

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Melksham Without Parish Council held at Forest & Sandridge CE Primary School, Cranesbill Road, Melksham on Monday, 11th April 2016 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs. Richard Wood (Chairman), Cllr. John Glover (Vice-Chairman), Cllrs. Alan Baines, Pat Nicol, Mike Mills, Paul Carter, Gregory Coombes, Rolf Brindle, Terry Chivers and Jan Chivers.

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk), Jo Eccleston (Parish Officer) and Sharon Newton (Finance Officer).

Apologies: Cllr. Steve Petty and Ian Tait.

1. **Welcome & Housekeeping:** The Chairman, Cllr. Wood warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire.
2. **a) Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2015:** The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday, 16th March, 2015, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

b) Matters Arising: There were no matters arising.
3. **Chair's Report:** The Chairman gave his report of the work of the Council during 2015/16 (See Appendix 1.).
4. **Reports from Wiltshire Councillors:**
 - a) **Wiltshire Councillor Terry Chivers:** Cllr. Chivers gave a written report of the work he had carried out during 2015/16 as a Wiltshire Councillor (See Appendix 2).
 - b) **Wiltshire Councillor Roy While:** Cllr. While gave an overview of his written report of the work he had carried out during 2015/16 as a Wiltshire Councillor (See Appendix 3.).
5. **Written Reports from Community Organisations in the Parish:**
 - a) **Melksham Neighbourhood Police:** A written report was noted. (See Appendix 4.).
 - b) **Melksham and District Neighbourhood Watch:** A written report was noted. (See Appendix 5.).
 - c) **Community Safety Group & Neighbourhood Police Tasking Group:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 6.).
 - d) **Melksham Community Area Partnership:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 7.).
 - e) **Action Groups:**
 - (i) **BASRAG (Berryfield & Semington Road Action Group):** A written report was noted (See Appendix 8.).
 - (ii) **BRAG (Bowerhill Residents Action Group):** A written report was noted (See Appendix 9.).
 - (iii) **CAWS (Community Action Whitley Shaw):** A written report was noted (See Appendix 10.).
 - f) **Village Halls:**
 - (i) **Shaw & Whitley Reading Rooms:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 11.).

- (ii) **Bowerhill Village Hall Trust:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 12.).
- g) **Schools:**
 - (i) **Forest & Sandridge CE Aided Primary School:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 13.).
 - (ii) **Shaw C of E Primary School:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 14.).
 - (iii) **Melksham Oak Community School:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 15.).
- h) **Transport:**
 - (i) **CATG (Community Area Transport Group):** A written report was noted (See Appendix 16.).
 - (ii) **TransWilts Community Rail Partnership:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 17.).
- i) **Health:**
 - (i) **Melksham Health Working Group:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 18.).
 - (ii) **Friends of Melksham Hospital:** A written report was noted (See Appendix 18.).

6. **Matters Arising from Community Reports:** Whitley Reading Rooms: Bob Brownrigg, Treasurer, Shaw & Whitley Reading Rooms reported that the three current committee officers were stepping down and had given notice that they were going to do so 12 months ago. He confirmed that with the assistance of the Parish Council all three posts had now been filled and that this would be confirmed at their AGM, to be held on 12th April, 2016.

7. **Comment & Question Time:**

A resident from Cranesbill Road expressed concerns with regard to the parking issues outside of Forest & Sandridge school, stating that some parents blocked the driveways and access points of resident's properties. She stated that she had nearly knocked over a small child, and had highway safety concerns. She sought the support of the Parish Council for school highways signs to be erected and she had also contacted her MP, Michelle Donelan.

Caroline Ramsey, Senior Caseworker for Michelle Donelan, MP, reported that she had spoken to Paul Galpin, Senior Highways Planner at Wiltshire Council, who had stated that the provision of a school sign could be done quite easily, and that the road was due for adoption in a matter of weeks, after the snagging period. Ms. Ramsey stated that there were options available for action to be taken, one of which could be full white lines on the road which would prevent parking at all times. She reported that this had worked well in other areas and for other schools, however it was always a difficult situation as some parents do not like being told what to do.

The resident replied that if action was not taken and an accident occurred that she would go straight to the press.

The Council responded that there was a situation outside of Shaw primary school where parking regularly takes place on double yellow lines at school pick up time, and thus queried the effectiveness of white lines. When the planning application for the school was submitted, the Parish Council had expressed concerns that this could have led to parking issues in Snarlton Lane.

A resident stated that the school was not currently at full capacity, and thus could accept more children. If the planning for 450 dwellings to extend the east of Melksham Development was approved, this would inevitably lead to more parking issues.

Mr. Paul Carter, Chairman of Governors for Forest & Sandridge School stated that he did not consider that the resolving of parking issues was the responsibility of the Head of the

School, and he had therefore taken on this issue and had been liaising and listening to the concerns of both parents and residents. He reported that in an attempt to mitigate this issue the school had adopted a drop off scheme. Some residents do not want permanent parking restrictions as this would prevent them and their visitors from parking outside of their properties. He had spoken to the shop owners and the Watermeadow pub and they were happy for parents to use their car park rather than park on the road. He said that the new footway from Ingram Road to the rear of the school, which had been orchestrated by the Parish Council had greatly helped.

The Parish Council takes the safety of school children very seriously and had been to the school at drop off and pick up times in yellow hi-viz vests on four occasions. It was noted however, that parents had a responsibility for the safety of their children on the journey to and from school. The Parish Council were supportive and empathetic to the situation and the issues of both parties, however there were criteria and elements that were out of the control of the Parish Council.

The Clerk advised that this issue was an agenda item for the next full council meeting to be held on Monday 18th April, 2016.

8. **Presentation on Dementia Friendly Communities & Safe Places:** Sheila Ashley, Dementia Friendly Representative, responsible for the East of Wiltshire at Alzheimer's Support, showed a short film and gave a presentation on how communities can become dementia friendly and provide safe places. She explained that the risk of getting dementia increased with age and that as a society we have an increasing aging population. She explained that her role was to help Melksham to become a Dementia Friendly Community by reaching out to all groups and that if people wished to become Dementia Champions that free training was available. She stated that a Dementia Friendly Community was one where people were aware about what dementia was and how it can present itself in order to be able to recognise these symptoms in neighbours to then be able to offer help, support, or just to keep an eye out for them. Additionally, training and information is given to families and sufferers, with activities and early support given at the point of diagnosis. The Community can provide "safe places", such as banks, shops, libraries, etc., where sufferers can seek help and support if they are confused or anxious. It was noted that Dementia Awareness Week was the 15th – 21st May, 2016.
9. **Emergency Response Plan:** The Clerk gave a short presentation on the Emergency Response Plan. She was seeking volunteers for the Emergency Plan, but explained that this was not about people going into burning buildings or wading through flood water, rather about having a bank of volunteers who would be willing to make hot drinks at a village hall if people needed to be evacuated from their homes, or having a list of people who could cascade information or get in touch with more vulnerable members of the community.
10. **Presentation of Grant Aid Cheques:** The Chairman and the Vice-Chair presented the 2016 Grant Aid cheques to groups and organisations who had been awarded a grant as they provided a service which benefitted the residents of the Parish.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm

Chairman, 18th May, 2017

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

11th April 2016

INTRODUCTION

This is my third Chairman's report for the Annual Meeting. Yet again it has been a very eventful 12 months both for the Council and for me. Indeed this could have been the year that the Parish Council was deemed to be surplus to requirements, but more of that later.

Our clerk, Teresa Strange continues to overhaul our ways of working and this year we have been using a new meeting pattern, with dedicated Planning committee meetings, thus leaving a less cluttered Full Council meeting. On several occasions Full Council has ended before 10pm, which is welcomed by us all. The next major change will be to adopt new methods of financial management as our Council's precept tops the threshold of £200,000 which necessitates a different accounting regime.

Lucy Key, our excellent Finance officer left us in November. She served the Council very well in her relatively brief stay with us. She was a hard working, extremely well informed and very conscientious person who did invaluable work particularly with the Byzantine detail of the building and commissioning of our new pavilion. Unfortunately for us she received an offer she couldn't refuse, one which will enable her to fulfil her ambition to become an accountant. We thank her for her work for the Council, which was always allied to a cheerful and positive manner with councillors and the public.

We have been very fortunate to find an ideal replacement in Sharon Newton. Sharon is a qualified accountant who has very quickly fitted in since she arrived in the New Year. She will be well placed to help us change our accounting methods and bed in new accounting software.

PRECEPT

The Precept set for 2015/2016 is £221,000 an increase which amounts to less than 30p per week on an average band D household. This increase was mainly in response to the devolution of services from Wiltshire Council to Parish level, a process taking place across the country.

