

# FARTHINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting  
held on Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7.00pm  
via Zoom



Councillors present: Mr Mick Morris (Chair) (MM)  
Mr John Grant (JG)  
Mr David Dashwood (DD)  
Mr Henry Bankes-Jones (HBJ)  
Mr Trevor Jarvis (TJ)  
Mr Barry Willett  
WNC Cllr Rebecca Breese (RB)  
Mr Dave Weston (Clerk)

Also attending Rev Sue Cooper

7 attendees from the public

Apologies: Cllr James Harrison (JH)  
Wendy Whitehouse Headteacher Farthinghoe Primary School

Item	
1	<p>Chairman's Welcome</p> <p>A warm welcome was extended to all present , and in particular to Cllr Rebecca Breese and Rev. Sue Cooper. Cllr Morris hoped that we would meet in person in 2022 in the refurbished village hall. Cllr Morris stated that he would ask for questions after each item was reached in the Agenda.</p> <p>Cllr Morris then presented the Chairman's welcome (Appendix 1)</p>
2	<p>To receive apologies for absence.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllr James Harrison and Wendy Whitehouse</p>
3	<p>To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24 April 2019.</p> <p>The minutes were proposed by Pippa Clayton and seconded by Cllr Barry Willett and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.</p>
4	<p>To review matters arising from the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24 April 2019.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
5	<p>To receive the Chairman's Report for the year 2020-2021.</p> <p>Cllr Morris presented his report (Appendix 2). He added that one of the new bus shelters has now been installed and due to the proximity of the other shelter, adjacent to the allotments on the main A422, installation would be linked to the road closure proposed for the gully work later in May.</p>

A question was raised asking what the local candidates in the forthcoming election for the West Northants Council were doing in support of the proposed Farthinghoe By-Pass. Cllr Breese re-iterated her continued support for the by-pass and that of her colleagues. The by-pass will be discussed at the first full cabinet meeting of the West Northants Council after the May elections and a decision will be made concerning the preferred route. No contact had been made by other candidates.

Cllr Morris then invited comment and questions on the following written reports which had been available to read on the Parish Council website prior to the meeting.

#### 5.1 Village Hall Report.

There were no comments; the full report is shown in Appendix 3

#### 5.2 Primary School Report.

There were no comments; the full report is shown in Appendix 4

#### 5.3 Parish clerk financial Report.

Mr Weston presented a summary of his report.

There were no comments; the full report is shown in Appendix 5

#### 5.4 South Northants Council Report.

In response to a question from Mr Weston , Cllr Breese agreed to speak to finance to establish when the first precept payment would be made to the Parish Council.

The full report is shown in Appendix 6

#### 5.5 Northamptonshire County Council Report.

Cllr Breese added to her report by saying that former South Northants Council staff now held several senior positions within West Northants Council. South Northants Council had been well run and had handed over its remaining reserves which has helped West Northants Council begin on a sound financial footing.

The full report is shown in Appendix 7

#### 5.6 The Church of St Michael and All Angels Farthinghoe Report

There were no comments; the full report is shown in Appendix 8

##### 5.6.1 The Severn sisters Tree site

There were no comments; the full report is shown in Appendix 9

#### 5.7 Almshouse Report.

There were no comments; the full report is shown in Appendix 10

#### 5.8 Allotments Report.

There were no comments; the full report is shown in Appendix 11

#### 5.9 Northamptonshire Police Brackley Neighbourhood Team Report.

There were no comments; the full report is shown in Appendix 12

	<p>5.10 Playpark Report.</p> <p>A question was asked how much remains in the Playpark fund. Mr Weston answered that at 31 March 2021 it was £1697.47. A further question was asked how much was used for maintenance and how much for capital. Mr Weston answered that the parish council pay for the annual safety inspections and regular mowing of the park. All other purchases for the park come out of the balance of the Playpark fund.</p> <p>The full report is shown in Appendix 13</p>
6	<p>General Questions.</p> <p>Cllr Grant asked Cllr Breese if we could speak to someone senior at the highways department regarding future traffic management during planned closures of the A422. Cllr Morris added that previously insufficient signage and not having manned closure points had led to traffic causing huge problems within the village. Cllr Breese agreed to speak to someone in the traffic portfolio and open direct dialogue with the parish council.</p>
7	<p>Any other business.</p> <p>Cllr Morris stated that the Parish Council were looking for more community led initiatives on ways to improve the village and its facilities rather than it all being totally Parish Council led.</p> <p>Please let us know your thoughts</p> <p>On numerous occasions it has been mentioned that community led ideas are gaining preference when Grant approvals are being made.</p> <p>A comment was made that several villages have a village plan in place and it may be worth looking at one for Farthinghoe looking up to 15 years hence.</p> <p>Cllr Morris added that Farthinghoe feature in the South Northants Council Local Plan when considering development protections &amp; controls. Cllr Breese added it might be worth considering a plan especially for the village to consider what may happen after the by-pass is completed, but also added that such plans can be costly &amp; time consuming to produce.</p> <p>Cllr Grant informed the meeting there had been a developer's consultation about a proposal for a further 700 homes in Brackley. The Parish Council had forwarded a response to this Consultation, which objected to this development in several respects.</p> <p>The Chair then made a closing address at which there was a thank you from a member of the public for all the hard work the parish council has done over the past year.</p> <p>The full list of appendices is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 - Chairman's Welcome</li> <li>2 - Chairman's Report</li> <li>3 - Village Hall Committee</li> <li>4 - Primary School</li> <li>5 - Parish Council Finances</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6 - South Northamptonshire District Council</li><li>7 - Northamptonshire County Council</li><li>8 - Church of St Michael and All Angels Farthinghoe</li><li>9 – The Seven Sisters Tree Site</li><li>10 – Alms houses</li><li>11 - Allotments</li><li>12 - Northamptonshire Police Brackley Neighbourhood team</li><li>13- Playpark Report</li></ul>
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The meeting closed at 1950

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**Farthinghoe & Steane Annual Parish Meeting Wednesday, 28 April 2021 at 7.00pm via Zoom.  
Chairman's Welcome**

Good Evening everyone and welcome to the 2021 Farthinghoe & Steane Annual Parish Meeting

With a particular welcome to our visitors

Cllr Rebecca Breese—Our District & County Councillor

The Reverend Sue Cooper

This is the very first APM to be held virtually & hopefully it will be unique in that next year we can resume "face to face" meetings in which we will be able to appreciate more fully the products of the dedicated hard work put in by the Village Hall Committee to update the hall.

Before we move onto to item 2 of the Agenda I would like to mention that since the agenda was issued a report for the Dashwood Playpark has been added to the Parish Council website.

Once we have concluded items 2,3, & 4 on the Agenda I will present the Chairman's report taking questions for this report at the end.

Following this we will receive questions for each of the other written reports in turn, dealing with one report at a time.

For items 5.4 & 5.5 Cllr Breese has requested to make a small verbal addition to her reports & will then personally take any questions.

Now I would like to hand over to Dave Weston to receive details of any apologies which have been received for absence.



## **Farthinghoe and Steane Parish Council**

April 2021

### **Chairman's Summary of the 2020/2021 Year:**

Last year my annual summary commenced with the following paragraphs.

"This has been a most unusual year, the kind of year that few of us have ever experienced before, nor want to experience again.

It has been a year in which most communities have had to react with considerable discipline and fortitude."

Few of us expected the pandemic and its ensuing problems to continue to have such a fundamental effect of our lives a year later, let alone continue to have an effect for the foreseeable future.

As a village we have reacted with the required amount of discipline and fortitude added to an immense amount of common sense and goodwill.

Thank you to everyone.

Late last year I was proud to learn that both Julia Pepler & Holly Walters were awarded with Northamptonshire Covid-19 Community Champions Certificates by Northamptonshire Acre.

Our school is also an asset that we can all be really proud of. Added to providing an excellent education and social skills for the children who attend I also understand that they have been immensely helpful, during these difficult times, to the children of key workers from other areas.

Our thanks to the staff and to all of those involved in the running of the school for creating this superb reputation and for ensuring that it is maintained.

In last year's summary I had mentioned some projects that were either in progress or were planned for the future. Following is an update of these.

#### **1 Bypass**

During the past year we have given a number of updates on the bypass progress.

These can be viewed in the Farthinghoe Chronicle, on the Parish Council website or have been circulated by email on the Parish Council database.

The Public Consultation closed on January 3rd 2021 & I quote from the Northants County Council website

"Following previous consultations in 2015, Northamptonshire Highways have developed four northern routes, which we are consulting on in order to identify a preferred route to be taken forward for further development. The preferred route will be determined by the West Northamptonshire Council cabinet after the May 2021 elections."

We have also recently received the following statement from Andrea Leadsom & I quote verbatim

***“The Farthinghoe Bypass remains one of my top priorities in my South Northamptonshire manifesto, and I continue to work with the local community to press the case for the urgent need for this project to progress.***

***I welcome the announcement from the Government of the Levelling Up Fund, and I have written to the Secretary of State for Transport for further information on how the Fund may be a viable source of funding for the bypass. He has confirmed that local authorities are encouraged to consider prioritising resubmitting their pinch point projects for the first round of the Levelling Up Fund, and further guidance for larger projects will be published shortly. All applications to the Levelling Up Fund require support from the local MP and I have written to the local authority to confirm that I am happy to provide my backing and any help that they may require.***

***I have also discussed the project with Cllr Phil Larratt, the new Cabinet Member for Highways at Waste at West Northants Council and have urged him and his colleagues to adopt the bypass as the top road and infrastructure priority for our local area. He has confirmed that it is in their top three list of infrastructure improvements, and that he will help me in seeking funding for the road.”***

We will be following this subject up after May 6<sup>th</sup> & will keep you informed about the future developments.

## 2. Road Safety Grant by HS2

This project has now been completed.

New more visible lights have been installed at the pedestrian crossing which has a much improved control system.

Additionally a new electronic warning sign has been installed close to the church gate. This sign is linked to the crossing signals such that it operates as soon as the crossing button has been pressed. It then turns off as soon as the traffic light returns to green.

