

Brixton Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report



For 2018-2019



Brixton Parish Council – Annual Report 2018 – 2019

Like 2017 -18... 2018-2019 has been another busy year for Brixton Parish Council.

The new town of Sherford and Planning remains a major item on our agendas. Representatives from the Parish Council - Michael Wills, Helen Williams, Brenda Huxtable, the clerk and myself attend regular Sherford Liaison Meetings which include Plymouth City Councillors, District Councillors, County Councillors and representatives from the Sherford Consortium. As new houses are now being planned in Brixton Parish/South Hams the Parish Council has started to actively engage with people in the community at Sherford and has set up quarterly meetings with the Reverend Tom Brassil and other residents. Plans are in place for a Parish Council notice board to be located near the school and for at least one meeting of Brixton Parish Council to be held at Sherford this year. The Parish Council attended a community event at Sherford in the spring to raise awareness for residents that the new houses will be in Brixton Parish.

The Parish Council is part of the consultation arrangement by South Hams District Council for reserved matters for planning applications for new neighbourhoods in Sherford. The Parish Council objected to the revised proposal for Sherford particularly in relation to the protection of the hamlet of Wiverton, the risk of flooding and the failure to address the connectivity from Sherford to and from Brixton by car, cyclist and pedestrians. This has been taken on board by the Planning Authority.

Cllr Helen Williams is the nominated representative of Brixton Parish Council to the Sherford Community Land Trust. It is fair to say that progress has been slow in setting the Community Trust up but Helen has been tenacious in ensuring that the Trust as it starts is legal and fully represented. This is an important role being part of the setting up of the Trust which will eventually be handed over to the residents of the new town. I would like to thank Helen for taking on this important role and for her tenacity in ensuring that the legal documents are fit for purpose now and in the future.

During the year the parish of Brixton has continued to be under pressure from planning applications for small and large developments. The Parish Council is currently considering the reserved matters application for Phase 3 of Canes Orchard for 29 houses serious concerns remain about the design layout, the public open space and suitability of play space for the whole of Canes Orchard. In addition to this and throughout the year the Parish Council has been consulted by South Hams District Council on up to 40 planning applications many of which require a site visit of a minimum of 3 councillors. The Parish Council has revised its policy and procedure for the management of the consultation process for planning applications. I would like to thank Councillors Ian Martin and Michael Wills for coordinating the arrangements for the Parish Council to respond to planning

applications as part of the consultation process with South Hams District Council with informed recommendations and to thank those councillors who sometimes at very short notice attend site meetings.

Planning for the future is a critical issue for this parish on the urban fringe of Plymouth. The Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Group set up in 2015 has met regularly throughout the year to progress the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan is now completed; and it is in the final stages as it is currently with the Examiner and all being well we should be holding a referendum to adopt it during the summer. The plan if adopted will protect Brixton village in particular from further development in the countryside. This has been and continues to be a considerable time commitment for the group members in ensuring that all the required consultations have taken place working closely with the District Council I would like to thank Ray Holland, Jon Capel, Greg Webb, Tony Steer, and Shirley Deeney for their time, commitment and enthusiasm to the process of producing Brixton's Neighbourhood Plan and to Duncan Smith the Planning Officer at South Hams District Council who has been a great support to us.

During the year the Brixton Sport and Recreation Plan was agreed by the Parish Council and 3 projects plans have been developed i.e. improvements to Footpath 26, changing Monkey Lane in to a pedestrian/ cycle, bridle way access to Sherford Community Park and an outdoor gym at Elliot's Hill.

The Traffic Plan Management Group representing local people and Parish Councillors has met quarterly with Nick Colton, the local Devon County Highways Manager and Andy Potter PCSO to address issues affecting the safety of pedestrians, road users and environmental matters relating to traffic and the roads. I would like to thank Nick Colton and Andy Potter and the local residents for their time and positive contributions to the discussion on the main agenda items which include the condition of the roads, drainage, signage and speed in the village and through the lanes. It is good to get together to work out how to resolve issues constructively and collectively, although some take a long time. As a result of these meetings we now have a VAS system to monitor the speed of vehicles through the village, a group of residents have been trained to ensure that work around the roads by volunteers is safe and a resident has been Chapter 8 trained which means that control can be taken of traffic until the authorities arrive, a group of residents have been trained through Speed Watch to monitor the speed of traffic through the village Thank you to Roger Wakeham, Ian Calvert, Brenda Huxtable, Michael Wills, Richard du Pont and Kirstie for their support to this group.

Brixton Composters continues to be successful in the collection of green waste and creating an income for use in the community. Applications for funding are welcome. Councillor Richard du Pont represents the Parish Council on this group.

I would also like to thank Councillors Brenda Huxtable and Roger Wakeham who monitor our footpaths. We are grateful to local residents who walk the paths and have agreed to provide the P3 group (Parish Paths Partnership) with quarterly feedback on the condition of the paths so that repairs can be done promptly and the paths remain safe and accessible. Fly tipping continues to be a problem for the parish... through good liaison with Tim Pollard, South Hams Locality Officer fly tipping is dealt with promptly.

