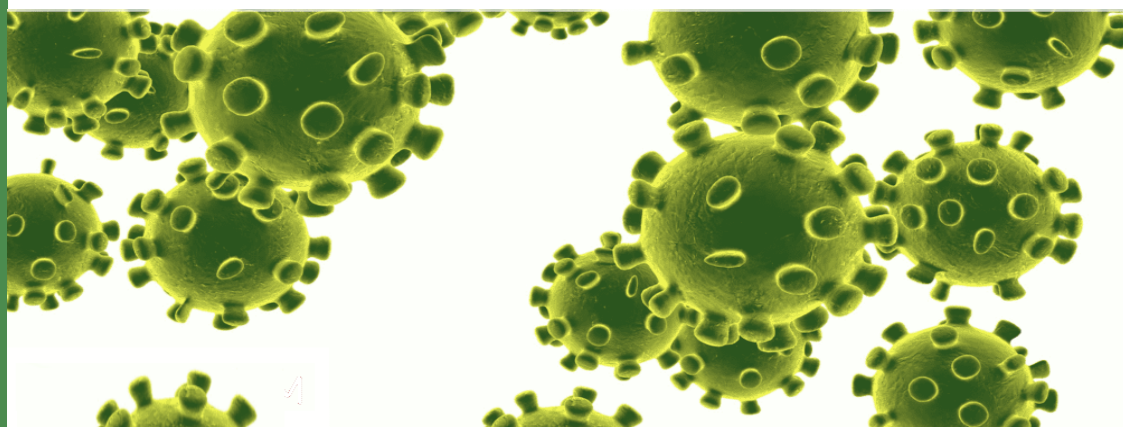




2020 ANNUAL REPORT TO RESIDENTS

FROM YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL



A bad end to a good year . . .

I guess I could summarise the year in terms of classic literature:

- It started with a Shakespearean Julius Caesar act when my colleagues on the PC took me by surprise and sticking their knives in at last year's AGM to elect me as chairman of the parish council (PC) - sadly, they did the same again this year!
- Act 2 was in Trollope style: as one resident objected to us felling the diseased ash tree in Chithurst graveyard, despite the obvious risk to the new church roof, we had to go through an appeal procedure with the "diocesan registry court" !!

- Act 4 turned more Dickensian as the court fees threatened to overwhelm us (Bleak House) but then, at the year-end, local church-linked charities saved us (Christmas Story)
- The last act – appropriately for us just outside Midhurst – could have been written by H G Wells, as a sinister invader descended on the world - although this one appears to have come from China, not Mars! And it's not over yet, although the community is doing its best to hang together—as these pages try to show. . .

. . . for our community



Thanks to the very quick response from our community, within a week or two of lockdown we had identified 16 vulnerable people and signed up 34 volunteers to do shopping, collect prescriptions etc, so we were (and still are) fairly confident that no-one in our parish need be unsupported. Thais and Charlie from The Elsted Inn, and the team at Aylings, were offering to deliver at least the essentials, and the Elsted and Southdowns Manor teams were also offering free meals. We had order forms available on our website and they reassured everyone that help was at hand (and served many).

The volunteers have kept in touch with the isolated residents but have not been called on to do much—yet! But they still stand ready to support the community if needed.

. . . but it's not ALL bad news! . . .

Is your parish council serving you?

"Question time": 6pm 9 Sept

Call in to the parish council meeting and ask any question you like of your council . . .

Details via the parish clerk (see banner above)

No Trotton fete this year?

No "First Fridays"?

Village 'bring-your-own'

(socially-distanced)

barbecue, picnic and family games

6pm, 4th September

See page 2



- On the parish council
- As a community support volunteer
- To join its email list (to save us printing costs and distribution)

Ask the clerk (above) for details

MARK YOUR DIARY

**5 Sep Trotton fete & duck race
CANCELLED - SORRY**

4 Sep 6pm: "Bring your own" village barbecue & picnic replacing First Friday and the Trotton fete - see below

9 Sep 6pm: annual parish "meeting" - see left

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DO YOU VALUE YOUR PRIVACY? - WE DO!

On our website community menu, you'll see a "sign-on" form that allows you to add your name to our lists—to keep you informed about local issues. We have about a third of the households signed up so far, but we're not allowed to keep your email or phone details unless you opt in. If you do, please be assured that the lists are stored securely in an ICO-registered database and **we will never share your details with anyone else** without your express permission.



WHO PAYS?

