

**In this issue:** Keeping Our Paths Clear; Keeping our Culverts Clear; The Parish Lengthsman Scheme; Fixing Our Roads – Reporting a Problem and Update on Telephone Boxes, Benches and Playground

### **The Parish Council Newsletter**

Welcome to the July 2019 edition of the Parish Council Newsletter. This two page version of the Newsletter is available on the Council's website. Paper copies of this version are also available from Bartley Post Office, Woodington Feeds and the Courtesy Filling Station shop, Romsey Road.

### **Keeping our Paths Clear**

As we approach full summer (yes, it is now summer, in case you hadn't noticed.....!), we need to make sure that the over and undergrowth around our properties, where they are adjacent to pathways, is kept under control.

Recent weather conditions have clearly encouraged a great deal of vegetation to grow in abundance and there are several points around the Parish where **hedges are now growing out from garden boundaries into pathways**. In some locations around the Parish, the effect is to push pedestrians out into the roadway to avoid the overhanging branches. Also, in some areas, hedges are now obscuring road signs.

The Parish Council employs a **Lengthsman** (see a separate article below), to deal with some major aspects of this, but where the vegetation is coming from inside a garden boundary, it is the responsibility of the property owner to deal with trimming this back.

Please could you take a moment to check on the extent of growth of bushes, hedges and smaller trees around the periphery of your property and see where you may need to trim it back. The season for dealing with this is approaching soon, once nesting birds have moved on, **so this is a good time to check those boundaries!**

### **Keeping our Culverts and Watercourses Clear – Riparian Responsibilities**

Linking to the above, if you have a **watercourse or culvert** on your property, now is also the time to check for choking of the watercourse by vegetation. Cow Parsley in particular is abundant this year and as it rots back can clog waterways quite easily, causing, in some cases of heavy rainfall, surface water flooding.

If you have **riparian responsibilities** – you have a watercourse / ditch either forming a boundary with another property or a public walk / highway - now is a good time to check them for any vegetation clogging. To check on riparian responsibilities and requirements, details can be found on the HCC web site at [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk) - 'Planning and Environment – Flooding' section.

This is also a good opportunity to keep an eye out for **Himalayan Balsam** and **Japanese Knotweed**, both highly invasive species common in waterways, and which we have reported on in the Newsletter many times in the past. Help with identifying these species can be found on the (very useful) website [www.nonnativespecies.org](http://www.nonnativespecies.org), an agency of government bodies concerned with environment matters.



### **The Parish Lengthsman Scheme – Getting Things Done!**

There are some specific activities which our **Parish Lengthsman** undertakes, such as cleaning road signs, dealing with some of our public rights of way which are overgrown and other important tasks in our local environment.

The Parish Council sets the work programme for the Lengthsman based on inputs from Councillors and the public and is in the process of looking at what activities we want him to undertake this year.

If you are aware of any specific areas of need for the intervention of the Lengthsman, please let the Clerk to the Parish Council know (details below), for consideration to be included in the programme of work.

### **Fixing Our Roads – Reporting a Problem – New Inn Road**

As we have promoted in previous editions of the Parish Council Newsletter, Hampshire County Council (HCC), has created a very effective web site based reporting system for local issues across a range of areas – including **potholes and damaged / crumbling road surfaces**.



At the last Parish Council meeting in June, the matter of the condition of some of the roads in the Parish was discussed, with a particular focus on the rapidly deteriorating road surface in **New Inn Road**.

This heavily used roadway, being a main access point into the Forest roads, access to Bartley Post Office and of course, the main route to Southampton Road for many local residents in Bartley, is deteriorating at an increasingly rapid rate. Several Parishioners have commented to the Parish Council on the condition issues on the road.

The Parish Council expressed surprise that the roadway surface was not included in the recent works in April on a number of local roads, as it was clearly needed.

The Parish Council Clerk has via, the very easy to use, HCC web site for reporting on highway issues, registered its concern about New Inn Road. However, we can only register one 'report'. If any Parishioner similarly wishes to log on to the site and register their comment on the condition of New Inn Road, this could well help making the case for some repairs to the surface to be made. The more people register a comment, the better! The Parish Council will then follow up with HCC in the near future to see what, if any, action is likely to be taken.



If you have **any** issue which needs reporting in connection with our local infrastructure, please use this service. When you enter an issue, you are given a unique reference number to help you track the progress of your problem on the system. We know this system works well, **so let's make good use of it!**

To use the system, simply go to the HCC website at [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk) and type '**Report a Problem**' into the 'search box' to get to the relevant page.

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### **Other News – Telephone Boxes, Benches and Playground**

**Telephone Boxes:** After a slight delay from earlier in the year, in a short while the project to refurbish our **Parish Council owned telephone boxes** and bring them into use as community resources, will get under way. We are hoping that the telephone boxes will serve as a repository of information about the Parish, with guidance on local Rights of Way, local history and current local events. Keep an eye out for action on our telephone boxes in the near future!

**Benches:** We reported in the last Newsletter on the condition of some of our **public benches**. The Parish Council has now inspected them all (as well as identifying all the litter bins in the Parish!) and is preparing a plan for those which need repair or replacement. We hope to be able to commence work on this later this year, but the programme will have to take place over at least two years, due to costs. In the meantime, please bear with us on this, **as the replacement programme will take a while to resource and action!**

**Playground:** In late May, some minor works were undertaken on the **playground** after a period of 'settling in' of the equipment. We plan a further set of small jobs, such as a gate closer, in the very near future – **all helping to keep the playground in tip-top shape for our enthusiastic users!**

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**Date of the Next Parish Council Meeting:** The next two Parish Council meetings will take place on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019** and **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September** (there is no meeting in August), both at 7.00 p.m. Parish Hall Annexe.

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*The Clerk to the Council, David Rigby, can be contacted by post at: 9, The Cleaves, West Totton, Southampton, SO40 8WL or by telephone: 02381120150 or by email at: [parishclerk@copythorne.org.uk](mailto:parishclerk@copythorne.org.uk); website: [www.copythorne.org.uk](http://www.copythorne.org.uk). Details of individual Parish Councillors, and information on District and County Councillors, can also be found on the Parish Council Website and on community notice boards.*