

# MICHELDEVER PARISH COUNCIL

# NEWSLETTER

December 2021

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

*William Helen*

What a year it has been since our last newsletter and we hope that this edition finds you all well. Another year of restrictions has focused many minds on the things that really matter: good health, friendship, our beautiful countryside and the simple pleasures such as walking and chatting with our neighbours.

The Parish Council, through the use of modern technology, have been able to continue meeting and working throughout the various restrictions and we have now returned to face to face meetings. These are held on the first Wednesday of each month (except August) and residents are encouraged to attend.

This edition of the Dever is provided free of charge by the Parish Council and we hope that you find it informative and a useful update on the Council's activities and support across the Parish. I would like to thank the Parish Councillors, City Councillors and Hampshire County Councillor for their support and efforts to maintain an active and living community, safe for us to live in.

As a community, I would urge you to continue to check on your neighbours, particularly those who are older, less mobile or needing to isolate, please try to speak a few words with them each day, by phone or over the fence.

Please accept the best wishes of myself and the councillors for a happy

and more sociable Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

## Low Cost Housing

The Parish Council continue to actively support the needs of over 30 households with strong local connections to the parish who have a need for low cost housing. The use of exception sites enables the development of suitable properties which are then made available to those whose connection to the Parish has been established and verified. Dever Close and Barron Place are examples of these type of developments and the provision of further small developments is supported by the Parish Council. The continuation of the Barron Place development should provide six additional homes but more suitable sites around the parish are still needed to meet the demand from residents on the waiting list.

## Local Plan

Whilst Winchester City Council (as reported by the Dever Society) may no longer be considering a large scale development, such as that proposed for Micheldever Station, in order to meet the future housing needs of the District, there are still crucial planning decisions to be made during the development of the Local Plan. The Parish Council continue to monitor the stages of the Plan and seek to ensure that local considerations are

not overlooked. During 2022 the Parish Council will be invited to meet with those developing the Plan and to discuss any areas which may have a local impact.

## **Security at Warren Field**

The removal of the old play area has now been completed and the old railings used to provide additional security for the field. With the extra gates and height barrier, we hope that this will prevent there being any unwelcome visitors but residents are asked to remain vigilant.

The area occupied by the old play area is to be used for a petanque area. The petanque group have applied for a Small Grant from the City Council and the balance of the cost will be met by the Parish Council. It is hoped that, in addition to the fitness equipment and table tennis table, this will provide a healthy and sociable meeting place for residents to engage in friendly competition.

## **Lord Rank Play Area**

The Parish Council have now published a tender for the improvements to the play area at the Lord Rank Playing Field and responses are awaited.

The intention is to retain and re-use as much of the equipment as is possible but to extend so that the current area remains for older children and has a few new pieces of equipment whilst an extended area in front of the pavilion will have a mixture of old and new equipment appropriate to a younger age group.

Play equipment and surfacing is expensive and it has been necessary to set a budget of £60,000 in order to achieve the desired improvements. This is a challenging budget for the Parish Council and exceeds our

annual income. Reserves have been built up over recent years towards the cost but, in order not to have to cut back on any of our other activities, we are seeking to try to raise £5000 from other sources.

We will be writing to local businesses to ask if they might consider making a donation and would ask residents to let the Clerk know of any other funding sources which they may be aware of or to contact their employer if they think that they may be able to support the improvements. It will be possible to recognise donations on a plaque (or similar) on the side of the pavilion.

Any help that you can provide in finding funding for a quality play area for our younger residents will be greatly appreciated.

## **Micheldever Station Footpath**

It was reported in last year's newsletter that the focus would move from seeking to extend the pavement on Andover Road to the railway bridge and instead be on upgrading the permissive path through the trees. However, after repeated requests, HCC have now allocated a modest budget for the pavement project. Feasibility studies are currently being undertaken and Parish Council representatives will be invited to attend a site meeting to consider these once they are completed. It remains unclear whether the budget allocated by HCC will be sufficient for the project but having feasibility studies completed may make it easier to obtain other funding to assist in completing the project.

## **Trees at Warren Field**

The older trees around Warren Field are nearing the end of their lives and were pollarded a few years ago as a safety

precaution. New trees were planted so that when the old trees have to be felled these new trees would be established and help to restore the outlook. However, two of the new trees have died over the summer and now need to be replaced. If there is a resident living close to Warren Field who would be prepared to monitor the new trees and to water them during dry spells whilst they are becoming established this would be greatly appreciated. If you think you could help please contact Jocelyn, the Clerk (contact details as below).

