

Chairman's Report May 2019

The Parish Council has met monthly, except August and December, during the past year. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month with the exception of the January meeting which remains as the second Wednesday. There continue to be no meetings in August and December and the start time remains as 7.30 pm unless otherwise notified. All members of the public and press are welcome.

Agenda, minutes and relevant Parish notices continue to be routinely posted in the notice boards in the bus shelters in Great Somerford and Startley and on the Great Somerford website. Draft minutes are posted normally within a week of the meeting and replaced with approved minutes when they become available. Brief notes of the PC meetings are also routinely placed in Signpost.

I want to express my sincere thanks to Council members for their work during the past year – I will make some more comments about this later. I am also pleased to say that we welcomed a new member, Meriel Griffiths.

Thanks from the Parish Council are extended to all the volunteers who have given their time for activities in the Parish including Rural Arts events, the War Memorial and Grave Yard maintenance, Free Gardens and allotments maintenance and improvement, display of notices in the village shop and pub, Neighbourhood Watch, contributions to Signpost and the care of our Phone Box library. Our thanks also go to Mrs. Scott for her continued care and maintenance of the Community Room. Thanks also to our community police officer for the past year's efforts.

My apologies and thanks to any activities/volunteers I may have missed.

Village Amenities

We are extremely fortunate to still have a shop and a pub in the centre of the village. The Mallets took on the shop in 1976 and now Debbie and Malcolm have taken a well-deserved retirement – the shop is now run by Rohit Babbar.

There are also new tenants in the Pub – Adrian and Rhianna Freak. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to welcome Rohit, Adrian and Rhianna to the village and hope they have a long and happy time here.

Activities and Events During The Year

I would like briefly highlight some of the PC's activities during the past year, in no particular order

War Memorial

I daresay you have already noticed the lovely clean condition of the War Memorial. The lettering will be cleaned and re-painted later this month with any loose or missing letters being re-affixed or replaced.

Thanks to all of the Parishioners who contributed to the fund for this work – we received more than was needed and, with the permission of the contributors, the excess is now reserved for any future work on the memorial that may be needed.

Litter Pick

A village Litter Pick was held on Saturday 23rd March – fortunately, the weather was good and a total of twelve volunteers collected several sacks of rubbish. For future Litter Picks we have several sets of litter picking equipment free-of-charge from Wiltshire Council.

It was pleasing to notice that there was very little rubbish deposited within the village – most of it was deposited in ditches outside the village boundary – we assume by thoughtless motorists ejecting their rubbish through their car windows.

Upkeep of the Startley Cemetery

The cemetery in Startley continues to be well maintained. We are re-painting the gates later in the year – the original schedule was “when the weather gets better” so I hope we will make a start later this month. The work will be carried out by members of the Parish Council.

Best Kept Village Competition

I believe the last time we won this competition was 4 years ago. We didn't enter last year but we are doing so this year.

Parish Information E-Mail

Earlier this year we instituted a Parish Information E-Mail system – this enables us to send useful information to all those who have subscribed to the service. Currently there are 96 parishioners signed up to the service and I would urge everyone who has not yet signed up to do so – it is easy to do – just click on the “Sign up to the Parish Information E-Mail” link on the village web-site. No personal details you enter are shared with any third party or any other subscriber.

The Parish Information Email Co-ordinator (me) is responsible for what is published, subject to the agreement of the Parish Council.

Parish Council Website

For a number of years, Parish Council information has been made available on the village website run by Sue Walker and the Parish Council are very grateful for this service. However, more and more Parish Council related information is required to be published on a web-site – indeed it is no longer necessary to post hard copies of meeting minutes or agenda on village notice boards but it is mandatory to publish them on a web-site. This, coupled with the need for some information to be displayed with specific start and end dates is making it increasingly difficult to rely on, what is effectively, a great favour from Sue so (and after receiving advice) we have decided to have a dedicated Parish Council web-site. It is, as of this evening, 'live' - the URL is :-

www.greatsomerfordparishcouncil.co.uk

Even though it is not a transactional web-site it has been set up with SSL Domain security so that it will appear on your browsers as a 'secure' site.

