

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council of Melksham Without Parish Council held at United Reformed Church, High Street, Melksham on Monday, 16th March 2015 at 7.00pm.

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

Other Community Members: Cllr. Roy While (Wiltshire Councillor), Phil McMullen (Melksham Area Community Partnership), Bob Brownrigg (Whitley Reading Rooms), Michelle Tattershall (Shaw & Whitley Action Group), PC Barry Dalton and PCSO Maggie Ledbury.

Apologies: Cllr. Steve Petty.

Inspector Matthew Armstrong - Wiltshire Police

Graham Ellis - Melksham Railway Development Group

Gill Arbery – Berryfield & Semington Road Action Group

Peter Davies – Shaw Village Hall Committee

Maureen Hibbott – Shaw & Whitley Flood Group

Abbi Gutierrez – Melksham Area Board

Rhys Schell – Melksham Area Board

Anna Wilcox – Headteacher, Forest & Sandridge School

Andrew Matthews – Headteacher, Bowerhill School

Steve Clark – Headteacher, Melksham Oak Community School

Brenda Chandler – Bowerhill Villager

Rob Bridges – Melksham Town Football Club

Paul Clark – Melksham Health Working Group

John Harding - Connect

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 2014:** The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday, 24th March, 2014, 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 2013/14 (*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 2014/15 as a Wiltshire Councillor (*See Appendix 2.*). He reported that Balfour Beatty would be sub-contracting the grass cutting element of their contract with Wiltshire Council to English Landscapes.
 - b) **Wiltshire Councillor Roy While:** Cllr. While gave a written report of the work he had carried out during 2014/15 as a Wiltshire Councillor (*See Appendix 3.*). He stated that he felt that Wiltshire Council do not do enough to make the public aware that 2/3^{rds} of Wiltshire Council's budget spend goes on children and the elderly. He reported that there is much partnership working between Wiltshire Council and other professionals, and that Wiltshire

Council is the biggest business in the county. There is also greater emphasis from Wiltshire Council on supporting volunteers and community groups. He stated that he planned to invite a complainant of Wiltshire Council to accompany him on a day at County Hall to see its working processes in action.

5. Reports from Melksham Neighbourhood Police Team & Community Safety Group:

- a) Melksham Police:* PC Barry Dalton gave a written report (*See Appendix 4.*), but also highlighted some points of interest. He stated that Melksham is fortunate as it is an area of low crime and that anti-social behaviour (ASB) has decreased along with dwelling burglaries. He said that his team worked with the community to address ASB concerns, and also with other agencies such as Selwood Housing. Cllr Mills stated that the Parish were lucky to have such a dedicated NPT. The evidence that of the 86 patrols of the new MUGA in Hornchurch Road there were no reports of ASB is a testament to the relationship that the NPT have created with local people. PC Dalton stated that the police were currently promoting the new “Community Messaging Service”. This service sends out messages from the police on crimes that are actually happening, and Melksham have a good sign up rate with Melksham Rural North having had the most people sign up. This is a free service and can be tailored to needs. Bob Brownrigg thanked PC Dalton for the alert service which he has signed up to. The Clerk reported that the Parish Council is signed up to the messaging service and then feeds this information onto its website and Facebook pages, and as such the police are probably reaching more residents than they record themselves. She reported that the recent warning about catalytic converter thefts had received over 2,700 hits. PC Dalton reported that unfortunately the police had not managed to catch anyone with regard to the recent spate of burglaries in Whitley. In response to a query about “Nottingham Door Knockers”, PC Dalton stated that these door to door salesmen have to be licenced and if not they will be arrested.
- b) Community Safety Group & Neighbourhood Police Tasking Group:* A written report was received (*See Appendix 5.*).

6. Reports from Action Groups and Melksham Community Area Partnership:

- a) BASRAG:* A written report was received (*See Appendix 6.*). The Chair reported that this year has been more active as more people have been involved with BASRAG. He stated that the residents were still waiting for action with regard to the construction of a new village hall and as such BASRAG are having to make necessary repairs to the old hall as they don’t know how long it will be before a new hall is built.
- b) BRAG:* A written report was received (*See Appendix 7.*). Cllr Mills reported that BRAG had been successful in their grant application from Melksham Charities and had been awarded £7,000. They were now in a position to order two lectern style notice boards.
- c) SWAG:* A written report was received (*See Appendix 8.*). Michelle Tattershall, Chairman of the relaunched Shaw & Whitley Group reported that the group wished to rename themselves and that there was a meeting to be held on 17th March, where this would be discussed. She stated that the new group was still in the process of setting up, but its aims were based around the play area, flooding issues and planning applications that could potentially affect the residents of both villages. Bob Brownrigg stated that he was on the committee of the original SWAG and had been invited to give some advice and historical information. He said that he was really pleased to see that the group had been started up again.
- d) Melksham Community Area Partnership:* A written report was received (*See Appendix 9.*). Phil McMullen reported that it had been a really busy year, however with funding being cut

he felt that it wouldn't be so busy next year. He gave his thanks to the Parish Council for the money and support they have given to keep small groups going. He reported that MCAP had just received a grant of £1,500 from the Police and Crime Commissioner to provide "SMART" kits for people to protect their homes against burglary.

7. Reports from Village Halls & Magazines:

- a) Whitley Reading Rooms:* A written report was received (*See Appendix 10.*). Bob Brownrigg reported that a new boiler had been installed in the Reading Rooms 3 weeks earlier provided by a grant from Baxi Commercial Community Challenge. He thanked the Clerk for providing him with the information about how to apply for this grant. Additionally he thanked the Parish Council for the grant for a new notice board. A new aluminium fire door was due to be fitted in the next few weeks.
- b) Bowerhill Village Hall:* A written report was received (*See Appendix 11.*). Cllr Mills reported that Bowerhill village Hall had recently been painted under the community payback scheme, and they had done a marvellous job.
- c) Bowerhill Villager:* A written report was received (*See Appendix 12.*).
- d) Connect:* A written report was received (*See Appendix 13.*).

8. Reports from Schools:

- a) Forest & Sandridge C.E Primary:* A written report had been received (*See Appendix 14.*).
- b) Shaw C.E. V.C. Primary:* A written report had been received (*See Appendix 15.*).
- c) Melksham Oak Community:* A written report had been received (*See Appendix 16.*).

9. Reports from Transport Groups:

- a) Melksham Community Area Transport (CATG):* A written report had been received (*See Appendix 17.*). Cllr Baines reported that Snarlton lane had met the criteria for a 20mph speed limit and if implemented would cost £3,000.
- b) TransWilts Community Rail Partnership:* A written report had been received (*See Appendix 18.*). Phil McMullen reported that in the future it was hoped that there would be a direct line from Swindon to Southampton Airport.

10. Reports from Health and Charity Groups:

- a) Health Working Group:* A written report had been received (*See Appendix 19.*). Cllr Carter reported that although the local GPs had absorbed all the new patients created from the new housing development, it should be noted that the reason that the demand for health care was disproportionate was due to the fact that the houses are occupied by an older age group, making larger demands on the services. This was something that should be brought to the attention of Wiltshire Council when the Parish Council make comment on future planning applications for large developments.
- b) Almshouses:* A written report had been received (*See Appendix 20.*) Cllr Nicol reported that the Almshouses had been recently refurbished to meet regulations. Their priority was to give grants to groups with little money.

