

**WING ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2017**  
**Report by Wing Parish Council Chairperson Lynn Stuart**

Welcome to Wing Annual Parish Meeting 2017.

Since last year Maxine Hayes, who had been our clerk for over 4 years, has moved to Norfolk. Although she obviously isn't here (probably walking along a beautiful beach with the wind in her hair!), the council would like to thank her for the tremendous amount of work she put in to bringing the council into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and I would personally like to thank her for her unerring support and advice. We wish her well in her new life in the country, not without a hint of envy!

It took us nearly 5 months to find a replacement for Maxine and eventually we appointed Huw Thomas as our new clerk. He worked for the Home Office before taking early retirement and thinking he would take on a 'little job to fill his time' applied for the clerk's post. He has not been a clerk before and so it is a steep learning curve for us all! We welcome Huw who is proving to be a valuable asset to our team.

Also, we appointed 2 new councillors, but unfortunately it hasn't worked out, but we would like to say thank you to Kathryn Levett and Mark Reynolds and wish them well. I would also like to thank Clive Parish, who although not a councillor has worked closely with the council and is endeavouring to update our website and social media presence.

Over the past year, despite being without a clerk for 5 months, we have continued to try to revise and hone the policies and practices which have been put in place. This is a never ending task, especially with new legislation, but we try our best.

The two new developments will be completed with the next year and we will be able to welcome the new residents. There have been lots of problems with traffic, parking, lorries going down the wrong road and dirty roads. We have liaised with the site managers, who have been very welcoming and helpful, but our thanks go out to residents for their patience with the problems and they will soon be gone!

The Woodlands will have a footpath with natural play equipment along the way and Bewick Green will have a more traditional play area. Martin Grant homes has also allocated the very large area behind Littleworth to the council and this will become part of the wildlife corridor, extending Long Spinney and providing a huge area of open space for residents to walk and children to play. This leads me on nicely to Long Spinney – 2 years ago we acquired Long Spinney on a 99 year lease and since that time a dedicated group of volunteers has sawn down trees, built footpaths, bridges and fences, dragged the pond and built bird boxes. They were helped by Youth Action and the Scouts who are developing their own mini campsite and outdoor space. Our thanks go to this very dedicated group of volunteers, Malcolm Oliver, John Lomas, Sarah Roe, John Benson, Ed Waller, Liz and Bob Tring and Gill Jeffries, Ernie Weight, Simon Hellegren-Derry and Scott Jones-Williams for giving up so much of their time and energy to produce a little piece of paradise in Wing. If you haven't been I strongly recommend a visit – it is truly lovely.

The council receives money from each of the developments called s106 funding and it must be spent on new facilities. It cannot be spent on maintenance or renovations. As I said last year this money will be spent on the recreation ground providing a Multi use Gym area and a new building, which will include a football pavilion, parish office, meeting room and storage, relaying of the football pitch, provision of a mini playing pitch and extending the car park. All of which will be free, except users will have a token system for the MUGA to pay for the electricity if they use the floodlights. With Jubilee Green and the two new play areas there is masses of space for our younger residents and this new provision on the rec will provide for more organised sports and a wider audience such as our teenagers, older residents (anyone for walking football) women – netball, hockey – is that sexist should I have suggested cricket and football, well I do!

Like any project sometimes sacrifices have to be made and we will probably lose two trees, one goat willow and an oak, however the environment group and Malcolm Oliver have put forward a planting scheme for the whole of the rec which will increase the number of trees, prettier and more plentiful planting, screening and picnic and play areas.

Dog poo is a continuing problem in the village. Most residents are responsible dog owners and pick up after their dogs and put the bags in the bins and an enormous thank you to all those people. It is the small core group who for some reason do not believe it is their responsibility to clear up after their animals. These people do not understand the impact this has on other walkers, dogs and as most of our footpaths go across farmland, farm animals and grass cutting, which to note, of a bale contains any dog poo is rendered useless and the farmer loses the cost of that bale. People pick up the poo and then leave the bag for others to pick up. I would love to know why as it isn't exactly heavy. Please note if we do obtain evidence about anyone doing this the council will prosecute and seek the maximum fine of £1000.

Also, there is a person slashing the dog poo posters, which bothers me because someone is obviously walking around with a very sharp knife, which could be deemed as a weapon. The police are aware.

Litter is a perpetual problem in any village so I must give a tremendous thank you to Antonia Blake, who collects litter around the village and does an absolutely sterling job, often above and beyond what she is expected to do - so many thanks to her. I would also like to thank Ivor Collins who puts his hand to anything, again many thanks Ivor.

Jubilee Green is always on our agenda and new equipment is added or replaced when necessary. The logs are about to be replaced as they have rotted. We also still have a problem with people fly-tipping or allowing their dogs to roam free and poo on an area that children play on daily. To this end we decided to revise the bye-laws. This is an often lengthy legal process and the new laws are currently with the Secretary of State.

Last year we were approached by Elaine Hassall the AVDC Community Engagement Officer for Older people, Ali Curson a Community Development Officer from community Impact Bucks and Simon Garwood, a community links officer, about setting up a Good Neighbours Scheme for Wing, initially for the elderly. At first we were a bit cautious as we didn't think Wing needed another organisation or group, but after some debate it was decided that we should bring all the groups and organisations under one umbrella and extend it beyond helping the elderly, but also the vulnerable and those in need. It did however, quickly become evident that that is everyone regardless of age, gender, race or disability so we compiled a Directory of all the groups, clubs and organisations in the village, plus other services of use to residents and delivered one to every household in the village. Copies are also in the library, doctors' surgeries and the church. There are some spare copies at the back of the hall if anyone wants a copy.