At this point I must thank Jon Bunston for his invaluable assistance with setting up both the Information E-Mail and the Web-site

Highways

Speed Awareness Camera

A speed awareness camera was purchased earlier in the year following Metro counting and speed watch activity in Startley. It appears to have had an effect as the camera records the speed of traffic and it is lower than the speeds detected by the Metro Count and Speed Watch. Although it could be used in Great Somerford the Metro Counts that have been done do not justify starting Speed Watch checks and without both we are unable to use it.

Safety in West Street by the Manor House

We have now received permission from Wiltshire Council to fill in part of the ditch on that corner and ensure that there is a flat area to provide a 'safe haven' for pedestrians from traffic rounding the bend. We hope to start on this soon.

Signposts

The signpost at the Startley/West Street Tee Junction fell into disrepair (actually it fell down). These finger-posts are, apparently, the responsibility of the Parish Council and, although Wiltshire Council can supply replacements, they are (a) very expensive and (b) plastic and metal instead of the traditional ones that we have in the Parish. It was therefore decided that we would make one ourselves and, as I mentioned earlier, thanks

must go to various councillors for their splendid DIY job. We have also repainted the finger-post by the War Memorial.

White-lining and Potholes

This is still an ongoing concern that we discuss on a regular basis with Wiltshire Council. Many of the lines and some SLOW signs in the village have been refreshed in the past year and I am pleased to be able to report that some additional funding is being made available by Wiltshire Council for street works. We have been asked to identify our 'top 5' issues – the response was 'white lining and potholes'. We look forward to more remedial work later this year

Reporting of Concerns

Although I mentioned this last year it is worth repeating - I strongly urge Parishioners to use the Wiltshire App reporting system – it means their concern is registered immediately and you receive a reply with a reference number that you can use to check up on progress. The App is available on the web and also available for mobile phones. I use it for reporting all issues in the Parish and have found it effective.

Training

Eight Parish Councillors recently attended training provided by Community First on the Role & Responsibilities of a Parish Councillor and six are signed up for training on Planning later this month

Finance

A full report of the PC finances is provided by our RFO.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Mansfield', written over a horizontal line.

S. Mansfield

Finance Report for GSPC AGM 2019

2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Budget
£ Receipts	£	£
7,822 Precept	8,118	9,000
Grants		
500 Community room hire	273	250
0 Burials	0	100
2,204 CIL receipts *	0	0
452 VAT Refund for prev year	357	1,156
VAT Reclaimed In Year		900
104 Defibrillator	233	250
War Memorial	1,435	0
Training Recharged		0
230 Other	231	0
669 Free Gardens Maint'n Contrib	0	0
2 Bank Interest Received	2	5
11,982 Total receipts for year	10,649	11,661
Payments		
1,608 Wages	1,943	2,035
110 Clerk's Expenses	180	180
1,195 Administration	67	75
50 Neighbourhood Plan	0	0
Council training & subs	931	620
(73) Audit adjustment	0	0
250 Audit	0	0
43 Payroll services fees	0	0
789 Community Room	1,205	750
4,650 s137 Grants/donations #	550	600
669 Free Gardens Charity Maint'	0	0
536 Insurance	511	540
2,551 Grass cutting & maintenance	1,187	1,235
Cemetery	926	1,300
0 Play Area Recurrent	77	100
Play Area New Equip ~	3,144	0
0 Street Furniture - fingerposts	555	0
0 Street Furniture - speed camera *	2,246	0
0 War Memorial	0	0
0 Defibrillator	0	1,800
0 Capital Project t.b.d. ~	0	5,000
357 VAT incurred in year	1,156	1,395
12,734 Total pay'ts for year	14,678	15,630
(752) Surplus/(Deficit) in year	(4,029)	(3,969)
War Memorial spend (slipped year)		<u>(1,400)</u>
		<u>(5,369)</u>
15,479 Reserves brought forward	14,727	10,698
14,727 Reserves carried forward	10,698	5,329

*** CIL Receipts (Brownleaves)**

£2,204 CIL money received in 2017/18 used to fund purchase of the speed camera in 2018/19. No CIL monies remain.