11. Reports from Sports and Social Groups:

- a) The Whitley Players:* A written report had been received (*See Appendix 21.*).
- b) Pavilion Club:* A written report had been received (*See Appendix 22.*). The Clerk reported that she had a meeting with the Community Youth Worker on 19th March, and it was hoped that the Youth Club could be relaunched.

c) **St. Barnabus Cricket Club:** Phil McMullen reported that he was the Chairman of St. Barnabus Cricket Club in Beanacre and that they were a friendly club that played about 5 times a year. He stated that they had a very good pitch and were interested in providing a cricket pavilion in the future.

12. **Matters Arising from Community Reports:** Cllr Baines reported that the TransWilts Service changes this summer due to the electrification of the railway lines. He stated that travellers should be mindful of changes, especially at weekends, and of very long diversions, and should check before they travel.

13. **Comment & Question Time:** There were no questions from the public.

14. **Queen's Honours List:** It had been suggested that the Annual Parish Council would be a good forum for members of the public to nominate people for the Council to consider putting forward for the Queen's Honours List. Cllr Coombes felt that this was an item to be discussed in committee as people's names and details were being given. **Recommended:** *Any proposals for nominees to be considered in committee at the next Full Council Meeting, to be held on 23rd March, 2015.*

Meeting closed at 7.58pm

Chairman, 11th April, 2016

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

16th March 2015

INTRODUCTION

This is my second Chairman's report for the Annual Meeting. Yet again it has been a very eventful 12 months both for the Council and for me.

Our new clerk, Teresa Strange has instigated a complete review of the office, and looked analytically at our tried and trusted ways of doing things. As a result we are a more efficient and streamlined organisation now, much more work is done on line (though we are still a long long way from being a paperless office!) and our revised meeting pattern should yield more but shorter meetings in which fatigue is not a factor in decision making! Teresa's innovation of an emailed weekly summary has already helped to keep meetings more focussed on the matters in hand, and we now have a Facebook page which will help us reach a younger demographic in the Parish. We made a very important appointment in May when Lucy Key joined us as our Finance Assistant. She is very well qualified and has been able to lift a heavy load from Teresa's shoulders. She has the knack of making complex issues seem almost straightforward!

COMINGS AND GOINGS

At Christmas we bade farewell to Margaret Mylchreest after 13 years of service to the Council. She was frequently the first port of call in the office, always welcoming and efficient, and totally supportive of the Council. We miss her.

Cllr. Trudy Fennell resigned just before last year's Annual meeting, and quite soon afterwards, Cllr Adam Nardell resigned too, as his work load made it difficult for him to play a full part in the affairs of the council. His detailed planning knowledge has been missed, and we thank him for his service.

We have been lucky to recruit two excellent replacement councillors. Jan Chivers is a very active person, and her detailed local knowledge and experience of social housing issues has been invaluable. Ian Tait, a long term Whitley resident, has also been very active in local affairs, particularly with youth work and the local church.

PRECEPT

The Precept set for 2015/2016 is £166,423.59, an increase which amounts to less than £1 per month on an average household. This increase was largely accounted for by the need to resurface the Shaw Play Area and refurbish the equipment

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 93 planning applications, including 6 different large developments.

Without doubt the most exciting for the Council were those dealing with the building of the new pavilion on the Bowerhill Sports Field, which is even now being built. We have enjoyed a good and productive relationship with Herman Miller and particularly their contractors WINVIC during this process, and are looking forward to the handing over of the building in April.

This past year has seen a surge in large scale housing projects. We have considered proposed large developments on Pathfinder Way, East of Melksham and in Semington Road. We were particularly concerned about the plans for Pathfinder Way as it would have led to the coalescence of Bowerhill and Melksham, and we considered the plans in Christie Miller before a very good turnout of local residents.

Wiltshire Council was minded to refuse this application and it has subsequently been withdrawn. The other applications either await decision or are likely to be resubmitted when the Wiltshire Council have completed their DPD, Development Plan Document, on sites around the town.

This year saw the emergence of a predatory developer who boasted of their ability to get virtually any development through however unpopular. They have not targeted land in the parish so far, but their Shurnhold plans will affect our parishioners.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Melksham Without Parish Council is joining with Melksham Town Council to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the whole of the Melksham area. Neighbourhood Plans enable local councils to influence future growth in their area, including issues such as housing and industrial development, transport provision, and environmental and recreational concerns. Wiltshire Council has now published their Core Strategy document and work is ongoing on the DPD covering land use in the County. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have been meeting regularly, and their launch event takes place later this month over two days. As Chair of the Group I have been rather frustrated by the slow progress we have made, although everyone now seems to be working together to produce what should be a very important document for the future of the area.

COMMUNICATION

One of the fundamentals of writing a Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that every one has the chance to contribute. The launch will help this goal and we have already carried out an initial on-line survey. This communication applies all across the business of the Council, and to this end we now have our own Facebook page, and have used social media very effectively in our engagement with Shaw and Whitley residents over the refurbishment of the play area and over concerns with flooding. It has become very clear that notice boards are not as effective a way of reaching parishioners as social media, especially for younger people.

RECREATION

We have been delighted to be able to improve our recreation facilities significantly this year. The Hornchurch road MUGA was completed in September 2014 and immediately became a very popular facility for young people in the area. The planning process had been rather drawn out, but support from the vast majority of local people had supported the development.

The Shaw Play Area playground had become in need of substantial renovation and a working group with two co-opted local parents met in the autumn to plan the works needed. By February we had installed new safety surfaces, refurbished the equipment and plans were well underway to purchase another piece of equipment for younger children. These plans were informed by extensive surveys carried out by local people, who also planned the siting of new seats and picnic benches.

Our next task will be to repair the edging to the safety surfaces in Beanacre play Area.

FLOODING

Once again the Parish has been badly affected by flooding, especially by the freak event in September. At a very well attended meeting at Shaw School residents were able to talk to representatives from Wiltshire Council, and get some answers. We convened a later meeting at which we recruited flood wardens and planned for the next flood. Sand bags are now stored in the parish, and flood warden training has taken place. Meanwhile a survey of the area has been undertaken and some ditch clearing has begun.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

There are currently two active residents groups in the parish, BRAG and BASRAG. However we now have three. As a result of widespread community involvement in flooding issues and in the refurbishment of Shaw Play Area quite a large group of enthusiastic volunteers emerged, and in February two meetings under the aegis of the Council led to the formation of the Shaw and Whitley Action Group (SWAG). We look forward to working closely with this group in the coming years

THE FUTURE

The New Forest & Sandridge School

Construction of the new Forest & Sandridge School is well underway and will include meeting rooms and sports facilities which will be available to the community. The new East of Melksham District Centre should be open January 2016.

The Wilts and Berks Canal

The year has seen some very ambitious plans launched by the Wilts and Berks Trust and their commercial partners. The plans involve very significant house building in the countryside which we are told are needed to fund the canal cut. It will be interesting to see how these plans tie in with the County's review of building land supply and needs of the town. Some aspects of the plan are quite exciting, particularly the provision of a wet land near the river, but the final decision will need to be judged on the totality of the scheme.

Bowerhill Sports Pavilion

As I speak the pavilion is rising from the ground and just a few days after completion the old pavilion will be demolished and Portal road finally extended to Bowerhill. The new pavilion includes changing rooms for four teams plus officials, and also a club room which we hope will be a base for a revived youth club for the area.

