

## **DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) FC Meeting held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in the Village Hall.**

**Present:** Councillors: Day (GD – Chairman), Hill (TH), Cottell (PC), Kemp (MK), Hollyman (MH), Cottle (SC), Kinnaird (LK)

**Clerk to the Council:** Lunn (BL)

**Councillor for Urchfont & The Cannings:** Whitehead (PW)

**Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting):** Mr Roy Ellis, Mr Peter Bailey, Mr Alistair Everett, Mr Nigel Fowler, Mrs J Ciappi, Ms N Hammond, Mr Malcolm Taylor, Mr & Mrs Lee Acton, Mr Steven Arnott, Ms E Burrows, Mr Malcolm Smith

### **A. Introduction**

- 1. Welcome by the Chairman** – GD welcomed councillors and members of the public to the meeting.
- 2. Apologies** – Cllrs Botham, Creasey, Cowen and Stevens
- 3. Standing Orders Update** – BL explained that in consultation with GD he had updated Standing Orders to reflect current practice and improve the layout, the draft had been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting. GD commented that reviewing the document had reminded him of a number of requirements, in particular the need to ensure that sufficient discussion takes place before votes are taken on resolutions.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>	<b>Resolution</b>
<b>To approve the document unchanged.</b>	<b>GD</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>AGREED unanimously</b>

### **B. PLANNING – See separate minutes.**

### **C. FULL COUNCIL MEETING**

- 1. Declarations of Interest** – None declared at the meeting.
- 2. Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports**
  - i. Public Time Allowance** - Ms Hammond asked why Katherine Wale had been allowed 40 minutes or so to talk on Climate Emergency at the last meeting when normally members of the public are restricted to only 3 minutes. GD responded that this was an agenda item, not part of public participation.
  - ii. Street Naming for Uphill site** - Mr Ellis stated that the proposed name of 'Yardlands' came from a 1784 map of the area, QDOS had indicated that they are content with the name. BL advised that he had been informed that Yardlands was in fact an 'open field farming unit' used throughout the country in medieval times and not a name specific to Urchfont.

Mr Smith pointed out that he had proposed the name Crook's Close for the Uphill site, not Crook's Piece as stated in the minutes of the last meeting.

### **3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>	<b>Resolution</b>
<b>To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</b>	<b>GD</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>AGREED unanimously</b>

**ACTION: FC/12/20 - BL**

**4. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020** - BL reported that all actions are being progressed or have been completed, none have been outstanding for long periods.

**5. Finance**

**a. Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020** – BL confirmed that statements had been distributed to councillors prior to the meeting. As indicated in his written report, sufficient CIL funds had now been transferred to the main account to cover all current project and financial assistance approvals, this has resulted in a predicted positive year end reserve of £8406. No questions were raised by councillors.

**b. Budget 2020/21** – An updated 2022/21 budget had been distributed to councillors prior to the meeting, this was largely the same as previously presented versions but updated to reflect current information. BL emphasised that whilst indicated fixed and running costs were necessary to maintain Council operation, indicated projects and associated funds would not be finalised until requirements and costs had been substantiated and approved by Council (maybe with additional back to back funding from elsewhere). He also emphasised the fact that additional CIL funds of around £16,177 are expected to be received from WC during 2020/21, this will assist with any infrastructure project funding.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve and implement the proposed budget from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2020.	TH	SC	AGREED unanimously

**c. Astill Tree Survey Quote** – Following approval to gain a quote at the last meeting, BL explained that a quote of £700 (No VAT) had been submitted by Astill Treecare Ltd who had undertaken the previous survey in 2017. The survey will be undertaken and a report submitted by the end of April 2020. SC highly recommended acceptance of this quote, but advised that the results are likely to require significant and expensive tree surgery.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
T approve the quote of £700 and instruct Astill Treecare Ltd to proceed.	SC	LK	AGREED unanimously

