a steaming pile. Losing sight of your dog in the dark is another. Simply, this is unacceptable, especially so as we approach spring when more people will be out and about enjoying the Songhurst Meadow and the Green.

The PC has had a leaflet printed that emphasises the serious health hazard that dog faeces present, especially to young children, that could lead to blindness. Further, enforcement is being put in place capable of issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice carrying a £100 fine. Why is this even necessary? If you see someone failing to pick up after their dogs please report them confidentially on the number on the leaflet (a photograph would be helpful too).

The PC provides poo bags for those who may have forgotten to bring them, the dispenser was recently moved to the west road, in front of the Pavilion as, in its previous location, some car drivers were stopping to grab a handful – the PC expenditure on this was approaching £500 per annum. Don't get me started on people who pick up then hang the bags on trees or bushes; what is this madness?

In the southern French town of Béziers owners who leave dog poo in the street could soon be tracked down using a DNA database. A scheme is being trialled that requires dog owners to have their pets DNA tested allowing authorities to link them to excrement left on the ground. Under the scheme, dog owners will be required to take their pets to a vet for a free saliva sample, which will be DNA tested and a 'passport' issued. Those subsequently stopped without their dog's DNA passport will be fined €38 (£32.60). If we were able I would happily see such a scheme introduced in WG; I would happily name and shame the guilty parties whether inadvertent or repeat offenders.

Continued overleaf

Chairman's Message Continued

At this point you might have gained the impression that this is a Groundhog Day problem that makes my blood boil – you are 100% correct. The, probably, few people who are responsible are not only blighting WG but they are also letting their dogs down – whilst they are outside to 'do their business' they lack the wherewithal to clean up after themselves.

Please, let this be something that comes off the PC's Groundhog Day list.

Whilst on the subject of defecation some good news: the public loos next to the old phone box are going to remain open as they are being acquired by the PC.

On that happy note, as evenings are marginally lighter and we edge toward spring may I offer you all, clean-shoed, best wishes.

Peter Drummond, Chairman

Traffic Matters

The west road that leads to the Pavilion: It has been previously highlighted that many more cars are being parked and/or driven at speed along the west road. Access on this road is restricted to residents, pavilion staff and sports match officials. Different signs are currently being trialled and have already been altered to reflect concerns about turning. The PC is closely monitoring vehicle activity and asks that you support the endeavours on safety and protection of the village green. Any comments can be made to the PC Clerk either by phone or email.

Community Speed Watch: As usual, the Winter months offered the CSW team a bit of time off. However, they're gearing up for a Spring Offensive... in the hopes of keeping the village safer and, hopefully, quieter.

Speed Indicator Device: SID has been around the village in his various locations recording valuable data – which has been useful in supporting our application for a reduction in the speed limit along Durbans Road. We have heard from several residents that where SID's been located they've noticed a reduction in vehicle speed – he's doing good work.

A272 Surface: We, as a village, are collectively utterly sick and tired of the state of the main road through the village (A272). Numerous attempts at repair have been tried by the WSCC Highways teams – all to little or no effect. The PC has been relentless in highlighting the continuing problems to Highways and senior members of WSCC. It all comes down to money – the resurfacing of the main stretch is 'out to tender' for the current financial year. Fingers crossed we see some progress. In the meantime, it is vital we all report road surface damage – simply Google "pothole West Sussex" and you will be directed to the appropriate page of the WSCC website. Keep our roads top of their inbox.

Durbans Road Speed Reduction: The previous attempt to reduce the 40mph limit failed to meet WSCC criteria because the cars were going too fast (madness). WSCC recently changed its policy which has potentially opened the door for another application; the PC has just submitted a Community Traffic Regulation Order application, so here's hoping. You will obviously be kept up to speed.

Precept 2024 - 2025

This article first appeared in the January Ad Vincula magazine. Repeating in case you missed it.

CDC will shortly be sending out your Council Tax statement containing itemised charges for CDC, WSCC, Sussex Police and the Parish Council. The Precept, the local element of Council Tax, is the Parish Council's main source of funds and is used in maintaining and administering the village.

Over several years, our County and District Councils have had to focus budgets on social services and other statutory obligations. Many other services they provide, that we may normally see in our village, have now been reduced or withdrawn. Many of these services relate to general maintenance: gully clearance, road sweeping, sign cleaning, grass cutting, public toilets etc; things that if left undone, have a cumulative and detrimental effect for our village.