### **Speed Indication Device (SID)**

The Parish Council currently share an old device with a group of other parishes and it is deployed in Micheldever Station for a few weeks each year. There have been major developments with these devices in recent years and the cost has fallen so that new devices can now be purchased for around £2000. An additional expense can be the cost of employing a contractor to move the sign around the Parish. This cost has been avoided to date in Micheldever Station as two of the councillors have been undertaking the moving of the sign, covered by the Parish Council insurance. The Parish Council have met with an officer from the HCC Safer Roads Team who has identified a number of suitable sites for a device to be deployed in Micheldever and East Stratton (in addition to the current sites in Micheldever Station). Due to the commitment to upgrade the Lord Rank Play Area (as noted above) the Parish Council is unlikely to have sufficient funds to purchase a new device until 2023 and are therefore considering the WCC Crowdfunding scheme which can provide match funding for community projects. If it

is possible to raise £1000 in the community this would be matched. In order to utilise the sign volunteers would also be needed in each village to move the sign. Training would be provided and volunteers would then be covered by the Parish Council insurance. It would be really helpful to know at this stage whether there is community support to fundraise for a device and whether any residents would be able to volunteer around one hour of their time every six weeks or so to assist in re-locating the proposed sign.

If you think that you might be able to pledge an amount to the crowdfunding or to volunteer to move the sign please contact Jocelyn, the Clerk (contact details as below).

### **Greening Micheldever**

The launch event for the 'Greening Micheldever' initiative is to be held at Micheldever Primary School on Tuesday December 14th. Please come along and discover how Micheldever can work to reduce its impact on Climate Change.

Further details are available on the Parish Council website [www.micheldeverparish.org.uk](http://www.micheldeverparish.org.uk)

### **Grit Bins**

Grit bins around the Parish should now have been refilled. If you know of any that have been missed please note the number (inside the lid) and contact the Clerk who can ask for it to be refilled.

As many of our roads are not gritted by HCC, they have supplied these bins to help keep the roads clear of ice.

Please remember the grit is for highways use and not private use. If the grit is found to be being used for private paths and drives HCC may refuse to refill the bin.

## **Fireworks, Thatched Roofs & Animals**

With fireworks no longer confined to the 5th November but used at celebrations throughout the year please be conscious of any neighbouring thatched properties, take sensible precautions and warn the occupants if you intend to use fireworks. If a thatched roof does ignite the results are rapid and devastating.

Similarly, please show consideration for dogs, horses and other animals which may become distressed by the noise of fireworks and warn neighbours in advance if you are planning an event.

## **DOG FOULING – AGAIN!**

This issue has been raised many times before but the problem persists and is particularly dangerous where children play and take part in sports activities.

The open space areas in our parish are for recreational purposes and are not public toilets for dogs.

It is an offence punishable by a fixed penalty notice of £50 to allow your dog to foul in a public area. If the fixed penalty is ignored a £1000 fine can be imposed by the court. Ignorance of your dog's actions is not a permissible defence so, if necessary, please consider keeping your dog on a lead until they have completed their business.

Around the country, and closer to home, pitches are being fenced off, bye-laws enacted and CCTV installed due to the scourge of dog waste, please do not make any of these actions necessary in your community.

If you witness a dog owner not clearing up after their pet please call 01962 848350 during office hours or

e-mail [ehealth@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:ehealth@winchester.gov.uk). Further detail is available on the village website.

## **Hedges and Overhanging Trees**

In last October's issue of the Dever a longer item was included outlining the legal responsibilities of landowners in respect of hedges and trees which are encroaching or overhanging pavements and roads.

These are set out in the Highways Act 1980 and are enforceable by HCC who are the Highways Authority. In the first instance, HCC ask Parish Councils to write to residents to remind them of their responsibilities. If residents fail to take action, HCC may serve a notice upon the landowner and have the authority, where necessary, to carry out the work themselves and recover the cost.

Please look to your property boundaries and consider if your hedge or trees are causing an obstruction to pedestrians, cyclists or motorists or are affecting the sightlines of road users or those accessing neighbouring properties.

If you have any questions or concerns or would like a copy of the longer article, please contact the Clerk.

## **Queen's Green Canopy**

The plan of the national scheme is to create a greener canopy for Britain to celebrate the Platinum Anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's reign. This can be large tree planting schemes or just one tree planted in a private garden. More details are available at <https://queensgreencanopy.org>

The Parish Council can be contacted via Jocelyn, the Clerk, [micheldeverpc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:micheldeverpc@hotmail.co.uk) or 01794 368951