**ACTION: FC/13/20 - BL**

**d. Urchfont Pond Fish removal quote** – GD highlighted the points made in the written report made by MB, emphasising that harmlessly stunning the fish is considered the best solution without disturbing the silt and negating a lot of the work already undertaken to improve water quality. PC pointed out that whilst not really having a choice but to remove fish, new fish will return to the pond in due course as a result of natural wildlife transmission of eggs. A quote of £600 + VAT per day had been received from Aquatic Management Services to undertake this work using a boat and removing fish to a local receptor pond.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
<b>To approve project funds of £600 to undertake this work. MB to organise.</b>	<b>GD</b>	<b>PC</b>	<b>AGREED unanimously</b>

**ACTION: FC/14/20 - MB**

**6. Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other Written Reports (See Appendix 1 attached on website only)**

**a. Clerks Report – BL highlighted three items in his written report as follows:**

**i. Coronavirus (COV-19)** – BL confirmed that a link had been placed on the community website home page to the UK Government advice page. GD commented that UPC obviously have a duty to oversee safeguarding the community on this issue in terms of attendance at gatherings and meetings locally. For the time being UPC meetings will continue unchanged and it is understood that the Scarecrow Committee will also continue to prepare for the May event, but developments will obviously depend on UK Government and NHS/PHE guidance. If the situation gets worse as currently predicted, LK suggested that UPC should consider putting in place some sort of support for anyone in the community who has to self-

isolate, especially the elderly without obvious family or neighbour support. TH and PW agreed that this would be sensible. MK suggested a leaflet drop to all households outlining UPC support, it was agreed that such a draft leaflet should be produced now to prepare for issue if and when the evolving situation dictates. It was also agreed that the evolving position is to be kept under review by UPC taking account of the necessary safeguards for all concerned.

**ACTION: FC/15/20 – LK/MK**

- ii. **Wiltshire Open Space Survey** – all households in the community are encouraged to submit to this survey, further details and the survey document can be accessed via a link on the Community website home page. Deadline for submission is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.
- iii. **Stolen Post box** – The Royal Mail have decided not to replace the stolen box at Uphill as other boxes exist within the community which meet their site location criteria. There is no appeal process against this decision.

**b. Councillor Reports**

i. **Crookwood Lane Lay-By Project Update** – GD reported that the project is progressing well. Two additional items have been identified to facilitate ongoing works, removal and replacement of the fence above the bank to Oakfrith Pathway to facilitate grading of the bank to a 45 degree angle and the possibility of steps in the bank to provide access to the pathway / School directly from the parking area. The contractor has provided quotes of £1420 + VAT for the fencing and £1740 + VAT for the steps. TH expressed the view that the steps are not necessary as access can be gained via the metal gate, others tended to agree.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To remove and replace existing fence at the top of the bank along the pathway to Oakfrith Wood at a cost of £1420+VAT.	GD	MH	AGREED unanimously
Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To build steps up the bank from the lay-by to the pathway to Oakfrith Wood at a quoted cost of £1740+VAT.	GD	SC	NOT AGREED – 2 for and 4 against

ii. **Urchfont Pond Update** – nothing additional to item 5d above

iii. **UPC Highways Update** – MH updated the written report as follows:

- Some potholes have been repaired on the road to Redhorn Hill
- Wiltshire Sewers Team have cleared some blocked drains, but need traffic control measures to work on B3098. Now awaiting report from them on locations cleared to date to compare with UPC highways survey.
- Damaged grass verges are a big issue in the Parish with vehicles continuing to run over the grass and rapidly increasing the damage. MB proposes that UPC apply for Section 96 licence (thought to be FOC) to repair verges, including installation of edging of some sort. This proposal was generally agreed by councillors. MB is prepared to experiment with the repair of the verge outside his home, the results to inform repairs elsewhere. PW emphasised that all verges belong to WC Highways, they need to be aware of and give approval of repair scenarios. PW also stated that it is important to ensure continuity of repairs throughout the Village to avoid potential criticism locally.
- It was agreed to investigate more fully the uses and potential obligations of both S142 and S96 licences and review this matter next month.
- Dennis Guiney from Manor Farmyard (No 20) has reported erosion of the finger of land at the entrance to Manor Farmyard due to heavy vehicles cutting the corner, the finger has effectively reduced by some 48cms recently. Further consideration will be given to potential ways of repairing and stopping such damage in the future.