The Wisborough Green Precept will be increased for the coming year, funding additional maintenance by the Parish Council. The increase will represent less than £10/year for Band D households. It will help fund:

- Full maintenance for the public toilets in addition to cleaning, otherwise the facilities would be closed.
- Clearing road gutters and weed removal to keep pavements safe.
- Grass cutting costs and Songhurst Meadow open space maintenance.
- Resurfacing of the Kirdford Road pavement on the village green to improve width and remove trip hazards.
- Pothole repairs on Parish Council land.
- Playground equipment maintenance.

The Parish Council already has increases in existing costs, for example, looking after the village green and over 80 trees on Parish land. We know from feedback that residents value the village being looked after. Whilst it adds further pressure on our budget, we consider that items dropping off the WSCC/CDC lists should be maintained at village level, rather than not at all, risking safety and perhaps higher long term repair costs. We are not alone and other villages are taking this approach.

An increase of under 9% represents an 18p per week increase for a Band D property, and 36p per week for a Band H property, allowing the village to directly benefit. It means that the Parish Council can do more to protect, preserve and enhance Wisborough Green; more than would be the case if left to CDC and WSCC.

Allotments available - catch the allotment bug!

Was it your New Year's resolution to grow veg? This is your opportunity as there are currently two plots available. Priority is given to WG residents, but rather than have uncultivated plots, they will be allocated to other local residents if there is no WG demand. For more details, contact Louise, the PC Clerk.



Public loos acquired by Wisborough Green

It's 10 years ago that the PC went into battle against CDC to keep the public loos open and a petition demonstrated the widespread support for retaining the facilities. After some negotiation, the PC entered into a 10-year agreement whereby the PC paid the cleaning costs and CDC picked up all other charges.

As mentioned in the article explaining the Precept, CDC has been looking at ways to reduce its budget and the WG loos came under the spotlight again. Last autumn, CDC offered to sell the facilities to the Parish Council, for £1.00, otherwise it was likely they would be closed. The PC decided the village couldn't take that risk, as they are valuable for residents, visitors, community events, the many delivery drivers serving the village, and those just passing through; this is demonstrated, not only by the emails of appreciation sent to the PC, but also donations from grateful travellers.

From 1st April 2024, the PC will assume responsibility, including all the costs, for the building. Hopefully the building will be updated in the future to provide disabled and baby changing facilities.

Parish Council Investments

One of the PC's roles is to ensure that your money is spent wisely and earmarked reserves are protected. Much consideration is given to the annual budget and with rising bank interest rates, the PC made the decision to invest funds in a series of smaller one year fixed rate bonds. These funds are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme and the interest earned is supporting the village.

Hear all about it - Annual Report

Through articles in the Ad Vincula and this newsletter, the PC tries to provide an update on the projects being undertaken, however these only provides a summary of the work that the Council does. More details are available in the published meeting minutes, and a full Annual Report is published following the 31st March year-end.

For the last couple of years, we have circulated a summary of this report to every household in May and will be so doing again.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS **In the Committee Room at the** **Village Hall, 7.45 pm on the** **following Tuesdays:**

19 March
16 April
21 May
18 June
16 July

PC PLANNING COMMITTEE **MEETINGS**

Please refer to the agendas displayed on the village noticeboards and website for information - a meeting will only be called to meet CDC deadlines. Meetings are held at 8.00 pm on a Tuesday in the Village Hall .

5 March
2 April
7 May

Village Spring Clean - please do your bit

The PC has been organising the bi-annual village litter picks for the past 14 years - doesn't time fly? It's been fantastic to see such a great turnout over the years, and with new equipment purchased last year, more helpers can join the merry band. It is also encouraging that many people appear to be taking the initiative by collecting litter when out and about. Even if a staggeringly important engagement prevents you joining the next session, on Saturday 6th April, please consider doing your bit when walking in the village and surrounding countryside. Perhaps take a bag to collect the rubbish that other, disrespectful, walkers and drivers have left behind; why not post what you have collected on the village Facebook page?

The village takes a battering over the winter: debris, litter and soil accumulates in the gutters. Perhaps spend an hour clearing up directly outside your house. Let's encourage everyone out to do their bit and keep WG looking beautiful.