The future of Melksham Without

As a result of the governance review undertaken by Wiltshire Council, two alternatives are being put forward for the future of local government in the town. The first sees the incorporation of the new East of Melksham developments within the town boundaries, whereas the second proposal sees the dissolution of both Melksham Town and Melksham Without and the creation of one overall Melksham district Council.

My view, one shared by the large majority of our council, is that the interests of the separate villages of Shaw, Whitley, Beanacre, Berryfield and Bowerhill are best served by the continuing existence of our council. The interests of Town and villages obviously meet in many ways, but all the villages have a distinct character which we have served to maintain since 1894. We believe that our non political approach in which we try to involve our parishioners in all decisions offers the best model for the future.

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 settled very quickly in to her role as Clerk, and her changes have definitely led to a more efficient council, though we are all concerned that Crown Chambers has become her second home!

Lucy has been a friendly but steely guardian of the finances, and somehow seems to enjoy burying herself in a spreadsheet.

Jo is a very cheery but efficient presence, always ready with a joke and a cup of tea!

Terry continues to excel in his role as parish caretaker, and just as importantly as the public face of MWPC.

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

Councillor Terry Chivers
7 Eden Grove, Whitley, Melksham, SN12 8QJ
Terry.chivers@wiltshire.gov.uk
Annual Parish Council Report

In all my years as a local Councillor, the last year must go down as the hardest, with much of my Ward being flooded, and cuts to vital services that so many residents rely on. However, with that said I have been grateful for the co-operation of all of the Parish Councils within my Ward. I have enjoyed working with Atworth, Broughton Gifford and Melksham Without of which I am also a member. And I have managed to get along to most Parish meetings. At Wiltshire Council I have attended all Full Council meetings, and I am also a member of the Councils Standards Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, I am also a sub on Western, Northern, Eastern and Southern area planning committees. I also attend other committees if there is a local issue on the agenda.

The Council has a budget of around £900,000 per year and again this year has cut its budget by a further £38 million pounds which included £1.74 million from the highways budget. I was unable to support this year's budget, with cuts to front line services and the RUH Hopper, local bus service cutting these services will have a massive affect on our rural community.

The BBLPs Highways contract continues to be a major concern to me, and many other members of the Council and I'm keeping a very close eye on work that is being done within my ward, and I would urge both residents and Parish Councils of any outstanding work.

Councillor Terry Chivers
Independent Melksham Without North

Report from Roy While

Wiltshire Councillor, Melksham Without South

Yet another year of tight budget control with a further reduction in Government grants

support. This intensifies in 2015/6 with more Government reductions in grant requiring

savings of over £20 millions. Almost two thirds of our £315 million is taken up by adult and

childrens services which face ever increasing pressures.

The good news is that work has started on the exciting rugby and football development on

the Woolmore farm site alongside the Melksham Oak School and will be followed soon by a

start on building the major community campus project on the Melksham House site.

Currently we are seeking people views on the naming and the logo. I 'lead' the COB team

(community operations board, responsible to the Area Board) who are working with the Area

Board manager on community engagement to ensure the successful operation of the

campus when it opens in 2017.

I like to support volunteering and local organisations through the Area Board grant scheme

and sing their praises particularly the Bowerhill Residents Action Group which is looking to

take on more tasks. I don't get too many complaints/concerns and these tend to be mostly

inconsiderate parking and planning applications. We had persistent humming from

machinery in a unit on the Industrial estate adjoining Halifax, I did walkabout on a few nights

listening, hoping to avoid anyone who thought I might be up to no good!

Residents mostly

refer issues direct to Highways or through the Area Board issue reporting system. In my

experience we get efficient response/action. Recently, following requests from the Parish

Council and residents I have 'called in' planning applications at Redstocks and Berryfields to the Planning Committee, rather than planning officer determination. I always stress the importance of residents/councillor taking the opportunity to speak at planning meetings in County Hall. We have had two large scale housing applications turned down but other sites will, in time, come forward following the Neighbourhood planning process. Our industrial estate is changing and work is well advanced on the new Hermann Miller development and other firms are 'growing'. I have been working with the community projects officer and with our economic development team on the recent launch of the Bowerhill & Hampton Park Business Initiative. This business led group, together with local stakeholders, will look at options on how we can work together to improve the attractiveness and sustainability of this estate which makes an important contribution to the Melksham and Wiltshire economy. Finally during my year as Chairman of Wiltshire Council I have made visits all over our County (and sometimes beyond) and been both impressed and humbled by the efforts of volunteers. We certainly have our share in the Melksham Community involving a large number of organisations. There is so much going on. As I said last year I am proud to be a Wiltshire Councillor.

Neighbourhood Policing Annual Report 2014 -2015:

The crime figures for Melksham Rural North which incorporates Melksham Without Parish Council can be found in the attached chart with figures for the main recorded areas of crime. Without reading too much in to the figures in the chart we have to note that crime figures for Melksham Rural North are generally considered to be low. When viewing the figures readers have to take in to consideration that Melksham Rural North also includes crimes recorded in Atworth and Broughton Gifford which do not come under the geographical area of Melksham Without. There was an overall increase in victim based crimes by 2.4% compared to the same time last year with the most significant increase coming from vehicle crime which saw a 35% increase in reports or 7 more crimes in total. However with regards to this spike in crime Melksham as well as neighbouring towns have been hit on random occasions over the last year by catalytic converter thefts – where it is believed gangs from outside of the local area arrive and hit numerous vehicles in one night. Within the last year Melksham has been hit on two occasions with this kind of theft with offenders target numerous vehicles with high road clearance such as the Mitsubishi Shoguns where they can gain access to the underside of the vehicle and remove the catalytic converter which is targeted because of the precious metals contained within.

There have been significant decreases in non dwelling burglaries which would include break ins to garages and sheds as well as a significant decrease in reports of criminal damage. One of the more significant decreases has been in the reported incidents of anti-social behaviour for the area. ASB as many will know can come under the guise of many things but has the potential to result in recorded crimes. ASB is what the Neighbourhood Policing Teams deal with on a day to day basis with the aim to proactively tackle issues before they get out of hand. The perception of ASB comes from the public and by working in partnership the NPTs have been able to tackle issues early on. Despite the decrease in reported ASB in the last year the NPT have through the Neighbourhood Tasking group looked at tackling two specific areas of ASB that come under the Melksham Without geographical region.

Firstly we looked at perceived problems with groups of young people misusing the newly erected MUGA in Hornchurch Road, Bowerhill. Prior to the MUGA being put up there was a lot of opinions for and against its placement with residents citing the rise in ASB as being a likely outcome. In order to pre-empt this, the NPT set it as a priority with the aim to carry out targeted patrols of the area and deal robustly with

any reported ASB. Over 86 targeted patrols were recorded by local officers within a 3 month period following the MUGA going up and there have been no signs of ASB in the area. In fact we have received fewer calls about ASB with the MUGA in place than when we were getting reports of youths congregating in the smaller children's play park.

Our second targeted priority around ASB has been within Eden Grove, Whitley. Reports were coming through to Police about ASB in the area through a number of sources including the residents and Selwood Housing Association. Working in partnership the NPT have looked at tackling the issues at hand through patrols and positive intervention as a result of this work. One adult male was issued with a caution for public order offences and another adult male was charged with common assault. NPT and Selwood Housing have been able to identify the source of concern for most residents and looked at working together to tackle the issue.