## 3. HS2 Construction causing traffic to migrate from the Welsh Lane to the A422.

This traffic would be additional to the existing A422 traffic which is already at saturation point.

We have been unable to gauge the extent of this migration mainly because NCC have shown no interest in helping despite being very aware of this threat since 2016, but we hope to see change with the incoming West Northants Council.

## 4. Queen Street Rush Hour Rat Run.

No progress due to the lack of interest & application from NCC Highways despite the continued & diligent efforts of John Grant  
We will raise this subject with West Northants Council after the May 6th elections.

## 5. Replacement of Bus Shelters

Thanks to considerable effort from Barry Willetts & Dave Weston we have been able to secure a £10,000.00 Community Grant to complete this project.

Both bus shelters should be in place early in May

## 6. Sewers & Drains

Last year we thought that these problems were solved, but we were wrong.

After all of these years it was discovered that the surface water drains on the Main Road between Baker Street & the Limes Farm entrance have never been connected to each other.

This work will be completed on May 10th which will result in few days road closure.

## 7. Farthinghoe Village Hall

Despite all of the set-backs & difficulties generated by the coronavirus the village hall situation is still progressing positively.

This is due to the diligent & judicious management by the committee.

Once the hall can be opened & fully utilised by the community all will be more apparent.

We thank you all for your hard & structured efforts.

## 8. Farthinghoe Chronicle

Our thanks go out to Ollie, Rosemary, Vivienne, Julia, Ellie, Alice, Becky, Katie & Annabel for all of your efforts to ensure that we receive our monthly village news regularly & on time.

9. Our thanks are also due to Jenny Phipps who has quietly put tremendous efforts in during the year to help to ensure that the village looks spick & span.

10. As always the playpark is looking well-manicured & has been a great asset for many this year.

We thank Jon Hampson for this along with his efforts in keeping other green areas of the village looking neat & tidy

The Parish Council personnel this year have remained unchanged and thanks to Dave Weston's efforts & advice we have managed to cope with the essential transition from live meetings to Zoom Meetings. Dave's efforts & inputs in all aspects of PC activity have been way beyond his remit & for that we sincerely thank him.

Although absolutely necessary in the current climate it is not felt that Zoom meetings will be a replacement for face-to-face meetings.

Next year sees the change from County Council/District Council administration to Unitary Council administration for everyone.

If anyone has any questions concerning this change then we will be pleased to receive them. If we do not already know the answers then we will check further to find out.

Things to look out for:

During the next year we MAY see some Planning Activity on 2 projects which could affect us,

These being

A Solar Farm on the Greatworth/Farthinghoe border, which may re- emerge

A 700 Homes development in the west of Brackley bordering the A422 prior to the Brackley West roundabout.

Let's all hope that the present optimism will prevail and that we will all see life returning to something more normal very soon.

In the meantime please take care

Yours Faithfully

Mick Morris

Chairman



## Farthinghoe Village Hall - 2021 report

Good progress with the Hall this year despite the reduction in bookings due to Covid.

### **The following improvements have been made in the past two years:**

1. The roof has been insulated with a grant.
2. We now have stage curtains thanks to a grant from Coop.
3. A heating system has been installed and is controllable via the internet.
4. Fibre Broadband installed.
5. New flooring in the main Hall but waiting for some faults to be rectified.
6. Storage area extended into roof space which has been boarded and safety rails fitted at first floor level.
7. Central hot water system purchased and awaiting installation.
8. Ballet bar brackets replaced and walls decorated.
9. BBQ and paved area completed.
10. Rose arch and stone seat installed for weddings etc.
11. Shelving expanded in Committee Room for books (Read and Feed)
12. Kitchen upgrade planned, including the floor.
13. Outside sheds upgraded and awaiting new metal roof installation.

### **Finances:**

We have received some grants from the Council. Income obviously down but normal bookings were up pre Covid. Interest in Weddings and other larger events from the surrounding area is increasing due to the improvements at the Hall.

Electricity costs have risen as a result of heating installation and we will be reviewing hire charges this year.

We continue to support the school with hire rates for PE now approaching the Villager hire rate, parents using the car park for drop off and pick up, teachers parking, hosting the container for equipment, storing equipment etc.

A Village Show is planned for September with the produce going across to the Church for Harvest Festival.

An application is being prepared for an HS2 grant for Solar Panels and Battery to complete the main Hall upgrade.

Grounds maintenance will now be contracted out to relieve the pressure on the Volunteers.

As at 31/03/2021 we have a positive balance of £23,000

**Thanks:**

Just a quick reminder that the Hall continues to open and function because of the many Volunteers. In addition to the main Committee, we get support for events, maintenance etc. from others in the Village. This is an important aspect of running the Hall and the Table Tennis Club is a good example of something proposed by the Village, managed by Barry and a purchase of a new table by the Committee which has now been paid off by the hire fee.

So I conclude with a massive thanks to those who make things happen.

David Hancock  
Chair, Farthinghoe Village Hall Committee (FVHC)

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**Farthinghoe Primary School  
Head Teacher Report for the Parish Council  
April 2021**

*Farthinghoe.....where all children are valued and given the opportunity to thrive!*

*We are....*

*A Community*

*Unique*

*Caring*

*Resilient and able to grasp every opportunity to learn.*

Being resilient has been one of the most important values we have needed this year. Along with the rest of the country we have found different ways of working during lockdown, pulling together as a community to support all our families.

School looks very different at the moment. The children are in phase 'bubbles' and are split across two areas in the school. We have additional cleaning which we have put in place as well as changes to equipment.

During lockdown the school was still open for keyworker children and with approximately 20% of the school attending over the weeks. We were able to buy each child in keystage 2 a laptop, allowing all the children to sign into live lessons and still meet their teachers and friends. In keystage 1 Ms Turner even hosted a virtual 'Great Farthinghoe Bake Off.'

Parents, villagers and the village hall committee have been so supportive during this difficult time and on behalf of the school I would like to thank the village of Farthinghoe.

We are very excited to be back in school and hope to return to normal as soon as possible.

**Our topics in Summer this term are**

- Victorians- agriculture and 'Shoe making'
- The Motor Industry in Northamptonshire
- Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole
- Science- Animals and Habitats

If anyone has any resources or photos that we could borrow to show what Farthinghoe looked like over 100 years ago could they please contact the school.

In September we introduced the Power Maths Scheme (Pearson). This is a structured scheme that is based on the Shanghai Maths programme. This has been a major investment on the schools' part and we are excited to be one of the only schools in the area to be using this resource and taking part in the research project.

We are so fortunate to live in such a beautiful rural community and to have the opportunity of visiting a farm. The children in Keystage 1 (age 5-7) took part in Forest School sessions at Limes Farm. The philosophy of Forest Schools being to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive outdoor experiences. The children had the opportunity to learn about the natural environment and at the same time establish and grow in confidence. We are hoping to also grow our own produce on the allotment after half term.

In December we were pleased to welcome The Right Honourable Andrea Leadsom, MP, to our school. She watched an extract of our Nativity play which had originally been shown in a barn at a local farm. It was a short visit but as usual, the children at our school were well informed, articulate and unfailingly polite. Mick Morris the Chair of the Parish Council met with Andrea after the visit and once again I would like to thank the villagers who are working so hard to ensure the roads in Farthinghoe are safe.

We remain a very popular school and currently have 55 children on our school roll. Our unique character and our small class sizes enable us to offer a high adult to child ratio delivering a broad and balanced curriculum.

Farthinghoe Primary School is lucky to be part of such a supportive village community.

Thank you for your continued support.

Wendy Whitehouse  
Head teacher

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## FARTHINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

### Financial report for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

In the financial year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, the Parish Council continued to provide for Precept funds, Playpark funds and Defibrillator funds separately within the accounting process to ensure that the funds raised so diligently by parishioners can be clearly accounted for. The Financial Report therefore reflects this accounting process.

#### Precept funds

Opening balance at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020: £8287.24 (this includes £1250.00 for elections)

The precept for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 was £12000.00.

Income received in the year:		Expenditure in the year (incl. VAT):	
VAT refunds	£105.27	Street lighting	£1153.01
Interest/Compensation	£4.61	Maintenance Grass/Dog Waste etc.	£1371.76
Transfer from Playpark Fund	£731.15	Subscriptions	£375.07
Chronicle Advertising	£0.00	Chronicle	£931.60
		Clerks Salary (Inc. Tax)	£3047.93
		Clerks Expenses	£300.00
		Insurance	
	£666.13	Audit	£180.00
		Website	£135.45
		Training	£253.00
		Community Donation	£500.00
		Playpark	£839.15
<b>Total Income Received</b>	<b>£12841.03</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>(£9808.08)</b>

Opening Balance	£8287.24
Income received	£12841.03
Expenditure	(£9808.08)
<b>Closing Balance at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021:</b>	<b>£11320.19 (£1500 of balance is reserved for Election Costs in 2021)</b>

Item	2020 costs (excl VAT)	2021 costs (excl VAT)	% increase (where applicable)
Street lighting			
- Electricity	£1001.01	£1098.09	9%
- Maintenance	£79.80	£163.20	104%
Administration			
- Insurance	£657.91	£666.13	1%
- Internal audit fee	£176.00	£180.00	2%
- External audit fee	£0.00	£0.00	
- NCALC subscription	£260.17	£269.07	3%
- Chronicle printing	£635.60	£931.60	32%
- Election fee	£0.00	£0.00	

- Clerk's salary	£2859.00	£2438.53	-15%
- Clerk's expenses	£350.00	£300.00	-17%
- Clerk training	£36.00	£253.00	607%
- Website domain name renewal	£51.00	£48.96	-4%
- Website hosting and support service	£61.88	£59.40	-4%
- IT equipment	£0.00	£0.00	
- Land registry	£0.00	£0.00	
Mowing	£820.00	£890.00	8%
General maintenance			
- Dog waste disposal	£166.40	£171.60	3%
- Playpark safety inspection	£47.00	£90.00	48%
- Playpark Bark/Signs	£0.00	£609.29	
Council for Protection of Rural England subs	£36.00	£36.00	0%
ACRE Subs	£0.00	£35.00	

#### Explanation of increases

The increase in street lighting costs is due to having 2 repairs for this year and an increase in consumer costs. We have changed electricity supplier and aim to see a reduction in electricity costs next year.

