

Chairman's Report 2018

Ladies and gentlemen, good evening and welcome to the 2018 Parish Assembly.

I have served on the Parish Council for 9 years now and was elected Chairman in May 2011.

We currently have a full complement of nine councillors and your Parish Council now consists of;

Myself, Tony Steer: Chairman, Hugh Threlfall, Vice-Chairman, Annabel Moir, Kristian Berggreen, Baron Von Thunderclap, Mike Spragg, Victoria Hawken, Ken Larkins and Sarah Ellis.

Martin Duff and Laura Brook left the council, and Ken Larkins and Sarah Ellis were co-opted during 2017.

Debbie Thomas remains as our clerk and I would again like to personally thank Debbie for making sure all Councillors keep within council guide lines. Debbie has continued to work tirelessly behind the scenes and is a much valued member of our team. People need to remember that she is an independent point of contact and reference for the Parish Councillors; decisions made by the Council bear no reflection on her views and she continues to act on our behalf

Our thanks go to our County Councillor Joy Dennis and District Councillor Judy Llewellyn-Burke.

The council is made up of volunteers who give up their time for the benefit of the parish to ensure that you are represented at a local government level.

We continue to take advantage of whatever help we can for the parish at central and local Government levels and we highlight issues and try to follow them through to resolution.

Our work includes being involved with planning, highways, transport and traffic, community safety, housing, street lighting, litter, the war memorial, seats and shelters and rights of way. The list goes on.

Grants

Your Parish Council has made the following grants during this financial year;

Bolney Village Society:	£180 for the cost of field hire for Village Day in 2017.
Bolney Volunteers:	£600 towards the cost of fuel, equipment hire and maintenance.
Bolney Church:	£1500 to help fund the upkeep of the churchyard.
The Rawson Hall:	£500 towards the cost of cleaning and maintenance of the outside toilet.
St Catherine's Hospice:	£200 towards the cost of caring for patients in their own homes.
St Peter & St James Hospice:	£200 towards the cost of the Outpatient Transport Service.

Communication

The Parish Council continues to try and improve communication in the parish. The Parish Council holds an email distribution list to forward relevant information to parishioners quickly and our newsletter 'Bolney Matters' is issued periodically with an update on the work of the Parish Council.

A special thanks to James Staples for continuing to look after the Bolney website, blog and Facebook.

Partnership working

The Parish Council continues to work closely with WSCC exploring and engaging with them in the new initiatives open to us as a result of the emphasis on localism and self-help. A personal thank you needs to be addressed to WSCC's Tim Boxall for all his help and advice and pointing us in the direction on how to get things done correctly and without wasting too much time.

As a result of this, we have finally seen the installation of our pedestrian crossing on the A272 along with 5 new lamp posts. This has taken several years to achieve but is now being very well used. Again this is something that this Parish council should be proud of. After a recorded 18 accidents in a 1 year period along that stretch of the A272, since the flower beds and the lights have been installed, there have been none in 16 months.

Bolney Volunteers

The Parish Council has only been able to complete some of the recent improvements due to the help of the Bolney Volunteers. With their help we are able to achieve much in the parish that would otherwise face a long wait until it could be done by WSCC.

As well as the highways improvements, this year they have continued to help keep the footpaths clear in the parish. We have installed yet another picnic bench by the BBQ area that can be used by people in wheel chairs and mums with buggies.

A recent litter pick led to 16 bags of rubbish being collected.

A new bus shelter was constructed at the bottom of Ryecroft road and new steps and a notice board at the bottom of the Street.

The 5000 bulbs we planted last year have all flowered making Bolney look like a picture post card village.

Gullies have been cleared to prevent flooding issues.

Finger posts have been maintained and painted

My thanks to Aiden McGrath for continuing to lead this group and to Debbie Smith for working tirelessly behind the scenes. To Peter Griffiths for his continued support and for his belief that the volunteers could carry out the work, and again to Tim Boxall in helping us sort out the licences and locations. Without this team of people the Parish Council, and indeed the volunteers, would find things a lot harder to finalise.

Community Payback Team

The Parish Council has entered another agreement with the Community Payback Team. They will continue to come to the parish for one day each week and carry out a wide range of jobs to keep the parish clean and tidy. Jobs they have done include grass cutting, hedge clearing, painting, clearing our paths and cutting back grass edges. They work alongside jobs that the volunteers do and I still believe that it is one of the best things to have happened in this village for a long time. I will continue to monitor their work and direct them to places in need of care.

Emergency Plan and Winter Plan

These plans are reviewed each year to ensure that the parish is protected in the event of extreme weather or other emergencies. Last updated in November 2016.

Aims for this year.

We will be continuing our quest to finish your action plan started a couple of years ago. The next big project is to start with speed management restrictions in the Street and sort out the problems at Crossways with the HGV Lorries.

We will aim to have another litter pick towards the autumn and clear the gullies ready for the impending rain and winter months.

We are also actively seeking land to start an allotment for residents

Police and crime

We are fortunate to continue to live in a village with one of the lowest reported crime rates in West Sussex and the crime rate in Bolney has remained very low. I would still ask everyone to remain vigilant as self-help is often the most effective form of protection we have as a community.

Mobile Waste Collection

The last mobile waste collection was held on Sunday 15th April at the Rawson Hall. Please continue to support these collections to ensure future collections continue to take place as they are funded by the parish council.

Precept

This year the precept was set at £35,877. This is an increase of £377, however the tax base has increased which means that there is no change on the amount each household will pay. This extra money will help the Parish Council to continue with improvements and some maintenance in the parish that wouldn't otherwise get done due to the budget cuts at West Sussex County Council.

Affordable Housing

There has been no progress on the construction of the 10 affordable homes since September 2015 as increased costs made the project unviable. However, English Rural Housing Association has continued to look for ways to progress the scheme and has now come up with a revised scheme for 12 homes which should be more financially viable. This is currently at the planning permission stage so it's hoped that further progress will be made in the coming year to get this village housing scheme built for local people in the near future.

Other housing matters

The Parish Council considered 48 planning applications this year. MSDC approved 2 that the Parish Council objected to, refused 6 that the Parish Council objected to, 6 were withdrawn and 13 still await a final decision.

I would like to thank Kristian Berggreen for leading on planning matters and looking at all the applications to report back to each Planning meeting.

As your Chairman, I have represented Bolney at County, District, Town and Parish levels.

**I have been invited to talk at 8 WSCC conferences,
And continue to represent SALC, where I have now delivered 11 speeches at
various conferences across the country and have also now been made an
associate member.**

I have also visited 27 Parishes across West and East Sussex.

**It shows that this Parish Council are still leading the way on not only forward
thinking, community resilience and community involvement, but as a
consequence the reputation of Bolney has been enhanced, and that helps trade,
visitors and house prices. It also shows that we are prepared to push beyond
normal boundaries to ensure the best for our village. In all just over 110
properties have benefitted from the work carried out by the volunteers this
year.**

**We are now being invited to share our success with all Parishes and Towns
across the board and this is something we should all be proud of.**

**It is on that note that I would personally like to thank all of my councillors, my
clerk, the Bolney Volunteers, Peter Griffiths and Tim Boxall for their continued
support**

Thank you.

I will now open the floor to any questions