Our latest priority that covers Melksham area as a whole has been the promotion of the Community Messaging. Community Messaging is the new, free crime alert and information system ran through the Police for the benefit of the local Community. You can sign up for free anywhere within Wiltshire and chose to receive messages that would benefit you. For more information please go online at www.wiltsmessaging.co.uk

There have been no changes with the personnel of the NPT team and Melksham Without is still covered by PC Barry Dalton, PCSO Janet Gould and PCSO Maggie Ledbury under the guidance of Sgt James Williams and Inspector Matt Armstrong. The local knowledge provided by an established NPT team in tackling local issues I am sure is invaluable.

ED12 Melksham Rural North Crime	Detections*						Volume Change	
	12 Months to January 2014		12 Months to January 2015		12 Months to January 2015			
% Change	12 Months to January 2014		12 Months to January 2015		12 Months to January 2015			
Victim Based Crime	249	255	+6	+2.4%	23%	26%		
Domestic Burglary	9	10	+1	+11.1%	0%	0%		
Non Domestic Burglary	28	21	-7	-25.0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Vehicle Crime	20	27	+7	+35.0%	0%	7%		
Criminal Damage & Arson	70	60	-10	-14.3%			41%	40%
Violence Against The Person	23	27	+4	+17.3%			35%	38%

ASB Incidents 191 175 -16 -8.4%

Barry Dalton
PC 1947
Melksham NPT
Tel: 101 ext 77431947
e-mail: barry.dalton@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE REPORT TO MWPC ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

The Melksham Area Community Safety Group is part of the Melksham Community Area Partnership and meets on the last Thursday of each month. Every three months part of the meeting is handed over to the Neighbourhood Policing committee.

The Community Safety Group had been involved in many issues in the past year such as: CCTV for the centre of Melksham is now ready and will go live when volunteers have been fully trained. It is hoped that with further funding or sponsorship the CCTV cameras will be extended to other parts of the town.

The Group is active in promoting Neighbourhood Watch scheme especially to the new streets to the east of Melksham development much of which is within MWPC's boundaries. Most of the Melksham community area is now included in the Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

The Group is also encouraging the setting up of new community speedwatch schemes and the reforming of dormant groups such as the one in Bowerhill.

The Group has also been active in encouraging the creation of "safe places" in the Melksham area where people who are feeling vulnerable or threatened can go for safety. These places can be shops, banks or community buildings such as the Town Hall and the Assembly Hall. There are now 26 safe places set up in the Melksham area.

The Group has also been encouraging residents and businesses to use "Smart water" to mark their possessions which shows up under ultra violet light and enables people to recognise stolen possessions if the police recover them.

The quarterly Neighbourhood Police meetings involve the police giving an update of their work and giving a progress of work that was prioritised at the previous meeting. New priorities or an extension of a current priority are then agreed by the members of the committee and these become the police priorities for that area for the next three months. The areas include all of our parish boundaries.

Mike Mill

Melksham Without Parish Council Annual General Meeting.

Report of Berryfield and Semington Road Action Group, 2014

1.00 Aims

Berryfield and Semington Road Action Group (BASRAG) was formed to promote community unity by overseeing initiatives and social events to enhance the lives of people living in the Berryfield area. It played a key role in establishing the existing Berryfield Village Hall and adjacent play park and it is now working towards establishing a permanent village hall in the area.

2.00 Report on Events

The annual Easter Fun Event attracted several local children and parents who enjoyed hunting paper eggs in the play area to exchange for chocolate eggs and also had fun with Easter themed craft activities in the hall.

A Spring litter pick produced several bags of rubbish, most of which came from the hedgerow along Semington Road.

A Summer Fun Day with a Bouncy Castle was held for local children in August. Numbers were a little down on last year but those that came enjoyed themselves.

Sadly events in the Autumn and around Christmas- table top sale, craft exhibition, Christmas social and children's Christmas Craft session were poorly supported. However, the Santa Run just before Christmas, was well received.

3.00 Committee

Richard Wood was elected as chair at the annual meeting in April, Gill Arbery continues as Secretary and Steve Petty as Treasurer. Sue and Jim Whyborn continue on the committee as do Liz Callaway and Cynthia Legge. They have all played an active part in events and maintenance of the hall

4.00 Hall User Groups

The Art Group continues to use the hall weekly and the craft group meet twice monthly.

British Gas has not used the hall at all this year.

The hall has been let for a few private parties during the year.

BASRAG has liaised with Sue Stoker, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator for this area, to establish groups within the Berryfield area.

5.00 Future Events

An Annual Meeting will be called for 17th March 2015. An Easter event has been arranged for 4th April and there will be a litter picking event in the Spring and a Summer Fun Day in the school holidays.

6,00 New Hall Working Group

It has been a difficult year regarding progress towards a new community building. Further delays in the consideration of the planning application for the Wilts & Berks Canal Link have been very frustrating. Now a grandiose scheme identifying sites for housing, recreation, a school and wildlife reserve has been published for comments. Although we have been promised a site for a community building and play area this has not been identified on the plans. Earlier this year a proposal for residential development, incorporating a community hall, on the eastern side of Semington Road was submitted but refused permission by Wiltshire Council

Melksham Without Parish Council have secured planning permission for the retention of the existing portacabin on the present site. This will expire in May 2019. Members of the Committee gave their time to repaint the exterior of the portacabin and the interior of the main part of the hall. Unfortunately, the structural condition of the portacabin continues to deteriorate and urgent repairs are needed if the building is going to be of service until 2019.

Summary

Despite setbacks this year Basrag continues to strive for improved facilities for the Berryfield community. We continue to promote events for all ages in the area and keep the village hall as a hub for the community.

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

We remain grateful for the ongoing support of the Parish Council

Gillian Arbery
Secretary

BOWERHILL RESIDENTS ACTION GROUP (BRAG) REPORT TO MWPC ANNUAL MEETING

This has been the most successful year ever for BRAG which culminated with us entering our picnic area in the Its Your Neighbourhood class of South West In Bloom. As a first time entrant we were hoping to get a Level 3 award but were amazed to achieve the top Level 5 award as “Outstanding” with the judges paying tribute to “the impressive amount of funding and sponsorship that the group has unlocked”.

In the past year BRAG has had seven new seats erected around Bowerhill, the costs coming from a Melksham Area Board grant. Two of these seats have been erected at the open space at Hornchurch Road and we know that these seats are much appreciated by local residents. Two of the seats near the picnic area are now commemoration seats paid for by local families to celebrate the lives of their loved ones. Yet another commemoration seat is planned for the bridle path to the canal.

In the next few weeks a lectern style noticeboard will be erected at the picnic area giving details of the flora and fauna to be found nearby. This too has been funded by Melksham Area Board. Another lectern style noticeboard is also planned if we are successful in our grant application to Melksham Charities.

Throughout the year BRAG volunteers have continued with their regular litter picks which keep Bowerhill clean and tidy and working parties have met regularly at the picnic area and elsewhere to carry out environmental work to improve the appearance of the area.

BRAG also held a meeting to gain the views of local residents about the planning application for houses both sides of Pathfinder Way and we submitted comments opposing the development on behalf of residents. We were pleased when the application was withdrawn.

We know that our work is appreciated by local residents as they tell us so whilst we are working. My thanks are due to the band of volunteers who comprise BRAG who give their time freely and fully.

Our work never ends and we look forward to another successful year.

