

June 2020

## Forthcoming events

### This month

All meetings of the Parish Council will be held virtually until restrictions on face-to-face meetings due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak are lifted.

Members of the public are very welcome to join any of our virtual meetings.

Please contact the Clerk on [clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk) to request an invitation.

- **CANCELLED - Planning Committee** – Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 7.00 pm
- **Planning Committee** – Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 7.00 pm
- **Finance & General Purposes Committee** – Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 7.00 pm
- **Full Council Meeting** – Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> June, 7.00 pm

Meetings listed are correct at the time of printing but may be subject to change. Please check on the website for any updates or confirm by contacting [clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## NEWSLETTER No.10

**Parish Council Newsletter** Newsletters are posted on Noticeboards within the Parish and made available on the Parish Council website. If you would be interested in receiving the Parish Council Newsletter by email, please contact us on [clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**COVID-19 information and support** There is now a dedicated page on the Charlton Kings Parish Council website where we are posting information and useful contacts for individuals and community groups. <https://www.charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk/covid-19-corona-virus-support.html> This information is also being posted on our noticeboards and hard-copies can be requested by contacting [clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Parish Councillor vacancies** There are currently vacancies on the Parish Council. Being a Councillor is a varied and interesting role which allows residents to have a positive impact on their community. **For more information see the Parish Council website.**

**Chair's Report on 2019-20** The Chair's report for 2019-20 could not be given at the Annual Parish Meeting as is usual but has had to be published on our website. This is just a short summary.

The 'Lockdown' affected our busiest month in March and continues to affect what we can do, although we remain 'open for business' and are busy developing some great new projects for 2020-21. Highlights of last year included:

- Taking a lease from Cheltenham Borough Council on **Grange Field** and building a new '**ChatShak**' for our young people.
- Continuing to develop new ideas for the Future of the **Kings Hall**. It has been disappointing not to have made more progress, but we now have more secure plans and we will start to move forward next year.
- Supporting the Kings Hall Trustees to develop **youth services**, prompted by a spate of antisocial behaviour which we hope has now passed.
- Moving into a new area of parish business, with a contract to research isolation, loneliness and care in for our community, just as the virus hit! This critical work, **CK Health Connect**, will continue in this current year.
- Our **allotments** are more popular now than they have been for years and we have quite a long waiting list!
- From great interest at our Open Meetings in May and October, we have developed a working group of councillors and knowledgeable volunteers, '**Charlton Kings Futures**', who are addressing environmental issues linked to Climate Change.

I would particularly like to thank this year:

- Our **16 fantastic councillors** who have not just turned up to our Council and committees but done the real work between meetings. We currently have vacancies and would welcome applications from interested, committed and resourceful residents.
- Our **three staff**, who do more and do it better than we could reasonably expect.
- Our new partners in **Friends of Charlton Kings** who have been a revelation in how they have quickly set up a strong network of volunteers and

## Your Councillors

Cllr Rob Williams (Chair)

Cllr Jessica Diamond

Cllr Russell Grimshaw

Cllr Penny Hall

Cllr Clive Hodges

Cllr Ned Holt

Cllr Janet Honeywill

Cllr Lynda Johnson

Cllr Andrew Lansley

Cllr Duncan Munro

Cllr Pat Palmer

Cllr Felicity Parnham

Cllr Rob Reid

## Contact details

Charlton Kings Parish Office,

26 Church Street, Church Piece, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 8AR

01242 250087

PLEASE NOTE - The best way to contact the Parish Office staff during the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak is by email or letter.

Clerk/RFO - Joanna Noles  
clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk

Administrative Officer - Helen Johnston  
administrativeofficer@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk

Admin Assistant - Debbie Dockree  
admin@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk

www.charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk

helped hundreds of people now unable to go about their business because of the virus.

- **Each Precept paying resident** who has given us £22 this year to support the work we do on your behalf. To this, we add another £6 from hirings, grants and interest.