NCALC is the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils. The subscription fee pays for membership of NCALC and of NALC, the National Association of Local Councils. The subscription is based on the number of electorates of 342. The fees increase is inflationary.

The internal audit is conducted by NCALC, the increase is inflationary.

The increase in printing for the Chronicle is due to 2 bills for 2019/2020 not being received until after the close of the financial year and additional papers being printed regarding the bypass.

Clerks Salary decreased as for 2019/2020 there were 5 quarterly payments to the clerk showing for that financial year to bring the figures in line with Financial year end rather than Calendar year end. Additionally, the clerk did not claim a salary for January 2020. There was a 2.5% national salary increase awarded in April 2020.

Clerk expenses decreased due to the change as above. There was no increase in basic expenses in 2020/2021.

The training budget increase is due to the clerk attending a number of courses being new in post.

The council made a donation to the Brackley Community Hospital to assist with refurbishment after their expansion.

The Precept for the forthcoming year 2021/22 is £12240. This represents a 2% increase.

The playpark inspection was carried out by a new company due to the previous one being unavailable. A large amount of play bark has been purchased as advised by the subsequent inspection. Additional signs regarding dogs and parking have been purchased. Monies for these items has been transferred across into the general precept fund from the Playpark fund.

The Council became a member of Northants ACRE, a countywide, independent charitable organisation working with rural communities in Northamptonshire to improve their quality of life, especially the disadvantaged.

A breakdown of the accounts is uploaded monthly to the website so that at any time, parishioners will be able to see the current funding status for the parish. This is contained within the signed minutes and financial report.

### Playpark funds

Opening balance at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2020: £2,156.34			
Income received in the year:		Expenditure in the year:	
Closed old playpark account £ 272.28		New Bark £704.99	
		New Signs £26.16	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£272.28</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(£731.15)</b>
Opening Balance	£2,156.34		
Income received	£272.28		
Monies paid out	(£731.15)		
Closing Balance at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	<b>£1697.47</b>		

### Defibrillator funds

Opening balance at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2020: £436.48			
Income received in the year: None		Expenditure in the year: None	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(£0.00)</b>
Opening Balance	£436.48		
Income received	£0.00		
Monies paid out	(£0.00)		
Closing Balance at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	<b>£436.48</b>		

### TOTAL CLOSING BALANCE AT 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2021:

Precept	£9820.19
Precept reserves (for elections)	£1500.00
Playpark	£1697.47
Defibrillator	£436.48
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£13454.14</b>

Dave Weston – Parish Clerk  
23 April 2021

Farthinghoe Parish Council - Accounts to 31st March 2021			
		To 31.3.21	To 31.3.20
<b>Receipts</b>			
<b>Parish Council</b>			
	Precept	£12,000.00	£7,900.00
	Transfer from playpark fund	£0.00	£0.00
	Chronicle advertising	£0.00	£120.00
	VAT returns	£105.27	£0.00
	Bank interest/Compensation	£4.61	£19.49
		<b>£ 12,109.88</b>	<b>£8,039.49</b>
<b>Playpark</b>			
	Fundraising	£272.28	£0.00
	VAT returns	£0.00	£0.00
		<b>£272.28</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Defibrillator</b>			
	Fundraising	£0.00	£0.00
	Donations	£0.00	£0.00
	VAT returns	£0.00	£0.00
		<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
	<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>£ 12,382.16</b>	<b>£8,039.49</b>
<b>Payments</b>			
<b>Parish Council</b>			
	Electricity	£1,153.01	£1,051.10
	Maintenance - grass cutting, dog waste	£1,479.76	£1,211.84
	Subscriptions	£430.05	£346.16
	Chronicle	£931.60	£635.60
	Clerk's salary including Income Tax	£3,047.93	£2,859.00
	Clerk's expenses	£300.00	£350.00
	Insurance	£666.13	£657.91
	Audit	£180.00	£176.00
	Website	£135.45	£135.45
	Training	£253.00	£36.00
	Community Donations	£500.00	
	<b>Total Overheads</b>	<b>£9,076.93</b>	<b>£7,459.06</b>
	Asset purchase - computer equipment	£0.00	£0.00
	<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
	<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>£9,076.93</b>	<b>£7,459.06</b>
<b>Playpark</b>			
	General maintenance	£0.00	£0.00
	Health & Safety equipment	731.15	£0.00
		<b>£731.15</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Defibrillator</b>			
	Asset purchase - defibrillator and casing	£0.00	£0.00
	<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>£9,808.08</b>	<b>£7,459.06</b>
	<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for year</b>	<b>£2,574.08</b>	<b>£580.43</b>



Accounting Balances						
	Parish Council	£11,320.19			£8,287.24	
	Playpark fund	£1,697.47			£2,156.34	
	Defibrillator fund	£436.48			£436.48	
	<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>£13,454.14</b>			<b>£10,880.06</b>	
Bank Balances as at 31 March 2021						
	Current Account	£3,339.00			£769.53	
	Business Saver Account	£10,115.14			£10,110.53	
	<b>Total</b>		<b>£13,454.14</b>			<b>£10,880.06</b>
Annual Accounts 2020-2021						
		Opening balance	Receipts	Payments	Closing balance	Surplus/ (Deficit)
	Parish Council	£8,287.24	£12,109.88	£9,076.93	£11,320.19	£3,032.95
	Playpark funds	£2,156.34	£272.28	£731.15	£1,697.47	£-458.87
	Defibrillator funds	£436.48	£0.00	£0.00	£436.48	£0.00
		<b>£10,880.06</b>			<b>£13,454.14</b>	<b>£2,574.08</b>
Annual Accounts 2019-2020						
		Opening balance	Receipts	Payments	Closing balance	Surplus/ (Deficit)
	Parish Council	£7,706.81	£8,039.49	£7,459.06	£8,287.24	£580.43
	Playpark funds	£2,156.34	£0.00	£0.00	£2,156.34	
	Defibrillator funds	£436.48	£0.00	£0.00	£436.48	
		<b>£10,299.63</b>			<b>£10,880.06</b>	<b>£580.43</b>

## **Annual Report 2020/21 for SNC**

The past twelve months has been dominated by Covid and Local Government Reform. A year ago we went into lock down, the councils were asked to invoke their emergency procedures to plan to help the vulnerable.

The Local Resilience Forum led the response at a county level. SNC were part of that command structure and lent staff as the various cells got up to speed. We worked to ensure that food parcels were distributed, homeless people were taken off the streets and our staff could operate from home. Our staff were heavily involved with the distribution of emergency grants that the government made available.

As we began to have the limited unlock in the summer SNC staff were involved with the return to business. Environmental Health staff inspected premises and gave advice on a safe reopening and Economic Development staff worked to ensure shops had signage and advice on how to socially distance and trade safely.

The routine continued through the second and third lock downs. Throughout members had regular briefings as to the strain on the local hospitals, bed occupancy rates, infection rates and sadly the death rates in the district and county.

Since the beginning of 2021 we have had the vaccination rates which has seen Northants make great progress in vaccinating all of our most vulnerable cohorts and we are now moving to second injection for the older population while moving down the age groups.

Throughout this the process of Local Government Reform has been ongoing. In April 2020 the government issued a revised Structural Changes Order to cancel the elections for May and create a Shadow Council made up of all the existing Councillors. Ian McCord, the Leader of SNC was appointed as the Leader of the Shadow Council and Jonathan Nunn, the leader of Northampton Borough was appointed Deputy Leader.

The programme for creating the new council was revised to scale back the ambition and get to a 'safe and legal' position on day one, Vesting Day, 1 April 21. The revised program has delayed some of the planned savings and integration by approximately one year.

The Shadow Authority met in June for the first time and three subsequent times, although the fourth meeting in February did require a second night to complete the business. The Shadow Authority has in place a budget, constitution, scheme of members allowances, and other policies and procedures that are needed to establish the new council.

Alongside the full Shadow Authority there has been a shadow executive that has the leader and one other member for each of the four councils. This Executive has met monthly and approved many of the plans to get the new council underway.

From 1 April to 10<sup>th</sup> May this is called the Interim Period when the old councils are abolished but the new councillors to be elected on May 6<sup>th</sup> have not taken over. During this period all the existing councillors will continue and the Executive will meet. If there is a need for a planning committee it will be the SNC, DDC, NBC existing committees that will meet to decide.

Looking forward, once the election is out of the way a new set of 93 councillors will set the policies and direction of West Northamptonshire Council. There are many decisions to be taken, for example office accommodation and where the council will have its headquarters. These have been quite deliberately left for the incoming new members and not the outgoing ones.

No matter what your view is on how we got to where we are, we now must leave the past behind and look forward. There are opportunities that the new council will create that we must seize. If we can get planning and highways to work more closely together, have housing and adult social care aligned and environmental health and trading standards all operating as one team our residents will be better served by better quality decision making. That is the new goal. A fresh start and bright future for all.

## **Planning**

### **Local Plan Pt 2**

This plan has been many years in compiling and sets out the future of our district for the next 5 years. It was consulted on many times by our parishioners both locally with exhibitions, on the internet and in our own publication SNC Review. It was adopted at full Council in July 2020 and forms the backbone of current and future planning applications in our district. It has been used on many occasions since adoption to prevent speculative developers trying to build in the open countryside outside village boundaries. It also importantly identified areas within the district suitable for industrial development and it is encouraging that applications have already come forward for two of these sites which vindicates our choices.

### **Land Supply and appeals**

Having a land supply of greater than 5 years is key to resisting developments in the Countryside and the fact we have one of at worst 5.18 has meant we have refused applications. We won a significant victory at appeal over a site of 300 houses in the open Countryside near Grange Park, following another successful rejection for a site of 50 houses at Rothersthorpe. We currently have about 6 appeals being considered by the planning inspectorate.

