

Chairman's Report 2019

Ladies and gentlemen, good evening and welcome to the 2019 Parish Assembly.

I have served on the Parish Council for 12 years now and was elected Chairman in May 2011.

We currently have 7 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 and Victoria Hawken.

Ken Larkins and Sarah Ellis left the council in 2018.

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 for all their hard work and we look forward to working with them again this year.

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 Church:	£1500 to help fund the upkeep of the churchyard. £1000 grant for steel handrails.
The Rawson Hall:	£300 towards the cost of cleaning and maintenance of the outside toilet.
Bolney Community Café:	£300 for signposts to advertise the café.
Friends of Bolney School:	£450 towards the cost to install a safe bonded rubber mulch surface to the back play area.
St Catherine's Hospice:	£200 to support patients of the hospice.
St Peter & St James Hospice:	£100 to support patients of the hospice.
4Sight Vision Support:	£80 towards an outreach worker support.

Communication

The Parish Council has updated the website this year to try and make it more user friendly and encourage people to use it as their first port of call when finding out about Bolney.

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

We are also continuing to press for improvements to the mobile phone signal through contacts with the local MP and OFCOM.

The Parish Assembly of 2018 was extremely well attended by over a hundred people, who were able to find out about the plans for future developments in the village and talk to representatives from local societies and interest groups.

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 and Richard Speller for all their help and advice and pointing us in the direction on how to get things done correctly and without wasting too much time.

It may be hard to believe but the lanes in Bolney are some of the best as far as pot holes are concerned and again this is something the parish and WSCC have worked closely in getting done. All of the gullies along the A272 now have concrete skirts around them which should help in slowing down the speed in which they get blocked.

Bolney Volunteers

My thanks to the Baron and Aiden McGrath for continuing to lead this group and to Debbie Smith for working tirelessly behind the scenes, and again to Tim Boxall and Richard Speller for helping us sort out licences and locations for our planned works. Without this team of people the Parish Council, and indeed the volunteers, would find things a lot harder to finalise.

As well as the highways improvements, this year they have continued to help keep the footpaths clear in the parish. A recent litter pick led to just 4 bags of rubbish being collected.

Gullies have been cleared to prevent flooding issues.

Finger posts have been maintained and painted but will be undergoing a big refurbishment this year.

"A "Silent Soldier" was installed by the War Memorial to commemorate the end of the First World War, and work is scheduled in the near future to improve the surroundings and planting of the War Memorial site".

Work in replacing the posts on London road slip road to the A23 was completed last year as well as constructing an earth bund to try and stop Lorries parking on the verge.

This year we intend to construct a bus shelter outside of Drovers,
Speed restriction advice along the Street outside the Rawson Hall
Works to improve/repair the war memorial and
Bus shelters and benches will be maintained

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 2018.

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

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 14th 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 which is the same as it was last year.

Affordable Housing

The Parish Council has spent 10 years promoting the provision of affordable housing for local people. This has finally come to fruition with the construction during this year of the 12 new homes at Magdalene Rise. They are scheduled to be completed at the end of May with a formal opening on 11 June.

All the 12 homes will be occupied by people with a Bolney connection.

Other housing matters

The Parish Council considered 51 planning applications this year. MSDC approved 1 that the Parish Council objected to, refused 4 that the Parish Council objected to, 4 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 and Tim Boxall for their continued support**

Thank you.

I will now open the floor to any questions