PLANNING

Reviewing and commenting on plans submitted to Wiltshire Council are an important part of MWPC's responsibilities, one we take very seriously. This year we received 92 planning applications, including 8 large developments.

Without doubt the best planning outcome for the parish was the completion and opening of the new pavilion on the Bowerhill Sports Field, or officially the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Sports field. This was opened on 19th September by the Lord Lieutenant Sarah Troughton and has been in constant use ever since.

This past year has seen the virtual completion of the original east of Melksham development and the associated school and commercial centre. The new pub, the Water Meadow is now open and the occupancy of the shops should not be long in coming. Approval has been given to the completion of this area of development with building of 450 houses behind the Spa, and the extension of Eastern Way to Spa Road. This new road potentially forms part of a future Melksham eastern bypass.

We have several more developments in the works, the most significant being those at Pathfinder Way, Semington Road and Sandridge Common. These developments are rather controversial, especially the Pathfinder Way one which threatens to close the gap between Bowerhill and Melksham, and provide a school and early years nursery, the associated traffic for which could cause serious congestion at peak periods. Unfortunately our ability to resist developments such as these has been compromised by the Wiltshire Council's failure to guarantee a five year supply of housing land. This failing has the potential to turn development in all of North Wiltshire into a free-for-all.

THE WILTS AND BERKS CANAL

This is becoming a saga! The original master plan for a canal through Berryfield and 600 houses to help fund the project has now been changed because some landowners have refused to sign up to allow their land to be used for the canal. This has resulted in a new plan to change the course of the canal route, and to build 800 houses in open countryside between Berryfield and Melksham, and along the Semington road. No formal plans have been submitted for this large number of houses, and there will be need to be a very serious discussion about how such a large increase in population could be accommodated. The impact on health services, education and traffic congestion would be particularly crucial. We await new developments with great interest.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Neighbourhood planning is potentially a way to shape future development to the needs of Melksham rather than the needs of developers. Melksham Without Parish Council and Melksham Town Council continue with their work on our own Neighbourhood Plan. Work is well advanced on the assessment of housing development sites in the area. This has been ably led by Mark Ashkowski and has reached the stage where we can identify preferred options for future housing development. Nick Westbrook has led some very useful work on health and recreation, and work on Education is also well underway. Our target is to produce our report for consultation in the Autumn.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

The year has seen a considerable amount of work on emergency planning. Flood wardens are in place for Shaw Whitley and Beanacre, and CAWS, the new community group for Shaw and Whitley have been very active in this area, and have been able to acquire considerable amounts of equipment to help the cause. We are in the process of setting up groups in Bowerhill and Berryfield as well, so that the Parish can be more resilient under the stress of unforeseen events.

One unforeseeable and very personal emergency is a heart attack. We have just put in an order for seven defibrillators to be installed in prominent positions around the parish. They will be at Shaw Village Hall, Whitley Reading Rooms, The New Inn at Berryfield, the Water Meadow in East Melksham, The Pilot in Bowerhill, St Barnabus Church, Beanacre and The Pavilion at Bowerhill Sports Field. Funding has come from various sources including a very determined parishioner in Bowerhill, the Friends of Melksham Hospital and Melksham Area Board. Melksham Without will be funding the majority of the cost.

RECREATION

The significant increase in this year's precept has been made in response to the severe constraints placed on Wiltshire Council's spending by central government. This year a further 16.3% cut in central funding left Wiltshire council seeking £25,254,000 worth of savings. One way of accomplishing some of this saving is to devolve certain services to the parishes. Our parish has agreed to contribute towards keeping the toilets by the Art café in the Market Place open, and it is our intention to take over the maintenance of play areas at

Hornchurch Road, Kestrel Court and Berryfield from Wiltshire Council as soon as possible. Wiltshire Council has a totally inadequate budget for play area maintenance, and without our intervention it is certain that these play areas would gradually lose equipment, and ultimately be closed for safety reasons. In addition to costs incurred on these play areas, and our existing ones in Shaw and Beanacre, and the MUGA at Hornchurch Road, we have the Bowerhill Sports field and Pavilion to look after. We consider it our duty to our parishioners to preserve these facilities, which it is all too easy to take for granted. It is our view that future generations would not forgive us if we did not step into the breach and save these recreation areas but rather let them decay as Wiltshire Council would have to do.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

It has been a busy year for our community groups, and this year we welcomed CAWS to the party! In my Chair's report last year I mentioned the reformation of SWAG. They decided, after their inaugural meeting to change the name to Community Action: Whitley and Shaw and they have gone from strength to strength. I had the pleasure of attending their Auction at the Pear Tree last Christmas at which over £1000 was raised, the lots including a bottle of Louis Roederer Cristal champagne donated by a well known local councillor which went for over £100!

THE FUTURE

In this section last year I had to mention the existential threat to our Council from the Local Governance review. The officers, councillors and parishioners all worked very hard to present our case for a council for the rural part of Melksham district. Happily our arguments fell on receptive ears and the Wiltshire Council members voted in our favour. At the same review our suggestion for boundary change in the east of Melksham and at the George Ward school site were also approved.

Last year we were looking forward to opening of the pavilion, and planning for it to be used as the home of a Bowerhill Youth Club. As often happens events overtook us, and this time in a good way because the Canberra centre was re-opened as a youth club for at least two years. Melksham Without have been glad to help fund a minibus which enables young people from our parish to get to the Canberra centre safely and conveniently. When the Canberra centre becomes unavailable, the parish will have to reconsider how it can be involved in the provision of youth facilities for our parishioners.

We are committed to picking up some of the slack left by Wiltshire Council lack of funds, and while we will be able take over maintenance of play areas quite quickly, the transfer of the actual play areas will be more protracted and might not happen for several years. Ultimately we hope to own and maintain all the play areas in the Parish but this goal may take many years to achieve.

A PERSONAL NOTE

Finally, I'd like to thank the hard working staff who always deliver a top class service whatever the workload or the occasional provocation. Teresa has proved to a tireless and innovative clerk, and we are a more efficient and proactive council as a result. Our new finance officer, Sharon is settling in very well and will be pivotal in our adoption of new accounting procedures, and Jo is becoming the guardian of all matters planning as well as a very cheery and well informed public face for all our parishioners who drop in to Crown House. Terry continues to excel in his role as parish caretaker; he has had his duties changed somewhat as the pavilion came on stream, but takes change in his stride.

They all support us wholeheartedly and are the very heart of MWPC.

Wiltshire Council Report

Despite a four percent increase in Council tax, services are still being cut to the bone across the county. Since my last report, I have been involved in many local campaigns. Including the withdrawal of the RUH Hopper bus service, which will be withdrawn in June this year. And cuts to local bus services that are at present funded by Wiltshire Council. And the charging for the green waste collection.

After last year's complaints regarding the standard of grass cutting this year the service is being provided by The Landscape Group, and we have already seen a vast improvement.

I remain a member of The Planning Committee, and serve as sub on the Northern, Southern and eastern Planning Committees. However, most planning decisions are made under delegated powers, which concerns me.

Also I have concerns about changes to planning rules, that removes the duty of major developers to provide social housing to rent, via social landlords. They now only have a duty to provide a percentage of affordable housing that in many cases is still out of reach to most on the housing list.

It is also a concern that Wiltshire Council have now decided not to adopt public open spaces on new housing developments across the County.

Councillor Terry Chivers

Melksham Without North.

Melksham Without – Annual Parish Meeting 11th April, 2016

Report from Roy While-Wiltshire Councillor, Melksham Without South.

The Councils budget

Last year I began my report with the WC budget update – continuing reduction in Government grant support necessitating challenging savings across the board. This year sees a similar pattern. The budget for looking after vulnerable children and adults which accounts for two thirds of the net budget of £314 million remains intact and the other services bear brunt of the £25 million savings target. We need to change the way we do things, looking for even more efficiency, with some staff reduction. Like many other councils our council tax goes up by 1.99% (the first increase in 5 years) together with the social care levy of 2%. Cuts are biting and, unlike Government, we cannot balance the books by borrowing!

The Government have proposed fundamental changes for the future which entail the gradual withdrawal of government support grant but allowing councils to retain business rates (with some equalisation adjustment mechanism for those councils that lose out.) in addition to the Council Tax. Will we gain? Watch this space!

Melksham Campus – now renamed Health & Wellbeing Centre.

The Council has reviewed the overall Campus programme. The Melksham project has been scaled down but at £23 million remains the largest investment. Talks are ongoing with the Town Council regarding the inclusion of a new Melksham Assembly Hall. All the key facilities are retained with an extra court for the sports hall but sadly indoor bowls is omitted. I am extremely disappointed as I have backed the inclusion of bowls from the beginning. Development of the impressive rugby and football facilities adjacent to Melksham Oak School is well advanced and the clubs relocate from the Melksham House site in the summer.