Grants & Donations Paid Out

In 2018/19 section 137 allows Councils discretionary spend of up to £7.86 (£7.57 in 2017/18) per head of the electorate for the benefit of parishioners on activities not specifically authorised by other powers.

The Council spent £550 (£4,650 in 2017/18) on donations to the Church and the Signpost magazine (plus the Free Gardens in 2017/18).

~ Capital Spend Planned for 2019/20

The capital budget in 2019/20 may be spend on the Play Area or on footpath work in West Street. The Parish Council has not yet decided the split.

Bank Balances at 31 March

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Actual	Actual	Predicted
11,010 Current account balance	6,979	1,605
3,717 Deposit Account Balance	3,719	3,724
14,727	10,698	5,329

P. C. C. of ST. PETER and ST. PAUL
GREAT SOMERFORD

Report for Great Somerford Parish Council April 2019

After two years of hectic activity at our Church during 2016 and 2017 when the roof was completely renewed at some considerable cost and fundraising events needed to be organised on a monthly basis to finance it, 2018 may have seemed to many to have been a quiet year.

Not so; the Church Council has had a busy and sometimes frustrating time, planning and modifying as necessary, Phase II of 2020 Vision, this being the re-ordering of the interior of the Church to provide kitchenette and toilet facilities in the base of the tower, a hospitality area and improved children's area and a new vestry, coupled with the renewal of the heating system, electrical rewiring and new lighting and sound systems. Final permissions to proceed were received from the various authorities in the autumn of the year, and work has now started. It is hoped that the bulk of the planned work will be completed during 2019.

During 2018, the Church has been well used with regular services for the Parish provided on nearly every Sunday in the year. There have been five weddings and two baptisms; we have been particularly pleased to welcome Somerfords Walter Powell School and the Pre-School on three occasions recently and it is hoped that once the improved facilities and better heating has been installed, more use will be made of our lovely Church by the school and other groups. On Christmas Eve "The Great Big Barn Nativity" was organised at The Mount House, with many thanks to Mr and Mrs FitzCharles, and this was attended by over 300, mostly from the village.

The Church Fete once again was well attended and remains one of the highlights of the year for the Village, as well as raising much needed funds for the Church. Our thanks go to Mr and Mrs Jefferson for hosting the fete at The Old Rectory and also to Tricia Morris with her stalwart team of organisers and helpers.

Free Gardens Report for the APM 1 May 2019

The Free Gardens and allotments were once again included in the National Gardens Scheme last year and proved to be a great success. They will be included again in the future. Thanks to Cllrs. Butcher and Hourigan for overseeing the maintenance of the allotments which continue to be a credit to the village.

Last year saw a competition by Historic England to identify 100 places in England to be included in a book "Irreplaceable: A History of England in 100 Places", I am pleased to say that the Free Gardens was recognised as such and included in the book.

Free Gardens Accounts.

I mentioned last year that the majority of the monies held by the Free Gardens Trust had been invested in a managed fund (The COIF Charities Investment Fund). Thus far, even in the difficult financial climate at present, the fund is providing sufficient income for our needs without destroying the principal sum.

Neighbourhood Watch Report 2019 to Great Somerford PC

The past year has been relatively quiet with the usual online scams from people masking as BT, OPENREACH, HMRC and Thomas Cook being just a few. I try to get the notice out as soon as I hear from either my area coordinator or Wilts Police directly.

Burglaries have been thank fully few and far between, with one being a key safe targeted robbery where the thieves went for the spare key and used that to enter the house while the residents were still asleep inside.

Another we think involved suspects casing empty houses posing as Jehovah Witnesses, then either returning themselves, or notifying to another group, who then broke into a house on West St and took two cars in broad daylight.

