

NORTH NIBLEY PARISH COUNCIL: ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017/18

The Council is pleased to present its Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2018

Details of all Parish Council activities can be found on the Parish Council website at: www.northnibleyparishcouncil.org.uk/. The new website was launched on 1st December 2016 and has seen a steady increase in user numbers during 2017 and into 2018. There were 3,000 plus page views for the year ending March 2018.

Summary of Parish Council Activities.

Your Parish Council has been active again this year working on behalf of the community. Following the sale of the Breakheart Hill land the Council considered options at its 2017 autumn finance meeting especially for improvements to council assets including the Wotton Road cemetery and memorial garden. A number of key improvements have been made. The council continues to be active in representing the interests of parishioners and has continued to monitor the installation of fibre broadband services to the Parish. Thank you to those parishioners to contributed feedback to the clerk on the new service.

Parish Council Activities in more detail.

The Council:

- Met monthly throughout the year;
- Made considerable improvements to the cemetery and memorial garden to include a new memorial garden section, resurfacing of cemetery paths, hedge and tree trimming.
- Arranged for the installation of a sign to request voluntary reservation of a parking space for cemetery and memorial garden visitors in the layby on Wotton Rd.
- Arranged for a new assistant to the Burial Clerk who has facilitated day to day work of liaising with funeral directors, relatives and the organisation of burials and interments. The clerk continues to deal with the financial aspects of the cemetery.
- Organised and was supported by volunteers during the annual "Village Clean-Up Day" on 17th March 2018.
- Was successful in helping to ensure the two parish BT phone boxes were retained as active phone boxes despite a national initiative by BT to close boxes overall.
- Awarded grants to support local organisations in providing services to people in the Parish;
- Has continued to regularly contribute to "On The Edge" as a means of keeping parishioners informed of the Council's activities;
- Commented upon new Planning applications and Appeals to Stroud District Council;
- Contributed to the district authority consultation on Options and Issues for its future planning strategy.
- Has requested and received guidance from the district authority on the exercising of dogs in public areas and will continue to monitor this issue within the parish.
- Is due to receive assistance from a new internal auditor appointment this spring;
- Has been advised of the appointment of a new external auditor for the 2017/18 annual review of council finances and practices.

- Continues to monitor the condition of parish footpaths;
- Continues to monitor hedges within the parish where growth may impact on public highways or rights of way.
- Renewed its membership of the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils to access expertise, training provision, and networking events;
- Notified parishioners of key local events to include road closures with details posted on the Council website.

Parish Council Property. The Council owns land throughout the Parish.

- 1) **Land at Nibley Knoll.** The Council's 6 acres at Nibley Knoll continue to be managed by the Nibley Knoll Trust to ensure the long term future of the Hill for the Community.
- 2) **The Cemetery.** Further work has been carried out to maintain the Cemetery in accordance with the long term Maintenance Plan. Mrs King has continued in her role as Burial Clerk and worked hard to assist local families deal with their arrangements.
- 4) **Jubilee Recreation Field.** The Council, through their representative on the Trust (Mr Keith Larkin), has continued to work with the Recreation Field Trust.
- 5) **The Closed Churchyard at St Martin's Church.** The Council, having taken over responsibility for the Closed Churchyard at St. Martin's Church in 2014, have continued to carry out essential maintenance and repairs to the churchyard.

Parish Council Finances.

In 2017/18 the Council's Precept was not increased and remained at the same level as the previous financial year at £18,040. The council retains sufficient reserves to meet its commitments under its risk management policy and additional reserves to enable some new projects to be considered.

Looking ahead to 2018/19

- Will continue to explore options for affordable housing within the Parish and will communicate key development to parishioners through the council website and OTE reports.
- Will continue to monitor the condition of the cemetery and memorial garden with a view to further improvements to include a plinth as part of the memorial garden wall.
- Will review and update its Cemetery regulations to reflect the new facilities becoming available to parishioners.

Parishioners are welcome to attend the monthly Council meetings held in the Village Hall on the first Monday of each month, although normally the second Monday if the first is a Bank Holiday.

Cllr Ken Brown

Chairman of North Nibley Parish Council.

9th April 2018