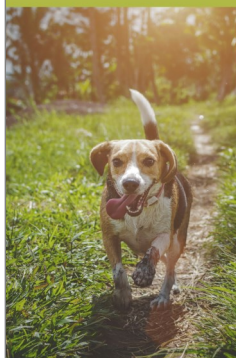
Please join the spring litter pick at 2 pm on Saturday 6th April and, at least, clear the area in front of your home.

We can't mention it enough - watch your dog

It is good that not picking up after our dog is now totally unacceptable. The PC and most of the village is fed up with the inconsiderate attitude of some (a few) dog walkers which is making our open spaces a health hazard, especially to children. You've been asked politely, in increasingly stronger terms, and now the Enforcement Team is getting involved. This leaflet will be given out to as many dog walkers that we can catch up with and posters displayed.

DOG FOULING

**PLEASE CLEAR UP AFTER YOUR
DOG BUT IF YOU CAN'T BE
BOTHERED, DON'T WALK YOUR
DOG IN WISBOROUGH GREEN**



**FIXED PENALTY
NOTICE
£100**

**DON'T BLIND A
CHILD**

Turn over for more
details

To report an offender, in
confidence, call
01403 701102


WISBOROUGH GREEN
PARISH COUNCIL

WHY DOG FOULING IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE

- Dog faeces can pose a significant health risk, particularly to young children as their immune systems are not fully developed.
- Children are more likely to encounter soil that contains dog faeces whilst playing.
- All faeces contain bacteria that can cause stomach upsets, but the greatest risk is from toxocariasis.
- **TOXOCARIASIS CAN RESULT IN BLINDNESS.**

**OFFENDERS WILL BE REPORTED AND
PROSECUTED**

To report an offender, in
confidence, call
01403 701102


WISBOROUGH GREEN
PARISH COUNCIL

Still no news about Project Gigabit

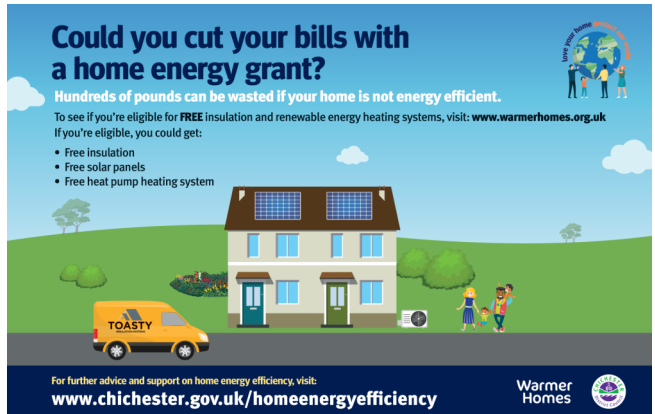
The PC is still on the case for better village broadband but there is no progress to report. WSCC is waiting for the project procurement process to conclude but have offered the assurance that WG is still on their radar. It is hoped the relevant WSCC Officer will attend the March PC meeting to provide an update, don't hold your breath.

Make your home warmer and more energy efficient

Hundreds of pounds can be wasted if your home is not energy efficient and CDC has a new webpage to provide information on where to get advice on saving energy in the home and grants that are available to improve the energy efficiency of your property. Most grants are available to households on the lowest incomes but there are financial schemes that can help make some measures more affordable to install. To find out more information on grants and schemes please visit: www.chichester.gov.uk/homeenergyefficiency If you want advice on where to start with a home retrofit project, visit: www.chichester.gov.uk/wholehouseretrofit

If you are struggling to pay energy bills please contact your energy provider who are obliged to provide support to householders on low incomes. You can also get advice and support through the Citizens Advice Energy Advice team who can help you identify and apply for grants. See their top tips for saving energy by visiting: <https://www.arunchichestercab.org.uk/energy>.

Did you know that our homes contribute 30% of carbon emissions in our district, which in turn has an impact on climate change. By making our homes more energy efficient we can not only save money and keep warm, but we can also lower our carbon emissions and help reduce the risks of climate change. **Now is the time to start planning for a warm home next winter!**



Could you cut your bills with a home energy grant?

Hundreds of pounds can be wasted if your home is not energy efficient.

