

SEALE AND SANDS PARISH COUNCIL
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 15th MAY 2023

This is the Chairman's report for the Annual Assembly of the Parish of Seale and Sands for the year from May 2022 until today. A warm welcome to all those present.

Both Mick Cover and I did not stand for re-election this term; which left two vacancies. This Parish had an uncontested election with only four Parish Councillors now in office – Ian Brown, Jason Butcher, Lyn Parrott and Nicola Collett, has joined the Council. There is still one vacancy which can be co-opted onto the Council. The position of part-time Parish Clerk will be taken over by Lesley Rixon, as Margaret Nelson is retiring at the end of July.

Matt Furniss is the County Councillor and has recently been elected as the Guildford Borough Councillor for the Pilgrims Ward, along with Sallie Barker. Angela Richardson is the MP for Guildford.

Barrie and Pauline Rimmington are carrying on with the general maintenance of the Parish, working at both Recreation Grounds and other public areas within the Parish, as required, both are retiring at the end of July.

A Litter Picking Team and Community Speed Watch are in place, co-ordinated by Simon Lipyeat – with thanks to all those who volunteer on these.

The Parish Council has representation on the following:

- Remembrance Day Service and Procession
- Surrey Association Local Councils (SALC)
- Act as Trustee of the Seale Recreation Ground Charity
- The Liaison Group for the Runfold SITA site
- Working Groups for the restoration of Seale Lodge
- Sits on the Seale Village Hall Committee
- Mrs Sue Newman, a previous Parish Councillor, continues on the Board of Smith's Gift Trust

The number of Meetings that took place during the year were eight, the September meeting was cancelled due to the sudden death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

- All meetings are advertised on the Notice Boards, in the Village News and on the Council's web site and are open to the public. We also e-mail the agenda, summarised minutes and any other relevant information, to all who attend our meetings, and those residents who have expressed an interest in being informed.
- The web site includes all the necessary information and contact numbers needed by the community, including copies of all the official documents.
- Legislative requirements covering Transparency and Data Protection are observed and the Standing Orders for the Council are detailed on the Web Site.
- The Declaration of Non & Disclosable Pecuniary Interests are in place and Councillors declare items when applicable, recorded in the minutes at each meeting.
- The Precept was maintained for the forthcoming year at £19,500 and the Council Tax element per person in the Parish was therefore £38.27 per annum.
- Grant Aid currently outstanding equates to £4591.

- The Council considered 56 planning applications during the year, which is half the amount of the previous year, due to the change in planning policies. The Parish Council objects to retrospective planning applications on principle. Concern over the advice and efficiency of Guildford Borough Council Planning and Enforcement has been and still is an ongoing issue over several years.
- Seale and Sands has been designated as a neighbourhood area and a Neighbourhood Plan is being formulated.
- The Finances of the Council are stable and there were no Audit Notes from the last set of results.

Recreation Ground activities:

- Rented by Ash Football Club in both The Sands and Seale
- The Summer Show is held annually on The Sands Recreation Ground.
- The Pilgrims Marathon annual event is hosted in The Sands in September.
- AGM Landscapes are retained to maintain the Recreation Grounds and work on any other maintenance within the Parish.
- Recreation Ground Parking is available for the use of other organised village events. The gates to the Grounds are required to be locked for security reasons.

Issues covered throughout the last year were as follows:

- LOCALISM ACT 2011 Assets of Community Value - The Barley Mow, Littleworth Road, The Sands, and The Royal British Legion in The Sands, were approved on 25th June.
- The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and Canopy – Celebrations were carried out, including two Street Parties, one in Seale and the other in The Sands. Trees were planted in both Recreation Grounds to commemorate the unique event. A portrait of The Queen was purchased and is displayed in The Sands Room.
- Following the sudden death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II a period of national mourning took place and all public meetings had to be cancelled.
- His Majesty, King Charles III was crowned on 6th May, and again the Parish celebrated the occasion with two street parties on the 7th May.
- There had been several issues concerning lack of Planning Enforcement. This included Laurel Bank Cottage, Ipsley Lodge Stables and the area behind Seale Lane. A meeting was held with the Executive of Guildford and Waverley Borough Council regarding the planning and enforcement failures.
- The approval of development in Smugglers Way was a series blow in attempting to protect the Green Belt.
- Parliamentary Constituency Boundary was reviewed and Seale & The Sands are now in a new area, Godalming and Ash.
- Speeding is still an ongoing issue within the villages.
- Road, Footpath and Bridleway maintenance was still a regular issue, but thanks to County Cllr. Matt Furniss an agreed Action list is in place with regular updates as to when work is taking place.

As Councillors, we really appreciate the support of local residents in the community.

Once again, many thanks to all fellow Councillors, Clerk, County & Borough Councillor, and especially you, the residents, for your help and support during the year.

A copy of this report will be available on the Parish Council Web site.