



Parish Clerk

After nearly 30 years serving the local community as our parish council clerk, Mike Dew will be stepping down at the end of September. Mike has been our parish clerk since 1992, performing a role that is essential to the smooth running of the council. His depth of knowledge and experience has benefited us in many ways, such as providing advice and administrative support, helping members of the public with their enquiries, and dealing with the many day-to-day issues that come up, as well as taking the minutes for over 300 parish council meetings.

We will be sad to see Mike go but wish him all the best for a long and happy retirement. We will be holding a short leaving presentation in the Village Hall at 7.15pm, just before our next parish council meeting on Wednesday 6th October, to thank him for his many years of public service.

As you will see elsewhere in the newsletter, we are now recruiting for a replacement clerk. Please get in touch with us if you are interested in applying. In the interim period we'll be making arrangements to ensure continuity of service and any amendments to contact details for the clerk will be published on our website. You can of course also continue to contact any of our councillors if there is a particular issue you wish to raise.

Parish council meetings

In September we returned to holding our parish council meetings in the Village Hall with some additional ventilation and social distancing to help manage the risk from Covid-19. Our October meeting will also be in the Village Hall but we will continue to keep a close eye on infection rates. There are a number of benefits to in-person meetings, including making it easier for parishioners who may be less comfortable with digital technologies to participate and allowing for a more open and flowing debate amongst councillors. However, we're also aware of the need to be sensitive to the ongoing threat from Covid-19 and will continue to keep our policy for meetings under review. Any changes will be publicised via the website and the noticeboards.

Road safety

We are continuing to work on improved road safety and have been firming up our plans to

introduce a number of vehicle activated signs in some of the speeding hotspots around the village. We have had further discussions with the county council highways department around the siting of the signs and in September the parish council gave the go-ahead in principle to the purchase of two that can be moved periodically between four different locations in the village.

We are also planning to introduce some yellow zig-zag no parking lines outside the school entrance on the High Street, both to address problems with congestion in the area and to make it safer for parents and children when dropping off and picking up children. We realise it's not always easy to avoid using a car in a rural village like ours, and that time constraints or mobility issues can sometimes make the car the only option, but if you can consider leaving the car at home for short journeys within the village where possible this would also help reduce congestion at peak hours.

High Street Flooding

We are still pushing the county council for action on flooding outside the Co-op, which we recognise is causing problems in periods of heavy rainfall. We have been raising the matter regularly with the county council and will continue to do so until we have a clear plan for resolving the problem.

Vandalism

We regret that we're still experiencing problems with vandalism and anti-social behaviour around the village, including a recent fire set in one of the bins on the Millennium Green and further damage to the Skate Park infrastructure. All of this takes up council time and the costs of repair frequently have to be met by the parish council, leaving us with less to spend on more positive things. The continuing problems in the skate park are particularly frustrating; we are aware that the ramps in the park are in need of replacement and/or refurbishment and we are working in the background to bring this about. Dealing with repeated damage to the park takes time away from moving this forwards as well as inconveniencing the majority who want to use it in a responsible way. If you do come across any further instances of damage please report it to one of your councillors or the local police, and if

you see anyone in the act of vandalising any of our public open spaces or infrastructure please report it to the police at the time if safe to do so.

Play area inspections

The parish council undertakes regular inspections of the equipment in the play areas to ensure they are kept in a safe condition. The inspections are currently carried out by councillors but we are also looking for volunteers who might be able to help. The role involves looking for any apparent defects or damage to play equipment, logging the results and highlighting anything that needs action. No previous experience or particular expertise is required, other than the ability to commit an hour or two on a regular basis to having a look for any obvious problems. If you would be interested in helping us to keep the play areas in good shape, please get in touch with either Kevin Middleton or Karin Williams-Cuss to express an interest. If you are a parent whose children use the play areas this could also be a nice way of keeping occupied while your children are enjoying using the equipment!

Footpaths working parties

We have been looking at our priorities for the coming year for footpaths. Although the parish council doesn't have any statutory responsibility for footpath maintenance we try to play an active part in keeping local paths accessible and in good condition. We are hoping to organise some working parties to tackle particular sections of paths that may be overgrown or inaccessible. No previous experience is needed – just a willingness to roll up your sleeves and help with activities such as cutting back overhanging vegetation or clearing obstructions and debris from local paths. If you would like to join a working party, please contact Kevin Middleton.