### **Virtual Working**

Due to Covid the planning department have spent the last year working from home and planning Committee meetings have been held via Zoom each month. This has proved to be a total success and the department have dealt with more applications in the last year than before which is good as the number of applications being very high due to people at home deciding to alter their houses. The monthly meetings have operated well and have had some lengthy debates which have not been stifled by being held virtually.

### **Major Developments**

Towcester South extension continues at pace and there are more than 500 properties now occupied on the site which has triggered first S106 payment to Sponne School plus the construction of a new primary school due to open September this year. Current development at Radstone in Brackley is drawing to a close in the current phase with in excess of 1500 properties being built. The new medical centre and Sainsbury's supermarket were completed and are in operation in the town as well.

### **Towcester Relief Road**

This long-awaited road commenced construction in December 2020 and looks likely to be completed by 2023 well ahead of schedule mainly due to advance funding from the Government. There has been a lot of local discussion about the road and its future effectiveness in diverting traffic from Towcester Town Centre. However it will link the A5 from near the current Whittlebury turn across to the A43 south of current Abthorpe roundabout thus giving traffic the chance to circumnavigate the town and this will be encouraged by local road signage.

### **SNC Financial Highlights**

2020/21 has not been a normal year! What should have been a "calm sea and a prosperous voyage" turned into the perfect storm. What should have been a year where we prepared for a smooth handover to the West Northamptonshire Unitary Council has been impacted by the covid pandemic which has generated a significant additional amount of work for many of our departments, not least in finance.

On top of the expected work of preparing the budget for the new authority, the billing of Council Tax and business rates across West Northamptonshire and arranging the transfer of assets, they have had to cope with a significant increase in the number of benefit claimants, last minute changes to business rates and enabling the payment of millions of pounds in grants supporting jobs and businesses across the District.

### **Council Tax**

With the creation of the unitary authority the structure of the bills will change and the District and County amounts will be combined. Comparing the WNC bill with the previous County/District and

Adult social care elements the bill rises by 5% for a Band D property. The Fire Service bill rises by 2% and the PCC element tops the list with a 5.1% rise. Overall, the tax increase is 4.9%.

As we need to harmonise Council Tax across the West over the next 3 years the rises in South Northants will be slightly larger. Rises in Daventry District will be higher still and slightly smaller in Northampton Borough.

#### Council Tax bill for 2021/22 for a Band D Property

Body	2020/21	2021/22	Change
NCC	£1,170.98	£1,396.61	
SNC	£196.33		
NCC Adult Soc. Care	£114.44	£158.89	
Total WNC	£1,481.75	£1,555.50	5.0%
PCC	£255.04	£268.04	5.1%
Fire Service	£61.97	£63.20	2.0%

<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,798.76</b>	<b>£1,886.74</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
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<b>Cost Increase from previous year</b>	<b>£65.53</b>	<b>£87.98</b>
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On top of this residents will be paying the Parish Council precept and if you want to know what a particular parish will be paying the full list is available on the Shadow Council web site as part of the [paperwork](#) for their budget meeting.

To help offset the increase for those most financially vulnerable the Council Tax Reduction Scheme has been set at 20%, a decrease from the 26.5% originally consulted on. A hardship fund will also be established to help those who face the largest increases and additionally additional support is being provided for those leaving care.

#### Council Tax Collection

South Northamptonshire always had an enviable reputation for the collection of Council Tax and we continued that in 2019/20 collecting 98.64%, the highest collection rate in all of Northamptonshire. We were the 27<sup>th</sup> best Authority in England, rising from 56<sup>th</sup> the previous year.

Ranking - England	Council Tax			NNDR		
	Rank 2018/19	Rank 2019/20	Change	Rank 2018/19	Rank 2019/20	Change
Corby	198	202	-4	181	202	-21
Daventry	134	122	12	118	72	46
East Northamptonshire	156	153	3	50	91	-41
Kettering	142	141	1	34	31	3
Northampton	254	243	11	210	189	21
<b>South Northamptonshire</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>-44</b>
Wellingborough	94	81	13	8	8	0
	% 2018/19	% 2019/20	Change	% 2018/19	% 2019/20	Change
Daventry	98.0%	97.8%	-0.1%	98.7%	98.9%	0.2%
Northampton	96.3%	96.0%	-0.3%	98.2%	97.9%	-0.2%
<b>South Northamptonshire</b>	<b>98.5%</b>	<b>98.64%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>99.1%</b>	<b>98.5%</b>	<b>-0.6%</b>
<b>Average West</b>	<b>97.3%</b>	<b>97.1%</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>	<b>98.4%</b>	<b>98.3%</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>

#### Government Grants

As a result of the pandemic business have been hit hard and the Council has fully played its part in providing financial support over the periods when businesses have been forced to close or had their trade significantly reduced during periods of restriction. This has required a significant amount of work as the Council need to balance the need to pass on the funds as soon as possible but also ensure that claims are valid. We have worked hard to establish procedures that include the appropriate checks but also make it simple for businesses to apply for them. Because there have been many

different types of grants, with different criteria, that are applicable for different time scales (for national restrictions, tier restrictions etc.) we have worked to streamline the process so that multiple grants can be applied for at once.

Grant funds are in addition to business rate support for business. Retail, hospitality and leisure businesses have benefit from not only zero business rates for 202/21 but lump sum grants of up to £25k. There are business rate reductions and further grant funding available for 2021/22.

To date some £4m has already been distributed to businesses in the area and this continues to grow week on week.

### **SNC Grants**

SNC, for many years, has been able to use 50% of its new homes bonus to support local organisation across the District. In 2020/21 we have distributed nearly £700k to a variety of communities. In total, over the course of the New Homes Bonus scheme SNC has been able to provide well over £5m in funding through our grants scheme.

### **New Homes Bonus**

Going forward into the Unitary, it is not proved financially viable to allow for this money to be donated to good causes and has had to be incorporated into the new Council's base budget. Next year will be the last year in which the scheme operates and during the course of the year the government will be consulting with Councils as to an alternative scheme.

### **Investment and Assets**

During the course of the year the Council has continued to invest in the District in a wide variety of ways. We have been able to fund the acquisition of the Co-op car park, refurbish the toilets and continue work on the Watermeadows in Towcester. We have also ensured that the toilet block in the centre of Brackley continues to be open, arranging the license from the County for continued use and ensuring that funding has been made available to complete a refurbishment of the facility.

In addition, we have been able to sell the Town Hall to Towcester Town Council to ensure its continued use at the Centre of the Town.

### **Financial Position**

Although we will not have any final accounts for South Northamptonshire until well after the elections the Council remains in good financial state, as it has been for many years. The last figures that are published will be the monitoring report for January 2021. This indicates that the forecast out-turn will be an underspend of £290k. This is very creditable given the additional costs that the Council has incurred over the year as a result of the pandemic.

## **Wellbeing & Housing**

### **Wellbeing**

#### **Community Resilience Hub**

Since the end of March 2020 the Healthy Communities Team has led South Northants District's Community Resilience Hub. The Hub responds to referrals passed through by the county Covid support hotline. So far 287 individuals have been referred to SNC's Community Resilience Hub to arrange appropriate help and ongoing support. Some individuals had multiple requests, generating 329 requests for help in total. The requests for help have included 162 food deliveries, 114 prescription collections, 25 supports with loneliness, 3 items of mail posted, 7 supports with computer problems and 18 other acts of support including transport to medical appointments. There are currently 300 registered volunteers. The Community Resilience Hub works in partnership with local organisations from the community and voluntary sector and couldn't have delivered this response without their valued support. Organisations currently supporting the Hub and actioning referrals are Daventry Volunteers, BRC, Ability Transport, NERC (referred by central cell), SNC Customer Services Team, Tessa Matthews - Social Prescribing Link Worker, Good Sam App, SNVB and Cherwell District Council. SNC's Community Resilience Hub is currently providing on-going support to 100 individuals.

**Ability Transport** stepped in to help with collection and delivery of vital food parcels. At the height of the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown our Healthy Communities Team were working flat out to support our most vulnerable and isolated residents through our Community Hub. The team were ensuring that support was given to every resident in need. Every day vital food parcels were coming in to the District and being delivered out to our residents, which was incredibly challenging. Brackley and Middleton Cheyney were struggling to get their food parcels delivered into the District from Milton Keynes. Nigel Hinch of Ability Community Transport, which is part funded by SNC, stepped in to support us.

### **Towcester Centre for Leisure Refurbishment**

Despite the leisure centre having to close due to Covid-19 restrictions the planning and preparation work for the refurbishment continued. South Northants Council funded the £1m refurbishment project which started in September 2020 and completed on schedule in February 2021. The refurbishment works include:

- refurbishment and refit of the wet changing rooms
- new and enlarged fully accessible changing room with hoist
- extension to the fitness suite, increasing square footage by 20%
- construction of the multipurpose studio, designed for yoga, pilates, meditation etc
- extension to the spinning room
- new reception area decoration and reception counter
- new flooring throughout the main areas of the centre
- high / low level painting and maintenance of the pool flume structure
- painting of poolside handrails and pool hall wall
- updating of dryside disabled toilet
- poolside hoist on site
- addressing all dilapidation work, the air handling units and the building management system

The leisure centre is now planning to re-open to members on the 12<sup>th</sup> April following Government guidance as part of a phased return to leisure and physical activity. Returning (and new) members will benefit from the high quality improvements delivered through the refurbishment programme.

### **Community Funding Grants**

South Northants Council has been supporting community projects and voluntary groups across the district for the past 6 years with financial funding. During this time £5,692,410 worth of grants have been awarded to over 270 projects. The grant awards have supported both small community projects and big scale projects such as new facilities.