iv. **Community Shop** – no update given

7. **Uphill Development Street Name Proposal** – BL explained that it was unfortunate that Mr Ellis had to leave the February meeting before this item was discussed, he would have been able to provide more background information at that time. As tasked, BL had written to QDOS with the counterproposal of 'Crook's Piece' but this had been considered inappropriate as it related to another parcel of land. By way of preparation for this meeting

and not wishing to predetermine councillor decisions, BL had also written to QDOS suggesting some potential alternatives including 'Yardlands Close' which they preferred. TH indicated that he did not like the name 'Yardlands', MK agreed. PW liked 'Yardlands'. BL indicated that there is a need to agree a name acceptable to all parties or defer responsibility to WC to approve.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To approve 'YARDLANDS' as the road name for the Uphill development.	LK	MK	AGREED – 5 in favour and 1 abstention

## 8. Response to Climate Change

a. **Proposed Environmental Policy** – The proposal had been distributed to councillors prior to the meeting. GD commented that this is designed as a generic policy to set out the aims and criteria for improvement within the community. PW warned that this Policy may conflict in some areas with procurement policy, this needs to be checked.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To approve the Policy document unchanged subject to a review of potential conflicts with procurement policy. BL to check publish finalised document in UPC format.	LK	GD	AGREED unanimously

**ACTION: FC/16/20 - BL**

b. **Environmental Working Group** – BL advised that the WG should consist of up to 6 members including councillors and members of the community. The first task of the WG is to prepare a set of Terms of Reference including timeframes for approval of the Council. It was suggested that LC and LK should be on the WG together with Katherine Wale, other members to be determined by the WG in due course.

**ACTION: FC/17/20 – LC / LK**

c. **Food Waste Re-Cycling** – PC advised that other unitary councils (e.g. Hampshire / Somerset) collect food waste using vehicles used for other re-cycling collections, he believed that UPC should be putting pressure on WC to include this service when their current re-cycling contracts are renewed. MH commented that Bromley Council was very efficient in this respect when he lived in that area. PW advised that this would undoubtedly be considered when the Wiltshire contract is renewed, but warned that food waste could increase as a result. Maybe better to encourage composting.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To put pressure on WC to consider regular food waste collection when their recycling contract is renewed	PC	LK	AGREED unanimously

9. **Best Kept Village Competition 2020** – CPRE have announced the criteria for the 2020 competition, Urchfont as a winner last year will be invited to take part in the Laurence Kitching winner of winner's competition as one of 6 winners in the last two years. Applications have to be submitted by 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020. In principle it was felt that Urchfont should enter, but there is a need to identify a co-ordinator to submit the application form / supporting documents and who can lead the necessary work to prepare the village for the inspection(s). GD agreed to speak to Clare Cannon and Peter Cook to see if they would be interested.

**ACTION: FC/18/20 - GD**

10. **Re-location of 20mph signage in Crookwood Lane** – GD explained the desire to re-locate the signs in Crookwood Lane further out towards Potterne Wick and away from the School. PW suggested that this request to CATG would have more chance of success if not submitted until the new lay-by is completed.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To prepare a case for submission to CATG when the lay-by works are completed.	GD	SC	AGREED unanimously

**ACTION: FC/19/20 - GD**

**11. Recording Parish Memories** – GD proposed that the Council should consider ways of capturing personal memories to update the films produced in 1936 and 1986 which can be seen on the Parish Council and Community website. MK thought that this was a good idea and could perhaps be a topic for the Parish Meeting in May. PW suggested that it might be worth contacting a local college to see if they would undertake this as a project.

**12. Annual Parish Meeting (29<sup>th</sup> May 2020)** – GD emphasised that there is a need to continue planning for this event, the local MP has indicated that he will not be able to attend due to other commitments. LK asked whether the poster used last year could be updated for this year, it was agreed that this was a good idea once the programme had been finalised.