Town and Parish Councils – Governance Review

The Council embarked on a wide ranging governance review of town councils and parishes. There was consultation but this did not capture the public's attention. At the Wiltshire Council meeting in November councillors, swayed by the strong case put forward by this Parish Council and BRAG and CAWS (and supported by Councillor Terry Chivers and myself) voted against the Town Council's merger proposals. For me retention of the strong community spirit of our individual communities is important and I am all for small government locally keeping bureaucracy and its associated costs to a minimum.

How I keep busy!

On the broader front I try to keep up to date with what is going on in Wiltshire – the budget process and service proposals and developments through attendance at Cabinet and other meetings and seminars. We are among the largest councils in the country. You never stop learning! I take part in the Western Area Planning Committee, the Wiltshire Pension Fund Committee and the Financial task group. I try to keep pace with the growing volume of emails.

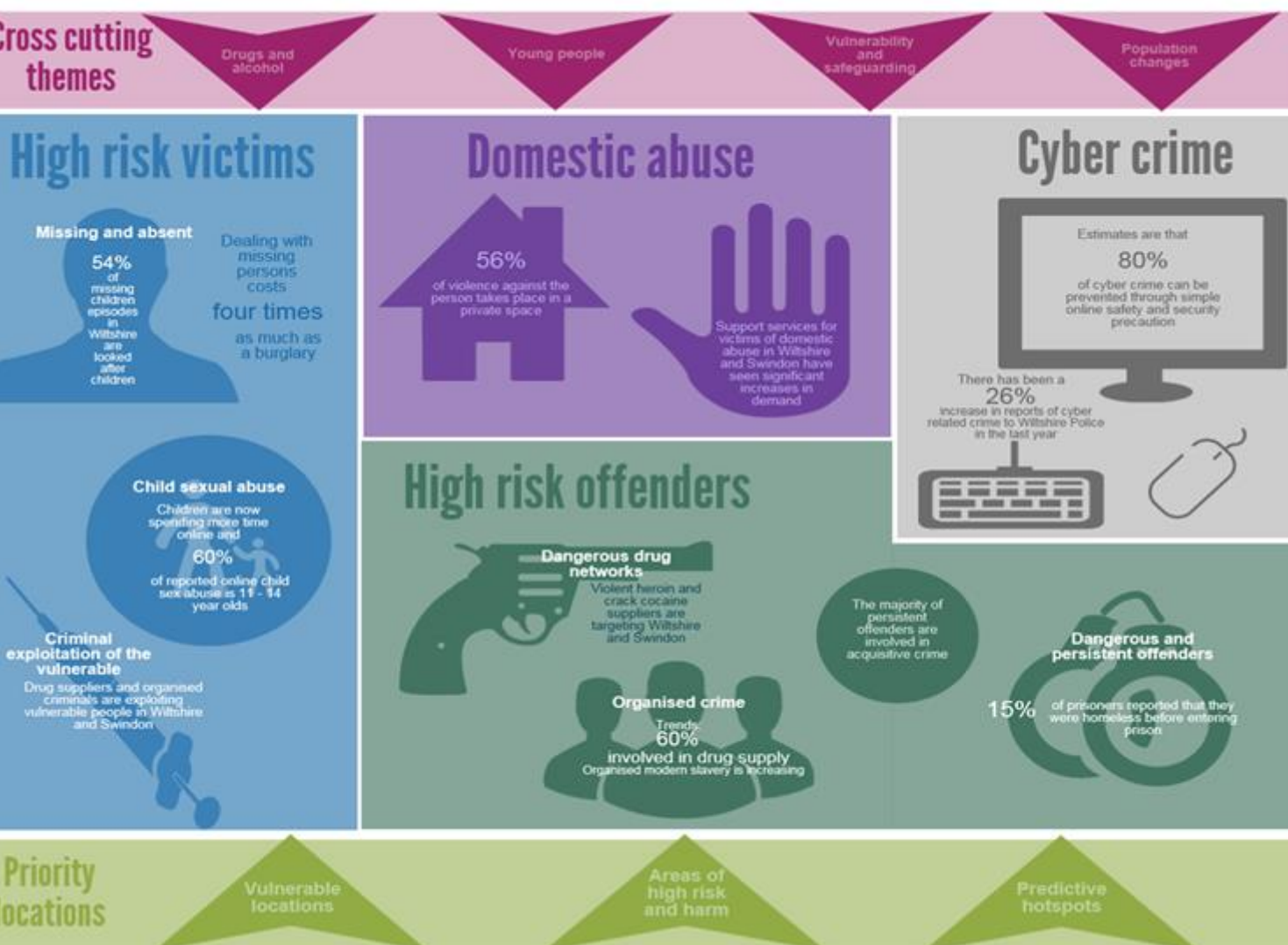
Locally there is the Area Board activity which includes the grants process, Bowerhill/Hampton Park Industry, the Melksham Campus Project Board, CATG (community area transport group). I enjoy attending the BRAG and Parish Council meetings which helps me to keep abreast of local issues and I support and further their cause where I can.

Many residents now transmit their concerns via the App or issue note system and also contact the Parish Council. I do, however, get a number of the more complex issues. These have included planning, environmental and social matters. I always say in my newsletters if anyone has any difficulty contacting the council over urgent concerns then contact me. I am not looking for work but I know that some people, particularly the elderly, do not always know who to turn to.

Police Report April 2016

Melksham NPT have had a busy and proactive year. Our work has been guided by the new Control Strategy (see diagram) which highlights the key areas and themes that Wiltshire Police need to target in order to reduce crime and making safer more satisfied communities. Lately Melksham NPT have set a priority in raising awareness around Cyber Crime within school children. Members of the team have been going in to primary schools across the Melksham Community area to give OP Polite lessons on best practice in using social media, email, and telecommunications in total 430 children in years 5 and 6 were given the presentation with good overall feedback. NPT are continuing to push out these lessons to the local cubs, scouts and youth groups. Members of the NPT also donned their baseball caps and bling necklaces recently when the concept of promoting Cyber Crime awareness was taken to Melksham Oak school as they became involved in a rap with students of the school who thought up the lyrics, composed the rap which was they also captured on video. We are seeking ways to promote cyber-crime awareness in the elderly population of themselves can become targets for different reasons to the younger generations.

Control Strategy Diagram



Within the last year Melksham NPT helped with the setup of the 'No Through Road Watch' scheme. This is a voluntary scheme similar to the community speedwatch schemes set up in the past where volunteers have monitored motorists who choose to ignore the no entry signs along Semington Road near to Divisional Headquarters. Volunteers had raised concerns about this route being used too often as a rat run for motorists trying to avoid going around on the A350. The scheme is well under way and the volunteers have seen the scheme have positive effects as motorists have turned around when the volunteers have been in place. Hopefully the knock on effect will be that motorists no longer see this as being a quick short cut option will choose to use the A350 which would relieve some of the traffic that residents in Semington, Berryfields and along Semington Road have come accustomed to.

Melksham NPT have been included in the roll out of new technology in the last year to help them in their roles. All officers have been issued with personal issue smart phones that provides them with a practical means to make contact with the public when out and about. These phones have a number of apps installed in them which will also allow NPT staff to keep the community up to date with crime reports, security advice etc. including Facebook and Community Messaging and officers are currently going to undergo refresher training on the use of community messaging via the apps on these phones which will allow us to provide the community with more up to date and relevant information. As well as the mobile phones officer have been given access to laptop devices so that we can work on the go with the Chief Constable keen to see officers in public using these devices to keep up to date with work – the idea being that officer will no longer need to yo-yo back and forth to the station to complete much of their work when they could happily sit in a coffee shop or on a park bench where they can also be accessible for the public to approach.

There have been a few changes within the Team make-up. Sgt Williams moved on from his post in January 2016 to take up a roll in Custody. PC Kane Fulbrook-Smith has taken up the role of Sgt in an acting post and brings with him all his local knowledge after Policing Melksham Town Centre as a Beat Manager for many years. PC Emily Thomas has returned from maternity leave to bolster the numbers and has taken over Melksham Town Centre as the Beat Manager. As for the area covered by MWPC this continues to be Policed by local officers PC Barry Dalton and PCSO Maggie Ledbury. Inspector Nick Mawson has also taken over the sector as Inspector Matt ARMSTRONG also moved on to a role elsewhere in Wiltshire Constabulary.

The Future?

There have been many questions within the last year from the community about the future of Melksham Neighbourhood Policing Teams and we have tried to keep you updated when we can.

A Community Policing Team pilot scheme has been taking place in the Trowbridge and Warminster area since September 2015. Initial evaluation has suggested that the Community Policing pilot could deliver a more efficient, effective and streamlined service to the public through a 'one team' approach to policing local areas.

