

## WAKES COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

### The Council's Winter Work

This last winter has been an endurance test for us all on many levels due to the pandemic restrictions and the very wet weather which has limited the walks of all but the most hardy, as our footpaths became too muddy and slippery. Nevertheless WCPC has been continuing to meet by zoom (please see our website for the minutes: <https://e-voice.org.uk/wakescolne/parish-council-minutes/minutes-2021-2022/>) and to be very active on a daily basis trying to maintain and improve local conditions in our parish.

Within three months of forming a new council we have begun to work as a cooperative team and different groups of individuals work together on particular areas of the Council's remit, drawing on our experience and interests. Our clerk is integral to the team, and our work is enhanced by several volunteers and parishioners who check on issues and report their concerns.

During the last two months our activities have included:

- An informative talk to the January meeting by Jill Bruce, who is Wakes Colne Women's Institute climate change spokesperson to raise our awareness of issues. As a result we will be considering what the council may be able to do in its work to reduce our carbon footprint. Jill kindly accepted to be Climate Change Ambassador for Wakes Colne, to add to her duties as Essex Federation WI Climate Ambassador and she has started to provide us with more information about local initiatives in the county and involve us in meetings. We each need to re-consider our own behaviour and tell others of when we have made improvements in our garden composting, our electricity usage, limiting our car usage, planting trees and so on.
- Our list of nearly 20 highways issues, some outstanding for many months is not getting much shorter, though we keep pressing for highway maintenance and signage repair. This is not helped by an unclear system of division and overlap of responsibilities between ECC, the LHP, CBC, which makes it difficult to find where responsibility lies and when tasks will get done. We have recently been able to have a worthwhile meeting with County Cllr. Anne Brown and Ward Cllr. Peter Chillingworth to clarify policy, procedures and practices. WCPC and two local residents were also able to make some suggestions for our most pressing concerns: trying to improve the crossing at Chappel Corner, pedestrian safety in Station Rd, clearance of the pavement along the A1124 from the village hall to Wakes Colne church, flooding and speeding in Lane Rd. Notes from the meeting are available. Cllr. Brown agreed to take forward some of our suggestions, so yet again, we await action!
- A survey of all our footpaths has been undertaken and a list has been compiled of work needed to improve signage, undertake repairs and vegetation clearance; some of this we can do but some, for health and safety reasons again need Highways support; we will also be calling on local landowners to ask for their assistance.
- We have decided to purchase a second defibrillator (one is at the Post Office) which will most likely be located at the Cricket Club at Middle green to be accessed by all in that area. Watch this space!
- We will also be going ahead with a Seed and Plant Swap at Chappel corner in the late spring.

- Our telephone box book swaps continue to be popular; sometimes we have too many books donated but at present we can accept some more.

As you can tell, we have plenty to engage with. One of our team unfortunately had to resign due to new employment, so we have a vacancy for a co-option (see advertisement elsewhere in this issue). If you have the inclination and some time to consider joining us please apply by contacting our clerk. Our community needs you! Let's enjoy the arrival of spring as best we can.

Cllr. Monica Taylor