I still receive phone calls from residents about suspicious individuals in the village, as much as this is useful, unfortunately by the time I forward the information to 101 they've already moved on, or the amount of detail required by the responding officer on the phone is beyond my knowledge, resulting in miss-information. Can I ask that if you are truly worried about something or someone please ring the Police directly on 101 (non emergency contact number) and then call me after so that I can update the portal for others to be aware and to keep an eye out.

For anyone wanting to locate the live updates, the Neighbourhood Watch page for Gt Somerford can be found on either Facebook (search Great Somerford Neighbourhood Watch) or to be added to a more traditional email list please email Kyle at admin@dhsurveys.co.uk an he will include you on the notifications.

Kyle Hourigan

SOMERFORDS' WALTER POWELL SCHOOL

A Church of England primary academy, part of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust (DBAT)

ANNUAL PARISH UPDATE MAY 2019

Most recent OFSTED report: Good, Jan 2018 (previously Good, May 2012)

Most recent SIAMS report: Good, June 2017 (previously Good, Jul 2012)

Executive Headteacher – Andrea Kaye; Head of School – Lisa Shibley

Mrs Kaye was appointed Executive Headteacher (EHT) in February 2019, stepping up from Acting EHT and previously Deputy EHT ensuring continuity of leadership across the three schools: Somerfords' Walter Powell, Seagry and Christian Malford. Miss Shibley is Head of Somerfords' Walter Powell and has been teaching at the school for over ten years. The pre-school is part of the school, having joined DBAT in November 2017. A Local Board (of Governors) comprising Community, Parent, Staff and Foundation (Church) members is responsible for the three schools and pre-schools.

There are 47 pupils on roll in the school, the same as last year and down from 51 two years ago. Pupils live in the Somerfords and surrounding villages or Malmesbury. We expect numbers to be stable next year with the expected intake to Reception from pre-school. We run three classes in the morning for Literacy, Maths and Science; and two mixed age classes in the afternoon. Low numbers in pre-school from September gives us the opportunity to work more with the Reception children in the outdoor den, weekly "welly walks" and trips. The school hosts a Monday morning "Mothers and Toddlers" group that is well attended.

Broad curriculum: the children enjoy a breadth of learning experiences including topic days and weeks, outdoor learning, science, French and music opportunities complementing the core Mathematics and Literacy curriculum. The children enjoy taking part in local arts and sports activities including netball, football, cross-country running and gymnastics festivals; village fetes; nativity and summer musicals; country dancing; and many other clubs and

activities. Leadership is encouraged across the school including participation in School Council, Worship Council and other responsibilities.

Challenges: the financial health of schools in England has been extensively reported in local and national press. Our school is similarly challenged and we strive to balance the budget and meet the educational needs of the children. That said, we rely on and appreciate the support of the community in fundraising, volunteering and grant applications. Please get in touch if you can help us.

“Pupils and parents and carers speak enthusiastically about the practical hands-on learning, which is a core part of the school’s approach to the curriculum”, OFSTED letter February 2018

•

The Local Board vision:

A Christian values-led education that provides opportunities to enjoy ‘Life in all its Fullness’ through inspirational staff leading personalised learning, and encouraging aspirational pupils who have respect for themselves, others and their environment.

Signpost – bringing our community together

Signpost is a monthly community magazine which has been published for the past ten years. It is produced by a committee of volunteers led by an editor, and is printed by printers in Chippenham. It is distributed to every house in the villages of Little Somerford, Great Somerford, Seagry, Startley, Corston and Rodbourne, and is also posted to others who have moved away from our area but asked us to keep them in touch with what is going on in our community.

Previously a church magazine was circulated giving news and details of events happening in the villages. On the vicar's retirement and the group of parishes being dispersed, it was felt that this community resource would be missed and so Signpost was born, ensuring the continuation of this service, keeping the villages together and enhancing local cohesion. From feedback that we receive it is still doing the job that it was intended to serve a decade ago.