The pilot was built upon 18 months of data gathering which included a large element of public consultation. During this consultation the public told us they saw the role of Wiltshire Police as 'to keep me safe and protect my community' through local, community based visible and accessible policing services – upon which the pilot model was built.

Neighbourhood policing is a core part of our proposed Community Policing Teams. Local officers will be policing local communities – dealing with local issues. The introduction of larger Community Policing Teams means that we would be broadening the size of local teams to include our response officers and

investigators giving the public a more visible and accessible police presence in their local areas. Supporting this would be the development of a model in the control room to assist with decision making.

By introducing a Community Policing concept, we anticipate that this will deliver an even better service to the public because issues can potentially be resolved at the first point of contact (101 and 999 call-takers). A member of public will be provided with a named officer who they will be able to keep in touch with during the investigation. A recent evaluation has shown that generally the pilot was well received.

Melksham NPT have been informed that we are to be incorporated in to the Trowbridge Community Policing Team possibly from October 2016 although a date has not been confirmed. It is expected that the officers within Melksham NPT will be utilised to make the most of their local knowledge and will primarily remain as the Melksham officer within this new team.

PC Barry Dalton
Melksham NPT

Melksham and District Neighbourhood Watch

The Melksham and District Neighbourhood Watch network continues to grow with new schemes starting up frequently. At the moment we have 154 established schemes with new ones in the pipeline. The Berryfield Scheme has transferred to Mrs. Sue Whyborn as Mrs. Cynthia Legge has now moved to North Somerset to be near family, and I would like to thank Sue for stepping into the breach.

NHW works very closely with the Melksham Community Area Partnership and is, therefore, very active in the Safe Places initiative, Community Resilience planning, provision of domestic SmartWater kits and proposals to promote a Dementia Friendly Town. The Neighbourhood Policing Team have been very supportive of NHW, helping to set up schemes and passing on referrals for schemes as well as alerts.

I am hoping to promote the setting up of No Cold Calling Zones but this must be done through Wiltshire Council and Trading Standards as there are specific guidelines to be followed.

REPORT ON MELKSHAM AREA COMMUNITY SAFETY GROUP AND NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE FOR MWPC AGM

The Community Safety Group meets on the last Thursday of each month with the quarterly meetings incorporating the Neighbourhood Police meetings where the police give an update of their work in the past three months and report on the priorities set at the last quarterly meetings. New priorities are then agreed for the next quarter.

In the past year the Community Safety Group has continued to work with the local police, Community Speedwatch and Neighbourhood Watch with updates at each meeting. We have also concentrated on promoting the Safe Place scheme in Melksham Town and hopefully to take the scheme into the local villages. Over 30 businesses in Melksham have joined the scheme which advertises their premises as being a place of safety if anyone is lost, confused or believe they are being followed or hassled.

The Community Safety Group have also been promoting Smartwater as a security measure which enables people to mark their belongings with a forensic traceable product which has a unique forensic code which is registered to an address or location and can only be seen under ultra violet light. Displaying that your property is protected by Smartwater has been proved to be a deterrent to criminals. Melksham Without Parish Council's sports pavilion is protected by Smartwater.

We have also recently started to get involved in the campaign to make Melksham a Dementia Friendly Town where businesses are trained to recognise people with Dementia and to be ready to help them.

The Community Safety Group is grateful to Melksham Without Parish Council for the grant that enables the Group to continue its work in the Melksham community area.

Mike Mills

MELKSHAM COMMUNITY AREA PARTNERSHIP

Annual Report 2015-16



1. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the local community, MCAP seeks to:

Identify the community's priorities for action

We have established a wide-ranging network of community organisations, groups, clubs, societies, schools, churches and businesses as well as interested individuals in order to connect with as many local people as possible.

Reflect local concerns and ideas

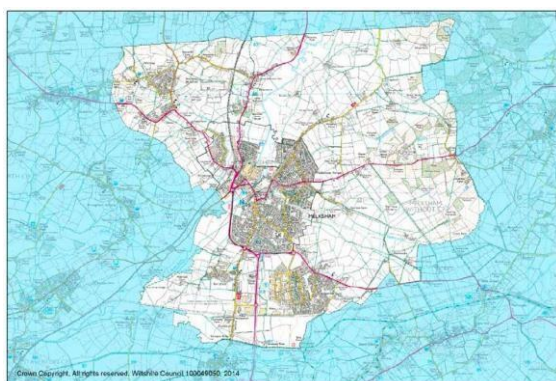
We are looking to bring about positive change through a combination of encouraging local projects and finding ways to raise awareness.

Maintain strong links with town and parish councils

We engage with councils and other partners to build effective participation, consultation and community engagement across the community. We serve as an advocate for civic engagement and enable the creation of strong, resilient and empowered communities. We provide excellent meeting and event facilitation, administration and management.

- **DEVELOP:** To develop the capacity and skills of our community groups, enabling them to perform their roles
- **SHARE:** We endeavour to provide a platform for the community organisations to share information, ideas and best practice so as to foster efficient and informed working.
- **PROFILE:** To raise awareness, understanding and support for the organisations and the work they carry out in our community area
- **NETWORK:** One of our primary aims is to build and maintain relationships with partner organisations and key stakeholders. We are skilled in networking and encourage engagement via social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn, and have links to well over 1,000 Twitter users.
- **SUSTAIN:** We seek to ensure an independent partnership that is fit for purpose, sustainable and able to support the community organisations in their work.

Below are just some of the highlights of Melksham Community Area Partnership in the previous year.



2. DEVELOP

Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council are working together to support and facilitate the production of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan, and a Steering Group has been formed with their support to oversee the process.



m Neighbourhood Pla

Partnership staff also played a key role in the development of a **Sustainability Scoping Report** for Melksham, an eighty-page document covering such diverse issues as:

COUNTY WILDLIFE SITES - As might be expected from a town bisected by a river, much of our richest biodiversity is found in our riparian meadows and banks. In consequence many of these areas along the floodplain of the River Avon are now designated County Wildlife Sites by Wiltshire Council. This

Our network of **theme groups** look at specific issues and arrange projects and report direct to the partnership Officer. We also link to existing groups that are active in the community.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a green long-sleeved shirt under a dark vest and dark trousers, is walking a small, scruffy dog on a leash. They are on a paved path that runs alongside a grassy area. A black trash bin is positioned on the grass near the path. The woman is reaching towards the bin. In the background, there are trees, a blue sky, and a wooden bench. A blue circular sign is visible on the left side of the path.



It's planned to hold similar such events again later in 2016.

This is something else which the Environment Group has established as a regular attraction in the Melksham community area calendar of events. Anyone that's been a gardener for any

length of time, whether simply growing a few flowers in a border at home or keeping the kitchen well stocked on an allotment or two, will be bound to have a few spare packets of seed lying around.

The Melksham Community Seed Swap is a great opportunity to exchange some of those seeds, crowns or sets for something else. We welcome flowers, vegetables, any kind of seed. People simply have to turn up with seeds to swap (clearly labelled and saved in packets or envelopes), take a look at what's on offer and swap seeds either directly with other gardeners or from the Community Collection.



Theme: Community Safety

This group meets on the last Thursday of every month and has been successful in introducing a volunteer-run state-of-the-art digital CCTV system to Melksham Town Centre and a highly commended Safe Places scheme, as well as serving as a focal point for Neighbourhood Watch, Community Speedwatch, the PCC, and the Neighbourhood Policing teams to ensure that community safety priorities are identified and tackled. The group undertakes a great deal of work in the Melksham Without area in particular. It is hoped to continue to introduce SmartWater across the whole community area in 2016 to make it a safer place to live and work in.

MCAP's Sue Stoker was voted volunteer of the year in 2015's Neighbourhood Policing Awards for her dedication to the community.

Mrs Stoker beat three others for the title after being nominated by Melksham Without Parish Council for her tireless work in reviving Neighbourhood Watch schemes in the area and supporting new ones.

Community Speedwatch in and around Melksham has also been a major success, notably in Atworth, Steeple Ashton, Seend,

Trains

Snowberry Lane, Shaw & Whitley and Semington Road. The

Theme: Transport

transport group has been building on the success of earlier campaigns to increase rail passenger figures for Melksham (which is now the 7th fastest growing station in the UK in terms of passenger numbers). The partnership nevertheless strives to facilitate crosspartnership working regarding both Buses and Trains, and retains close ties with the Trans Wilts Community Rail Partnership.

Theme: Health & Well Being

Project: Establish a Health Forum

Working closely with the Spa Medical Centre's Patients Reference Group, MCAP volunteers have successfully launched a series of public health forums which have been extremely well attended. These have tackled issues such as men's health, obesity, mental health and diabetes.