We have to work out a budget for the year ahead and tell our local district council (Chichester) how much we need to do our work. They divide this by the number of residents in our parish (currently around 270) and charge the appropriate amount as part of the rates they collect—the precept. We postponed our decision, reported last year, to increase the precept for the first time since 2015, due to the uncertainty over whether we could fell the diseased ash tree in Chithurst graveyard last year (see separate article), so it remained at £3,000 for this year (around £1 per month for each ratepayer). Although the cost of this tree felling job was delayed to the current year, two church-related charities gave us £500 each to cover the court fees. We also received a £1,600 delayed VAT refund, so our total income was £6,040—over half of it from outside sources, not residents.

WHAT DID WE SPEND IT ON?

Our expenditure last year was:

Day to day costs

* Insurance	£335
* Dues & subscriptions	£240
* Office supplies	£150
* Online services ¹	£763
* Payroll ²	£0
* Churchyard maintenance ³	£1,152
* Other maintenance ⁴	£281
* Donations ⁵	£432
* TOTAL SPENDING	£3,352

¹ To comply with public authority transparency rules and GDPR, we need fairly expensive websites and secure email / data facilities, but we hope START's new charity venture might offer us cheaper access to these (see separate article)

² As our clerk is voluntary, we don't pay him but we donate £500 to cover grass cutting at Trotton church in lieu, so that we could pay a clerk if we needed to.

³ As Chithurst graveyard is closed to burials, it is legally the responsibility of the parish council. This year, we had to pay £500 to cut down a dead willow tree.

⁴ Replacement defibrillator batteries

⁵ Community event sign for church

As a result, we had a surplus for the year of £2,689, bringing our reserves to £6,374—so we are now hoping not to have to raise it again to cover the cost of felling the tree.

The year in Trotton: 1 April 2019—31 March 2020

It wasn't all misery and isolation, though. It seems forever but lockdown only started in late March—the last day of our reporting year. Before that, we ran or helped with a number of events in the parish, including:

- First Friday suppers (every month)
- Froxfield choir Spring concert
- Parish clean-up – our 'Gilet Jaune' day
- Local elections (2 May)
- Dovetail Trio folk concert
- "Are we angels?" - Tobiah in concert
- Alested festival
- Sussex day & launch of START Community Trust (see below)
- Open day at Chithurst Monastery
- Classical guitar concert - Gordon Dunn
- Our own folk trio: Madhurst at Trotton church
- Trotton fete & duck race
- The Trotton bonfire and fireworks



- First Friday village Christmas party

Stedham, Trotton And Rogate Together Community Trust to START supporting wider community.

A year ago in April, we teamed up with our two neighbouring parishes to set up a community land trust (CLT), with the primary objective of developing affordable housing. It's still working on that but it has also recognised a shared need across the area for a charitable body that can apply for funds and provide "back-office" (virtual meetings, email forwarding, website pages, databases, etc) for all sorts of local bodies. CLTs can do this too so START has decided to set up a charitable arm to do this. START will hold its AGM (virtual or otherwise) at 6pm on 17th September and hopes current and prospective members will take part. It's looking for board volunteers / nominations and groups interested in this new arm . . . Email info@start-ct.org.uk or go to www.start-ct.org.uk



Eco Rother Action

ERA is a local climate change response group with 45 members - and growing. With things on hold during the pandemic, it's working on its aims and objectives, with input from members adding to the sizeable list of potential projects. These are organised under 4 main headings:

- Products and Packaging – reducing our use of plastic, considering the environmental impact of what we buy, buying locally, growing more of our own food, etc;
- Homes and gardens: insulation, renewable energy, etc;
- Transport and travel: public transport, electric cars, cycle routes, etc;
- The environment: water, litter, biodiversity, trees, etc.



Join us: eco.rother@start-ct.org.uk

Buy less, Use less, Waste less - making frugality fashionable!

Village family barbecue, picnic & family games to replace fete

6pm Friday,

4th September 2018

As we haven't been able to do our 'First Friday' suppers since March, and as we've had to cancel the Trotton fete and duck race this year, we're suggesting a **"Bring your own" socially distanced village barbecue & picnic** on the day we would have been preparing the fete. The plan (subject to changes in guidelines) is that we all take our picnics and games to the Rogate village green. We will arrange a separate area of "socially-distanced" tables & chairs (6 people each) for those who pre-book and we can use the "Pop-up pub" in the village hall for drinks. To keep to attendance limits, you'll need to book in via the website and we'll be suggesting donations of £5 each or £10 per family to replace the fund-raising of the Fete.