**13. Update on Current Parish Issues not covered by above agenda items**

**i. Community Speed Watch** – GD reported that David Myers had resigned as the leader and active participant in Speed Watch. David has led or deputy-led the Community Speed Watch Team in Urchfont since its inception in February 2011. He has led from the front, personally participating in 92% of the sessions, in addition to the work he has performed in session set-up, and session reporting to the authorities. He has done all this while dealing with repeated changes in system and personnel between Wiltshire Police and Wiltshire Council. I believe that properly-supported Community Speed Watch has an important contributory role to play in reducing the incidence of speeding, and on behalf of UPC I would like to thank David and his supportive wife Barbara, and other volunteers, for their sterling efforts over the past 9 years. In the absence of anyone else volunteering to take on the role, we understand that the Urchfont Speed Watch will cease with immediate effect. See copy email from David Myers to local CSW members and others attached at Appendix 2 – on website only. UPC understands that he has subsequently written to the Head of Crime Prevention, who's responsible for Speed Watch, and copied the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and the Citizens in Policing Supervisor, to whom the co-ordinator reports.

**ii. Planning Policy and Procedures** – TH noted that this policy has not been updated since 2017, he intends to prepare an update for approval by the Council next month.

**External Meetings** – No meetings had been attended since the last FC meeting. LK agreed to attend the Devizes Area Board meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> March, especially as this includes environmental issues.

**ACTION: FC/20/20 - LK**

**14. Councillors' Other Reports and Items for Future Agenda**

**Bees in Farmers Field** – MH reported that Phil Milanes had been to see him about the possibility of establishing a bee colony in Farmers Field. GD suggested that this proposal should be investigated further by MK / LC as Lead Councillors for the Field and then brought to Council if appropriate.

(Post Meeting Note: This issue has been discussed in the past and the following decision made at the FC meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2013: "That UPC supports and will consider contributing towards the funding of bees locally, but they are NOT to be sited on Parish Council owned or leased land including Farmers Field at any time.")

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.12pm.**

**Date of Next Meeting: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020 in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm**

a. **CLERK'S REPORT**

**1. Update on Clerk's actions from February Meeting**

**FC/07/20 – Tree Quote Request** – quote requested and received – see item C5c above

**FC/08/20 – Lay-By Contract** – contract refined to reflect revised specification and approved quote. Contract signed on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

**FC/09/20 – 'Crooks Piece' proposed for Uphill site** – subsequently rejected by QDOS. See Item C8 above.

**FC/11/20 – Firework By-Law** – The Council decided not to initiate a by-law, but advisory notices will be issued on website and in Redhorn News nearer main firework events.

**2. Finance** – Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation is distributed to all Councillors with this agenda. Accounts are in good order. Sufficient CIL funds have been transferred to the main account to effectively cover all approved 2019/20 project and Financial Assistance budgets. The end of year reserve currently predicts a positive £8406 plus £6658 CIL account balance.

**3. Draft Budget 20/21** – The budget previously presented in January has been updated to reflect financial expenditure / receipts and other information gained as at 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020. This update is distributed to all councillors with this agenda and will be explained in more detail at the meeting under agenda Item C5b.

**4. Pedestrian Crossing Signs** – The new 'pedestrian crossing' signs either side of the informal crossing on the B3098 near Crooks Lane have at last been installed by WC. However, I have subsequently queried the location of the signs with WC which appear too close to the actual crossing to give drivers sufficient warning within a 60mph zone. A response is awaited.

**5. Stolen Post Box at Uphill** – UPC has been notified that the request to Royal Mail by Malcolm Smith to replace the stolen box has been reviewed by the Royal Mail Area Collections Manager and unfortunately the decision has been taken not to proceed any further. This on the basis that as there are two boxes SN10 58 (Urchfont Old PO) and SN10 57 (The Green) existing within sufficient distance, the installation of a further box to the area could not be justified. UPC thanks go to Malcolm Smith for raising this issue.

**6. Coronavirus (COV-19)** – A link has been added to the Parish Council and Community website 'Home' page to the latest information and advice available on this virus from the UK Government which is updated daily.