On the back of this the Wing good Neighbours Group has organised an event called Wing Live on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June 4-7 (wine and cheese) and 1<sup>st</sup> July 10-4, (homemade cakes and scones by the WI, what other reason do you need to attend!) and we hope all the groups will have a table, where residents can find out about clubs for themselves, their children, parents, elderly relatives and friends. You will be able to get information, join or even volunteer to help. Please get more info from the back of the hall.

We still have a lot to do and hope that all groups will stay engaged as we continue to establish a system to help those with any form of need in our village. I would like to thank all the members of the WGNS for giving up their time – Vicar Helen Barnes, Ginny Hollas, Esther Morris, Vicky Day, Maureen Lomas, and Christine Maudlin. If you require further information please contact Huw.

Our committees continue to offer a high level of support to the council:

#### **The finance committee**

Set the precept this year with a slight increase. The reason is the council was advised to do so as Bucks county council are expecting councils to do more with less money and also cutting the services they offer. This year the number of cuts of grass verges etc will be reduced by two from 6 to 4 over the growing season, which is March to October. There are other more rural verges which will receive fewer, or no, cuts. They have also stopped weed killing which the council has had to take over, but with strict rules about who can do the job and the kind of weed killers used.

Bucks has tried to devolve powers to parish councils for grass cutting, sign cleaning and many more aspects of looking after the village, with a view that they will not have to offer these services in the future. The council has looked into this and expressed serious concerns that it is not about devolving power, but devolving responsibility without the power and initially very little money with no guarantees for future funding. They also have paid little or no regards for all the on costs that this involves, such as the clerk's time, insurance and machinery. Just for

your information and I hope most of you are aware there is a bid for a unitary authority, which will have one of two outcomes – AVDC will become our governing council or Buckinghamshire will become our governing authority and the district councils will be dissolved. However, we are awaiting the decision from the Government, but as a General Election has been called everything is on hold. Whichever way it goes the impact on Parish Councils will be immense and their responsibilities will increase.

The **Environment Group** has put planters outside the village hall and we have to thank Peter clay for maintaining them so beautifully. We also got a commendation in the best kept village competition, so we are hoping to do better this year and Wing in Bloom was a great success, where everyone's front garden is entered. We have some beautiful gardens and gorgeous hanging baskets.

Wing Speedwatch Group has the use of 2 moveable Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS) which are shared between Wing, Wingrave and Mentmore. These signs display the speed limit and a message to slow down, when they are activated by vehicles exceeding the speed limit. They also log the quantity of vehicles and their speeds continuously. Recent locations for the MVA unit have been on the Soulbury road and at the entrance to Ascott House, but this is purely data gathering to be used if evidence is needed.

You will be very interested in these figures –

At Soulbury Road, in 24 days it recoded over 25,000 vehicles entering the village, which is over 1000 per day, with an average speed of 36mph and a max speed of 65mph.

At Ascott in 24 days it recorded nearly a quarter of a million vehicles coming from the Leighton roundabout, that's about an average of 10,000 vehicles per day with an average speed of 44 mph. There were 2 vehicles recorded travelling at 90mph.

There are 3 more locations that have been approved in Wing – Stewkley Road, near Well Lane and Church Street on the A418. These sites will be used in future deployment of the MVAS.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to the speedwatch group of John Lomas, Dennis Green John Hughes John Benson? Who collect, deliver, dismantle and erect the MVAS unit and, John L who downloads and analyses the data. This group is made up of councillors and residents and they would love some assistance (dare I say this – younger members without bad backs etc, would be more than welcome and the group would love some assistance.

Although we the council has no direct control over planning other than ensuring issues are brought to AVDCs attention, we have been concerned about the new systems introduced by AVDC, where the parish council no longer receives paper copies of any proposed planning as it is put directly onto the AVDC website – or not as the case may be. There have been significant problems with planning not being posted, put on the wrong website and just 'lost'. The parish council have been pushing AVDC to sort out the problems. The council continues to monitor the website to ensure that nothing slips through the net and that AVDC adheres to our NP.

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you that every councillor is a volunteer and undertake all these activities on your behalf in their own time.

So although, I hope you realise that although the groups and committees are generally spearheaded or overseen by the council, we are extremely grateful when other residents want to be involved. This is an opportunity for us to draw in the wealth of expertise in the village and for individuals not to feel they have to commit totally to the council. So please feel free to volunteer we promise it won't take up a lot of your time.

You can also meet with Huw and councillors on Wednesday mornings, 10.30 -12 in the library to discuss matters or get information. Please look at the boards at the back of the room to see more details.

This next part might sound like I am accepting an Oscar and thanking everyone including the dog's mother, but it is so necessary. So I would like to say thank you to all the councillors for their hard work. Being a volunteer is not easy these days with extra pressures from work, as well as family, children, dogs etc - the list is endless and so a big thank you for giving of your time and expertise so generously. Also, to those people who are often unseen and help the council, like Sheila Lambert and Robin Washington from the village hall, who are always helpful, often at short notice. If I have missed anyone, then apologies and please know that we greatly appreciate your help.

You will now be very happy that we are nearly at the bit you have been waiting for. – money! Many councils give out some grants, but very few invite organizations to apply for grants and few award as much as we do. As the council is keen to support organizations in the village as they are what makes Wing so special and an absolute joy to live in.

And now to the money .....