Mike Mills

Shaw and Whitley Action Group

We are delighted to announce the formation of the Shaw and Whitley Action Group. The purpose of the group is to represent residents' views and to coordinate community action on various issues that affect the villages such as litter picking, floods, pathways, and proposed housing developments.

The Group's work is to be coordinated by a committee of members, which will include a member from Melksham Without Parish Council. Working in partnership with the Council will help ensure that residents' concerns can be effectively communicated to local government, and that action can be taken to help address those concerns.

We will be meeting regularly and our next meeting is due to take place during the second half of March.

Michelle Tattersall has been elected Chair, Tony Bruun the Treasurer, and Mark Ashkowski the Secretary. If anyone has any questions about the Group, suggestions or issues for it to consider please contact us at shaw_and_whitley@aol.co.uk.

MELKSHAM COMMUNITY AREA PARTNERSHIP



Annual Report 2014-15

1. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the local community, MCAP seeks to:

Identify the community's priorities for action

We are establishing a wide-ranging network of hundreds 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 by tackling them in the Community Plan

We are looking to bring about change through a combination of encouraging local projects and finding ways to influence decision makers.

Maintain strong links with town and parish councils and the area board

We are engaging with councils and other partners to build effective participation, consultation and community planning within the community.

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

2. CONSULTATIONS



Community Plan – latest version published April 2014

Having collected comments and concerns throughout the year, the priorities for the community are outlined in the April 2014 version of the Community Plan.

This document is for the Area Board, Wiltshire Council, community groups and individuals to refer to in order to address priorities and organise projects.

Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

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.

A key element of the process is the effective participation of the public in the plan preparation process and support of local residents for the final Melksham Neighbourhood Plan. MCAP has been engaged in this process since December 2014 and forms a key element of the Public Participation Delivery Group.



Melksham Community Campus

Following an in-depth consultation across the community area in 2012 involving meetings, open days and a questionnaire sent to every household in the community area, MCAP continue to encourage participation and provide feedback into the campus project, with our Chair having a seat on the Shadow Community Operations Board (SCOB)

3. COMMUNICATIONS

Our website continues to develop as a source of communication and information for the community, and we have established links with Melksham Community Radio and Wiltshire Council's "Our Community Matters" blogsite, for which the Partnership provides regular updates.

4. THEME GROUPS

Our theme groups look at specific issues and arrange projects and report direct to the Steering group. We also link to existing groups that are active in the community.

Theme: Environment

Through partnership working with McDonalds MCAP were able to arrange for **two branded dustbins** to be deployed, one at the top of Murray Walk in Melksham and one at the junction of Snarleton Lane and Snowberry Lane in Melksham Without. The latter bin went some way towards solving an identified problem of a lack of bins on the new housing development at Snowberry Lane which had received considerable attention in the local media.



Community Apple Pressing Days were held in September and October 2014. These events have become very popular since we started them in 2012. Area Board grants were applied for and kindly awarded which enabled the Environmental Group to purchase a powerful pulping machine and a much larger apple press.

It's hoped to hold similar such events again in 2015.

Community Seed Swap events.

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,

The group undertakes a great deal of work in the Melksham Without area in particular. It is hoped to introduce SmartWater across the whole community area in 2015 to make it a safer place to live and work in.

Theme: Transport
Trains

The transport group has been particularly active in the past year. There have been major consultations instigated and public meetings held in order to facilitate cross-partnership working regarding both Buses and Trains. The Partnership has close ties with the Trans Wilts Community Rail Partnership and the development of a TransWilts Community Interest Company, and has been actively involved in inputs to the Wiltshire Long Term Sustainable Funding Station Travel Plans.



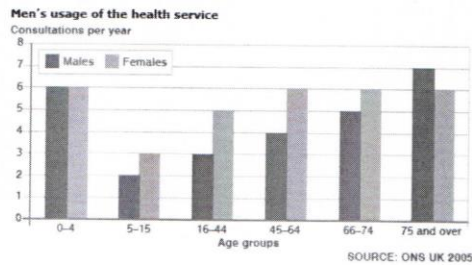
Transport Group – Buses, Cycling, Walking

A comprehensive audit of the bus stops in Melksham Without was undertaken in spring 2014, the results of which can be found on the Partnership's website.

The **Cycling Workgroup** has been providing information for a new leaflet that shows the cycle routes in and around Melksham, updated to show the various new housing developments.

Theme: Health & Well Being

Project: Encourage men to go to the Doctors



Delivered: Spring 2014

A Daily Mail survey reported that only 14 per cent of men admitted to being happy to see a doctor if needed, while a third revealed that they will only go to the doctor's if their partner encourages them.

A further survey published by the BBC magazine, suggests that it is younger men that are less likely to visit their GP. Males aged 16- 64 were the almost twice as unlikely to visit the Doctors as those aged 75 and over

The Project

To help encourage Men to go to the Doctors in the Melksham Community Area, MCAP undertook a health promotion project targeted at men from their late teens up to retirement age.

The aim of the promotion was to:

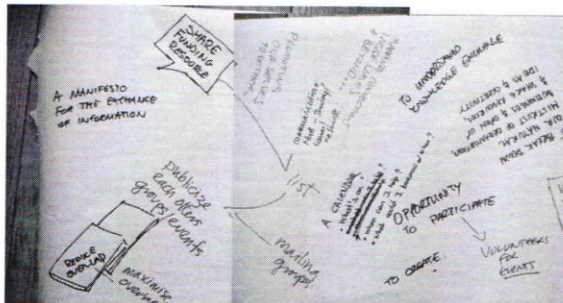
- a. Heart disease
- b. Cancer (focusing mostly on Lung - 15% most frequent, Colorectal – 14% most frequent and Bladder 5% Cancer most frequent)
 - a. Chronic Lower respiratory diseases
 - b. Stroke
 - c. Type 2 diabetes
 - d. Mental Health Problems
2. Explain what to expect from a Doctors Visit, questions they may ask, tests they may do, what could happen next,
3. Provide numbers for three main Doctors surgeries in the town so the reader can make an appointment without having to seek out further information
4. Highlight further areas of information – such as online: sources that will further promote a Doctors visit.

Over 60 men of various ages attended an evening presentation at the Spa Medical Centre in Melksham. This was recognized as being such a successful event that it has been followed by others aimed specifically at pain management and healthy lifestyles, with further public awareness events planned for the coming months.

Theme: Leisure, Culture and Sport
 Project: Mapping the Creative Network
 Timescale: April 2014

In the lead-up to Wiltshire Council's Joint Strategic Assessment exercise in April 2014, Melksham Community Area Partnership undertook a comprehensive project to map the Creative Network in our area. Melksham is a growing community with many different groups doing various things. We analysed the creative networks within the area to see if there is some way of bringing them together in an accessible way. The project included:

- Public consultation, both in person and online
- Extensive research to assess the groups, venues, events, audience and footfall
- Production of a comprehensive report which was submitted to Wiltshire Council.



5. THE COMING YEAR

In 2015 / 16 MCAP faces a significant challenge in the withdrawal of all funding from Wiltshire Council. Volunteers are working hard however to identify potential other sources of funding to enable the kind of work identified above to continue alongside the work being funded by Town and Parish Councils towards the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

For further information please contact:

Phil McMullen, Partnership Coordinator - phil@melksham.communityarea.org.uk
 or Colin Goodhind, Chair of the Partnership colin@melksham.communityarea.org.uk

www.melksham.communityarea.org.uk

WHITLEY READING ROOMS
Charity No 305595

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

I am pleased to report that 2014 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, 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 improvements to the facilities offered by the Reading Rooms. The building frontage has never exhibited a sign saying 'Whitley Reading Rooms' so we purchased a lovely new notice board (with signage) which now displays details of user groups and forthcoming events. The new board was acquired with the help of a grant from the Parish Council, for which we are very grateful.

