

## **Fishbourne Parish Council - Chairman's annual report 2022/23**

During the year we reviewed fourteen planning applications. At the April meeting we had a presentation by two senior planning officers who are investigating ways of improving the response on requests by local Councils to investigate possible breaches of planning rules. I hope this will lead to Fishbourne having a guaranteed response if we have any queries.

At the October meeting we co-opted Christine Woollin to the Council bringing us up to full strength. I am pleased to report that all our Councillors make significant contributions to the functioning of the Council. Our Clerk, Lindsey tendered his resignation that was accepted at the January meeting and Mrs Katie Riley was appointed at the March meeting. We held a small reception to wish Lindsey well with his new appointment.

At the May 2022 meeting we made a request to Wightlink to alter the lighting at the Fishbourne Terminal to reduce the light pollution to surrounding properties and on the creek. The lights are being altered now but at a fairly slow pace.

Last July we held the first coffee morning which was attended by twelve residents. This is a monthly event with the intention of reaching out to people who live alone or who appreciate a chance to meet other residents for a chat. I am grateful to Cllrs Talbot and Conyers who have spear headed this initiative.

On the fourth June we celebrated the Queens Jubilee and made grants to support three street parties. The Council is keen to support activities that bring people in the Parish to meet socially.

There have been more issues with traffic queuing on Fishbourne Lane and obstructing residents' driveways and making access to their properties difficult. The Council is working with Martin Gulliver (Wightlink's Isle of Wight Port Manager) to resolve these issues. I think we have made progress but the issue is that the new larger ferries carry so many vehicles that when there is a problem the traffic build up is such that the terminal does not have the capacity to hold more than two ferries traffic. Wightlink have introduced text messaging to advise customers of any delays and revised sailing times but we can only wait and see how effective this is. A small number of customers are extremely awkward and abusive to staff when their journey plans are affected by delays.

Whilst on problems cause by the sea the sea wall just past the boathouse on Fishbourne beach has been breached by strong seas, repaired by the Isle of Wight Councils, but the repair was effectively washed away again in the last two months. The Council have confirmed that another repair will be made.

Lower Green TRO (Traffic regulation order) or otherwise parking restriction. This is now moving forward and so far, has passed the review stage and hopefully will be installed this summer. The Parish Council are requesting this is installed as soon as possible but we are in the hands of Island Roads

Queens Green canopy, after a lot of searching we found sites for half a dozen trees and as reported in the Parish Newsletter the trees were planted in the spring.

Pedestrian crossing on Fishbourne Lane - We have spent some time discussing this but have made little progress. We need to have a speed survey completed to provide factual data to support any request made. We do need a speed watch team, please let the Clerk know if you are willing to spend a few hours monitoring vehicle speeds.

Speeding in Firestone Copse Lane is an issue as is the danger to pedestrians who walk down the road. I am aware that one resident was hit by a wing mirror and it has been a concern of the PC for a number of years. We previously made an attempt to get a speed restriction imposed but the Council judged this to be unnecessary. Very sadly until someone gets hurt its difficult to make progress but this will be on our agenda in the forthcoming year.

In November we held another Parish Spruce up day, there was noticeably less litter than on the previous spruce up day but still more than one would hope. Please keep our Parish free of rubbish.

We held a photographic competition over the winter. There were not many entries but we wish to encourage activities that create awareness of our surroundings as well as learning a skill.

We joined with the Friends of Quarr Abbey to have a bench made by the carpenter at Quarr and sited down by the old abbey looking out over Spithead. The Opening ceremony was attended by Cllr Fontana on a very blustery day and gives users of the coastal path a chance to sit and admire the view.

For a long time, we have been considering the Junction of Firestone Copse Road and Kite in respect of pedestrians both crossing Firestone Copse Road or waling from one road to the other. Footpath on corner of Kite Hill and Firestone Copse Road. The Parish Council consider this to be a dangerous crossing and would like some footpaths installed on the inside of the grass verges at the junction. We have requested this upgrade from Highways but they are not prepared to fund it unless the Parish Council funds the works. We then requested a quote with a view to doing this, but the quote we received was in excess of £50,000. We are not happy with this situation but it's difficult to see what else we can do.

The Kings Coronation, another chance for people in the Parish to meet and I was pleased to attend both Parish parties and chat to some of you. My message is that if there is any local issue affecting you, please do come and talk to us, either at the Tuesday morning surgery (09:30 to 10:00 at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club, sometimes in the Snug or on the veranda overlooking the creek) or to one of our monthly meetings on the second Thursday each month (excepting August – *apparently all Councils go on holiday in August!*)

Planning enforcement – We have for a long time struggled to get possible breaches of planning investigated. In April we had a very good meeting with the two senior planning staff and I am hopeful we can come to an agreement to have a set amount of time to investigate complaints in our Parish. We will need to fund this but if we have a formal agreement, it could prove very beneficial to the Parish.

We are looking at producing a Community Information Sheet giving details of local business and also contact details for a number of agencies that will support residents that have particular problems.

We have agreed to assist Ryde Town Council in funding a help centre in Ryde Library which will be available to any resident who has a problem that they would like to discuss with someone who can advise the best course of action.

We had a recent incident when two properties in Fishbourne Lane were being flooded out when there was fairly heavy rain. Southern Water after denying any responsibility did, with a bit of prodding, did realise it was a foul water drain and then came very quickly to mend the drain. It was a great shame that it took so long before action occurred.

Finally, we had reported to us that a resident walking along the foreshore between Fishbourne and Binstead had been accosted by the owner of a property on the foreshore saying the beach was private and you cannot pass. He was correct in that his property has riparian rights (basically ownership of the beach) and the basic tenet is that its private property but after that the situation is far more complicated. Apparently if you are a fisherman, you have a right of passage. Anyway, a fascinating subject but I just urge all to be sensible and if you are walking along that part of beach keep to the low water area, not that it's a very easy walk, the coastal path is much easier. Also do be aware of the birds that feed on the beach and keep away in the migrating season so as not to disturb them.

As you can see the Council has had a very busy year!

Malcolm Hector

Chairman, Fishbourne Parish Council