

KNOWSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council started the year with five councillors: Timothy Browne, Reg Howe, Tony Moore, Mike Smith and John Stanbury. At the Parish Council's AGM Reg Howe was elected as Chairman and Tony Moore as Vice-Chairman. At the by-election at end of June 2017 Ed Costerton and Jeremy Filmer-Bennett were elected onto the council. In September 2017 Mike Smith resigned leaving a vacancy which has yet to be filled.

Being a Parish Councillor is interesting and important – the first level of government. Let me set out what our responsibilities are:-

- Maintenance of the Parish graveyard
- Care of playgrounds (if and when we have any)
- Monitoring of Footpaths
- Care of Assets – Beaples Stone, Millennium Stone, The Pound
- Emergency Plan
- Liaison with our local police force
- Liaison with Devon County Council Highways Dept.
- Liaison with our Parish Hall Committee
- Liaison with our Parochial Church Council
- Monitoring of our community bus service
- The right to comment on planning applications (Our Local Planning Authority does take note of a parish's position on all planning applications)
- Parish Councillors also sit on the Moors Management Committee and the Parish Hall Committee

We are NOT responsible for:-

- Removal of fly-tipped rubbish
- Drainage problems
- Highways (although parishioners' concerns are passed to Devon County Council Highways Dept.).

Main challenges/ activities during the past year

- Sidemoor picnic area. The council invested a lot of effort into examining the feasibility of taking over the picnic site. The final decision was not to proceed as it's likely that it will be used as a site for storing materials and machinery in connection with the proposed upgrades of the A361 North Devon Link.
- Updating of Parish Council Standing Orders
- Compliance with the Transparency Code
- Data Protection (purchase of fireproof safe and dedicated council-owned PC and printer)
- Introduction of General Data Protection Regulation
- Introduction of new requirements for internal and external audits
- Councillors attended a valuable training session

Current issues

- East Hill Farm (17 year wait so far for DCC to do anything)
- Oaklands Poultry Farm (next to Blackerton). Concerns over the impact of the proximity of poultry sheds to the Blackerton Cross development resulting in the devaluing of the houses to be built for the open market and consequent inability of the developer to erect 'affordable housing'. In addition, the likely daily transport of chicken manure in open trailers through Roachill will harm the environment. A planning decision will be made at a meeting of the NDC Planning Committee on June 13th.

We are also supported by our District Councillor, Eric Ley and County Councillor, Jeremy Yabsley who, despite all their other responsibilities, manage to attend and contribute to our parish council meetings.

In summary, you have a hard-working and focussed parish council with councillors who really care about our parishioners. We are supported by our Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer Wendy Sweet, to whom we are all extremely grateful for her diligence, hard work and guidance.

Reg Howe,
Chairman, Knowstone Parish Council

