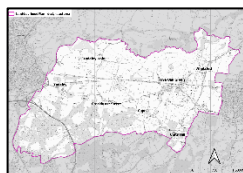




Parish Chairman's Report

The Tunbridge Wells Local Plan has continued to dominate the parish, potentially affecting the lives of residents for years to come. We were pleased TWBC accepted that the Tudeley GV proposals were unsound, and we welcomed their deletion. During the consultation on the Plan revisions, we supported this approach, though we also view the reduced housing proposal in East Capel as unsound on flooding and highway grounds. Our representation was sent in at the end of February and can be accessed on the Borough Council website. We worked closely with Save Capel, jointly hiring the same consultants on highways and flooding. We will continue to collaborate with them to prepare for the new hearings expected in early summer.



The Capel Neighbourhood Plan is nearing completion. In the last year, the draft has gone through two consultations. There were many helpful representations from residents and statutory consultees some of which have been incorporated into the submission version that went to the Examiner in the late autumn. Since then, we have responded to the examiner's Clarification Note and recently held an online meeting with him. We expect his amendments shortly, following

a referendum of residents will occur before the NP can be 'made.' It will be an important guide for decision makers on planning in the parish for years to come. I would like to thank the members of the working party, both parish councillors and members of the public, who helped produce this document since we started it in February 2020. Our consultants Alison Eardley and Jim Boot, and our clerk Louise Goldsmith have played a big part in this, and we thank them too.

Residents' biggest complaint is the state of the roads and speed of traffic. We are in regular discussion with KCC through our Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) revised last year, and under discussion tonight.



Recently, we bought a speed indicator device (SID) which was installed in March and will be moved between three sites on Five Oak Green Road. It will tell travellers their speed and records passing traffic data which we download.

KCC views the B2017 as an arterial road not suitable for a crossing but will support a traffic calming scheme in the form of chicanes. This is liable to cost more than £50k so we are exploring funding with KCC. Residents can access the HIP on the parish council website at <https://capel-pc.org.uk/highways-and-transportation/>

CPC are keen to promote opportunities for social interaction. We are working with the CCA as they plan a new/refurbished village hall (see the display and comment on the plans). We are keeping an eye on the works on the Queen's Head. We designated it as an Asset of Community Value two years ago, and the Neighbourhood Plan includes a policy on the protection of village pubs.

The CCTV upgrade around the village Hall has been a success, with few reports of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. We are looking at how the security of the allotments can be improved.



Using grant funding we have also modernised the public toilets and doors.

The Recreation and Allotments working party want further improvements to the Recreation Ground and have applied for a grant for an outside gym useable by all. This would be in the old under 5's play area.



We are pleased that two electric vehicle charging points have now been installed in the car park and are available to use.

Thanks and Farewells: I want to thank my fellow parish councillors for the time and effort they have given to the community over the last three years. Your 2021-4 councillors are: Hugh Patterson (chair); Maggie Fenton (Vice Chair); Ewan Mackenzie; Charles Mackonochie; William Malpas; Suzi Rich; Ashley Saunders; Trevor Sawyer; and Sian Young. The nominations for the parish elections are now closed. At the time of writing, we do not know how many nominees there are. If we have fewer than 9 we can co-opt residents on to the council once it takes office in early May. Please feel free to email clerk@capel-pc.org.uk with your details.

Finally, our thanks go firstly to Louise Goldsmith, Parish Manager and Clerk, whose unstinting efforts over the last three years have allowed us to become a more proactive council better able to represent the interests and views of its residents, and secondly to two councillors who are standing down at the coming elections. Suzi Rich who has been on the council since 2019 and chaired the Staff Office and Administration committee, and Maggie Fenton has been a councillor for over a decade, was Chair between 2016 and 2018 and Vice Chair since. Both have made an enormous contribution to the council which we will miss.

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2023-2024

Bank Reconciliation

Opening balance as at 1 April 2023	136,718.95
Plus receipts to date	126,917.85
Less payments to date	136,398.58
Closing	127,238.20

Payments

	Budget 2023/24	Total Spend 31 March 2024
TOTAL STAFF & SALARIES	32,000.00	30,707.86
TOTAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	2,972.00	9,257.64
TOTAL OFFICE COSTS & ADMIN	11,426.00	10,820.62
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP FEES	1,135.00	1,118.85
TOTAL PROPERTY, RECREATION & AMENITIES	50,450.00	40,820.15
PROJECTS:		
	CCTV	13,574.00
	CORONATION	711.32
	PUBLIC TOILETS	6,715.00
	SID SCHEME	9,513.22
TOTAL PROJECTS	33,500.00	30,513.54
VAT	12,000.00	13159.92
TOTAL PAYMENTS	143,483.00	136,398.58

Note to the Accounts:

Grants were obtained to support the expenditure on the public toilets and replacement CCTV system.