Ideas / queries to events@trotton.community

More details via our website "What's on" and email list (sign up via the website community menu)

REPRESENTING YOUR VIEWS

We may be a small community but we still want to make our views known . .

Whether it's maintaining rights of way across fields or responding to new policies and strategies from WSCC, the complaints and consultation papers come in and it's our job to see if we can put things right and represent our communities views to others who affect our lives.

Just a sample of the complaints / issues we dealt with last year:

- Potholes on Trotton bridge and Terwick Lane (former dealt with, latter pending)
- Outside lights at two properties offending neighbours / dark skies policy—one still offending
- WSCC small schools consultation
- Motorbike noise: PC joined with other PCs along A272 to lobby MPs / WSCC
- WSCC consultation on travel concessions
- SDNPA proposals on sand quarries
- Boggy right of way off Dumpford Lane

We also spent a lot of time dealing with the diseased tree in Chithurst graveyard — see separate article below.

PLANNING

We are not the planning authority for the area—the South Downs National Park Authority has that responsibility—although they farm most of it out to Chichester District Council.

The parish council, though, is a “statutory consultee” - meaning that the planning authority has to take our views into account.

The planning committee dealt with 9 applications last year, from simple tree felling / trimming, through extensions and alterations, to a new swimming pool in Mill Lane, to a proposal to put a statue on Trotton & Iping Common.

In all but one of these, the planning authority eventually made the decision we recommended. The only exception was the sculpture, where we objected that it was inappropriate on what is supposed to be a wildlife preserve and open heathland. The SDNPA approved the proposal but put it on on Stedham Common, not on “ours”.

GIVE YOUR VIEWS . .

. . to the county council,



WSCC runs a lot of surveys and consultations to collect residents' views on things . Look for it at <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/have-your-say/> . . . You can also use this page to make complaints or even to join the “People’s panel” and volunteer to be consulted regularly about important local issues

. . the district council

Chichester DC also does surveys to check local views, although not so often. They are at: <http://chichester.gov.uk/letstalksurveys>

. . our neighbours

Several of our neighbour parishes are preparing neighbourhood development plans—you can get to all of them from here:

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/community-planning/>

On litter

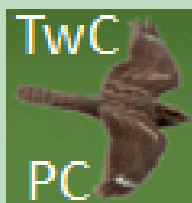
How about adopting the area around your house as part of CDC's “against litter” campaign here:

<https://www.chichester.gov.uk/adoptanarea>



. . OR TELL US!

We are your local council, and we'd love to know what you think about our services (or anything else relevant to our work), so give us your views at any time and we'll try to pass them on, do something about them or at least ask you to tell us more . . .



Trotton community memorial garden

Following the death of ex-chairman of the parish council (PC) Chris Hodgson in 2015, his family took a collection at his funeral to pursue his dream of a wildflower space to provide a much-needed habitat and community area. With the PC's support they got permission from WSCC to use the wide verge on the corner of Dumpford Lane and Trotton Road, opposite Mill Lane West. As a volunteer-only project, the project progressed slowly until the PC's new environmental and open spaces committee and the new Eco-Rother Action group (see p2) agreed to work together on a plan, which was agreed with the PC, and help to co-ordinate the volunteers working on it. Wildflower areas take a long time to develop, and the plan envisaged four phases of work, started this Spring. Despite lockdown, local volunteers have removed the turf and, advised by the Sussex Wildlife Trust, the SDNP Authority and other specialists, carried out limited spraying to kill bracken, couch grass, and other perennial weeds. The PC was given a £250 grant under the Chichester District Council VE 75 initiative to pay for an elm tree with mulch and stakes and this has been planted. The plans envisage two more decorative trees, fruit trees, one or two benches, and a picnic table and other facilities. Ideas and queries to:

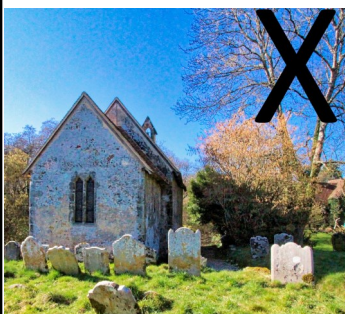
barry.cooper@trotton-with-chithurst.org.uk

Our tree problem

Lovely trees they might be, but this ash has been confirmed as having “ash die-back” disease and, as it's in the now-closed (and therefore our responsibility) graveyard at Chithurst, it's our problem.

