

In 2023-2024 the Parish Council met seven times in Wittering Parish Hall.

Simon Hurn, Sophie Joy and Maxine Palmer resigned from the Parish Council, and we would like to thank them for their hard work and commitment over the past few years. They have been replaced by Jean Jackson, Russell Pye and Iain Wilkinson. Kate Jackson joined the Parish Council as a volunteer.

Gavin Elsey was re-elected to Peterborough City Council Ward Councillor on 2nd May 2024 and the Parish Council look forward to continuing to work with him with over the next four years.

Disappointingly, attendance at meetings by Police Representatives has been non-existent over the past year as the PCSOs have failed to attend any meeting. Thankfully the level of crime in the village is low. However, PC Stephen Main has introduced the Police Surgeries which are held every month in different locations throughout the local area and were hosted by Wittering Parish Council in January and March 2024.

Several members of the public have attended meetings throughout the year, and they are always very welcome. Various issues were brought to the Parish Council's attention which varied from dog fouling, overgrown footpaths, anti-social behaviour and motorists parking vehicles dangerously.

Throughout the year, several planning applications were considered and responded to. The Parish Council made comments on the Peterborough Local Plan and PCC has now processed all the comments received during the consultation. It will take them into consideration alongside a range of other evidence that it is gathering as it prepares the Draft Local Plan. It expects to publish the Draft Local Plan for consultation in autumn 2024.

The Parish Council is looking to start a Neighbourhood Plan which is a way for communities to have a say in the future of the places where they live and work. It gives Parish Councils the power to produce a plan with legal weight that directs development in their area.

The Wittering Parish Council Website (www.witteringparishcouncil.com) has proved ideal for people to keep up with the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings and for other matters that affect the village.

Simon Hurn continues to keep the playing field and churchyard in a neat and tidy condition. I would like to thank Simon Hurn for his commitment to this.

The Sports' Pavilion and Bowls' Club Pavilion are much appreciated by residents and visiting football teams and bowls' teams alike.

The Allotments provide a popular amenity in the village. The Allotments are all rented out and there is a small waiting list for people wanting to rent out an Allotment. I would like to thank Geoff Dunkley for his commitment to the Allotments.

I would like to thank Julia Cunnington, Jean Jackson, Gavin Elsey and other members of the Bus Service Campaign Group for their hard work to enable a village bus service to be re-introduced in Wittering, Wansford, Ailsworth and Castor and this is due to start in July 2024.

I would also like to thank Jo Gault and the Events' Committee for their efforts in putting on the Village Fete. This was an enjoyable event. A Christmas Fayre took place in December 2023.

The Remembrance Day Sunday Parade and the Church Service had been well supported. The Remembrance Afternoon Tea had been enjoyed by those who had attended. A total of £4,276.30 was collected for the RBL Poppy Appeal.

The Sports & Social Club has experienced financial difficulties in the current financial climate, but both the bingo and quiz session are going well.

The Parish Council's finances remain on a sound footing, the internal audit has been completed and suggestions from parishioners to improve or add anything to the village are always welcome.

The Parish Hall is hired out on a permanent basis on five evenings per week. In addition, it is hired out for wedding receptions, christening parties, children's parties and other social functions at the weekends.

The Parish Council had already decided that the existing Parish Hall is no longer fit for purpose and had decided to build an up-to-date replacement. David Watts, Architect of Dwell Architects Limited has been appointed the architect for the new Parish Hall. The Parish Council will be publicising the project soon and liaising with residents about what they would like to see in the new Parish Hall.

Wittering Parish Council received grants of £46,948.91 in May 2023 from the Community Infrastructure Levy Fund.

Allison Homes has continued with its 3-year development that will comprise of 190 three, four and five-bedroom homes in a variety of styles. Allison Homes wants to meet the Parish Council's expectations – they are building in a densely populated area, and they understand the area has key workers and lots of parked cars. They said things will go wrong and it will be a challenging relationship. They work with third party/sub-contractors and don't always have full control of the timings of deliveries, for example. However, they want to work with the residents/village in harmony. They are willing to listen to residents' concerns via the Parish Council and step in as necessary. The development is on track to be completed by March 2025.

Seven Afghan refugee families will be moving to the village in March 2024. The Afghan males had worked as interpreters/translators for the British Forces in Afghanistan. They will live in the village for a minimum of three years. The Red Cross will be supporting them during this time.

Jon Parsons of the small local group of Detectorists that are already working in Ailsworth, Castor and Yarwell sought permission to work on Wittering Parish Council owned land. They submitted details of some of the finds from their visit in March 2024 – they were interested in finding a toy jet plane on their first hole and then some quite nice early 1900 coins.

Gavin Elsey, Peterborough City Ward Councillor has taken over from John Bradshaw with advancing the case for an A1/Wittering Flyover. The submission is in Stage 2 (in the

2025-2030 programme of works). Stage 3 deals with the financing/funding of successful projects.

Wg Cdr Nikki Duncan took command of RAF Wittering in January 2023 and we have been delighted that she attended a recent Parish Council Meeting. Mark Davies, Community Devt Officer, RAF Wittering retired in May 2023 and his commitment and involvement to working with the Parish Council and village residents has been much appreciated. Emma Stacey has attended meetings in place of Mark Davis.

Many thanks to Mike Horne and all his helpers for their hard work in improving the natural environment in Wittering by planting trees and installing bird and bat boxes. Work on a Wittering Nature Recovery Plan is underway.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their interest and commitment to the village over the past year.

John Bradshaw
Chairman
May 2024