The central heating system was improved by the addition of a radiator in the kitchen, an area which has always been a cold spot.

Following a communication from the Parish Council I entered the national Baxi Commercial Community Challenge 2014 because the prize up for grabs was to be a new Baxi boiler. This would be just what we needed after suffering two years of continuous faults with the existing Baxi boiler. In October I was delighted to learn that my entry had won! As I write this report, the new boiler has just been fitted, and Baxi's promotions department have been provided with photos of our users' activities for inclusion in a trade magazine.

The Reading Rooms' total income for 2014 was consistent with previous years, and the accounts showed a healthy surplus at the year end. A grant application was made to the Melksham Area Board for a new aluminium fire exit door to replace the existing wooden door which has a faulty mechanism. The application was successful and the new door should be fitted in March.

Replacement chairs for the hall are being sourced and, should there be sufficient funds available, we aim to carry out a complete redecoration of the premises in 2015.

My thanks, as usual, go to the Parish Council for their continued support of our charity.

Bob Brownrigg
Treasurer, Shaw & Whitley Reading Rooms

February 2015

BOWERHILL VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT TO MWPC
ANNUAL MEETING 2015

The Bowerhill Village Hall has had another successful year with both regular users and one off bookings increasing. Thanks to a grant from Melksham Area Board the Hall now has solar panels on the roof which have helped the Hall reduce its energy bills and maintain hiring costs to their current levels. This is very important to a number of smaller groups to whom even a small increase in rental charges could lead to the closure of the groups.

The main hall has been re-painted by the Community Payback Team who did a very good job considering many of the offenders had no experience in decoration. The Hall Committee has to purchase the paint, rollers and paint brushes and to provide refreshments to the team but using the Community Payback team has saved the Hall committee a great deal of money. We will use the team again when other parts of the Hall need redecoration.

The Committee is very grateful to Melksham Without Parish Council for its annual grant which helps with the costs of running the Hall and enables the committee to keep charges at a reasonable level for our users.

My thanks are due to the volunteers who form the committee and work tirelessly to ensure that Bowerhill has a Village Hall to be proud of.

Mike Mills

Bowerhill Villager

We have had another good year, our monthly magazine has been produced and distributed in time. The printing takes up most of a day, we would like to thank Lisa and Graham Ellis for their hospitality in allowing us to store and use our printer on their premises.

It takes a couple of hours to deliver the 1620 copies to the bulk deliverers. These are then taken to the people who deliver door to door to every house in Bowerhill. We aim to get the Magazine through the letter boxes by the first of the month. The actual production and delivery involves about sixty residents of Bowerhill so we think of this as a real community project which has been running for many years.

We would like to thank P C Barry Dalton for his articles updating us on police matters in the area, and our advertisers who continue to support us.

The Editorial Team is hard working and enthusiastic and we would to thank everyone who is involved in the production of the Bowerhill.

Villager

February 2015

Appendix 13

Connect

Connect is the magazine which caters for the villages of Shaw and Whitley. It is produced every two months, and includes details of organisation and activities within the villages. There are regular contributions from the Churches – Benefice of Atworth with Shaw and Whitley, and the Methodist Chapel -, Shaw Primary School, Shaw & Whitley WI, Shaw & Whitley 'Pre-School', Shaw & Whitley Garden Club, Neighbourhood Police, Golden Fleece Cricket Club, Whitley Golf Club, Shaw & Whitley Friendship Club and the Walking Group. Details are included of Melksham Without PC Councillors and meetings, and adverts for local services are published. We also publish varied articles from readers about their hobbies and leisure activities, and weather records for the area contributed by one of our readers.

We are extremely grateful for the financial support given by the Melksham Without Parish Council.

John Harding
Chairman

Forest & Sandridge C.E. Primary School
Sandridge Common
Melksham
Wiltshire
SN12 7QS
Tel: 01225 703394 Fax: 01225 899805
Email: admin@forestsandridge.wilts.sch.uk
www.forestsandridge.co.uk

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

February 2015

Forest & Sandridge CE Aided Primary School

We have had an incredible couple of years since I last wrote and I am thrilled to be able to tell you about them now!

Ofsted and SIAMS

We were inspected by Ofsted and SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) in the autumn terms in 2014 and were thrilled with the outcomes. We maintained our 'GOOD' judgement from Ofsted which is particularly great considering that the thresholds have risen substantially since our last inspection in 2010. The inspectors recognised the positive ethos and the hard work of the children and the staff which we were proud of. Please see our school website if you would like to read our full report.

We were also delighted to maintain our 'OUTSTANDING' judgement from our SIAMS inspector who was particularly impressed with the way in which our Christian values underpin everything we do in school. We are already very proud of this and are over-the-moon that the report confirms this. Again, the report is available on our school website if you would like to read it.

New Build Project

The other major development over the last year or so is the progress towards our new school building. Finally, after many years of waiting over which time we have watched and experienced our school grow whilst the actual building continued to fall apart, we are DELIGHTED to say that our new building is on its way up! Mi-Space, the contractors, are working very hard to keep the project on track so that we are able to move in September 2015 which is the current plan.

The children have been very excited to see the building take shape and our Year 5 children have taken part in regular visits to the site to see progress. They have then reported on this to the rest of the school and community through a BLOG, which can also be accessed via the 'Our School' page of our school website. Children have also drawn pictures of the building site and what they think our school will look like and these have been displayed on the outside and inside of the site – the children are thrilled with this!

All children, staff and governors have written or drawn a wish for their new school building and the site manager has arranged for these to be stuck into the wall cavities so that they will always be there. We hope and pray that all our wishes will come true!

Please keep up to date with progress towards our move on our website and via our BLOG.

Staffing

Due to the forthcoming move and expansion of our school staffing is a very pressing matter for us at the moment! We are very excited to be appointing new staff who will start work in September 2015 when we move. This process has already begun and will continue until approximately June.

We are delighted to have appointed Helen Biles-Wood as our new Deputy Headteacher to replace the previous Deputy who has moved onto Headship in a different county.

Children

We currently have 225 children on roll organised into 8 classes. We have 2 Foundation Stage classes (Reception) and 1 class for each other year group. We took an additional 18 children in September 2014 due to there being a shortage of school places in Melksham. The move to the new school will provide additional school places which we hope will ease this problem. Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate any more children currently which means we are still refusing families who are moving onto the new housing estate which the new school building serves. We are glad that we will have more spaces to offer to such families moving into the area from September. Classes, currently, all have 29 or 30 children in them. For a short time in September, class sizes will be smaller as we will be allowing room for growth. 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, etc. The children make good progress as they move through the school which is a result of the good teaching and learning.

Children enjoy opportunities to take part in visits and residential trips. In the past year children have visited the Swindon Steam Museum, Westonbirt Arboretum, Sevington Victorian School, Lackham Farm as well as residential visits to Saundersfoot near Tenby (Year 6) and Oxenwood Outdoor Education Centre (Year 2 and Year 4). These are great opportunities for the children to develop a variety of skills which they may not get chance to develop during a regular day at school. On all trips the children's behaviour was exemplary and they were fantastic ambassadors for our school and town.