**7. Wiltshire Council Open Space Study** - Wiltshire Council (WC) are undertaking a collaborative piece of work and are seeking assistance from the public. Approximately 4 years ago, Wiltshire Council collected data related to open space provision in your area and your input was invaluable. However, it is really important that the records the Council has are brought up to date so that they can accurately inform two significant emerging strategies. The data collected will be used to understand the current provision of existing open space within the county and will form part of the evidence base necessary to underpin a new Green Infrastructure Strategy and an Open Space Strategy.

More details and the survey document can be found via the Parish Council website 'Home' page. There is a deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 for submission of completed surveys to WC.

The Parish Council will separately update infrastructure, rural facilities and open space records based on maps and data provided by WC.

**Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council**

## **b. Councillor Reports**

### **i. Crookwood Lane Lay-By Project Update**

The contract for this project was signed on 26<sup>th</sup> February by myself and Bob on behalf of UPC and Geoff Potter. Photo below was taken at the signing ceremony.



Work has started today, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020. The photo shows Geoff and Peter have started to scrape back the topsoil and are erecting protective fencing and roadside barriers as they progress.

Surplus topsoil from this project will be stored by Geoff in his yard until needed to undertake verge repair work elsewhere in the Parish.

The contractor has advised that he needs to remove the fence at the top of the Oakfrith pathway bank to facilitate easier grading of the bank to a 45 degree angle to make it more robust. A fence will then need to be reinstated further back into the pathway, there is plenty of room for this. He has been authorised to remove the fence. However, the current fence is mostly rotten at ground level and will need to be replaced by a new fence at additional project cost. It has been confirmed that this will be treated for approval purposes as a variance under the contract terms. It has also been suggested that paved steps in the 45 degree bank should be installed to facilitate easier access to Oakfrith footpath and the School without the need to walk in the road. The contractor has been requested to provide a quote for this additional work prior to the March meeting.

## **Cllr Graham Day**

### **ii. Urchfont Pond Update**

#### **Pond water quality**

- One of the aeration pumps has been put back in service to keep the water oxygenated and moving.
- One application of “lake blue” dye has been made. This was necessary to prevent the recent spells of bright sunshine from encouraging the blue green algae to multiply.
- 0.5 tonnes of Siltex is scheduled for delivery on Friday 06/03/20. This will be applied to the pond as soon as a dry and calm day materialises.
- A further application of “good” bacteria will be made the day after the Siltex has been spread.

#### **Pond fish removal**

- Cllr Botham has sourced a Wiltshire based company that can provide an electro-fishing solution – Aquatic Management Services Ltd . The business is based in Blunsdon on the outskirts of Swindon
- They have provided a quotation of £600 to provide one day’s electro-fishing, register Urchfont Pond as a fishery with the Environment Agency, obtain the necessary movement licences and

transport the fish in an oxygenated tank to their new home, (which at the time of writing is TBA). The Clerk has a copy of the quotation.

- Netting is the most efficient way to remove the fish from the pond but cannot be used in this case as it will stir up the silt and release nutrients into the water. This in turn is likely to lead to an algal bloom forming soon after.
- It may be the case that an additional day's fishing is required but that can only be judged following the initial sweep.
- A boat with a generator and two long electrodes is used to stun the fish which are subsequently revived in a tank of oxygenated water. Aquatic Management Services web site describes the process in more detail. There will be some noise created by the generator but no worse than that created by the Fish and Chip bus.
- In Cllr Botham's absence from the March UPC meeting, The Chairman has agreed to propose that the quotation for £600 is accepted and the work placed with the contractor. Note that £600 is well below the £1000 limit for single source contracts.
- The contractor is contacting current clients to see if any of them can give the fish a new home. It is hoped that the new owners will not require health certificates as they cost £250 per species. The number of species in the pond is unknown.