Financial Year 2020-21

In total for the financial year 2020-21 we have awarded a total of £654,882.70 to 29 applicants. The breakdown of the awards can be seen below;

Applicant	Project Outline
Adstone Old School Village Hall	Energy reduction project
Deanshanger Parish Council	Community volunteers / Good neighbours
Eydon Community Sports Field	Lawn mower
Roade Village Hall & Playing Field Charity	Buggy access to playground
Towcester Area Door to Door	Community transport
Towcester Evening WI	Planting bluebells
Towcester Football Club	Junior Football Tournament 2021
Wappenham Parish Council	Millennium oak tree protection

Brackley Brownies	5th Brackley Brownies continuation of services
Stoke Bruerne Canal Partnership	Waymarking project
Boddington Good Neighbours	Good neighbours' setup
Yardley Youth Football Club	Youth football U9 & U11 winter training
Nether Heyford Playing Fields Association	Portable floodlights for Heyford Playing Fields
Greatworth Community Transport Association	Community minibus service
Ability CIC	Community transport
Boddington Parish Council	Recreational cycling in Boddington
Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	South Northamptonshire Advice Service
Daventry Contact	Provision to SNC
Maidford Parish Council	Renovation and repairs of Maidford Village Hall
Renew 169 Wellbeing Café	Mental health project (2 years)
South Northamptonshire Volunteer Bureau (SNVB)	Brackley area volunteer car service (BAVCS)
South Northamptonshire Youth Engagement (SNYE)	Youth provision and support (2 years)
Towcester Studio Band	Development plan 20/21
Harpole Youth Club	Toilet refurbishment
Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council	Village hopper community bus service
Northampton Mens Own Rugby Football Club	Dressing room refurbishment
Racing Minds CIC	Men's mental health support group
Re-Solv	Boosting wellbeing and community resilience – today and tomorrow
Wootton Grange Bowls Club	New equipment
South Northamptonshire Volunteer Bureau (SNVB)	Minibus
South Northamptonshire Volunteer Bureau (SNVB)	Rural Information Centre
Daventry Volunteer Centre	Happy at Home Project

### **Leisure and communities Section 106 developer contributions**

Work has progressed to support our local sports clubs and Town and Parish Councils to access SNCs allocation of S106 funding for leisure and communities. The following projects have had funds agreed and our Leisure Facilities and Contracts Officer continues to build a future pipeline of projects. Roade Football Club - £6,000, Middleton Cheney Academy, £11,000, Brackley Cricket Club - £67,000, Brackley Bowls Club £36,000, Mens Own Rugby Club - £19,000, Brackley Squash Club - £17,000 and Roade Library - £89,758.

### **Building Stronger Communities Strategy**

This Strategy was adopted by the Council in December 2020. The Strategy was co-produced and led by the Healthy Communities Team with input across SNC and from key partners including community and voluntary groups, Public Health, Northampton Borough Council and Daventry District Council. Supporting documents include seven Factsheets providing a detailed evidence base of data for South Northants. This includes a factsheet dedicated to the impact of Covid-19 and how the strategy aims to address this. The Strategy has four themes to deliver improved services to South Northants residents:

- People: Enable residents to live safe and healthy lives
- Engagement: Enable more residents to participate in building stronger communities
- Resilience: Build the capacity to deliver meaningful interventions for local communities
- Place: Create identity, culture and connection to the district

Key early pieces of work will look to build upon the support networks and address issues highlighted by the pandemic. There will also be an eye on the opportunities to upscale project delivery across the new West Northants Authority. The work focus will include:

- Reduce isolation and loneliness within our communities
- Expand involvement in volunteering and mentoring
- Address inequality in access to food and other essential resources
- Create better connected communities through improved community transport links.

The Healthy Communities Team and supporting Officers worked incredibly hard to develop this strategy to drive community development across our District. With our move into West Northants Council a communities strategy takes on an even more important role. This strategy will reflect the local needs of our residents and deliver local outcomes ensuring the needs of our residents are met and not lost during the transformation. The design of the strategy took a co-production approach, which has been important for the success of the strategy as we cannot deliver all the priorities alone. This has been delivered through three phases. Phase 1, during January and February this year stakeholder workshops, 1-1 conversations and small group conversations took place with our community and voluntary organisations and Parish & Town Councils. Phase 2 saw the theme focussed workshops with relevant community voluntary organisations. Due to the pandemic, Phase 3 was put on hold until July when a survey was launched, further 1-1 conversations were held and a Members workshop, this enabled stakeholders to tell us how they can contribute towards the objectives and give us their ideas for how we can deliver these. Officers consulted with Daventry District Council & Northampton Borough Council colleagues. They then consulted with our residents across our district and finalise the strategy.

### **Towcester Watermeadows Project**

The project work at Towcester Watermeadows has been broken down into 3 phases.

Phase 1 has been funded by a grant from the RDPE (Rural Development Programme for England).

This part of the project takes place inside the entrance to the Watermeadows on Northampton Road. Red Kite Network are an independent practice providing specialist landscape, ecology, green space and environment consultancy. This phase sees the creation of a gateway and welcome area with signage and historic information into the Watermeadows from Northampton Road. Here will be a children's play area and a picnic area. There will be new pathways to enable easy walking with pushchairs, wheelchairs and mobility scooters, and a decking area at the Bury Mound entrance. This work is scheduled to start in the next few weeks but is subject to the current covid lockdown, contractors ability to work and the supply of materials.

Phase 2 puts in a network of 2m wide bound Breedon gravel pathways and seating around the northern field for informal recreation, again giving a clear access for waking, pushchairs, wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

Phase 3, the southern field, is funded by a Water Environment Grant to support river habitat and flood alleviation improvements. The works have been informed by a feasibility study undertaken by Five Rivers Environmental Contracting. Five Rivers are specialist environmental contractors who deliver ecological mitigation works, habitat creation and mitigation, and habitat management services. This work will see the removal of the dilapidated weir in the River Tove and associated mitigation to the upstream river and work to create a small meander to the river in the southern field and some lowering of the river embankments. Focus is to preserve the natural habitats, management of the meadow and grassland, biodiversity and birdlife. This phase of river works are more complicated and require further consultation, we hope that work will start in the Autumn.

Our Healthy Communities Team are working in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver as much of our proposed Action Plan, which sits within our Sports & Leisure Strategy and our Stronger Communities Strategy, as possible. Currently activity delivery is very much dependent on Covid restrictions. The Team have written an Activity Action Plan to compliment the Watermeadows project. This plan draws together a co-ordinated delivery of activity across a wide range of interests



to maximise the overall of the Watermeadows. Activity includes physical activity sessions including the popular Park Run, community events, arts projects, historical and biological information sessions. Delivery of the Activity Plan, which will be led by the Healthy Communities Team is on hold until Covid restrictions allow activity to progress. The team continues to keep communicating with key partner organisations who will support the delivery and will input into the communications plan to ensure effective promotion of activity.

The Watermeadows remain open to the public during the current Covid lockdown for people to exercise in, walk their dogs and enjoy while observing social distancing.

### **Delivering 'Active Lifestyles' through the pandemic**

*Supporting children not in mainstream education through home education programme.* Since April 2020, 17 sessions have been delivered to a total of 31 children. The sessions have averaged 13 children, with overall participation totalling 224 attendances. Due to Covid-19 online content has also been delivered and weekly sessions have continued through Zoom. Sessions are set to return to face to face delivery from 31 March 2021.

*Online activities.* As well as sessions being delivered in a virtual way to regular participants of the Youth Activator Sessions, Kieren produced a total of thirty daily challenges for the community to take part in during Lockdown 1. He has also used the Playwaze app and encouraged families to download and join in challenges set during February 21 half term. We had a total of 26 members register.

**School holiday activity programmes.** The Covid 19 restrictions and government guidance have meant we are unable to provide our activity programme through the school holidays for children and teenagers. The Healthy Communities team working on a range of virtual activities and sports to keep children and teenagers active and engaged during the holidays.

There are lots of ideas and information on our website to help children and adults keep active at home.

### **Arts Development**

Because of restrictions on physical activities, which stopped all cinema, live performances and Taking Part workshops, 'development' has been more about finding alternative ways for arts groups to keep going, so work has mainly been keeping the networks active, learning new ways of communicating and planning for the future in a very flexible way. The key achievements through the past 12 months include the adaptation of the monthly Arts Events Calendar to provide frequent Arts News updates on resources and useful information for the voluntary and professional arts sector (email and web pages plus social media), facilitation of creativity packs distribution to needy families with young children during the first lockdown.

Sue Carverhill, SNCs Arts Development Officer did a fantastic job putting together The Big Green Draw to get our district drawing and she has been extra busy this week being interviewed by BBC Radio Northampton and the Brackley Community Radio to spread the word. The Big Green Draw Festival is a worldwide celebration of drawing, that takes place each year to promote the universal language of drawing. The theme of this year's festival was 'A Climate of Change'. Sue gave our residents the opportunity to take part by creating a '**Postcard for the Future**'. Residents were invited to create and contribute pictures with a few words to express their vision for the future, either locally or globally. The pandemic has impacted people in many negative ways, but the reflective and expressive act of observing and drawing or painting is very beneficial for children and adults, especially when combined with time spent in natural environments. The contributions were collected and shared and displayed in the front windows of The Forum and also online.

[Northants Cultural Education Partnership](#) in collaboration with SNC and Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust hosted a 'free' song writing and wellbeing course for 7 -12 year olds with

additional learning needs, in February. The sessions will take place on Zoom with singer, songwriter and vocal coach Sophie Garner. Participants received a copy of [Sophie's Creative Songwriting Journal](#) ahead of the online sessions. Over the five days everyone created their own original song and learnt about how singing can help our mental and physical health.

South Northants Art Trail in October saw all 37 venues taking part. The event was well adapted with social distancing and the opportunity to book specific time slots to see the artists and their work. This insured the control of numbers of people at the private studios.

**Computer support for school children.** The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the divide that exists between those young people who have their own computer and those who do not have access to one at home. Our IT team have risen to the challenge of covid and already offered up 20 redundant laptops for use by local families in desperate need of IT equipment while they home schooled their children during lockdown. Normally laptops would be taken by an IT company and reconditioned for onward sale. Our two IT Service Desk staff have reformatted the laptops and reinstalled Windows 10 so that they are ready for use. SNC identified an urgent need for 200 computers where children are not able to participate fully in lessons due to not having appropriate equipment at home. It is great news that SNC has been able to play a small but important part in this project. So far, the first ex-SNC laptops have been delivered to Blakesley School and Kislingbury School. These computers will definitely help make home learning a little bit easier for those families that need it. This work is ongoing.