**Update from the Parish Office** As is for true for all of us, lockdown was a real shock to the system for the Parish Office staff. Confined to our homes, some of us were coming to terms with not being able to see our families others were getting used to seeing much more of them! Despite all the uncertainties and speed at which we had to adapt, our robust and established processes have allowed us to hit the ground running and continue to work effectively from home. **Although the Parish Office is currently closed to members of the public due to Covid-19 restrictions, Parish Office staff are still working and can be contacted by email, by post or by leaving a telephone message.**

**Update on Allotments** The allotments have been a hive of activity over the last couple of months. Many allotment tenants have visited their plots as their daily exercise during lockdown. However unfortunately some of our tenants have not been able to tend their plots due to self-isolation or ill health during this time. This is one of the main reasons the Allotments Committee took the difficult



decision to cancel this year's Allotments Competition as well as the next set of inspections in June. Although undoubtedly this would have come as a disappointment to the allotments' community, as indeed it did for the Allotments Committee, this was the only fair and safe conclusion.

We have experienced a significant upsurge in interest from potential new "allotmenters". The waiting list for allotment plots is growing steadily but we will not be able to welcome any new tenants until the staff and committee are able to safely conduct plot inspections and fully resume the plot allocation process.

We ask that everyone visiting the allotments continues to do so in compliance with the government's Coronavirus guidelines and with consideration for fellow tenants and local residents. For those who have been unable to get to their plots during this period, please do not hesitate to contact the office with any concerns.

**Covid-19 liaison with Cheltenham Borough Council** As part of their liaison with Cheltenham's five Parish Councils during the current emergency, senior members and officers of the Borough Council held a virtual meeting with our senior members' team on 11th May. The Chair updated Borough Council colleagues of the current situation in Charlton Kings, emphasising the important work of the Friends of Charlton Kings volunteer network, the Parish Council's CK Health Connect programme, our £5k emergency fund, and our ability to hold Council and committee meetings remotely. Looking forward to a recovery

strategy for Cheltenham, we identified the CBC Resilience fund as a source of support for a future CK Health Connect work, and emphasised the importance we attach to urgent joint working on a plan for a carbon neutral Cheltenham by 2030. We will meet again on 8th June.

**Tree planting in The Beeches** Sharp-eyed residents will have noticed three new standard tree plantings on the south side of the Beeches playing fields. These are three fastigiata (upward branching) Beech trees that the Parish Council commissions and pays the Borough Council's Trees Officer to plant for us each year. His contract with a specialist tree planting company also includes their care and maintenance until the new trees are firmly established, so we can look forward to these Beech trees providing an unusual and attractive landscape feature on The Beeches for many years.



**Timbercombe Woods** Historical research evidence tells us that land shown as woodland on maps before 1600 AD has almost certainly been continuously wooded for about 8000 years – our Ancient Woodlands. Timbercombe Woods is one of these very special ancient sites, but like so many that are difficult to manage and have provided scant financial returns to landowners to pay for special treatment, its biodiversity interest has been slowly ebbing away. The post-war craze for conifers meant that many broadleaved woods, like Timbercombe, of native species like Oak, Ash, Hazel and Holly, were either replaced entirely or were nibbled away as here. Landscape plantings of Rhododendron and Cherry Laurel led, as here, to the shrubs and ground flora being shaded out as the light slowly faded from the woodland floor. The good news is that Timbercombe Woods are to have a new future. This began with the recent safety felling of some decayed old Beech Trees along the old Salter's Road. Although this work has upset a number of people because it had to be carried out by large and pretty brutal machinery, the landowner has exciting plans to restore the biodiversity of the woods by re-creating a mixed tree canopy of native species such as Beech, Hornbeam, Silver Birch, Hazel, and others. The recent works will be tidied up, the dark, dense thickets of Cherry Laurel removed, and consideration given to whether, with Ash die-back disease now predicted to kill most of our wonderful native Ash trees, the Timbercombe trees should be retained.

Timbercombe woods have kindly been made available by the owner for our parishioners to walk through and enjoy for many, many years and the Parish Council is right behind these proposals to restore their biodiversity. We hope that the public will understand and be patient with what will appear to be some pretty forceful interventions in the woods over the next few years.

**June 2020**