

What did the 2015/19 Hannington Parish Council do?

Highlights of the key activities completed by the Hannington Parish Council during the period 2015 -2019.

Hannington's Parish footpath and bridleway network.

- **Stiles to Gates:** One of the first initiatives taken up by the then HPC was the '*Stiles for Gates*' project. This activity was completed successfully with the combined efforts and enthusiasm of the local Ramblers Association, local farmers & landowners, and a variety of volunteers. Ten kissing gates replaced inadequate or seriously decrepit styles. HCC Countryside Services now use Hannington Parish as an exemplar to other parish councils of what can be achieved to improve access and safety to the countryside network for those with mobility problems and larger dogs.
- **Ibworth Bridleway Clean-up:** A major clean-up of broken branches and other detritus by a bunch of enthusiastic Hannington volunteers of the bridleway BW7110 i.e. from the end of the '*Yellow Brick Road*' all the way to Ibworth, allowed HCC Countryside Services to cut back the undergrowth. More importantly, Kingsclere Estates kindly removed the boundary fence. This allowed a significant extent of repairs to be made to the bridleway surface followed by the re-grassing of the damaged areas by the HCC Countryside Services team.
- **Berthas Lane (FP7106a) Safety:** was very problematic as it had been allowed to deteriorate over the years. To the extent that a considerable number of dead elm trees and some that had been declared by the BDBC arboreal consultant to be a danger to the public had to be removed. No responsible landowner could be found to undertake the work. In the absence of a declared landowner, the parish council coordinated the work to remove the dead trees and undesirable undergrowth. The HCC Countryside Services kindly arranged for the removal of the 'verified unsafe trees' and overhangs. They are now actively monitoring every two years the one remaining tree that may be at risk of falling down.
- **Berthas Lane (FP7106a) Repair:** Historically, Berthas Lane (FP7106a) is habitually used by farm vehicles belonging to Kingsclere Estates. Over time, due to the vehicular traffic, the surface of the lane becomes severely damaged to the extent that local residents could not use the lane due to the major pools of static water and mud during the winter months. The application by the parish council to HCC for funding the repair of the surface of Berthas Lane was turned down as it was concluded that the damage had been caused by farm vehicles. Discussion with Kingsclere Estates produced a very positive outcome whereby Bertha's Lane was repaired and a surface re-laid.

Hannington's Parish Rural Road Network

HCC Highways are under severe budgetary constraint. Other than their 'patching' running repairs any significant roadworks are planned for financial approval two years in advance from the date of request by the council. The council submitted their requests for . . .

- **Surfacing roadworks completed:**
 - Significant patching repairs along Meadham Lane
 - Repairs and resurfacing of Ibworth Lane
 - Major maintenance and resurfacing of the primary route from Hannington Village to the A339
- **Flood area on Hannington Road:** Several accidents had occurred at the then flood area along Hannington Road, near Freemantle Farm with one resident's vehicle being written off. HPC and HCC Highways had failed, over the years, to get BT Openreach to relocate a telephone cable from the ditch that should have taken the floodwater. The Hannington Parish Council successfully interceded directly with BT Openreach to have the stretch of offending cable rerouted to the other side of the road. North Oakley Farms now have dug out an extensive ditch to take the floodwaters off Hannington Road. HCC

Highways subsequently installed a new larger drain to provide an enhanced method to carry away the floodwaters to the ditch. No floodwaters have been experienced here to-date.

Ongoing Superfast Broadband Campaign

- **Superfast fibre broadband into Hannington Village:** From the outset, Hannington Parish Council initiated a presentation from HCC Superfast Broadband Programme team and BT for the parishioners which was well attended. At that time, some four years ago, it was seen as highly unlikely or extremely problematic that the rural communities would be able to receive fast broadband due to the limitations of technology and the high costs incurred which was regarded as not commercially viable. However, close cooperation and liaison with the HCC Superfast Programme team and BT Openreach - and new developments in fibre technology - finally resulted in superfast fibre broadband being delivered to Hannington in March 2019.
- **Superfast fibre broadband to the remaining communities:** Ibworth, North Oakley, White Lane and Plantation Farm are part of the continuing campaign by the parish council to get superfast broadband delivered to those communities. The parish council's continuing dialogue has identified these communities to the HCC Superfast Broadband Programme team who have in turn addressed this issue to Openreach in their weekly programme meeting in early May 2019. Indicative high level, but by no means certain, plans for Fibre Nodes (for FTTP) to be delivered to the Plantation and Freemantle Farm areas are now under discussion. The outcomes of the analysis and planning by Openreach are awaited.

General

The normal activities of monitoring and commenting on planning application and successfully completing the above outcomes, the work has been augmented by other items of activity such as the following examples,

- The transfer of ownership of the Hannington Village Green from Kingsclere Parish Council to Hannington Parish Council.
- Residents identified to the Hannington Parish Council their preferred choice as to the organisation that would most benefit from a £5,000 legacy that had been left to the parish council. Michaels Field was nominated with the highest number of votes. The parish council actively engaged with BDBC and the MFMC to produce the qualification proposal application to successfully gain additional funding for the inspirational and successful Michaels Field project undertaken by the MFMC.
- Formally evaluated the Parish Clerk's role as 'Officer' of the parish council: Given the radical regulatory changes that had to be implemented by the parish council, it identified the need for a qualified experienced part-time and paid Parish Clerk.
- Due to economic constraints, BDBC withdrew funding to the parish councils within the borough; the outcome was an increase in precept to cover the running costs of the parish council.
- In a rapidly changing, increasing regulatory and negative economic climate, the parish council identified a number of financial risks and created a three year rolling financial plan to mitigate against those risks.
- **Regulatory Compliance:**
 - The 'Transparency' regulations came into force whereby all regulatory information had to be made readily available to the public. The parish council obtained grants to finance the recommended use of a website to comply with the new regulations. The necessary IT equipment and software for use by the parish clerk had been purchased using the grants.
 - The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) imposed a significant technology and administrative burden from a data protection perspective, e.g. the requirement to 'erase all historical emails'. The requisite technologies have been put in place to comply with the Governments and National Cyber Security Centre (part of GCHQ) guidelines.