

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

### **Annual Parish Meeting 6 April 2023**

A very warm welcome to you all.

I am pleased to Report that the Parish Council, despite the economical pressures affecting everyone and, under the excellent guidance of our Financial Officer, Mrs Louise Goldsmith, the PC has managed to prepare a precept budget to accommodate our anticipated expenditure for 2022/23, whilst keeping the residents' contribution at the same level as has been achievable over the since 2017. To prevent the increased burden on our residents, at this difficult time, we are confident that we can address any shortfall from our savings.

Along with the rest of the UK, Addington lit their beacon on Thursday 2 June, at 21.10, for the start of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. **Provided light refreshments, Jubilee pies cooked by West Malling Golf Club and Prosecco** enabled residents to begin the celebrations in style. Despite the weather on 4 June, the Village Working Committee welcomed many residents to the Jubilee celebrations. Unfortunately, because of the wind, the bouncing castle/assault course could not be deployed but children were able to enjoy creative activities with Freya, St Margaret's Church provided an amazing cake and coffee service, music, by Gary Briley, played as residents enjoyed the bar in the Sports Pavilion and The Angel's mobile Pimms bar, whilst enjoying the provided BBQ, cooked by Andy Rimmer, Cricket Club. The Halliday-Sadlers manfully encouraged residents and children to join in a fun rounders match. The day finished with a very successful Barn Dance. A huge thank you to the Village Jubilee Committee, led by Brian Taylor, for all their hard work in achieving a memorable day and obtaining a Lottery grant to enable the event to be mostly self-funded.

Volunteers: The Diamond Jubilee, Village Hall Management and maintenance, maintenance of the recreation ground and childrens' playground, Sports' Pavilion Management, Tony Leach our Tree Warden and Parish Council, all volunteers. Residents quietly 'doing their bit'; picking up litter, walking footpaths, looking out for their neighbours. A community like Addington could not function without these volunteers that go above and beyond to allow others to enjoy this beautiful historic village. If, you love your village and want it to continue as the village you chose to live in, please give consideration as to how you could volunteer to enable Addington to continue with its attractive assets. Give a thought as to how you could volunteer. Consider getting involved with the BigHelpOut Initiative, on 8 May, as part of the Coronation weekend.

Our next 'event' will be the King's Coronation on 6 May. The Parish Council has rented a 6.5m x 3.5m outdoor screen to enable residents to bring a picnic and enjoy the streamed Coronation with their friends and family. In the case of inclement weather, the village hall will be open and coffee, tea and cakes will be provided by the Village Hall Committee. The Sports Pavilion's bar will also be open and BBQ food will be

available to purchase. A soft ball cricket match, between Trottiscliffe and Addington is planned for after the main events on screen are concluded.

Other issues from our Agendas: the PC continues its pursuit, with the support of Kent County Councillor Sarah Hohler, to reduce the speed on the A20 from Wrotham traffic lights to the crossroads. At present there are speed surveys in place to help determine what measures can be taken.

You may also recall that the PC assiduously pursued KCC and the bus companies to keep our local bus, especially the bus operating in the morning and evening for our children. Unfortunately, with all the financial restraints KCC have on their budget, the local bus has been removed. Addington PC has joined ~~with~~ an informal Parish Alliance, a group of Parishes that work together because they can have a combined political and financial muscle that no single Parish can achieve on its own. Through this Alliance, and with considerable input and work done by Mike Taylor of Borough Green, and co-operation by Norman of Nu-Venture, a no.58 bus will run through Addington on Fridays. At present, the 3 month trial will start on 1 April and, with a Community Transport Fund grant, the cost initially to Addington, will be a £50 contribution to a buffer fund.

A historical problem, still on our Agenda includes the replacement of the conifer trees, provided by National Highways, to screen the new footbridge at the end of East Street. The trees didn't appear to have been watered throughout the hot summer of 2022 and the majority died. After protracted correspondence with National Highways, we do now have confirmation that new trees are in the country and awaiting inspection and planting.

The destruction of a registered Ancient Woodland site, west of the Jet Garage, London Road has caused a lot of distress to both residents and the PC. Despite residents and the PC, along with our MP Tom Tugendhat, having been in constant contact with TMBC and the Woodland Trust, unfortunately, the trees continued to ~~be felled~~ and we are still awaiting the outcome of an Investigation by TMBC.

The PC's Environmental Policy has also been a topic, by considering integrating ecology, nature, habitat, in our community infrastructure by giving more attention to green spaces, monitoring, measuring, managing and enhancing.

The PC is continuing to get advice and prepare to address climate change. Our village is at an advantage with the benefit of carbon sequestration in our rural soil sinks, grassland, trees, hedges and planting.

Addington is very fortunate to have a Clerk that has now completed CiLCA. The qualification means Louise is now a Principal Member of the Society of Local Council and the PC has supported Louise with her initiative and believes this is of tremendous benefit in assisting the Council to correctly adhere to protocols and procedures. A personal thank you to Louise for being an outstanding Clerk and guiding me throughout 2023.

My thanks also to our County Council Councillor, Sarah Hohler, and Borough Councillors Ann Kemp and Piers Montague for their support.

Addington Parish Councillors have served the village well and I thank you all for being 'on the team', especially my Vice Chair, Councillor Chrys Short.

One last thought:

- Why did you choose Addington to live in?
- Can you help this beautiful village to grow?
- Can you help the village to develop further?
- Could you consider being a Parish Councillor or Volunteer?

I look forward to welcoming you on board!

Patricia Garrett  
Chairman, Addington Parish Council

6 April 2023