Waste and recycling

The parish council has responded to the recent Let's Talk Oxfordshire survey on waste and recycling, emphasising in particular the importance to the village of the Stanford Household Waste Recycling Centre on Faringdon Road and supporting its continuation as a well-used and valuable local asset. We're also aware of the problems the continued suspension of the brown bin garden waste service is causing. This is responsibility of the district council and we are continuing to liaise with our local councillor to find out when the service might be resumed.

Local bus services

The parish council has also responded to the county council's recent consultation on bus services, highlighting, amongst other things, the need for services to match up better with school times, the needs of bus users with mobility difficulties, and problems with busses waiting at stops in the village with their engines idling.

Kevin Middleton

Chair – Stanford in the Vale Parish Council

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Vacancy – Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

Applications are invited for the position of Parish Clerk to Stanford in the Vale Parish Council.

The role of the Parish Clerk & RFO is to facilitate the work of our Councillors, to carry out decisions made by them and to manage the Council's day-to-day financial affairs. The successful candidate will work closely with all members of the Council. As the Proper Officer of the Council, the Clerk prepares the agenda for and takes the minutes at Parish Council meetings, deals with correspondence, manages the Council's website and deals with enquiries from the public. Additionally, as RFO you will maintain detailed financial records and prepare annual audit returns.

The successful candidate will be self-motivated, proactive and highly organised with excellent communication skills and high levels of computer literacy. Whilst **not** essential, you would ideally have prior experience of working within the local government sector, and either hold or be prepared to undertake training towards achieving the Certificate in Local Council Administration - more details can be found here <https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualifications/>.

This is a home based, part time role with flexible working time arrangements. Attendance at monthly Parish Council meetings (2nd Wednesday of the month) is required. Dependent on skills and experience we envisage that the role would require up to 15 hours per week. We will reward the successful candidate between £12.89 - £14.03 per hour (SCP 18-23), based on national pay scales.

Candidates should contact the Parish Council Chair, Kevin Middleton, either by email at kevinfmiddleton@gmail.com or by phone on 01367 718395.

SEPTEMBER 'OUR NEWS' OUT NOW!

OUR NEWS NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER EDITION

FOR ALL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
SUPPORTERS ACROSS ENGLAND AND WALES

Neighbourhood Watch Network is a charity registered in England & Wales, CIO no: 1173349



We are delighted to bring you the September OUR NEWS edition – a monthly newsletter for all Neighbourhood Watch supporters across England and Wales.

This edition introduces you to our Neighbour of the Year Awards 2021 - open for nominations from 14th September, the no-excuse approach to gas safety, fraud trends, rural crime reporting, discount offers from ERA and Patlock for our readers, and much more.

We hope that you will enjoy reading our newsletter and share it with your community. Why not share this newsletter link <https://bit.ly/OurNewsSept21> with your street WhatsApp groups, community Facebook groups or neighbourhood email groups to keep your neighbours safer and more connected.

Best wishes

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH NETWORK, Central Support Team

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Public Purposes Charity News

Throughout the pandemic PPC has continued to reach out to organisations in Stanford in the Vale who might be struggling with Covid induced problems. We changed our granting rules to suit the difficult situations being faced and we are proud to say that we have been able to help a good number in the Village.

Normally we would be boasting about the things we have funded, but in this instance we are not going to name names but simply say we were glad to be there!

We are now reverting back to our more traditional guidelines of funding capital activity and we have a couple of exciting projects on the drawing board that will certainly have an impact if they come to fruition. Annoyingly mysterious? Watch this space...

New Trustee

Delighted to welcome Mike Dixon as our newest Trustee. Mike joins us with a wealth of experience, in particular in the finance sector but also in business in general. We look forward to his input into our deliberations. Say hello to Mike and congratulate him if you bump into him in the Village.

Trustee Meetings

We have continued to hold Trustee Meetings via Zoom but will revert to in person meetings as soon as it is safe to do so. We recently finalised our 2020 Annual Report and this is now on the PPC Website for those who might be interested.

All the Trustees have continued to maintain active interest in what PPC can do for the Village and we are delighted that Stanford in the Vale has this resource for our collective benefit. If you want to know more about PPC please go to the website: www.ppcstanford.org

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Clerk/Correspondent
PPC Stanford

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