

Chairs Annual Report 2018-2019

Another full year for the Parish Council. We have moved forward a number of initiatives. Most things we undertake as a Parish Council involve people volunteering their time, so I thank all Parish Councillors who have given their time.

We have had several community volunteers especially Sarah Sharland as Tree Warden and Lynn Parker resident rep on the Quarry Liaison Group, and regular attendees Sue and John Edwards, David Bell, Gerry Russell, Lew Edwards and Sarah Sharland at the Neighbourhood Plan steering group. None of the things we could achieve as a Parish Council would be possible without our parish clerk. A special thank you goes to Barbara Bland for her exemplary hard work, constant support to me and other Councillors, as well as community members.

We have continued to hold Parish Council surgeries with SMBC officers and joint Police surgeries. Unfortunately, these are poorly attended by the community. We will continue to hold them to ensure communication and information sharing continues.

This year our new external auditors Littlejohns gave us another clean bill of health.

The PC has had several open exhibitions at local events on the draft Meriden Neighbourhood Plan. Solihull MBC have still been working on their draft plan and Meriden's Neighbourhood Plan is nearing completion. The PC are still working towards accreditation to achieve a quality standard in the Local Council Award Scheme. Parish Councillors have undertaken individual training on a range of topics and have met twice as a group on Saturday mornings to ensure we can demonstrate that we are a competent parish council. We have upgraded the PC website to meet the improved standard expected of websites and all parish councillors now have a PC email address to comply with GDPR legislation.

The management plan for Meriden Pool Phase 2 has been completed and the Pool looks wonderful now the landscaping works are complete. Friends of Meriden Pool have really worked hard planting and tidying. Thanks to Peter Moss, Carol Stafford and Barbara Bland.

The servicemen who lost their lives in WW1 have been commemorated throughout the year on their anniversary with candlelit vigils. The group is still working on the development of ideas for a lasting poppy memorial on the dedicated Memorial Approach site. Last Remembrance Sunday, which marked the centenary of the end of WW1, had a record attendance at both St Laurence Church and Meriden's War Memorial.

Meriden Sports Park continues to be popular with residents and visitors alike. The demands for usage of the facilities has increased and the school holiday sports activity camps have been popular for children.

Meriden Sports and Recreation Trust continues to have a strong partnership working with the sports park directors and the parish council.



The Quarry Liaison Group continues to meet quarterly and attendance by quarry operators has been high. SMBC and Environment Agency officers have also attended. Issues raised by both Hampton and Meriden PC are taken seriously and actioned. These meetings have improved communications and information sharing, reduced lorry movements through Meriden Parish and makes better the nuisance, noise, litter, dirt and dust within our local environment.

Cllr Rosie Weaver was elected to be Chair of SAC and elected as Chair of WALC. These groups enable all parish and town councils to share their experiences and good practice and raise issues as a collective. In Solihull, following the Charter guidelines, the Chair and Deputy Chair of SAC continue to meet quarterly with SMBC Chief Executive Nick Page.

Community events were once again successfully organised. Alan Lole continues to raise much needed funds for Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Hospice Solihull through the Tree of Thought and Funday Sunday. The 7th Santa Fun Run organised by The Rotary Club in December was well attended by many ages and sizes of Santas! The Family Picnic in the Park was a success in July.

Meriden Watch website has increased its followers and provides up to date Neighbourhood Watch information and is supported by the police. There is good information sharing between them and the PC.

Cllr Barber has coordinated several Speedwatch training sessions. Speedwatch is ready to go again in the late spring of 2019.

So, what have we done from the list we compiled from last year's annual assembly? Quite a lot! Some things of note are:

- the PC met several times with SMBC's Head of Highways to look at the issues of parking, speeding and our views are being incorporated into his review of what can be done in Meriden in the future.
- Exercise and yoga classes in the Sports Park
- Astro-wicket – has been replaced and should last another 7 to 10 years

Plans for 2019-20 are to include:

- To hold the third Annual Parish Assembly and share the Neighbourhood Plan key issues.
- Achieve accreditation with the Local Council Award Scheme
- Continue to secure funds and complete the Pool Project
- Continue to update the website and meet the new regulatory codes
- To develop the poppy site for a fitting sustainable memorial
- To continue working with Head of Highways to improve traffic management throughout the Parish

Rosie Weaver
Chair Meriden Parish Council
April 2019

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