#### **SNVB**

The SNVB (South Northants Volunteer Bureau) have had to adapt their service offer since March 2020 as many of their regular programmes have been restricted by Covid-19. The volunteer bureau has supported a new influx of volunteers who have offered their time during the pandemic. The mini bus service is one example of how SNVB has adapted, using their mini bus to provide a vital service in collecting and distributing food parcels to vulnerable residents in our district. South Northants Council has committed to continue financial support to SNVB for the first 12 months of the new West Northants Authority.

#### **Parish and Town Council Clerks/Chairmen's Forum**

The Healthy Communities Team have continued to communicate with Parish and Town Councils throughout the pandemic. Three virtual forums have been delivered as a way of keeping Clerks and Chairmen updated. Local Government Reform has been a constant agenda item. Other updates have included The Building Stronger Communities Strategy, Planning, 2021 Census, Housing Services, SNC Community Resilience Hub and emergency Covid support to residents. The Healthy Communities Team will continue to organise the virtual forum until face to face meetings are allowed.

#### **Parish newsletter**

Since going into National Lockdown mid-March 2020 the Healthy Communities Team has continued to keep in touch with Town and Parish Councils through a regular newsletter. Fortnightly newsletters from April 2020 moved to monthly from September and include important updates including the Community Resilience Hub and SNC's emergency response to Covid-19, local and national funding opportunities, housing support services, economic support for local businesses, opportunities to take part in physical and wellbeing activity, planning updates and climate change news. In total 12 newsletters have been sent out to Town and Parish Councils through the year.

## Housing

### **Rough sleepers**

At the beginning of the Covid pandemic the Housing Teams reacted immediately to support the rough sleepers in our district. Officers worked with County colleagues supporting the county response to rough sleepers to ensure everyone was given temporary accommodation. Work is now taking place to outline what the future offer will be for rough sleepers. The Housing Team have compiled a report regarding SNCs temporary accommodation options, which details the current position. The ultimate aim will be to support those who have been sleeping rough to access longer term housing solutions in order to resolve their homelessness. This approach will differ depending on the specific needs and requirements of the individuals and conversations are currently taking place as to possible housing solutions.

**Free school meals.** Our Housing Options & Strategy Team are working with partners in the West Northants locality to support the roll out of Free school meal vouchers for eligible pupils across Northamptonshire through the school holidays. Assistance has been provided in the form of supermarket vouchers distributed by schools.

### **Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) provision and its provision as we go into West Northants.**

The grant funding SNC receives for DFG's is ringfenced, therefore it cannot be spent on anything else. This will continue when SNC transfer to West Northants Council. Any remaining DFG monies at the end of this financial year will be transferred to WNC and be ringfenced for DFGs within the current SNC district. The DFG grant available for this financial year was £699,781. This included a carry forward from the previous financial year. The anticipated spend as of December 2020 was £648,000, however it is likely that the level of expenditure may reduce, any unspent monies will be transferred to a South Northants locality DFG pot within WNC.

### **Customer Services & IT**

A year ago I wrote that in April we would split our customer services teams from Cherwell. In fact we were in an early trial of running this service in March 2020 when Covid – 19 ground everything to a halt.

We could not have foreseen we would go into the Covid-19 Lockdown just as Council Tax bills were going out to our residents and business and the Election for the new Shadow West Northants Council due in May 2020 would be postponed until 6<sup>th</sup> May this year.

The Forum was closed but our staff were incredible and laptops were provided and we were able to set up the telephone service through laptops and customer services were fully operational in our staff's own homes which was an amazing achievement.

With our communities unable to work normally access to information was essential and our website came into its own and whether you called emailed or went on line you were able to get the information and services you needed.

Our Customers services team have been exceptional with a consistence answering of over 94% of all telephone calls received in less than 30 seconds,

I am delighted this team will be with us in the new West Northants Council which starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> April, it has been a roller coaster journey this last year.

We were able to maintain and deliver to our residents our quarterly SNC review which was so important in keeping you informed of what SNC was doing in the district.

I am proud of the legacy we are leaving for our South Northamptonshire residents as we form the new West Northants Council it is good to know we will be able to deliver even better services to you all as we will now have all functions of responsibility which in future means only one point of contact for anything you need to do rather than before when having to contact either the District Council or the County Council.

For the Council continuing to operate we have all adapted well to online meetings and I am delighted with the way Members and Officers have ensured the legal functions of the Council have been delivered, Zoom has been very useful but as we all know a meeting in person is what we will all look forward to which we hope will be able to do in a few months' time.

### **Waste and recycling**

We are very proud that we were able to continue a full waste and recycling service throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Thanks must go to all our staff, in particular the crews, who worked on despite the difficult situation. During that period there were unusual fluctuations in the amount of waste and recycling collected. This has been put down to so many staying at home, where more food was consumed than usual and a greater use of takeaway meals and home deliveries. There were also many households which, at the start of the lockdown, took the opportunity to have clear outs, as well as a large amount of DIY work carried out resulting in extra tonnage. Probably and mainly for the same reason, fly tipping increased. Waste and recycling tonnages increased in all areas - garden, blue bin recycling, black bin rubbish and food.

Some of the vehicles have been replaced with new ones and the collection vehicles with pods will be phased out by the end of the year. Instead, the new vehicles have more capacity with dedicated vehicles being used instead for food collections. This reduces costs and is more efficient.

One of the first council staff Lateral Flow Testing stations in the county has been set up at the depot. This offers rapid Covid tests to all SNC staff that cannot do their jobs entirely through home-working and aims to identify any staff who are asymptomatic.

Going forward, the Tove Depot operation in Towcester is ready to become part of the new West Northamptonshire Council from 1<sup>st</sup> April and residents will still receive the same service and options as before.

### **Environmental Health**

The last year has been very tough for everyone working in all areas of Environmental Health. The opening and closing of public facing services such as retail, pubs and restaurants in a Covid secure manner is one side of the work that has had its own difficulties, including monitoring the lawful operation of premises during regulated periods. The takeaway sector has been particularly busy with the added situation of new businesses starting up to serve this enlarged market. With restrictions on visits, assessing and monitoring these businesses has been especially hard. The team has also been involved to a greater extent in the Covid work providing the infection prevention and control response to outbreaks in care homes, schools and workplaces. The team has assisted, the county with Track and Trace, where South Northants residents have been difficult to contact. They have worked with the police on joint compliance issues and also provided mutual aid support to other parts of the county, where Covid cases were at a more severe level.

### **Licensing**

Like the Environmental Health team, their licensing counterparts have been working with Covid in addition to their usual work. They are working side by side with their Environmental Health colleagues, monitoring the situation to ensure the rules are not being breached. If that was not enough, they are further working with their colleagues in Daventry and Northampton, with the goal of harmonising licensing policies for the new unitary. The most difficult area being taxi licensing.

### **Moat Lane**

The Towcester Moat Lane Regeneration Scheme has almost reached completion and is arguably SNC's greatest legacy. The result is the transformation of an unsightly part mainly wasteland adjacent to the town centre into desirable housing, an historic site, new shops, and the acquisition of the Watermeadows as high quality public open space. On top of this is the building of the Forum civic building and acquisition of no less than four car parks, three of which are free. This is something very few local councils could have even dreamt of. It should be remembered that when Conservative-run SNC put the proposal to do this to council as far back as 2007, the political opposition claimed it would be a disaster and could not work. They have been proved very wrong. All that is now left is to finish the building work on the corner of Watling Street and Northampton Road, where flats and shops will complete the building part of the project and

significant improvements to access and wildlife habitat will further enhance the Watermeadows very soon.

## **The Economy 2020 – 2021**

Due to the economic competitiveness of South Northamptonshire, this area has been able to tackle the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and still embrace opportunities for growth.

Despite the number of residents that have been made redundant, unemployment levels remain far below the national average and have consistently been the lowest in the County throughout the year. New businesses continue to start-up and investment in the District remains healthy.

South Northamptonshire has the highest percentage of residents skilled to NVQ Level 4+ within the County, far exceeding the national average. Broadband coverage has exceeded 97%, despite delays presented due to the pandemic. Superfast Northamptonshire has ambitious plans to increase coverage across the County to deliver the original target of 99% coverage by March 2021 as soon as possible.

### **Local Successes**

There have been many successes in supporting and recovering the local economy:

- From the first day of lockdown last March, the SNC Job Club evolved into a virtual service that was available to all residents online. As shown in the attached Employment Support infographic document, there has been an extensive range of new and innovative functions to support residents into employment or start their own business.
- Support was provided to the SNC Revenues and Benefits Team to disseminate COVID-19 grants, as well as offer guidance and advice. A new section of the website was developed, providing accessible and clear information regarding Government support and guidance to allow employers to understand and access what they needed as soon as possible.
- In November, SNC sourced a COVID-19 Impact Assessment to identify the effects of the pandemic on the local economy and consider interventions to restore the local economy. This document is available through the SNC Economic Growth Team. The report did identify at the time of publication that only 5 local employers had faced insolvency, while nationally there was an average of 18 insolvencies per local authority across the same period.
- A new resource, the SNC Business Toolbox, was developed to help unemployed residents start their own business and existing employers to plan for their future growth, source funding and evaluate risks and opportunities. The Toolbox is vital for local employers to assess their business health and has been designed to provide a shortcut to economic recovery and creating additional new employment opportunities.
- The SNC Economic Growth Team set up a *Think Local & Support Small Businesses* campaign to serve a range of purposes: providing local solutions for residents to buy essentials, promoting small businesses across the County (and beyond) and to foster an ethos of keeping everything local. Aligning with the messages of Small Business Saturday, this campaign championed a community spirit between small businesses and consumers, recognising that as a District, everyone succeeds through the growth of the local economy.
- The long-awaited arrival of Sainsbury's opening in Brackley took place on 25 November, which included robust plans for community engagement and supporting the local workforce.