Signpost contains notices of future events, results of recent happenings, articles, news from local organizations, schools, photographs, parish councils as well as a contact list and church services for the coming month. We welcome new contributors of prose, poetry or interesting news to share. Every month, except January we publish a diary of forthcoming events including summaries of council meetings such as this! (In December, we give ourselves a month off by combining January with December). Even in this age of computer technology and social media, it is still regarded as a useful tool of communication especially because it does reach every household in our community and in particular it reaches those who are not linked electronically to the rest of the world.

One important point to mention is that not only is Signpost run by volunteers who give their time without charge but it is also distributed by volunteers who take the magazine to each and every household in our community, again without charge. Without such, it would be nigh impossible to achieve such a reach.

The role of editor is currently vacant – the task is currently being shared among the editorial team. We would welcome new volunteers to the team as compilers, proof readers and, in time, a new editor. . If you would like to get involved in any capacity please contact any member of the editorial team. This way we can be sure that Signpost remains a relevant and integral part of our community for another ten years.

The total circulation is currently 965 copies. A 36 page edition costs £660 on which we usually just break even, but costs for a longer edition can sometimes exceed income and our print run is increasing due to a larger distribution to new households in the area. The growth of our communities is a great opportunity to bring new people on board, explore fresh ideas and keep our newsletter a vital part of village life. Signpost is presently funded by selling advertising space to local trades people and from gratefully received donations. And this is the way that we hope to see it continuing so that it remains free to everyone.

Peter & Brenda Oliver

LITTLE SOMERFORD WI REPORT 2018-2019
for GS Parish Council Annual Meeting

Little Somerford WI is possibly one of the oldest village clubs and has been meeting regularly monthly bar August and December in Little Somerford Village Hall since December 1941. We may have a small membership which is equally divided between Little & Great Somerford with Dauntsey, Corston & Malmesbury also represented but we offer a very full and diverse programme. This year speakers & demonstrations ranged from belly-dancing to WW2 Special Operations Executive Spies. Many of our speakers were local – Bill Reed from the Malmesbury Voices Project & Gill Bright from Malmesbury Lacemakers. Several of our members attended a workshop run by local Silver Clay jeweller, Clare Madeley.

We continued to support the Malmesbury Foodbank with a collection before Christmas and intend to have another this year in the summer as we understand stocks fall low then. Our knitters and sewers made twiddle-muffs for the residents of Athelstan & Stainsbridge Care Homes.

Our Christmas lunch was at La Flambé, Sutton Benger at which husbands/partners were welcome & several members also enjoyed a spring, summer and autumn lunch at other local hostelleries.

Three times a year we meet up with four other nearby WIs. Each group takes it in turn to organise the events for a year:- a Carol Service & two meetings with speakers. This year we had Christine Hamilton & the Sewing Soldier, Neil Stace.

A whist & skittles team were active this year playing against other WIs across the county.

Many members were also able to attend some of the many diverse events run by the Wiltshire Federation of WIs, ranging from sports' taster days, singing & dance workshops to talks on electric cars & clean energy.

2019-20 will be equally busy.

Fiona McDowall
Secretary Little Somerford WI

Police Report 2018/19

Crimes reported in the Somerfords

Data taken from <https://www.wiltshire.police.uk/article/848/Crime-Map-for-Wiltshire-North>

	Great Somerford	Little Somerford
2019		
January	Arson – West Street. Unable to prosecute suspect	
2018		
December	Arson – West Street. Unable to prosecute suspect	
November	Vehicle crime – Dauntsey Road. No suspect identified (theft)	
October	Anti social behaviour – on or near Manor Park	
September	Anti social behaviour – on or near Winkins Lane	Theft – on or near the Hill; no suspect identified Violent crime on or near the Street – unable to prosecute suspect
August	Vehicle crime _ Paddock Close; no suspect identified Ditto Shiptons Lane Anti social behaviour on or near the Folly	Violent crime on or near the Hill – unable to prosecute Burglary on Clay Street
July	Anti social behaviour on or near Park Lane Burglary Dauntsey Road	
June		Theft on or near the Street – no suspect identified
May		Theft on the Hill – no suspect identified Ditto Vale Leaze
April	Public order offence – West Street - unable to prosecute	