Volunteers also manned an information stall at the Food and River festival during the summer which saw 5,000 people pass by during the day.



5. SUSTAIN

The Melksham Community Area Partnership is committed to continuing the good work undertaken in line with the community's wishes but is reliant on grant funding in order to continue. Wiltshire Council's Area Board has previously been tremendously supportive and we look forward to working closely with them, however they are no longer able to provide revenue funding. Organisations such as the Police and Crime Commissioner will provide small grants to achieve specific projects, and mindful of this we are applying for grants where relevant – for example, purchasing SmartWater kits to protect householders' belongings. What is harder to fund however is the revenue costs that keep the organisation running, successful and impactful. This is largely the admin cost of the Coordinator, with some expenses cover for mileage, venue hire, printing, refreshments and other incidental costs. Other than the Coordinator role, all roles are voluntary and delivered by a very dedicated committee. We are looking for about £5k per annum in all.

The Wiltshire Council Business Plan states that WC will be “creating stronger and more resilient communities” and we fit into Outcome 2- *“People in Wiltshire work together to solve problems locally and participate in decisions that affect them.”* MCAP has experience in involving people in service design and delivery to achieve a better outcome and to help people trust each other and the outcomes for the community. MCAP will add value for money in working with the local community to achieve their needs and wants. MCAP has already shown by its community plans and projects that we are skilled and confident with community consultation, so our actions speak for themselves.

For further information please contact:

Phil McMullen, Partnership Coordinator – melkshamcap@gmail.com or Colin Goodhind, Chair of the Partnership colingoodhindofmcap@gmail.com

Melksham Without Parish Council Annual General Meeting.

Report of Berryfield and Semington Road Action Group, 2015/16

1.00 Aims

Formed over ten years ago, Berryfield and Semington Road Action Group (BASRAG) has been the driving force in promoting community spirit in the Berryfield area. It runs social events for adults and children in the village and was instrumental in securing the children's play park and the present village hall as a focal point for the community. BASRAG continues to campaign for a permanent village hall for the area and encourages community participation in local events. Our local Newsletter "Berryfield Buzz" is distributed regularly in the community and we hope to improve the content of future editions and make it more attractive.

2.00 Report on Events

BASRAG ran the annual Easter Fun Event in the hall and playpark which again proved popular. Easter eggs were awarded to the children who hunted down paper eggs in the play area and many of them also enjoyed making Easter bonnets and other Easter themed craft activities in the hall.

In the spring, volunteers worked hard to clear the Berryfield and Semington Road hedges and ditches of litter. It was agreed that there was not quite as much litter as the previous year and this was encouraging.

The Summer Fun Day in August was well supported with a Bouncy Castle, outdoor games and stalls. The local community police officer came with a police car and many children queued up to have their fingerprints taken.

A joint art and craft exhibition in October attracted some new exhibitors and resulted in new members for the art and craft groups.

The Santa Run just before Christmas was well received as usual and our thanks go to Melksham Lion's for the loan of Santa's Sleigh.

3.00 Committee

Richard Wood was elected as chair at the annual meeting in April, Gill Arbery continues as secretary but Steve Petty resigned as treasurer in April. Cynthia Legge took over as treasurer but unfortunately she has recently moved to Somerset so the finances are currently being managed by Richard and Gill until a new treasurer can be appointed at our annual meeting in April. Sue and Jim Whyborn and Liz Callaway continue on the committee and they have played an active part in events and in the maintenance of the hall. BASRAG has liaised with Sue Stoker, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator for this area and she has been a great help in establishing NW groups within the Berryfield area. Her contribution at our meetings is much appreciated.

4.00 Hall User Groups

The Art Group continues to use the hall weekly and the craft group meet twice monthly. The hall is available for private hire.

5.00 Future Events

An Annual Meeting will be called for 14th April, 2016.

An Easter event has been arranged.

We hope to run another Summer Fun Day in the school holidays and another art and craft exhibition in the autumn.

6.00 Village Hall Maintenance

Planning permission for the present portacabin expires in May 2019 and with delays outside our control regarding a new building, it was decided that without immediate repairs the hall would become structurally unsound long before 2019. It was decided to engage a local builder to repair to the door, construct a porch

canopy, replace guttering and other works which have rendered the hall sound and watertight at present although the condition of the floor at the rear of the hall needs assessing. Members of the committee undertook the repainting of the lobby and toilet area of the hall and it is hoped with new floor covering the hall will continue to be an asset to the community.

7.00 New Hall Working Group

Progress has been slow in our attempts to secure a site for a new permanent village hall for the community due to further delays with the planning application for the Wilts & Berks Canal Link. There is a possibility that the proposed route of the canal will be altered but at present this would not affect the proposed section through the hall and play park.

The proposed development on the eastern side of Semington Road, which was initially refused, has been resubmitted with further promises of a village hall within the development. A decision on this proposal is pending.

Meanwhile, we endeavour to raise awareness of the work of BASRAG and with new signage to the hall and a village sign on the Semington Road, we hope to raise the profile of our village.

Summary

Although we have been unable to make progress towards a new village hall BASRAG has worked to keep the present hall as a focus for the community. We continue to raise awareness of local initiatives to develop the community spirit in Berryfield and promote events that will appeal to all.

BASRAG is a member of Wiltshire Community Land Trust and the Village Hall Association.

The Parish Council has been most helpful to BASRAG over the past year with their encouragement and practical help for which we are very grateful

Gillian Arbery
Secretary
March 2016

BOWERHILL RESIDENTS ACTION GROUP (BRAG) REPORT TO MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL 2016

The last twelve months have seen very good times and unfortunately some bad times. The best time was attending the South West in Bloom presentation day at the Royal Navy College in Dartmouth where BRAG representatives collected a second consecutive Level 5 Outstanding award, a fitting tribute to all of the hard work by BRAG volunteers. The worst times were the picnic area being flooded recently on a number of occasions. The flooding probably killed many creatures that were hibernating in the Bug Hotel. BRAG volunteers are still not able to check the area as it is still too boggy but once it dries out we will check what work needs to be done to the picnic area to restore it to its previous state. We have entered the picnic area again in South West In Bloom and have sent the organisers photographs of the flooding so they can see what we have to cope with.

The BRAG litter pickers have continued to keep Bowerhill tidy which was reflected in Bowerhill once again winning the Best Kept Large Village in West Wiltshire competition and finishing fourth in the overall Wiltshire contest where the first four villages were separated by only a few points. We also took part in the Clean for the Queen event where we cleared litter from the whole estate and particularly cleaned the hot spot for litter outside Tesco's.

Our Facebook page has proved very popular and our messages are reaching over 1000 people.

We also discussed important issues such as the proposed merger of Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council which we opposed. I spoke at the Wiltshire Council meeting against the plan and we were pleased that the merger was rejected by the councillors.

BRAG is very grateful to Melksham Without Parish Council for its annual grant that goes to paying for our Public Liability Insurance without which we could not operate and towards the Village Hall charges for our meetings.

We know that the Bowerhill Community support our work and they are very grateful to BRAG for the work we do around Bowerhill. I wish to thank all of the volunteers who give their time freely to improve the environment in Bowerhill. Most of us are "golden oldies" and the work we do help us keep fit. Long may we continue.

Mike Mills

CAWS Chair report February 2015 – February 2016

CAWS have had a flying start in its first year. It begun with a new Committee and at our first full meeting, objectives were decided upon for the up and coming year, our name was changed to Community Action: Whitley and Shaw and plans begun for a community event which would help raise our profile and to get our community together.

CAWS were part of and ran three successful events in 2015. The first was supporting Shaw School in running the bouncy castle and balloon sale stalls. This not only helped raise money for the school, it also enabled us to publicise our event the following week – our community BBQ.

The BBQ was a culmination of a variety of events and activities that had been taking place leading up to July. These included the neighbourhood plan team having the opportunity to talk to local people about what they feel about new housing in our area, a chance for CAWS to find out what the community would like to see them take on in the future, the opening of the newly refurbished Shaw Park, consultation on future improvements for the play park and the receipt of a cheque from Scottish and Southern Energy from their Community Resilience fund for £3000.

The CAWS community BBQ was an excellent success story really showing our community that we as a committee are a great team. The committee put in their time and a huge amount of effort leading up to and on the day of the event which enabled the day to be so successful.

The third event was our auction at Christmas, the CAWS Christmas cracker which was held at the Pear Tree. The committee once again pulled out all the stops in not only organising the evening, but also in gathering 30 lots from local businesses, people and not to mention donating themselves to the auction that night. Around 50 people attended the evening and raised over £1100 to go towards community projects and events for 2016. Special thanks go to Roger Hollest who hosted a fab auction evening, the Pear Tree for their hospitality and venue provision and the people that came to the auction and donated so generously.

