

Artington Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 4th May 2021 via video conferencing.

Councillors present: Cllr R Bennett, Cllr, F Clayton, Cllr P Hutson (chairman), Cllr S Kitson, Cllr A More Molyneux, Cllr C Taft and Cllr J Wisher.

In attendance: Philip Gorton (clerk), Cllr Chris Blow (GBC), Cllr Matt Furniss (SCC) and one member of the public.

APC = Artington Parish Council, GBC = Guildford Borough Council, SCC = Surrey County Council.

In attendance: Philip Gorton (parish clerk), Cllrs Matt Furniss (SCC), Chris Blow (GBC) and one parish resident.

1. **Apologies were received from:**
Cllr Ramsey Nagaty (GBC).

2. **Chairman's Annual Report**

Cllr Hutson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The last year has been difficult for APC and the meetings have been held via video conferencing. The council is looking forward to resuming proper face-to-face meetings.

Planning applications

The council has looked at nine planning applications over the last year, making comments on a few of them but most being left to GBC planning officers to decide. The number of applications was down a little this year, probably because of the pandemic.

Development sites

At the *Treetops* site, the listed seventeenth century building has had the top of one of its chimneys removed but it has not been made weather proof. This has been brought to the attention of the GBC listed buildings officer on several occasions but to no effect, despite the fact that it is within the St Catherine's Conservation Area. The developer of the site insists that the building is to be retained – this is, after all, one of the conditions of their planning permission.

The ground work for the site has commenced but no building has yet begun.

Negotiations are continuing with the developer regarding provision of a new bus shelter to replace that owned by APC on the Guildford bound side of the Old Portsmouth Road, opposite the development site.

Nothing new has been heard about plans for *Mount Browne* after the departure of Surrey Police in 2024. That it will be another development site is certain but how it will impact on the parish is as yet unknown. APC will continue to monitor the situation, especially as it has been removed from the Green Belt.

Whatever happens with these two sites, we can be sure that the population of Artington parish will increase significantly.

Planning enforcement

Things are changing at *Pond Farm*. Mr Podger is no longer living there and the site is now in the care of his son who is gradually removing the unauthorised waste that has accumulated over the last twenty-five years.

It is considerably tidier than it has been for many years. Both APC and GBC enforcement officers are monitoring the situation.

Highways

The combined *footway / cycleway* between The Ridges and St Catherine's Hill has narrowed because of soil accretion and over hanging vegetation. It has been brought to the attention of SCC but nothing has yet been done.

The longstanding problem of *water run-off at The Ridges* is still comes to the fore in wet weather. SCC has it on the list of things to do but is has been continually been shunted down the list in favour of more pressing problems. APC continues to keep the problem in the minds of our SCC councillor and the Highways department.

A number of regular events have not taken place because of the Covid pandemic:

Litterpicks are organised by APC usually a couple of times each year. It is hoped that normal service will be resumed soon. In the meantime, the parish council would like to thank Sarah More Molyneux who frequently undertakes a one-woman litter pick around the parish.

There have been no *Community Speed Watch* or *rat running surveys* in the last year, largely because traffic levels are at such a reduced flow that it has not been deemed necessary. If levels do increase again then the surveys are likely to resume.

The decision was made after the last **Big Lunch** in 2019 to make it a bi-annual event. As it is, circumstances have prevented this year's lunch and it is hoped that, like so many other things, this enjoyable event will return in 2022.

Parish council website

The website has given the parish clerk some headaches over the last year or so. Firstly, the registrar from whom the APC bought its domain name cancelled it with no notice and the website and email cease to work. As a result, the clerk took the opportunity to buy a new one with a *gov.uk* suffix which, although more expensive, is the proper domain name for a local authority.

Secondly, a while later, the company that hosted the APC website and email for three years gave an unacceptably high quote for the continuation of their services. Consequently, the clerk has created a new website with a new host and website designer, Hugo Fox, a firm that provides websites and hosting free of charge for small community organisations, including parish councils. A separate company had to be found to host the email but in total it is a significant saving for the council, which is now paying a total of just £20 a year for our email service and website hosting. This more than pays for the increased cost of the new domain name.

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Following the chairman's report, Cllr Furniss reported that the footpath/cycleway between The Ridges and St Catherine's Hill is to be cleared in the very near future.

These minutes remain draft until signed at the APC meeting on 12th July 2021.

Artington Parish Council usually meets on the second Monday of alternate months at St Francis church in Littleton, beginning at 7.00pm.

www.artington-pc.gov.uk