Once again, the children enjoyed putting on their Christmas productions last year. Key Stage 2 (7-11 year olds) put on a production of Annie at Queensway Hall and Key Stage 1 (4-7 year olds) put on a version of the Christmas story called Wriggly Nativity. They were very much enjoyed by parents, children and members of our local community. We are very grateful to Queensway Chapel for allowing us to use their hall every year. We are also very pleased that next year we will be able to perform our productions in our own school hall as we will have plenty of space!

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, Comic Relief (forthcoming) and Special Care Baby Units in the South West.

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. Sadly we have outgrown St Andrew's Church for our special services but thoroughly enjoyed our Christmas Celebration Service at St Michael's last year.

We are looking forward to being able to welcome members of the community to let our school facilities from September. There will be 2 meeting rooms, a large hall, 2 junior sized football pitches and changing rooms all of which will be available for community use outside of school hours. Information about letting these facilities will be available from our School Business Manager, Alli Moon, from June 2015.

We are very excited about what the future brings for us at Forest & Sandridge School and will look forward to sharing news about our first year in our new building next year!

Anna Willcox
Headteacher
20 February 2015

Shaw CE VC Primary School

It has been another very busy year for Shaw School. Our roll continues to rise and we are significantly oversubscribed for Reception places in September 2015. We made a new appointment to the Senior Team this year and are delighted to have Miss Ingall as our Maths leader and Year 4 teacher.

As with all schools in England, we have been wrestling with the new government requirements in terms of a brand new National Curriculum and assessment framework. We have spent considerable time in applying the curriculum to the Shaw context and ethos and are very pleased with the results! Our curriculum remains focussed on the needs and interests of the children, includes lots of hands-on and out of school experiences and make the very best use of our wonderful school grounds. We continue to build some of our curriculum around exciting residential visits and now offer these in each of the 4 Key Stage 2 years, building up from one night away in Year 3 to a full week in Cornwall with our Year 6 children.

Shaw School continues to have an exciting focus on excellent school productions. Last evening I enjoyed the final performance of our Year 5 and 6 play, The Keymaster which was a triumph of singing and acting. It is clear that we are encouraging confidence in our children!

One of the most significant developments for the school this year has been our exploration of the benefits of Academy Status. We are a long way down the route of exploring this with six other Melksham Schools and are hopeful that the Multi Academy Trust of Melksham (ATOM) will be up and running in the next few months. This collaboration between Shaw, Bowerhill, Seend, Melksham Oak, Broughton Gifford and Semington promises to greatly enhance the education of the children in Melksham and the surrounding villages through much greater collaboration and sharing of resources between the schools.

One thing is sure, my report next year will still be talking about the many changes in the educational world. I do sometimes think that a period of stability might better help us to strive for the excellence to which we aspire!

Simon White

HEADTEACHER

Report from Melksham Oak Community School for Melksham Without Parish Council 2015

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

Examination Results

GCSE

The number of students achieving 5 A*-C's including English and Maths was 56%, which is above the National Average. The progress of our students continues to be very good, placing us in the top 25% of schools nationally (by Value added) for the seventh year running. The league tables show the impressive progress our students make.

A Level

The 'A' Level results were again excellent with a 100% pass rate; 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 parent and children learn together, continue to be over-subscribed.

Other Information

Melksham Oak is one of the founding schools of the Academy Trust of Melksham (ATOM), this is a Multi-Academy Trust and comprises Bowerhill, St George's, St Mary's, Seend, Shaw, The Manor and Melksham Oak. The ATOM was created to enable the schools to build on their existing good practice and collaborative work, whilst preserving each school's distinctive ethos. We work on the principle of "earned autonomy" in that Schools whose performance causes no concerns are allowed to manage themselves however support and challenge is always present. We all believe that we are creating something special in Melksham by using this structure and that it will be of benefit to our young people and our schools

Stephen Clark
Headteacher
February 2015

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, currently Cllr. Seed. 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.

Funds available 2014/2015 for Melksham CATG proposals = £13225, plus monies carried over from the previous year (c.£11000 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 2014/15 year the Group agreed to recommend funding the following:

- 1) Speed Limit Reviews on C165 Forest Lane/New Road (& C244 at Poulshot) at around £3000 each.
- 2) A traffic and pedestrian count where Valldata employees cross Lancaster Road c. £700.
- 3) A study of a crossing point on Snowberry Lane near Heather Avenue c. £1k.
- 4) An investigation into possible use of vehicle activated signage at the pinch-point on the A361 at Seend High St. c. £1k.

The non-slip surface on Melksham Bank Street 'high-pavement' was completed in the summer with a mixed reception! There are ongoing issues with loose/surplus grit, but any further sweeping would need to be done by hand.

The final tidy-up of the footway works at Whitley were eventually completed and the Parish Council paid the outstanding amount of its contribution.

The sockets for mounting poles for Speed Indicators at Woodrow were finally brought into use, but now it looks as if they may never be used again due to the SID programme being cut completely. CATG are requesting that the equipment is retained, pending an investigation into if the Area Board can have use of it.

The survey for a crossing point on Lancaster Road for Valldata concluded that the most suitable option would be an uncontrolled crossing with likely cost of about £5000. I declined any MWPC contribution on the basis that it is primarily for Valldata employees and traffic flow will reduce significantly when new link road is opened. Funding split suggested as third each from Area Board/CATG/Valldata and a response from Valldata is still awaited. One difficulty could be that the site is within the area of possible major maintenance surfacing, which for an industrial road is hugely expensive. Cllr. While seems to be taking on all the other industrial estate issues. An informal crossing point on Snowberry Lane was agreed without the need for a full survey and this will be provided within the cost allocated for the survey when weather conditions allow the application of coloured surface treatment.

The issue of safety at the Sandridge Lane/Brick Hill crossroads on A3102 is unresolved. Signage is deemed adequate and any incidents/accidents need to be fully recorded, but even then it seems there have to be injuries, or worse for it to count!

The results of investigation of the request for a 20mph limit in Snarlton Lane are expected soon. The matter of the missing section of footpath between the others behind Bowerhill School is going to the Area Board as a project for the 2015/16 year, with the Parish Council formally offering a 1/3 contribution towards the projected £4000 cost (based on £100/m).

DoNM: Wed 13th May, at Melksham Fire Station at 16.00.

Cllr. Alan Baines

TransWilts for Melksham Without Annual Parish Meeting - written 9th March 2015 for 16th March 2015 meeting

Trial extra services started on the line through Melksham (the TransWilts line), and passenger journeys have risen from around 20,000 per annum to around 160,000 as a result. Around 3,000 journeys have been made on the Melksham Rail Link Bus which runs from Bowerhill on Monday to Friday mornings, via east Melksham, to the station to connect with commuter trains to Swindon (and there's an evening service back too). Funding from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund has funded these trials, and also significant improvements in station facilities, and in the wider sustainable transport arena such as electric car charging points, bus maps, and the Connecting Wiltshire travel planner.

The services are making a significant difference to many families in the area - especially those who are unable to drive, and there are numerous examples of people changing their jobs / able to take up opportunities that wouldn't have been previously available, as well as the trains bringing people into the Melksham area. It's truly life changing for many people, and some of the trains that didn't even run just over a year ago are reported as nearly full. Some Saturday trains have been strengthened recently to cope with crowds.