## **Cllr Mark Botham**

### **iii. UPC Highways Update**

#### **Highways**

1. As per February's report Cllrs Botham (MB) and Hollyman (MH) met with Richard Dobson (WC Highways) to discuss the UPC Highways Survey as reported at the February UPC meeting and as reflected in the minutes thereof.
2. The very severe potholes in the road up to Redhorn Hill have been made passable with several patch repairs.
3. MH reported all the blocked gullies in the parish to Wiltshire Sewers on the 11th of February. No response had been received by 02/03/20 and MH requested a further update. At the time of writing 03/02 no update had been provided.
4. Ms Crook was in contact with the Clerk and expressed her concerns about the flooding on the B3098 at Ballingers which has been and is causing considerable concern. MB emailed Richard Dobson to find out the proposed solution to this ongoing issue – no response at the time of writing.
5. Throughout February our main focus has been on trying to get drainage issues resolved. MB has reported the worsening flooding in Blackboard lane and all the blocked gullies on the B3098 from Ballingers to Stonepit Lane. See photos below:

#### **Verges**

1. Following on from the February report and the narrative on S142 licences enabling residents to seek permission to repair verges adjacent to their properties; there is also an S96 licence that Parish Councils can apply for to repair verges and similar areas. The material difference between S96 Licences and S142 licences is that an S96 licence application can include some form of edging to verges.
2. It is proposed that an S96 submission is prepared to initially repair the verge in front of Beech House. The submission will be used to trial a number of alternative verge edge planting schemes ranging from turf to wildlife attracting meadow plants, lavender to attract bees etc. Such planting schemes will necessitate some form of support for the front edge of the verge or they will simply wash away or be destroyed by vehicles driving into them. If none of the trials prove acceptable to the village the reclaimed area can be simply turfed over as per the current scheme with its inherent issues.
3. MH will propose this at the March UPC meeting.
4. MB has agreed to fund the cost of planting, turfing and edging.

5. Malcolm Beaven (WC) came up with the idea of using the topsoil from the Cuckoo Corner lay-by works to rebuild the verges. Cllr Whitehead came up with the good idea of storing the soil on the old BMX track. Subsequently Geoff Potter; concerned about the damage that might be caused has volunteered to store the soil in his yard and subsequently deliver it to where it is needed. Thank you, Geoff.

#### **Blackboard Lane**

#### **Ballingers**

#### **Cllrs Mark Botham and Martyn Hollyman**

#### **iv. COMMUNITY SHOP**

The community shop, having reached fifteen years since it was first established, held a celebration on Wednesday 19th February to mark the important milestone in it's history. Rodney Gillington opened the proceedings, followed by a brief history of the shop by Richard Mistlin, and then refreshments were served in the Lamb with their kind permission. The event was very well attended by parishioners, and included our new member of parliament Danny Kruger, many of the shop volunteers and several members of the Urchfont Parish Council.

#### **Cllr Martyn Hollyman**

**Copy of email from David Myers to members of the local Speed Watch Team and others (published with David Myers approval).**

*Dear All*

*After nine years, going out 528 times out of a total of 574, and much deliberation, I feel it's now time to step-down from Community Speed Watch.*

*I hope we've made a difference since we started in February 2011; we certainly have with some drivers, though there are still those who think the speed limit doesn't apply to them. With no signs of enforcement from the police, I find this very frustrating and now often question why we're bothering, particularly on days when we're frozen to the core!*

*There's no real support from the police, though it was promised by the Commissioner when they took over responsibility for Speed Watch several years ago. He said that resources would be provided, but this has never happened.*

- When we started, in February 2011, there were just a few teams, with one person in the office processing returns. I don't know exactly how many teams there are now but, in November 2018, there were some 180, with still just one person processing returns.*
- Letters are sent, though not very promptly and not to everyone(!) and visits from police officers requested, where appropriate, though I don't see any evidence of these. I'm frequently reporting multiple-offenders who should have been visited but are still speeding, casting doubt on the efficacy of these. Whilst they should be 'targeted', the police have to catch them speeding to take any action, something which isn't very likely.*
- At one time, I received a weekly report by vehicle, which gave the results of each visit; then it became monthly, then it stopped, but was eventually replaced by a monthly 'summary' by team, with no details – not a lot of use. In March last year, a report appeared for November 2018, followed in May with one covering the period from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019, but only for those returns using the 'new system'. I wrote and asked "Where is Urchfont?", as we'd run four sessions in this time, using this 'new system', but we weren't included. I also asked "What about from November to April?" Needless to say, no response! The last was in September, covering June and July: and it was wrong!*
- When I question why certain drivers can't be sent a letter and are, it would appear, exempt from the rules of the road, I'm told (basically) 'it's none of my business'.*
- When I question why there's yet another new form for our returns and why we have to enter the date twice, in different formats, after one or two emails not properly explaining this, I'm told by the new co-ordinator "I'm not prepared to discuss this further": in other words, just accept and get on with it!*
- There are constant 'new initiatives', which are never actually implemented, and frequent changes in senior police staff responsible for Speed Watch.*
- Even getting responses to emails is nigh-on impossible most of the time!*
- In 2018, together with a number of other team-leaders, I was part of a 'working group', tasked with improving communications between the police and CSW teams, including better reporting on our activities; improving how the police deal with persistent offenders; how drivers can be educated about speeding, and making the back-office system more efficient, to which end a new computer system was supposed to have been introduced. However, procrastination from the IT department and a lack of 'push' from the police hierarchy have meant that this still isn't active.*

