

ETON TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2016

It has been a busy and interesting year for the Town Council. Following the general election, the Council welcomed new members Linda Tarbox, Malcolm Leach and Duncan Reed and said goodbye to retiring members Adam Demeter, Jonathan Palmer and Tony Ward.

Some of the significant issues that have been tackled during the year were as follows:

The Gables/Sandles Development: Much consternation was caused by the felling of a much loved cedar of lebanon tree although a degree of harmony was eventually restored by assurances from RBWM that the tree was not in good condition and felling was an appropriate measure. This development has also caused concern by the poor traffic management of site vehicles which have dug up grass verges and parked inconsiderately. RBWM has assured the Council that the verges will be restored to their original condition when work is completed.

Footpath 51: Concern by councillors over the potential closure of partial closure of this footpath by residents of Rafts Court was settled by a decision by RBWM (following a public meeting of the Alleygating Panel in the Council Chamber) against the application. Subsequently an application to close part of the footpath for the night time period was passed.

South Meadow Lane Car Park Extension: Work finally commenced on this project in November and was completed recently and reports have been very favourable. The recycling bins which had been taken away for the work have been returned. It is hoped than an official opening ceremony can be organised in the very near future.

Eton Wick Cemetery Extension: The planning application was turned down by RBWM due to concerns from the Environment Agency over flooding. It has been agreed to reapply but with assistance from a planning consultant and so this project remains pending.

Eton Wick Transformation: The positioning of a memorial in memory of the fallen of WW1 has taken longer than anticipated to come to fruition. Initial plans for plaques attached to the recently planted 34 trees was rejected in favour of a memorial stone. This project has yet to be completed but when it has then there will be a special ceremony to mark the occasion.

Bell Lane Farm: The farm has been leased by RBWM to the Animal Sanctuary and it is hoped that the new tenant will bring the site up to the required standard. There was no agreement with RBWM for the site to be cleared and so the new tenant has the responsibility of making everything good.

Neighbourhood Plan: Significant work was completed during the year including a local questionnaire and associated public meetings at Eton and Eton Wick. Planning consultants AECOM were appointed and it is expected that the Plan will be completed within the next year.

Other Issues: The Town Council managed many other issues of local concern and interest during the year including the following:

- **The Flaming Cow and Fishcraft restaurants:** Concerns about noise and fumes (Flaming Cow) and signage (Fishcraft) continue to vex local residents and the subject is under constant review by ETC and RBWM.
- **Eton Wick Notice Board:** a replacement board was erected in the heart of the village and was well received.
- **Planters in Eton Wick:** two planters were erected at the entrances into the village and these have been well received. Ongoing maintenance of these has been agreed with Eton Wick First School and a local resident.

- New Bench at Clifton Lodge: the Council replaced the dilapidated bench outside this home.
- Eton Town Council Website: the website has been revamped thanks to the contribution from Cllr Blightman who has maintained the site throughout the year.
- Clean for the Queen: Eton and Eton Wick contributed to this campaign with separate sessions in the two locations over the designated weekend, with great support from Eton Community Association and Eton Wick Village Association.
- The Myrke Bridge: The proposal to name this bridge Michael's Bridge was debated long and hard by the Council but eventually it was agreed that the new name would stand.
- Eton Wick Village Association: The establishment of this organisation was met with much local enthusiasm and it is hoped that it will make a significant contribution to the life of the village.
- Stockdales Recreation Ground: A project is underway to upgrade the facilities at the play area.
- Haywards Mead Recreation Ground: Plans are being discussed to install an outdoor gym with assistance from a grant from RBWM.
- South Meadow Lane Recreation Ground: A plan to join forces with Eton College in the redevelopment of the pavilion are being discussed.
- Bell Lane Open Area: Significant work has been undertaken on this site to remove unwanted growth and restore its natural beauty.
- Anti Social Behaviour in Eton: The Council helped the Eton Community Association in the management of a survey in the winter to measure the degree of ASB in the night. The findings were relayed to RBWM and Thames Valley Police.
- Refuse Collection Issues in Eton Town Centre: A constant dialogue has been maintained with RBWM over the number of refuse bags and wheelie bins that clutter the streets and make the town centre unattractive enough to deter visitors. This remains unresolved.

A highlight of the year was the party in September in honour of Cllr Highy who retired as Mayor at the start of the Council year. Cllr Highy served both Eton and Eton Wick with diligence and great skill over his eight year term as Mayor and guests were fulsome in their praise.

Bob Austen
Town Clerk
April 2016