

## Report from the ES&BG Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Once again, the council meeting was held online. Cllr Dain opened the meeting by noting that Cllr Hall had resigned for personal reasons. She thanked Cllr Hall for his outstanding service to the parish over the 14 years that he has been associated with the council. His contributions, including two periods as Chair, have been invaluable. He will be missed. His resignation leaves a vacancy on the council which we are looking to fill as soon as possible. This is an exciting time for the parish, with the launch of our Neighbourhood Plan process. Please contact the clerk at [clerk@ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk) if you are interested in joining our enthusiastic team. Do come along to our next meeting if you want to find out more about what we do. Details for joining the meeting are published with the Agenda on the parish website one week before the meeting.

The access scheme for parish residents to the Newtown Recycling Centre in West Berkshire is once again reaching a review point. Cllr Izett was able to reassure us that Basingstoke and Deane are willing to continue their financial support for the scheme. Unfortunately, our Hampshire councillors were unable to attend the meeting, so we were unable to hear news from them on this topic. Cllr Izett will be working closely with them to hopefully keep the temporary arrangement in place until a more permanent solution can be found.

Thank you to the large number of you who took part in the parish traffic and speeding survey recently. It is very encouraging to see this level of engagement from residents. The survey was still live at the time of the meeting, but Cllr Stamp was able to report that the vast majority of responses identified speeding as a significant issue throughout the parish. A pleasing number of residents have offered to get involved in finding ways we might improve road safety in the parish. I am sure you will hear more from this group over the coming months.

A couple of other traffic issues have been brought to the council's attention and we would welcome information from residents to help us to combat these.

- There has been an increase in HGVs using Hyde Lane as a way through the parish despite the signs at both ends of the road. This is dangerous for riders and walkers and detrimental to the road surface and vegetation.
- Unroadworthy cars are being left in Bishops Green after purchase from a nearby auction. These are left for several days before being towed away. This is unsightly and causing parking issues for residents.

If you see evidence of either of these happening, please email the clerk with date/time and registration number so that we can generate a body of evidence for the council to share with the Police and Hampshire County Council.

March also saw the start of the process of creating a Neighbourhood Plan for our parish. Thank you to the team of volunteers who have agreed to work on this. You will be hearing soon of the various consultation events we are planning over the next few months. Please take part in these as your views matter.

Despite now having 'Fibre to the Cabinet' broadband in both Ecchinswell and Bishops Green there are still large parts of our parish where the internet connection is nothing like adequate for 21st century needs. A group of residents is exploring the possibility of laying fibre around parts of the parish to provide 'Fibre to the Property' broadband links. The residents are working with a local community led initiative, Hampshire Community Broadband ( <https://hampshirebroadband.co.uk/>) and are keen to get in contact with other interested residents. We have been asked to pass on the

contact details of Rupert Elwes ([rupertelwes@gmail.com](mailto:rupertelwes@gmail.com)) if you would like to know more about this resident-initiated scheme.

Covid-19 restrictions prevented us from having an AGM and Parish Assembly in 2020. We plan to have a shorter than usual online assembly this year. To comply with government directives on remote meetings we are moving the date forward to Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021. We hope to 'see' you there.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7.30pm online. Everyone is welcome.

Cllr Marian Dain