The SNC Job Club was a delivery partner and ensured over 90% of the new employment opportunities were taken up locally.

- Through a partnership with the Motorsport Industry Association (MIA), throughout the year, South Northamptonshire has been promoted as the ideal place for businesses and employment within the motorsport and automotive industries.
- The SNC Economic Growth Team has been innovative in its approach to supporting the local economy, including a robust place-marketing strategy to enhance the reputation of this District to a local, national and global level. The Team has used social media and online platforms to promote positive news and support to the masses. Throughout this year, total views of their content have been an incredible 640,000. This is an average of over 50,000 views of the Team's publicity per month.

### **Next Year and Beyond**

Although things are yet to be decided for West Northamptonshire Council, the vision has already been made that West Northamptonshire is great place to live, work, visit and thrive. Recent correspondence states:

*"We have ambitious plans for West Northamptonshire to make this area a great place in which to live and work and where businesses can prosper...We aim to recover and grow the economy, playing a full role as one of the largest authorities within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, while establishing strong and safe communities with good housing. We want residents to have the best prospects and the skills to succeed, and for children to have the best start in life."*

The SNC Economic Growth Team, once they have transferred into the new authority, will continue to champion businesses and economic growth. South Northamptonshire will continue to grow its economy:

- Panattoni Park in South Northamptonshire, home to three buildings let to Eddie Stobart who has already moved in, will see further units delivered at 250,000 sq. ft, 380,000 sq. ft and 430,000 sq. ft, totalling over another 1 million sq. ft at the park. Work has already begun on the first two of these units and the final will begin towards the end of 2021.
- The development of High Speed 2 going through South Northamptonshire will create a wide array of employment and upskilling opportunities for the District. Support staff working in planning, design, finance and administration will use the HS2 office in Brackley. The new Brackley operation will also have an induction centre for workers joining the wider HS2 programme. In total, over 120 new posts are being created and are set to support the area's economic recovery in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.
- SEGRO Logistics Park Northampton Gateway (SLPNG), approved by Central Government, is a large-scale Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) of up to 5,000,000 square foot located adjacent to J15 of the M1. Construction of this major development has already begun which will attract quality employers into the District and create up to 7,500 jobs. The SNC Economic Growth Team is Chairing an Employment and Skills Group for this site to ensure this development has the greatest impact for the local area and local people.
- Government has announced a new Spatial Framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, which will have the status of national planning and transport policy, providing a strategic framework for local planning. South Northamptonshire is at the heart of the OxCam Arc, an

area that provides over 2 million jobs and is home to over 3.7 million people. The Arc currently generates over £110 billion to the UK economy every year and the plan is to almost double this to £200 billion by 2050.

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### NCC Report for Parishes

Apart from a couple of Parishes meeting in April, most annual Parish meetings will be taking place after day one of the new council!

That we have got to this point after the testing year we have had is quite something. Before writing this update I had a look at the last and my, what a difference a year makes. It was written in February, just as the news was beginning to be dominated by the virus. Last February blueprints for the operation of the services of the new Council were being developed and the ambition was for significant transformation in the way services were delivered – to improve the customer experience and, of course, save money. The impact of Covid, and the need for council staff to become deeply involved in the response hampered much of the preparation, and it was feared that the most basic ‘safe and legal’ delivery would be all that could be achieved. However, significant ambition has returned and major transformation in ways of working began in Q3 2020 in adult services, the Children’s Trust was established in November and most services have been split in two – unless there is a good reason not to.

In addition to splitting services from NCC across the two councils, we have had to combine and incorporate the services offered by SNC, Daventry and Northampton Borough. This work stream has shown that there are in excess of 1000 different services offered across the council.

**We will be the 5<sup>th</sup> largest Unitary in England after Cornwall, Buckinghamshire, County Durham and Wiltshire**

**Have a net budget of £326,570,000**

**Have a staff headcount of 2295**

**Serving a population of 432,000**

One of the major issues in establishing a new Council, has been preparing its first budget and setting Council Tax. Of course with three different local councils and a county council there were 3 different council tax rates. It is a legal requirement that by the start of year 8 we must all be harmonised and charged the same band rates. There is very little leeway in how to achieve this, however it was agreed that it should be done over 3 years with a consistent adjustment across each sovereign council until parity is reached.

	Average Band D Council Tax 2020/21	Average Band D Council Tax 2021/22	Change (£)	Change (%)
Daventry	£1,451.56	£1,536.55	£84.99	5.83%
Northampton	£1,516.26	£1,584.20	£67.94	4.46%
South Northamptonshire	£1,481.75	£1,559.80	£78.05	5.25%
Average	£1,491.94	£1,566.39	£74.45	4.99%



We have had to raise Council Tax by 1.99% and the Social Care Precept by 3%. 2/3 of council income is now made up of Council Tax (compared to just over 1/3 just eight years ago), and, while the new Council will seek to deliver more, for less, the average Band D council tax in West Northamptonshire (excluding Police, Fire and Parish) is £1566 vs an average for English shire unitaries of £1618.

To assist working age households struggling to pay Council Tax – The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme has been set at 20%. Although this is higher than the 8.5% the poorest households were paying before, we have again, had to harmonise the rates across the West. Prior to Unitary, the poorest households in Northampton Borough had a minimum payment of 31% and Daventry 20%. There are some 10,000 households in Northampton paying this higher figure and they have seen their maximum contribution decrease. In Daventry 1800 claimant households have not seen any change, but of course households some of the 1800 households in SNC will have seen their minimum payments increase. In recognition of this I proposed, and the Council agreed that a Discretionary Hardship Scheme be set up to help those households who have seen their LCTRS awards leave them worse off and are in the most need.

In recognition of our role as Corporate Parents and in order to help young adults leaving the care system at 18 I have also overseen the establishment of a Care Leavers Assistance Package which will see Council Tax due for these youngsters potentially eliminated altogether until the age of 25, subject to various situations.

Over the last 3 years the finances of the County Council been brought under control. Following a transformation of and by the finance team, NCC has gone from a position of negative reserves in 2018, to in 2021, bequeathing reserves of c£48m to West Northamptonshire, as well as a year of delivering services within the expected budget envelope. This profound change of ethos will serve our residents well as we embark on our journey as a new unitary council in the heart of England.

As well as dealing with Council work in the wider sphere, I have done a number of items of case work for individuals, whether dealing with planning issues, dealing with the Social Care system and trying to get particular road defects repaired. I sit on the Adoption Panel which approves both the capacity to adopt children as well as confirms approval of matches of adults with children.

In particular I have secured the £250,000 which has been spent on the initial preparation of the works for the Farthinghoe Bypass and I have secured the commitment of £1m by the former County which now sits in the West Northamptonshire budget for the final planning and preparation for the bypass. This investment totalling £1,250,000 will, when complete, ensure there is an 'oven ready plan' to present for central government funding to build out the bypass. A cabinet paper is due to go to the first post election cabinet of the West Northamptonshire Council, with the outcome and analysis of the public consultation and the next steps.

## **Report of Parochial Church Council of St. Michael and All Angels Farthinghoe**

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The report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 is a very different report from ones in previous years due to the covid pandemic.

Like all of our lives, everything in the church life has been affected - our church services, our ability to meet and visit and to fundraise in a way never seen in recent times.

Most of 2020 (and currently ongoing) was taken over by the COVID-19 crisis and Government regulations meant that we closed the church on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 and did not reopen until 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2020. We then closed again after Christmas 2020 and re-opened on March 2021.

For re-opening, we have been under detailed guidance and regulations both from the Government and from the Church of England. Services have been shortened, and sometimes we have had to limit the number of people who were able to attend worship.

We would like to thank everyone who has attended a service during these restrictions and for adhering to the regulations.

We were able to have our Remembrance Sunday service outside, on a cold but lovely day, which added to the solemnity of the occasion.

Our income has been severely reduced, we have not been able to have any fundraising (no fete) and no monthly coffee mornings.

On a positive note, the south aisle roof, following the lead theft in 2018, has been replaced. This was done during June 2020. Villagers may remember some rather enthusiastic pigeons who continued to set off the roof alarm! Thankfully they seemed to move somewhere else after a week or so.

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard, some visible and others less so. We thank all members of the PCC who have served in the year without whom we could not function. Particular thanks must go to Mrs Ruth Dashwood who has just recently resigned from the PCC after more than 40 years service.

We are very lucky to have a team of volunteers who get involved in cutting and tending the graveyard. Thanks also to those who have cleaned, tidied and polished the inside of the church especially after long closures.

We are very grateful to the work done by our church wardens, for all the work that Rosemary Jarvis does in the church and the community and for Lisa Wenmouth for playing the organ in our services. And not forgetting the congregation who continue to offer support and take part in our services.

We hope that we will soon be able to go back to our coffee mornings and we are meeting in May when we hope to be able to agree a date for our Fete this year.

### **Seven Sisters Tree Site**

The Tree Site was created in 2000 as both a visual amenity for the residents of Farthinghoe village to enjoy, but also as a place for the deposit of the ashes of any resident of the village or near relative who have died.

The site is financially supported by a Stewardship Members Group; membership is open to all at an annual subscription of £10.

There is a post for memorial plaques (we are currently awaiting a new post, delayed because of Covid)

The site is kept tidy by John Deeley and helpers.

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FARTHINGHOE ALMSHOUSES

The trustees of The Charity of Thomas Amphlett are pleased to confirm that the three Almshouses in Farthinghoe remain occupied.

Our commitment to maintaining and up-dating the Almshouses is ongoing which we hope provides the Residents with comfortable living.

As always a big thank you to the trustees, who are all voluntary: Andrew Bowyer, Victor Tolchard and Merry Wadlow.

We would also like to thank the tradesmen who have continued to attend at the Almshouses in these very difficult times due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

For further information, please find details on the Farthinghoe Parish Council website, or contact the chairman, Jenny Forbes on 01295 711942.