As well as a focus on events in our early stages, Mark, Tony and I applied to Scottish and Southern Energy for a grant following the September 2014 flood event. We very quickly, and turns out effectively completed the grant application and received £3000 towards equipment which would be used in a flooding event. Since receiving the grant Tony and Brian Roberts have been dedicated in taking this project forward and worked with flood wardens, SSE, MWOPC and CAWS to ensure the right equipment was bought and at good prices. Their work continues now with formulating a plan in order for the best way this equipment can be stored, used and deployed should an emergency event happen in the future. Receiving this grant has made a real impact on what we are now able to do for our community in the event of a major incident or flood in the future, huge thanks to Brian and Tony for the work you have done and continue to do with this project.

While this project has continued other objectives we set ourselves have continued to be investigated. This includes exploring a footpath option on Top Lane from the shop to the bus stop, requesting for footpaths to be cleared, and the footpath options from Dunch Lane to Shaw school. Further details of these can be seen in the Objectives table. With these being longer term projects, I would recommend these continue onto next years objectives.

Part way through our year, it was announced that Wiltshire Council had set up a working committee to assess and make recommendations on whether MWOPC and Melksham Town Council should merge. The committee and I deciding this was not in our best interests, I and some of the committee members attended one of the meetings where I raised our concerns against the merge happening. Tony then also spoke at the final review at the Wiltshire Council meeting all helping to give a majority vote that the councils should not merge. I am very proud of our committee, where we were able to support this decision showing the influence we can have as representatives of local people.

Reflecting on this year, I would like to thank every member of the committee for their hard work, time and effort they have given to CAWS in its first year of starting. Special thanks go to Mark and Tony for their dedication to their roles and how they have supported my position as Chair. I'd also like to thank MWOPC, especially Terry Chivers for being a valued member of our committee and of course Teresa Strange who has always been there every step of the way with us.

I of course say farewell to Mark as our secretary while he continues with local projects and wish him luck and our support in 2016. Marks support has been invaluable in the start of Community Action: Whitley and Shaw.

For me, it's been a pleasure to help and support our local community and would like to see CAWS have an even more successful 2016/17 year. With lots of suggestions coming forward to shape our year, it's going to be a busy one.

Next year I would like to see CAWS continue their work on local projects, make a real visible difference in our community and support and work with the village hall and reading rooms committees.

WHITLEY READING ROOMS

Charity No 305595

Annual Report to Melksham Without Parish Council 2015

I am pleased to report that 2015 was another successful year in the life of the Reading Rooms which remain a popular venue for the whole community. Our regular groups of users include Mother and Toddlers, pilates, art, sewing, drama group, personal fitness and music appreciation. The hall is also used as a Polling Station, as a meeting place for the local National Trust committee and for family parties and gatherings.

Our Trustees are committed to a programme of regular maintenance and improvements to the facilities offered by the Reading Rooms. The new Baxi boiler which we won in a competition in 2014 was installed in February and has performed as one would expect.

At least we were spared the problems encountered in the previous two years!

The Reading Rooms' total income for 2015 was an improvement on the previous year, and in particular the income from social events and meetings was significantly increased. A grant was made by the Melksham Area Board towards a replacement aluminium fire exit door and the work was carried out in April. The interior of the whole building was repainted in August at a cost of £1833, offset by a Parish Council grant of £500.

In April the Reading Rooms obtained 26 second-hand padded chairs free of charge through Wiltshire Council's former Youth Work Team Leader Siobainn Chaplin.

The Area Board advised me of this source of supply, and the chairs are in excellent condition, much appreciated by our user groups.

At the 2015 AGM the Committee Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer all gave 12 months notice of their intention to retire at the next AGM after long service to the charity.

It is hoped that a new committee will be formed at the AGM in April 2016 to continue the progress we have made over the past years.

My thanks go to the Parish Council and the Melksham Area Board for their continued valuable support of our charity.

Bob Brownrigg
Treasurer, Shaw & Whitley Reading Rooms

March 2016

BOWERHILL VILLAGE HALL TRUST REPORT TO MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL 2016

The big step forward for the Bowerhill Village Hall Trust was the opening of the new web site designed by Gavin Owen that enables users to check availability of the Hall and to enter provisional bookings directly into the Village Hall diary. The information is then sent to the Booking Secretary who acknowledges the provisional booking and sends hire costings to the person who made the booking. If the booker is happy with the hire costs the provisional booking becomes permanent. This on line service has proved to be a great success and has led to an increase in bookings.

The new management committee who were appointed at the Annual General Meeting in May 2015 have examined and revised all of the Village Hall procedures and produced a new constitution after discovering that the constitution was last revised in 1987. New booking forms, hire agreements and new charges have been brought in and a maintenance diary introduced to ensure that servicing is carried out at the due time. Overall bookings are up especially during the day which means that the Hall is running at a profit which is important to enable us to pay for maintenance. The Village Hall Trust is very grateful to Melksham Without Parish Council for their support and for the grant that they make to the Hall each year.

A wi fi service is being introduced to the Hall which should be in place by the time this report is read. The management committee also wants to install a multimedia system to allow users to have interactive presentations, a facility that many users require today and without which we will lose bookings. The Village Hall Trust has submitted a grant application to the Melksham Area Board for half the cost and the decision will be made at the April meeting. We have also approached Security 2000 to check the Hall evenings and weekends at the same time as they check Bowerhill school. A quotation has been received and will be discussed at the next committee meeting.

I wish to thank all of the committee members for all of their hard work managing the Hall. They are volunteers who give their time freely. Without their tireless work there would be no Hall.

Mike Mills

Learn, achieve, be happy, succeed!

Forest & Sandridge CE Primary School
Cranesbill Road, Melksham
Wiltshire
SN12 7GN

Headteacher: Mrs Anna Willcox
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Helen Biles-Wood
School Business Manager: Miss Allison Moon

March 2016

Forest & Sandridge CE Aided Primary School

We have had a crazy and exceptionally busy, but incredibly exciting, year since the last time I wrote a report for you! I hope you enjoy reading about it.

Our New Building

It finally happened! We moved into our brand new school building in September 2015 and it has been worth the wait! Our old Victorian building was, as you will be aware, no longer fit for purpose and was consuming a vast amount of time and energy to maintain to a satisfactory standard. Our new building could not be further from that! It is light, airy, build for purpose as a 21st Century primary school and it's enormous! We are making great use of the space for a range of purposes.

Our building comprises 14 classrooms and a preschool (to open September 2016 – applications now being taken), 4 small group rooms, 2 large group rooms, 2 meeting rooms, an open plan library, changing rooms, a school kitchen, various offices and a large hall. It also has 2 junior sized football pitches and 2 playgrounds as well as a large activities play area and outdoor Amphitheatre. We are very blessed!

We have managed to kit the school out with mostly new classroom furniture and IT equipment which finishes it off well.

Moving in was hard work but very exciting as well! The keys were handed over to me on 3rd August last year. My Deputy Head, Site Manager and I spent a large percentage of the summer holiday moving some key equipment over so that we could hit the ground running when the removal men arrived on 1st September. Staff worked extremely hard to ensure that the school was looking welcoming and ready for the children to learn in by the deadline of 10th September when we opened our doors to the children for the first time. We welcomed children and their parents for 3 open afternoons on 7th, 8th and 9th September to give them an opportunity to have a look around before the children started. Staff gave guided tours to hundreds of visitors over these 3 days.

Our first 2 days after the children started were Vision and Values days. We focused on the foundation of our school and on our core values which underpin all that we do. This was to demonstrate to the children

and parents, as well as to ourselves as staff, that we may be lucky enough to have a new building, but that our school remained unchanged – still rooted in Christian values and Jesus’ teaching from the Bible. This start had a very positive impact and we have been delighted with the number of comments we have received from parents, children and members of the public who have confirmed that we have not lost the ‘lovely feel’ of our school but that it is still the same and, if anything, better!

Children

We are currently experiencing rapid growth with regards to the number of children on roll. We closed our old school in July 2015 with 225 children on roll organised into 8 classes. We currently have 315 children on roll organised into 12 classes! We are opening another classroom and a preschool in September and hope to be full to capacity (420 + preschool) within 4 years’ time. Our roll continues to climb and this will be most noticeable at the start of each academic year when we will lose between 30 and 40 children in each Year 6 cohort and replace them, in Foundation Stage, with 60. In September 2016, KS1 will be full and we predict to have 344 (plus preschool children) on roll.

We have a wide range of children with differing abilities and who come from a range of backgrounds. We are proud of the equal opportunities all these children have regardless of ability, gender, background and ethnicity. The children make good progress as they move through the school which is a result of the good teaching and learning.

