

Annual Report by the Chairman of Turvey Parish Council

It is my pleasure as Chair to report on the activities of Turvey Parish Council during the last year. It has certainly been a challenging year for everyone as a result of COVID. We note that in January 2021 we had the resignation of Tony Smith who had been an active member of the Parish Council especially with regards to issues to do with Station End as well as liaison with the police and neighbourhood watch. At this meeting we are now welcoming two new parish councillors, John Ludlow and Roger Kirk who have recently been elected onto Turvey Parish Council.

1. Planning:

As consultees, Turvey Parish Council consider all planning applications within the parish and respond as necessary to Bedford Borough Council.

A significant amount of time was spent over the last year on progressing the NDP with an extraordinary meeting in June 2020 specifically focused on it. We saw the Neighbourhood Development Plan finally submitted to the Borough Council who consulted over the Summer of 2020. It has since been submitted to the Examiner with the Parish Council providing answers to questions posed. It is fair to say that there was far from universal agreement with the changes requested by the Examiner and BBC planners. There remains to be a final discussion about the latest letter of advice from the Examiner.

As part of the process a detailed survey of parking in the village was carried out by two of the Councillors. Unfortunately we were prevented from including some very informative information from this in the NDP. It will provide to be useful in our future planning consultation decisions and planning.

I would like to thank all those volunteers and parish councillors who have given up so much of their time and effort to date in working on this project which is now nearing its end.

2. **Priory Close Play Area:** Priory Close residents asked if the Parish Council could consider upgrading the play area by adding a multi play and swing. Contact has been made with Kompan, following a generous offer of supplying equipment at cost. It was agreed that a survey/questionnaire of the local residents should be conducted when current lockdown restrictions are less rigid to seek their views. With regards the budget, there is money set aside in ear-marked reserves.

3. Highways and Footpaths:

The Parish Council continues to monitor highways and footpaths and works to achieve improvements to both within the parish, as well as general road safety. Following the introduction of the 40mph speed limit at Station End, we have continued to request that the police monitor speed and enforce the limit. We saw during the year, the installation of the average speed cameras on the A428 and we thank Borough Cllr Jim Weir for all his efforts in helping to get these installed.

4. Grants: Following the finalisation of the purchase of the Reading Room, the Parish Council paid out the grant of £20,000 which it had originally allocated in November 2016 along with a further donation of £5,000 plus £324 from the former tennis club. A grant of £110 to cover annual insurance was also given to the Turvey Bloomers. The Parish Council welcome grant applications from any organisation which benefits a number of residents of the parish. There is now both a grant application form as well as a grant criteria form on the website. Please consider applying.
5. Precept: This is £33,900 for 2021-22 which remains unchanged from last year.

Finally, I would like to thank our Borough Councillor Jim Weir, who provides superb assistance to the village, as well as my fellow parish councillors for all their support and hard work on behalf of the residents of Turvey as well as supporting me as Chairman over the last year.

I would also like to encourage all Turvey residents to attend the bi-monthly meetings and use the opportunity to engage with local democracy. The parish council meeting always starts with a public question session which is the opportunity for residents to raise concerns. We publicise the dates of our meetings on the noticeboards and the website. The latter also contains copies of our agendas and minutes. The meetings will revert to physical presence as from the next on 27th May 2021.

Dr David Niblett, Chair of Turvey Parish Council 27th May 2021