March 2021

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April 2021

Farthinghoe Church Piece Allotments Report

All allotment plots are currently rented. One plot is known to become available from September 2021 and there is already one person on the waiting list.

Using the Parish Council contacts as a means of contacting the allotment trustees is proving effective.

The Trustees were pleased to report that despite Covid restrictions all rents were able to be collected, by various means, and it was felt that the allotments had been a major source of release for many during the lockdown.

Work on the bus shelter has not, so far, had a negative impact on the allotments nearby.

Sadly, several sheds were broken into earlier in the year, some damaged, and gardening tools taken. There is little or no evidence as to who was responsible.

Despite such setbacks, the allotments continue to provide an exceptional and much valued resource to local residents.

Ruth Brittain  
Henry Bankes-Jones  
Co-trustees

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## South Northants Neighbourhood Teams



### Annual Report March 2021

The last 12 months has presented some interesting challenges for Police and public alike. COVID19 has reshaped the structure of our lives and how we interact as a community. Community heroes have emerged bringing light to some dark times for many vulnerable persons. Restrictions have been ever changing and this has caused confusion and misinterpretation on occasion. Police now receive a vast number of reports of persons or businesses acting in apparent breach of regulations. Each of these reports has to be assessed and often officers are deployed to make checks. On occasion these reports are found to be incorrect but made with good intention. Others have been malicious however there have been a number of situations within South Northants where breaches have been identified and fixed penalty notices issued.

As more people are remaining at home and exercising locally there have been many more chances to interact with local officers. There have been no additional officers brought into the South Northants area due to COVID however people are seeing more of us due to the circumstances of the lockdowns. Northants Police has committed to increasing the establishment of Neighbourhood Policing Teams and as such there will be additional Police Constables posted to South Northants over the coming months in order to continue the problem solving work that the team currently undertakes. These officers will each take ownership for smaller defined areas which will increase their visibility and accountability to the larger public. The teams based at Brackley and Towcester will continue to provide sector-wide coverage in support of each other however communities will benefit from having specific named officers as their points of contact.

Over the last year Policing Priority surveys have continued to highlight that theft from vehicles and drugs use/supply are the most significant areas of concern for most people. As such these are the issues that you can expect the South Northants Neighbourhood Teams (NPTs) to be working on as a priority. Another topic that features frequently is 'Police visibility', especially within rural Communities. The increase in establishment of Neighbourhood Officers will seek to address this concern and allow officers to work more closely with key partners and agencies in tackling anti-social behaviour and crime. There also continues to be interest in parishes sponsoring their own Police Community Support Officer (PCSO).

A sponsored PCSO is paid for by the parish and their sole responsibility is for that parish area. This means that the officer will focus their daily activities on issues and concerns as identified by that Community that are suitable for Police intervention. The officer works as part of the larger Neighbourhood Team and as such can rely on their team colleagues to also be involved in solving more significant issues that may arise within the area. If you would like more information regarding sponsoring a PCSO please contact the team. We already have a number of sponsored PCSO posts around the county that can provide examples of the effectiveness of the scheme.

Repeated national lockdown has created differing levels of demand for Policing within the county. Behaviour trends have changed and opportunities for acquisitive criminal activity have reduced by virtue of people working from home or being subject to restrictions on movements. There have been increased reports of anti-social behaviour in locations previously identified as vulnerable and also in some new locations as young people seek to let off steam. Your local Neighbourhood Team gather information from active reporting of these situations and adapt their patrol plan to cover these locations. As you might imagine the summer months and an easing of restrictions brought a significant number of issues sometimes leading to community tensions played out over local social media. Higher priority locations were subject to a partnership working approach and this will continue in anticipation of spring and summer 2021. Towcester town now has some CCTV cameras managed by Northampton Borough Council and accessible by Police. These have already paid dividends in identifying persons involved in criminal and anti-social behaviour who are now subject to legal interventions.

Team members will monitor local social media sites where they can and often note comments regarding a lack of Police in an area or that a crime or anti-social behaviour would have been prevented if there were more Police about. We have also noted comments such as 'there's no Police so why bother reporting it'. All communities have a Neighbourhood Policing Team. Some teams are bigger than others due to area trends and demographics but all are available to tackle issues identified as an area of concern by the community. Many issues go unreported and as such Police are not aware. You have an opportunity to shape Policing activity by reporting the issues that affect you; including those daily ongoing situations that are considered as anti-social behaviour. If you are not telling Police that there is a problem in your part of the community then our resources are likely to be focused elsewhere where an issue has been identified and reported.

Your Neighbourhood Teams are based within the Community at Brackley and Towcester Police Stations and are often the first port of call for an emergency as the closest Police resource. This will always take priority especially where there is a risk to life. The teams also have a wealth of other responsibilities in respect of safeguarding vulnerable people, working with educational establishments, crime investigation and intelligence gathering. The team are dedicated problem solvers and will seek to address long-term issues which range from low level neighbour disputes, persistent anti-social behaviour to larger volume crimes.

Crime and anti-social behaviour will always happen due to constantly changing social and economic factors but we can be better prepared to fight it as a cohesive community. Effective community cohesion may be achieved via; public consultation (Independent Advisory Groups, Policing Priority surveys etc), the identification of capable guardians and community champions (Emergency Services, Neighbourhood Watch, Street Watch, clubs and organisations) and partnership working with a problem solving approach. You can join and/or support the people that work within your Community and help us make the area less attractive to criminals.

As a team we use social media (Twitter: **@SthNorthantsNPT** and Facebook: '**Daventry and South Northants Neighbourhood Policing Team**') and Neighbourhood Alert in order to inform you about crime and incidents relevant to your area and some of the work that the team undertake. Unfortunately there are a lot of aspects of our work that we cannot report back on due to the vulnerabilities of the persons involved. You are also able to follow the work of our Rural Crime Team via Twitter: **@hutch472 & @NorPolRural**

**Neighbourhood Alert** is an email messaging system that all Schools, Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Watch and community members can sign up to. In registering your email address you will receive up to-date information regarding crimes, policing activity and crime prevention advice. You can sign up to the Neighbourhood Alert Messaging System at: [www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk](http://www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk) Towcester, Brackley and Deanshanger currently have Street Watch schemes. Street Watch is the equivalent of a mobile Neighbourhood Watch. It can cover the entire Community and members help tackle issues such as; vandalism, anti-social behaviour, drug abuse and dog fouling. If you have a spare couple of hours per month and are interested in helping your community and joining your local Street Watch scheme please contact a member of the Neighbourhood Policing team.

If you wish to have up-to-date crime statistics for your area then we recommend that you visit: <https://www.police.uk/>

Should you wish to discuss a particular issue that is of concern to you or meet a member of your Neighbourhood Policing Team then please contact either team via:

[NT-SouthNorthantsBrackley@pnn.police.uk](mailto:NT-SouthNorthantsBrackley@pnn.police.uk) or [NT-SouthNorthantsTowcester@pnn.police.uk](mailto:NT-SouthNorthantsTowcester@pnn.police.uk)

**PLEASE DO NOT REPORT CRIMES VIA THESE EMAIL ADDRESSES**

Reporting an issue or crime to the Police can be made in a number of ways. This includes ringing 101 or online. Northants Police's new website [also](#) offers a reporting system for

- A road traffic incident
- Missing person – no immediate harm
- Terrorist activity
- Fingerprints appointments – this could be asked for when travelling abroad
- Hate Crime/ Incident



So that your report can be managed as quickly as possible, it's important to consider the following information and have it ready to provide:

- the date and time the crime happened
- the location, such as address or road name along with the town or village
- a description of any people involved
- the details of any witnesses or suspects
- if you think there's any other evidence such as forensic evidence or mobile phone footage
- if there is clear CCTV footage of the offence being committed

The above reporting tool can be reached via:

<https://www.northants.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

### Useful Links

Northamptonshire Police Website: <http://www.northants.police.uk/>

Check if a vehicle is taxed or untaxed and report if necessary: <https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-tax>

Useful link for all matters related to driving: <http://think.direct.gov.uk/>

Please use this link to support your children's safety: <http://talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk/>

This link will provide you with useful information to help protect yourself from scams: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/check-if-something-might-be-a-scam/>

Trading Standards – Advice and help for consumers: [Contacting Northamptonshire Trading Standards](#) Contact Crime Stoppers anonymously about crime: <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Fearless - a site where young people can access non-judgmental information and advice about crime: <https://www.fearless.org/>

Report to South Northants Council - Fly tipping, dog fouling, Litter, noise pollution and other issues: [www.southnorthants.gov.uk](http://www.southnorthants.gov.uk)

Advice on boundary disputes with neighbours: <http://www.rics.org/uk/knowledge/consumer-guides/boundary-disputes-guide/>

Street Doctor – reporting Highways issues: <http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/northamptonshire-highways/roads-andstreets/Pages/report-highway-problem.aspx>

**Thank you from South Northants Neighbourhood Policing Teams**



## **Dashwood Playpark**

25April2021

The enhanced Playpark has now been open for 6 years and remains a valuable asset for the Village. It is lovely to see youngsters enjoying the facility.

We have, unfortunately, had complaints regarding inconsiderate parking, mostly by families visiting the village, and about dogs accompanying families into the Playpark.

We have invested in the purchase and installation of some bollards which we hope will stop parking directly in front of the Playpark gate. We have also enlisted the support of the local Community Police to include the Playpark in their regular patrol routine to notify dangerous parkers of their responsibilities.

New "NO DOGS" signs have been purchased and will be installed in the near future. We trust visitors will heed the signs. The restriction for dogs being allowed in the Playpark is purely to protect the children and avoid them being chased by dogs or from disease caused by contact with foetus.

Every year we have a Health and Safety check on the condition of the equipment and grounds. The main item in the most recent report suggested that a "top up" of the safety bark should be undertaken.

Your Parish Council purchased a considerable quantity of bark at a cost in excess of £700.00, and the bark was distributed by members of your Parish Council gratefully assisted by Jane Jarvis along with Dave & Pippa Clayton.

CLlr John Grant