To see if you're eligible for **FREE** insulation and renewable energy heating systems, visit: www.warmerhomes.org.uk

If you're eligible, you could get:

- Free insulation
- Free solar panels
- Free heat pump heating system

For further advice and support on home energy efficiency, visit: www.chichester.gov.uk/homeenergyefficiency

Warmer Homes

TOASTY

The graphic features a cartoon illustration of a two-story house with solar panels on the roof. A yellow van with 'TOASTY' written on it is parked in front. Two people are walking towards the house. In the top right corner, there is a small circular logo with the text 'Warm your home' and an illustration of a family. At the bottom right, there is a logo for 'Warmer Homes' and a 'CITY OF CHICHESTER' logo.

**The next community litter pick:
Saturday 6th April, 2.00 pm
Meet at the Sundial.**

Gloves, litter picking sticks, bags and bag holders provided. Further information from the Clerk on 701102, otherwise just turn up on the day.

Get a WGAL on, see you there!



Every child needs a family. Do you have room in yours?

You don't need to be a superhero to be a foster carer! You simply need to have some experience of caring for children, a spare bedroom, and be kind and patient (a sense of humour also helps!).

Every child deserves to have a safe and loving home, where they can experience all that life has to offer and fulfil their potential.

While the children that West Sussex County Council cares for are all in safe accommodation, a number are living a significant distance from their school and friends. 65% of these young people are aged 11 to 17 and they are waiting to find a local foster family – someone like you – to guide them through this important time in their lives.



There are many types of care, from respite (usually one weekend a month) to Supported Lodgings, where you can help a young person aged 16-21 learn the skills needed to live independently.

Foster carers for WSCC receive comprehensive training, ongoing professional support and a competitive financial package of up to £30,393 per year, per child.

One WSCC foster carer, James, stated, "To be the first person to give a child hope, or care, or love... is the most rewarding thing I have ever done in my life".

Could you open your heart and home to a local child?

Contact the friendly team on 0330 222 7775, email fostering@westsussex.gov.uk or visit fosteringwestsussex.org.uk/info-sessions to book onto an online information session.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00 PM

We are delighted that Wendy Walker, the County Archivist at the WSCC Records Office in Chichester, will be making a presentation on the Records Office and their work – it is surprisingly fascinating.

This is also your chance to hear what the Parish Council has been doing over the past year. Explanation will be given to the Council's activities and expenditure, as well as providing you with an opportunity to ask questions and raise any concerns.

Your Parish Council

Peter Drummond (Chair) T: 07976 253969

Communications
Finance Committee (Chairman)
Gatwick Airport
Local Council Associations
Planning Committee

Sophie Winship (Vice-Chair) T: 700783

Community Speed Watch Coordinator
Local Council Associations
Planning Committee
Traffic Management Plan

Andy Burbridge T: 701902

Green Coordination Group
Major Emergency Plan
Planning Committee
Youth Activities

Andrew Jackson T: 700574

Finance Committee
Neighbourhood Plan Review
New Pavilion Project/Pavilion Trustee Liaison
Planning Committee (Chairman)
Village Hall Trustee

Mark Ogden-Meade T: 07774 904489

Neighbourhood Plan Review
Major Emergency Plan
Planning Committee
Winter Management Plan

Howard True T: 700150

Finance Committee
Planning Committee
Traffic Management Plan

Martin Watson T: 07836 700923

Communications
Finance Committee
Green Coordination Group
New Pavilion Project/Pavilion Trustee Liaison
Planning Committee

Tim Worrall T: 700100

Communications
Major Emergency Plan
Planning Committee
Winter Management Plan

How to contact your Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Louise Davies
Wisborough Green Parish Council
PO Box 255, Wisborough Green
Billingshurst, West Sussex
RH14 0WT

T: 01403 701102
E: clerk@wisboroughgreenpc.org

Alternatively, letters can be posted in the Parish Council letterbox at the Village Hall.

Members can be contacted directly by telephone or by email through the Clerk.

Parish Council Vacancy

I am sad to report that Lucy Bartley has stood down from the Parish Council. Lucy has stood firm within this small band of volunteers and has been our go-to member for understanding of environmental issues - we will miss her knowledge of bat corridors. I would like to extend our grateful thanks to Lucy for her 3 1/2 years on the Parish Council.

Peter Drummond, Chairman

There is now a vacancy to be filled. Please contact the Clerk for further details.