

REPORT FROM ECCHINSWELL, SYDMONTON AND BISHOPS GREEN PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING DATED 08/04/2020

For the first time in its history the monthly meeting was conducted online due to the social gathering restrictions. All the councillors were able to log on and we were joined by County Councillor Derek Mellor and Borough Councillor John Izett.

Derek and John updated us on the work taking place by local government. It was heartening to learn that despite the difficult times they are facing the council is managing to continue to provide satisfactory elderly care within the county. All council events are suspended with as many staff as possible working from home. There is a skeleton staff manning the offices at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council with no problems to report to date.

We have been experiencing a weekly refuse collection and our thanks go out to those who are providing this service. However, in line with other counties from 20/04/2020 our area will move to a fortnightly collection for both grey and green bins due to reduced staffing levels. For this reason, the brown garden waste bin collection has been suspended indefinitely. The Council are requesting that households dispose of their grass cuttings etc. responsibly during this time. The PC will provide more information as it becomes available.

There was good news regarding the pothole repair programme with the budget agreed and fifty crews already allocated to this project. However, due to the social distancing rules they are unable to commence work at this time. Please can you continue to report new holes as they are spotted so they can be recorded onto the system for future attention.

Some of you may have noticed the severe trimming of our verges which has led to the loss of most of the early spring growth of plants at the roadside. Hampshire County Council are aware that this has taken place too early in the season and have apologised for the error. Hopefully, things will grow back to normal before too long.

I am sure that many of you have appreciated the wonderful display of daffodils around the village. Unfortunately, for the first time we have experienced instances where the flowers have been picked. Hopefully, this is a one off and will not happen again.

The Village Volunteer Group is working well. There has been great co-operation between everyone involved. It is all very positive and a big thank you to all for their community spirit and kindness. Thankfully, the system has not been put under stress to date and let us hope that this continues to be the case.

There will be no AGM in May and it was decided unanimously that the Chairman and Vice Chair (Tim Hall and Marian Dain) should remain in their posts. It looks as if this will be until May 2021 unless it is possible to hold the AGM at an earlier date.

The stile replacement project is further delayed because the supplier of the kissing gates is closed for business at present. A further update will be given on how this is progressing as soon as we have more information.

The pond skimming by volunteers is ongoing to try to prevent the spread of the Azolla in this warm weather. The weevils are on order and hopefully we should have them in June although unfortunately this is not guaranteed. Every effort is being made to keep the spread of the algae down to a manageable level during this waiting time.

Finally, please stay safe and should you or someone you know require assistance with shopping or the collection of medicines please make contact on this e-mail address clerk@ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk.

Our next meeting is scheduled to take place online on Wednesday 13th May.

Councillor Jackie Bayliss