Music and the arts have a high profile at our school and our Key Stage 2 children have recently performed their version of *Mary Poppins* which we were able to do in our own school hall for the first time ever! Previously, Queensway Chapel had been kind enough to let us use their hall as our school hall was too small. It was a super performance and the children did themselves proud.

The children have worked hard, with the help of our School Council, to raise money for various charities this year through sponsored and fund-raising events. The charities they have raised money for this year are Marie Curie, Children in Need and Sports Relief.

Staff

With the increasing number of children on roll came a growing staff team. We have been lucky enough to appoint a fantastic new group of teachers and support staff who have all settled into our school very well and become part of the close knit team we have here. Our staff team will continue to expand over the next few years as the school continues to grow.

Church and Community Links

Links with the church continue to grow, and this has been helped by the commitment of our vicar, Rev Alison Sowton, who works very closely with us at school. We have enjoyed having some special services

once a term at St Andrew's Church for groups of children and have also enjoyed welcoming Rev Alison to lead our whole school Christmas and Easter celebration services in school which have been very special.

We are thrilled to be able to let our school facilities out to groups and members of our community. Rugby Tots, Slimming World, Pilates classes and Zumba are some of the groups that currently use our school facilities. The 2 junior sized football pitches and changing rooms will also be available from September 2016. Information about letting these facilities is available from our School Business Manager, Alli Moon.

Ofsted and SIAMS

We continue to be very proud of our GOOD Ofsted Status (November 2014) and our OUTSTANDING SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) status (October 2014). Please see our school website if you would like to read our full reports.

We continue to be incredibly proud of our school and of all that we are achieving for our children here. It is a very happy place to learn and work. We would love to show you around if you would like to visit us – just give us a call to make an appointment.

Anna Willcox Headteacher 29 March 2016

Shaw CofE Primary School

The most significant change in our school this year was joining the Academy Trust of Melksham on 1st April 15. The closer partnership and shared accountability between our schools has helped Shaw to move forward even more strongly in developing all that is distinctive and special about Shaw School, while also learning from and contributing to the success of our partner schools. Recent announcements from central government show that the ATOM schools were definitely ahead of the curve on this issue and are not facing the uncertainty which many non-academy schools are now facing.

Staffing at the school has been stable this year and the school continues to benefit from an extremely experienced, hard-working and happy staff. Our much-loved Deputy, Carol Sampey, will be leaving us at the end of the summer term to work for the Primary Science Teaching Trust. The appointment process for her successor is well underway and there will be some changes in management structure from September in the light of this.

We continue to be passionately committed to a broad and child-centred curriculum with lots of exciting indoor and outdoor and residential learning alongside a clearly structured core of Reading, Writing and Maths. This passion has been vital as we have tried to steer the right course through massively increased academic expectations placed on our children by the new assessment regime and our total commitment to make learning irresistible and fun for our pupils.

One other exciting development at Shaw has been the purchase, training and use of our ScrapstorePlaypod. For those of you who do not know what this is, it is a large shed which is filled on a termly basis by the LacockScarp store, with carefully selected junk which the children can then use in their play at lunchtimes. The creativity and co-operation shown by the children has to be seen to be believed! It is fair to say that this project has really transformed play for many of the children.

Clearly there is going to be increased demand for places at Shaw as the George Ward site housing comes on-stream. The Local Authority, as the responsible body for school places, has decided that there is no scope to increase the size of Shaw, so we are clearly going to have to share these new pupils with other local schools. Solving issues like this is surely another strong argument for the existence of Multi-academy Trusts such as ATOM.

One thing is certain; the world of education continues to change. Our commitment at Shaw is to ensure that this change is for the better whenever we can influence it.

Simon White

HEADTEACHER

Report from Melksham Oak Community School for Melksham Without Parish Council 2016

We are delighted to provide this report for the Parish Council.

Examination Results

GCSE

The number of students achieving 5 A*-Cs including English and Maths in 2015 was 56%, which is above the national average. The progress of our students continues to be outstanding, placing us 5th in Wiltshire and the top 25% of schools nationally by the value added measure, and the top 25% for 5x A*-C based on prior attainment for the seventh year running. The schools' league tables make for impressive reading with regards to students' progress and outcomes.

A Level

The A Level results were again excellent with a 99.2% pass rate and a continually improving average points score per student; the key point is that all students were able to access the planned next stage in their education or career.

Community Use

Our Sports Facilities are well used by the community and our "working together evenings", during which parents and children learn together, continue to be over-subscribed.

Other Information

We established a Sixth Form Rugby Academy in September 2015 with Lewis Moody's Maddog Company. This has been a tremendous success and has recruited well for September 2016

The Academy Trust of Melksham (ATOM) of which Melksham Oak is a part has made good progress since its creation in April 2015.

Stephen Clark
Headteacher
March 2016

Melksham Community Area Transport Group (CATG)

The Melksham CATG addresses transport related matters raised as 'Issues' with the Area Board and is attended by Councillor Baines on behalf of MWPC (Councillor Brindle also attends for Bowerhill). Meetings are held at roughly quarterly intervals, chaired by a Melksham Area Wiltshire Councillor, was Cllr. Seed, currently Cllr. While. The Group has no formal decision making authority on operational matters or budget expenditure, but acts as an informal discussion forum making recommendations to the Area Board.

All Community Transport issues must be first discussed with the Divisional Member and, where funding is required, subsequently recommended for progression to the CATG by the relevant Town or Parish Council.

Funds available 2015/2016 for Melksham CATG proposals = £13225, plus monies carried over from the previous year (c.£13000 less cost of schemes agreed). Contributions are expected from Town/Parish Councils for projects that they put forward and this now seems to be 1/3 with the other 1/3 coming from the Area Board. Further 'CATG Substantive Scheme Funding' for whole county is £250K, for which each CATG can make application, before July, for schemes which would be beyond their budget.

During the 2015/16 year the Group agreed to recommend funding the following:

- 1) Seend High Street vehicle activated signage - £2750 contribution plus similar from Seend PC and Area Board, with remaining £9250 from Substantive Expenditure Fund.
- 2) Drop kerbs in Blackmore Road - 1/3 funding with MTC & Area Board of £500.
- 3) Hurricane Road footpath link to Grasmere - 1/3 funding with MWPC & Area Board of £1334.
- 4) Asbestos check on bus shelter outside Melksham United Church - £125. (Result was negative).
- 5) 20mph zone for Kenilworth estate - 1/3 funding with MTC & Area Board of £1334.
- 6) Pedestrian handrails in Keevil main street - 1/3 funding with Keevil PC & Area Board of £425.
- 7) Tower Rd - Devonshire PI shared use path link topographical study - £1379.
- 8) Drop kerbs in Corsham Road Whitley - 1/3 funding with MWPC & Area Board of £500.
- 9) Atworth zebra crossing upgrade - £1750 plus similar from Area Board with £3000 from Atworth PC.
- 10) Drop kerb opposite De Havilland Close Bowerhill - 1/3 funding with MWPC & Area Board of £400.
- 11) Bollard at Bowmans Court Melksham - £500, but a secondhand one obtained for £200.
- 12) "Cyclists Dismount" signs on path at Berkshire Green Melksham - £1000, but only one done for £150 due to legal problem.
- 13) Directional pedestrian signage for Melksham Railway Station - £500, but done for £250.

About 50% of these schemes are now unlikely to be done in this year, due mainly to the change of highways contractor.

In respect of previous schemes, the Speed Limit Review on C165 Forest Lane/New Road was completed under budget, but did not recommend any changes. No further action was taken following a study of pedestrian/vehicle movements on Lancaster Road Bowerhill, because Valldata refused to contribute to any measures suggested, despite originally requesting a crossing point. MWPC stated that we were not prepared to contribute to something primarily for Valldata employees benefit, and that traffic volume would decrease anyway when Portal Road was opened. However, it did prove possible to provide an improved crossing point on Snowberry Lane.

CATG facilitated a site meeting of all parties required to resolve the missing footpath link from Ingram Road to the new Forest & Sandridge School behind Snarlton Lane. It was finally accepted that it should have been included as part of the build of the school, as requested by MWPC at the planning stage but still omitted. There were fears that the absence of this link might jeopardise the opening of the new school on schedule and its cost was far greater than if included earlier. It still only went ahead after MWPC agreed to submit, and pay for, the additional planning application needed ! As a result of its construction, much of the justification for a 20mph limit in Snarlton Lane has gone away and speeds were found to be already low anyway.