A huge thank you to the Department for Transport and Wiltshire Council for making this possible. Thank you to Melksham Without Parish Council for your ongoing support for the Melksham Railway Development Group, without whom there wouldn't have been a service to improve, nor the local knowledge and enthusiasm to do so. Thank you too to First Great Western for taking on and supporting the service with great enthusiasm, and to all the community volunteers who have helped in so many ways - we counted around 70 different names last year! And a huge thank you to people who are using the service.

But the service is just a trial. Funding for the Melksham Rail Link Bus runs out this summer, and for the trial train service next year. The bus service runs free of charge to users (so that it can wait at the station if the train is late, without getting into trouble with the traffic commissioners for being a late-running fare-collecting service) and we are hoping - but not with great expectations - that First Bus and Faresaver will add stops near Melksham Station to their routes, and co-ordinate bus and train times better. There's some sign of elements of this happening, with the late night buses from Chippenham and Trowbridge accepting train tickets.

The train service funding finishes in the latter part of next year. By that time, the current First Great Western franchise will have been replaced, and we'll have a new government, potentially with different priorities and policies. Our current MP has been instrumental in bringing the services to where they are today and continues to offer his support; other candidates for the seat that includes Melksham talk of improvements at Chippenham Station and re-opening Corsham, without reference to keeping the trial service running at Melksham beyond next year, even in circulars printed for (and delivered to) Melksham. So the future is far from a foregone conclusion, even though passenger targets for the first year were met in just 17 weeks.

In order to look to the future, the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership has become a division of the newly formed TransWilts Community Interest Company, and there's a launch of "Vision 2020" at 10:30 at Chippenham on Saturday 21st March. All are welcome (10:01 train from Melksham) - see <http://twcrp.info/vision2020> for details. We're looking not only at TransWilts line trains, but other trains and bus services right across Wiltshire looking to get rail and bus users and groups together and looking to the future with a co-ordinated and positive approach. The current times of great change in public transport in our area lead to grave risks, but also a great opportunity for us to make sure that we end up with an integrated system on rails and road that's heavily used and so only lightly subsidised, and provides the travel facilities that people want and need.

Graham Ellis - grahamellis@transwilts.org
Community Rail Officer, TransWilts Community Rail Partnership
TransWilts CRP 48, Spa Road, Melksham, Wilts, SN12 7NY
A division of the TransWilts Community Interest Company (CIC)
<http://www.twcrp.org.uk> - 0845 459 0153 / 01225 708225

Health Working Group

The Health Working Group has met on two occasions since the last annual report. The Group continues to provide an excellent means of exchanging information between the general practitioners providing health care in the local community, and those concerned with the provision of community services and in helping identify the best means of working together to achieve the best local services.

At its meeting in April 2014 the Group received a presentation from three representatives from the then Royal United Hospital NHS Trust on the plans for the Hospital to become a Foundation Trust. The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust was created later in the year in October 2014. During the presentation it was explained that foundation trusts have greater managerial and financial freedom when compared to NHS trusts. The foundation trusts are part of the Government's plan to create a "patient-led" NHS with an internal market. The purpose is to devolve decision-making from a centralised NHS to local communities to enable them to be more responsive to their needs and wishes. Foundation trusts allow for local people, patients and staff to become members and governors and hold the Trust to account. The Foundation Trust Board has members from throughout the clinical area served and the area in which Melksham falls has two public governors. The Royal United Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust would like to encourage everyone aged 16 and above to support the hospital by becoming a member. Membership is completely free and it is up to members to decide how involved they would like to be. Full details including an on-line application form is available on the Foundation Trust's website. The representatives were thanked for their presentation and the working group expressed a wish that efforts would be made to ensure the Royal United Hospital's overall future development would bring healthcare services into the local community and not centralised in Bath.

The agendas and topics discussed by the working group are wide ranging. Some of the key areas considered by the working group included –

The new housing developments have brought unprecedented numbers of new patients registering with GPs. It was noted that whilst the increased numbers had been absorbed into the GPs' patient lists they had brought a disproportionate increase in demand for health care. It was felt that this should be drawn to the attention of planners.

It was noted that GPs had assumed for the responsibility of the diagnosis, treatment and continuing care of dementia care.

The Better Care Plan 2014 – 2016 jointly produced and published by Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire CCG was noted.

Melksham Hospital building is managed by the Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the management of staff working in the building by the Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Foundation Trust and the work undertaken is commissioned by the Wiltshire Care Commissioning Group. It is therefore very complex to make changes.

The work of the Wiltshire Care Commissioning Group in improving health and social care was noted to ensure the efficient use of beds to help avoid bed blocking.

It was noted that there is a need to increase volunteers working in the community to help overcome loneliness and this needs to be linked with the Good Neighbour Scheme, dementia friendly support and the Age UK befriending network and it was agreed that the Town Council would work towards linking voluntary groups and GPs with a view to preparing a directory of groups and clubs.

Full details of the matters discussed at the meetings are available by reading the minutes. Parish councillors are encouraged to attend the meetings in order that they have a greater understanding of health matters within the community.

Paul Carter
Health working Group 20.02.15

Almshouses Report 2014

This year saw the completion of updating the charities by transferring all the monies in the Eleemosynary Charity which was the original name to the new Almshouses Charity, Which is the meaning of the old name, so we have just modernised it. All the monies held in the old charity have been transferred to the new one and have been put into bank accounts and trust funds that give better returns so we can keep up with all needs of the tenants and the any minor repairs of the properties. We also can keep giving grants to the groups who need our help.

The refurbishments of the houses were completed in the middle of 2013, but owing to a few minor unforeseen problems, were not signed off until the beginning of 2014. There were a complete new group of tenants, who have settled in and are beginning to be a little community who help one another.

The charity uses the funds at it's disposal to give grants to local groups who are struggling to keep going this is usually done twice a year.

We endeavour to keep to those groups who do not have a large amount in their deposit accounts or are run as a business. We have given funds to groups just starting up. The disabled football team is one such group. They have gone from strength to strength. The parents and their children have a new circle of friends and a new support network amongst those who attend.

This makes us feel privileged to be part of the Almshouses Charity.

Pat Nicol.

The Whitley Players Report

The Whitley Players last performance was in the Autumn of 2013, which we held as a joint production with the Neston drama group.

Since then we have been unable to stage a production to the standard we aspire to, due to a lack of performers, as a number of members have left the group in the last couple of years due to relocation etc.

We are still alive however, and hope to build on the core group and facilities that we have built up over the last 25 years, with the objective of another performance in 2015 or 2016.

Meanwhile our members are supporting Neston and Bathford AmDram groups to keep our skills alive.

We do thank the Melksham Without PC and the Reading Rooms committee for their continuing support.

John Hamley

Appendix 22

PAVILION CLUB REPORT TO MWPC ANNUAL MEETING

The Pavilion Youth Club Bowerhill has been closed for a while because the low number of regular members made it unviable. We hope that the opening of the new pavilion in April this year which includes an area for the youth club will act as a catalyst to re-launch the Club. The local Community youth worker, Ceri Evans, is keen to re-start the Club and he believes it will be a success because the closure of the Canberra Youth Centre has left the local young people without a premises.

The Pavilion Club equipment is being held in storage ready for the re-launch and the youth worker may have access to equipment from Canberra as well.

We all look forward to a successful re-opening of the Pavilion Club this summer.

Mike Mills