If it's left much longer, it could get too dangerous to climb, so we need to get it down before that happens. We had approval from the church authorities but a neighbour appealed, so we had to go to the church courts in London to get permission. That cost us an extra £830 on top of the

£1,500+ we'll have to pay for felling it. but, fortunately, organist Peter Thomas managed to get two charities to contribute £1,500 of this, which will probably mean we don't need to raise our precept. We owe Peter (and his charitable friends) a big thank-you!



WHO ARE WE?

Carola Brown: has lived in Trotton since her family moved to Gatehouse Lane in 1955. Retired this year after nearly 40 years running the local brewery.

Barry Cooper: has lived in Trotton for 25 years, working in and lecturing on the motorsport industry. He still helps with young people as well as being a bell-ringer

Dave Dawtrey: has lived in Trotton all his life. He works in an engineering firm and is a volunteer at the Hollycombe steam collection.

Katherine MacKellar: has lived in Chithurst since 2006 and practises hypnotherapy and 'personal and spiritual growth'.

Thais Robertson: was born and bred in Trotton. Her first job at 14 was as a waitress at The Elsted Inn. Sixteen years later, living in London, she decided to come back—as the landlady back at The Elsted Inn!

Neil Ryder: retired to Trotton nearly 5 years ago. He is clerk to the PC on a voluntary (unpaid) basis and is also chair of governors for Rake and Rogate primary schools and chairman of START Community Trust (see centre pages).

Darren ("Nobby") Stiles: came to Trotton in 1993 as the local policeman and retired in 2015. He is also a volunteer driver of the Midhurst Yellow Bus and Tandem minibuses.

WHO DOES WHAT?

(All voluntary, unpaid)

Chairman: Nobby

Deputy: Dave

Responsible finance officer: Barry

Clerk : Neil

Amenity plans: Nobby & Neil

Churchyards: Dave

Events - bonfire: Dave

- **community:** Thais

Finance: Barry, Thais & Neil

Emergency plans: Thais

Planning: All councillors

Trotton common: Neil

Environment, paths & open spaces: Barry

Website: Nobby & Neil

YOUR COUNCILLORS ARE . . . Unpaid local volunteers elected by you!



HOW ARE WE ELECTED?

Through local government elections every 4 years — the latest in 2019, when two new volunteers (Thais and Barry—see left panel) replaced Rosie and Keith, who'd moved away. As we then had the same number of candidates as vacancies, all of the candidates were elected unopposed.

WHEN AND WHERE DO WE MEET?

Our planning committee meets whenever it has applications to consider and the finance committee works mainly by email. The full council meets every other month,

starting in January, usually in St George's church (unless it's too cold) - although this year's have all been held "virtually".

Our website shows the full calendar for the year and, at least 3 clear days ahead of each meeting (usually earlier), we put a notice and agenda (including venue) of each meeting on the website and on our noticeboards (In Mill Lane, the bus shelter at Chithurst Lane / A272 and at the top of Gatehouse Lane). Residents are welcome to all of our meetings and are usually allowed a period to ask their questions.

WHAT DO PARISH COUNCILS DO?

They look after community events and services, and most have city, town or village halls—we don't, so we are working with the local church council to develop community facilities in St George's church (see page 2).

Larger parish councils look after many public buildings and land, allotments, toilets, cemeteries, etc. Ours looks after the bus shelter on the A272 at Chithurst, the defibrillator in Mill Lane, Dumpford, the closed churchyard at Chithurst and a few other things.

Like bigger councils, though, we have a wide range of information and consultation duties—our county council (West Sussex CC) and district council (Chichester DC), as well as the South Downs National Park Authority and many other bodies are legally obliged to inform and/or consult us on a wide range of issues—including planning applications, changes in school provisions, and much more— so we are an important part of your democratic representation.

The inside pages of this leaflet describe some of our recent and planned activities and there's a fuller description of the powers and duties of each tier of local government at: <https://www.gov.uk/understand-how-your-council-works>

WHAT DON'T WE DO ?

Civil parishes are sometimes confused with church parishes, but the two were separated by the Local Government Act of 1894. Church parishes are now run by parochial church councils (PCCs) while civil parishes are run by parish councils (PCs) like ours.

We also don't make road and right of way or planning decisions (although the planning authority must consult us on every application). See a fuller description of the powers and duties of each tier of local government at:

<https://www.gov.uk/understand-how-your-council-works>