Wiltshire Council discontinued the deployment of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) as an economy measure, but were finally persuaded to offer the equipment to parishes (initially groups of 4) to use. However, the numerous strict rules & regulations imposed for deployment has discouraged and delayed any take up. Whilst initially MWPC, together with the Town and Atworth and Broughton Gifford parishes, has accepted a SID, the equipment is non-operational due to age/neglect of the batteries. The recommended replacements are now only available from Germany at unrealistic cost, so MWPC have eventually successfully identified an alternative source at around 1/4 the price. At the last meeting, CATG agreed funding of £300 to get the SID into a working condition. However, there could still be high costs involved in deployment, at a new site every 14 days, by persons with the required Street Works accreditation, and there are also limitations on permitted locations. Hopefully it will be possible to eventually get it in use at the 8 previously identified sites in turn within the parish.

DoNM: Thurs 21st July, (probably at Melksham Fire Station at 16.00).

Cllr. Alan Baines

TransWilts Community Rail Partnership (TWCRP) in association with Melksham Railway Development Group (MRDG).

Report for Melksham Without Annual Parish Meeting, 11th April 2016

Past year

It's been a busy year at Melksham Station, and for train services on the TransWilts line.

At Melksham Station, additional free car parking for some 20 cars was opened last summer, and a ticket vending machine commissioned to allow the collection of tickets bought online in advance, and for purchase of tickets for on-the-day travel. The trial service of 8 trains each way per day continued, with the latest published journey numbers for Melksham Station up from 24,000 to 58,000 in a year, making in the 7th fastest growing station in the UK. Passenger journeys on trains to from and through Melksham rose from 180,000 in the previous year to a run rate at the end of 2015 or around 235,000 journeys; due to 6 weeks of engineering works in the summer, annual numbers for local TransWilts traffic can only be estimated. Business analysis suggests that further significant growth should be anticipated if train frequency or capacity is increased.

The Melksham Rail Link bus, which used the Frome minibuses vehicle to provide extra services to link with commuter trains, had grown a run rate of around 9,000 journeys per annum (about a dozen on the busiest bus each day) by July 2015, but funding through Wiltshire Council was withdrawn on 16th July, and there is no longer an easy link for commuters without cars to the station from Bowerhill or the newer eastern housing areas of Melksham.

Evening bus services from Chippenham to Melksham, which we had arranged to accept rail tickets and provided a useful late night way back to the town, were withdrawn from 2nd August when Wiltshire Council ceased funding them. Rail users were a small part of the traffic carried on that bus, but it made a big difference to those people as it provided the final piece in a jigsaw of long distance travel by public transport rather than by car.

Leaflets and season ticket wallets, pocket timetables, coverage in the Bowerhill Villager, the Melksham Independent News and the Wiltshire Times, provision of information via the Town Hall, TIC, and Library and on local radio and online via our own web site, Twitter and Facebook has helped raise the profile of the service. We've held two "TransWilts Link" events to co-ordinate public transport planning across the county, promoted day trips to Weymouth in the summer (with well loaded 8 coach trains on August Saturday resulting) and had Santa visit us in December (now travelling on 2 train services to see all the children - not just one as it was in the past)

The national RailFuture awards are presented annually in the autumn, and in November we entered for four awards - and came out with two golds and two silvers - for the best individual campaigner, the best social media campaign, the best web site, and the best overall campaign. Such awards are important as they bring our local line to national attention, helping us as we develop forward for the future and look to justify our line's place as part of the national network.

Present

In order to handle the dramatic increase in passenger numbers, and the need to ensure a secure future as a "second string" to current service support, the TransWilts CRP has become part of the TransWilts Community Interest Company, and we're looking at public transport to, from and within Wiltshire as a whole. In a survey we did (but before the rail link bus was withdrawn) some 80% of passengers used other wheeled transport to or from the station at one end (at least) of their TransWilts Journey, so it's all about integrated transport. The Melksham Railway Development Group is a member of the partnership, and act as eyes, ears, mouth and volunteers in Melksham.

As I write, there's a consultation underway from the DfT (Department for Transport) relating to our application for "service designation". Designation would offer extra funding and networking opportunities to TransWilts and would further raise our national profile, as well as delegating some powers should we wish to have local exceptions to national policies. The consultation closes on 6th April, but I would not anticipate a decision being announced until after the parish meeting

Future

Initial 'seed' funding for the service runs until December 2016 - from a grant from the DfT through Wiltshire Council. Although we are very much aware that both the rail link bus and the 234 services ceased last year at a "suitable" point in the funding contracts, we're fairly sure that the train service itself will be able to carry on at current or better levels, much thanks to the volunteers, Chair (Paul Johnson) and President (Peter Blackburn) of TransWilts CIC, Peter (again) as chair and John Hamley as secretary of MRDG and to Great Western and the DfT.

From 16th May 2016, an extra service runs in the middle of the day on weekdays, and that's a permanent service. An extra Sunday morning service will run too for the summer.

If all goes well, from May 2017 our 1 carriage train will be replaced by a 2 carriage train, and that by a train with higher capacity carriages, and another extra service, late in 2018.

Melksham Station is currently only long enough for one carriage, but as part of ongoing works, Network Rail are planning to extend the platform to 3 carriage lengths. This will add station capacity and speed up train loading as traffic continues to grow. Melksham Rail Development Group and the CRP have been awarded a grant through the GWR community fund - with match funding from local sponsors - to prepare for this work to connect the extended platform via a walkway and cycleway to Foundry Close. This will reduce the walking distance from the station to Foundry Close by 800 metres, to north Melksham and Beanacre by 700 metres and to Melksham Forest by around 500 metres.

Last August, during engineering works, the line was shown to have the capacity for an hourly train each way, and that's an aspiration we're working towards - though it's unlikely to be realised this year. We are also working with partners to join the Swindon - Westbury service to Westbury - Warminster - Salisbury - Southampton services, including the service to Southampton Airport. The effect of these changes will be to meet existing passenger flows with existing train units, and also have those train units much better utilised and offering through journeys where connections with waits are currently the order of the day.

This year, Wiltshire's supported bus services are under review with every probability that public funding will be cut after the May 2017 Wiltshire Council elections. Additionally, it has been observed that First Bus's commercial services to Melksham have been reduced over the years, with 234, 235, 236, 237 and 273 all no longer running - just the council supported 271 and the commercial 272 remain from this operator. TransWilts is keeping abreast of the situation, with a view to assisting with integrated total transport solutions; we believe that by providing extra travel opportunities on the buses (such as train connections), together with through ticketing and other steps designation will allow, a modernised bus network answering most journey requirements can be provided at a fraction of the current subsidy - growing the service to viability as has been done with the train.

Involvement

The Melksham Railway Development Group (of which the undersigned is vice chair) would like to thank Melksham Without Parish Council for their continued supports - both financial and otherwise. Without such support, we would not have been able to help get where the station and service is today, and without ongoing support we wouldn't be able to carry on that work into the future.

Friends and volunteers are always welcome. See <http://transwilts.org>
TransWilts Forum, Red Lion Hotel, Salisbury - Saturday 16th April, 09:30
Melksham Railway Development Group - next meeting Melksham Town Hall, Friday 29th April, 7:30 p.m.

Current services from Melksham <http://twcrp.info/melksham>

prepared by:

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Melksham Health Working Group

The Group met on two occasions in 2015. A further meeting is due in April 2016.

At the April meeting Ms Jane Rowland from The Royal United Hospitals NHS Bath Foundation Trust gave a presentation explaining how the Trust planned to provide more direct care in the local community working collaboratively with local medical practitioners and other health care providers. The aim will be to avoid onerous travelling to the RUH for a range of outpatient services and where ever possible avoid the need for hospital admission. To achieve this there would be a need to develop a a range of local services and this will be dependant on trained staff being available to provide these services.

The uncertainty of the future of the 'RUH Hopper' bus service was discussed at both meetings. Members of the Working Group along with many others, including the Town Council and independent councillors had made strong representation for the service to be retained but at the time of writing this report the service will be withdrawn from May 2016.

The progress in developing the Neighbourhood Plan was discussed at both meetings. The Plan will be foundation in planning the future of the local community and although primarily concerned with the built environment it is essential that it identifies all the supporting infrastructure including health care provision.

At the October meeting there was no information available concerning the prospective transfer of St Damian's Surgery to the planned Campus Development.

At the October meeting it was reported that CCG funding had allowed the appointment of additional medical and co-ordinators to support the local surgeries to improve the care of the vulnerable and elderly which is working well in a novel and extremely positive way.

It was reported the the Melksham Health Forum had meet and received presentations from representatives from Dorothy House, Healthwatch and various charities explaining their current work, initiatives and projects.

25/01/16

Friends of Melksham Hospital @ Community

AGM Held at Melksham Town Hall 8th March 6.30pm

Meets 4 times a year and anyone can join.

At the AGM, Mr. George brown was re-elected as Chairman as was Alan Weymouth as Secretary and Jean Harris as Treasurer.

There were no appeals made.

Accounts balance stood at £146,385.58 pence

Equipment expenditure was for Defibrillator at £1,597.76 pence.

G A Coombes