*We haven't met since June 2018, the meeting for October that year being cancelled due to so many members being unavailable. Since then, all those in charge have been moved to other*

roles within the Force, including Leanne, and we have a replacement co-ordinator, appointed in November 2018, who I haven't even met and, from his communications so far, with whom I'm not impressed. And he hasn't even been out! The group seems to have just ceased, without completing its remit.

- When was the last time we were joined by a police officer? We've not even averaged one visit per year, even though we've constantly been assured of this support.
- When was the last time we saw enforcement teams in the Village, which we were promised?

There's no interest from within the Village.

- Our scheme was started by the Parish Council, through Wiltshire Council, following pressure from one parent in particular, concerned about the speed of vehicles passing Stonepit Lane and the hazard of crossing the road there to take her children to school. Whilst those children are now somewhat older and no longer at the Village school, there are others who have taken their place, yet none of the parents is interested in joining us.
- Many Villagers will tell us what a good job we're doing but, when asked to join the team, will find every excuse imaginable why they can't.
- Any adverts for new volunteers are met with total apathy.

We know we have an issue with speeding throughout the Village 20mph zone, yet the metro-strip data hasn't supported this, because they've always been placed where one cannot easily speed. When questioned on this, Philip Whitehead (who was responsible for highways) always responded "that's where they've always been"!

However, with a new person in post at W.C., last December I was able to achieve another survey, this time with the strips in The Green, at least, where they should always have been. The overall result still didn't show a problem as far as the criteria for CSW is concerned (just ½ mph below the limit!), but 42.4% of vehicles were recorded over 20mph.

Looking at the detailed data, which separates the directions and shows the times of day, this clearly gives very different results at certain times.

Of that 42.4%, 410 were doing 25mph or more: 46.8% travelling east and 53.2% travelling west.

If we had a site here, 88.5% (363) between 25 and 30mph would have been sent a letter and 11.5% (47) at 30mph+ would have qualified for a visit, as 50% or more over the limit. 2 had exceeded 35mph and 1 was recorded at 42.3mph! But we don't have a site and are not likely to, as 'there isn't a speeding problem!', even though the overall level of recordable speeding was 9.2%, compared with the 7.9% we've averaged on the B3098.

Looking at the report, although it shows the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile overall was 23.6mph, it was as high as 30.8mph at one point, well within the scope for Speed Watch. Obviously, the more data one includes, the more the results will change. Nearly half the recordings actually gave an 85<sup>th</sup> percentile of 25.6mph, the level for CSW being 24.1mph.

However, this doesn't seem to matter to the powers-that-be; they're only interested in the actual overall results, and these don't provide a justification for speed watch. So we're fighting a losing battle!

We've encountered some really stupid and arrogant drivers. However, the (apparently increasing) lack of police support, the difficulty of getting responses to emails, and the frustration of trying to have CSW operate where we know we have a problem, has taken-away

*my enthusiasm and has become stressful, which I don't need. I've done my fair share; it's now time to retire.*

*In due course, I will notify the co-ordinator and others, and Urchfont CSW will cease, as have other schemes where teams have found the police and community support wanting.*

*Unless anyone wishes to take over.....!*

*Regards  
David*