Since September a growing team of volunteers has met on the first Saturday in the month to sweep the main street to improve the appearance of the village followed by a hot drink and a chat in the Foxhound. We were very sad to learn of Mr Tony Davis death, he made a great contribution to the village which he loved and his cheery smile and wave is missed by us all. The care of the Green has been taken on by Michael Wills. The damaged bus shelter has been replaced after a very long time and the telephone boxes on The Green and at Fordbrook have been refurbished and now have defibrillators in them. Julie Eccles is the guardian of the village phone box and the Parish family look after the one at Fordbrooke. I would like to thank everyone who has given their time to improve the appearance of the village and the phone boxes. Consultations are currently taking place with local residents to improve the parking around the Green.

The Parish Council is part of the Dementia Friendly Parishes around the Yealm linking Brixton with the parishes of Wembury, Yealmpton, Newton & Noss and Holbeton which is in now in its 7th year and during that time has linked to over 90 people with dementia and their families across the 5 parishes. The project was presented at an international conference in Japan by me as part of a presentation by Ian Sherriff about Dementia Friendly Communities last Saturday in Osaka. The project became a charity last October and continues to contribute to national and international development for dementia friendly communities.

Councillor Roger Wakeham has represented the Parish Council at the Hele Trust and we have been represented at the Ivybridge and District Association of Local Councils by Cllrs Michael Wills and Helen Williams. Annual grants have been made by the Parish Council to South Hams CAB, South Hams CVS, The Samaritans, Ivybridge Ring and Ride, Yealm Brownies, DFPY, Yealmpton & Brixton Caring and Brixton Scouts and to St. Marys Church towards the lighting.

The Parish Council continues to support St. Mary's School as an important community resource for our children, their families and for the community. Councillor Calvert and Williams have progressed plans in collaboration with Otter Garden Centre for the Parish and community to become 'bee friendly' with a flower bed of pollinators at Chittleburn Cross

The Environment Agency granted the permit for the restoration of Steer Point Quarry to start. BPC and the community will monitor the lorry movements to ensure that the traffic plan is followed. The Parish Council has started negotiations for the purchase of the land at the former site of the Old Mill at Cofflete.

Led by Cllr Parish Brixton Parish Council is working towards the parish becoming plastic free following a successful event in April to raise awareness about what each one of us can do to improve the environment ... a further event is being planned for later in the year. Thank you to Cllr Parish and his family for their great commitment to this important work of the community.

A successful exhibition to commemorate the 13 men who died in WW1 was held last November. Work is now being undertaken to obtain the stories of the 96 men and women named on the role of honour and monthly meetings about local history have been set up for the spring and summer.

The village website, funded by the Parish Council and the Feoffee Trust, continues to be a source of information about what is happening in the Parish. I would like to thank Graham Searle for keeping the website up to date and relevant. The Parish Council and the Brixton Feoffee Trust have agreed for the website to be refreshed and work is currently under way for a new website. The Parish Council posts notices on the 'I love Brixton' Face Book page so that we have as wide an audience as possible. I would like to thank Councillor Ian Calvert for helping to promote the work of the Council on the Face book page. The Parish Councils own website holds all the work of the parish council ensuring that information is easily accessible and transparent. BPC continue to fund its own Brixton Parish Council App. I would like to thank Kirstie for all her hard work in maintaining the website and App modernising our communications. A quarterly Parish Newsletter has been produced. The Welcome Pack is being updated.

The Community Emergency Plan has been completed by Councillor Helen Williams who leads the Community Emergency Team of councillors and local people. Helen has represented the Parish Council at County meetings about planning for emergencies and developing resilience in the parish Helen has set up appropriate training for the team. I would like to thank Helen for her diligent and enthusiastic approach to this important part of the life of our community.

In our Parish Plan 2012 we emphasised the importance of improving links for Carrollsland with the Parish Council. The Parish Council notice board at Carrollsland provides a link to the wider parish.

The Parish Council continues to have a good working relationship with the Police PCSO Andy Potter. We welcome his attendance at our meetings and thank him for the efficient handling of issues we have brought to his attention... particularly where he has made personal contact with local people about their concerns. However it is clear that the Police are under considerable pressure and cannot provide the service we expect particularly in an emergency.

I would like to thank Councillors Dan Brown and Basil Cane who represented Brixton at South Hams District Council last year and regularly attended the Parish Council meetings. In May Councillor Cane retired from the role and following the election Councillors Brown and Chown represent Brixton on South Hams DC I would also like to thank Devon County Councillor John Hart for continuing to take the time to attend meetings and his interest in the parish particularly the roads and the developing new town of Sherford.

Our qualified Clerk, Kirstie Aldridge, has continued to grasp the work of the Parish Council with enthusiasm, confidence and clarity. The Parish Council is now a quality parish council and is working towards the Gold Award. So thank you Kirstie for all you have continued to do in the past year modernising the governance and financial controls for the Council.

I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their hard work, time and commitment to the work of the Parish Council acting always in the best interests of the people of Brixton Parish. It is important to remember that we are all volunteers. I would particularly like to thank Councillor Michael Wills, our Vice Chairman, for his support and advice and his great support to me as Chairman and Kirstie Aldridge our clerk for continuing to move the Parish Council on so effectively.

In conclusion I would like to thank those residents who regularly attend the Parish Council meetings throughout the year. Your continued support is very welcome and important to us and we hope that you will continue to attend our meetings and bring your friends.

Finally as a Parish Council we have continued to make good progress in a time of change and uncertainty. This is down to the Parish Councillors and local people working together in best interests of the Parish now and for the future which I think will continue to be challenging complicated and uncertain.

Thank you

Liz Hitchins

22nd May 2019