Parish Council News 2020

**FEBRUARY 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

[**www.markvillage.co.uk**](http://www.markvillage.co.uk/)

**A Meeting of Mark Parish Council was held in the Church Hall, Vicarage Road, Mark on Thursday 29th November and Tuesday, 17th December 2019 at 6.30 p.m.**

**The following are some of the topics discussed.**

**Public Clock**

It was noted that a faculty would not be required for the refurbishment work to the clock.  Applications had been made for financial assistance from local organisations and a public appeal would be launched in February to assist with funding the cost of the work.

**Finances**

Our finances are in a healthy state and after careful consideration the 2020/2021 Estimates were approved and the Precept set at £17600 was agreed.  This means that this is the fifth year there has been no increase in the Parish Council portion of Council Tax collected by the District Council

**Highways**

It was agreed to report a defect at Vole Road. It was noted that all recent fly-tipping deposits had been reported to the District Council and subsequently removed but continues to be a major problem with new deposits appearing regularly along country roads in the Parish.

It was understood that County Councillor Huxtable was pursuing the installation of flashing warning lights in the vicinity of the School. There was still an issue of parents parking near the School for long periods with engines running. We would urge parents parking on The Causeway near the school at pick up times to turn off their engines.

The County Council had ordered the signage needed to implement the Traffic Order to extend the 30 mph speed limit at Blackford Road. Community Payback had carried out street/pavement cleaning in the Church Street/Littlemoor Road area. It was agreed to organise a Litter Pick Day on 29th February 2020.

Councillor Francis gave an update on the refurbishment of historic finger post signs. All had been refurbished other than the two historic posts located at the Yarrow road junction with Southwick Road and on River Road, which will be refurbished shortly.

He also reported upon the operation of the shared SID scheme.

**Play Area/ Village Hall /Football Pitch Area/Jubilee Green**

It was noted that the annual safety inspection had been carried out on the **Play Area** and a report was awaited.

It was noted that the new defibrillators have been installed at the **Village Hall** and outside Amesbury & Puddy

As part of a nationwide Woodland Trust initiative to provide free trees to communities, additional trees had been planted in the **Village Hall** grounds and at the southern end of **Jubilee Green**. The planting was completed by a team from Wedmore Young Farmers during the weekend of 23rd/24th November.

**Planning**

The following applications were considered:-

**33/19/022** Erection of two storey and single storey rear extension, 2 Council Houses, The Causeway, Mark – L. Edgecombe – confirm recommendation of permission.

**33/19/023** Erection of building to accommodate bats and outline application for demolition of Ashtrees and erection of replacement dwelling, The Causeway, Mark – National Grid - confirm recommendation of permission.

**33/19/024** Erection of a general purpose agricultural building, Moorhouse Farm, Southwick Road, Mark – J. Porter - confirm recommendation of permission.

**33/19/025** Erection of a self-build dwelling to the east of Ashdean, Kingsway, Mark – Mr. & Mrs. T.R. Buncombe. - The Parish Council supported this application for a self-build dwelling, in principle.

**33/19/026** Application for the prior approval for the change of use of an agricultural building to a dwelling and associated operational development, Littlemoor Road, Mark – Mr. & Mrs. S. House – recommend permission.

**Village Web-site**

Councillor Mrs Weekes reported upon statistics relating to visits to the web-site. Usage continues to be high and is growing with 3439 visitors and an average 1.98 page impressions per session. The web site we believe is a useful information source for the community and continues to be developed with some local historical information relating to World War II being added to the web-site in the near future.

**Mark Emergency Plan**

Councillor Francis reported that a snow event or prolonged winter power outage was likely to be the most serious emergency in Mark. Neighbourhood Watch would be best placed to identify and arrange assistance for vulnerable people. Neighbourhood Watch would also be organising a first aid course in June 2020.

**Help Keep Mark Tidy**

Were you aware that Mark has an annual litter and general debris cleanup day? Why not join the Parish Council and local residents, on Saturday 29th February at 10am at Mark Village Hall. Vole Road as we need your help to keep Mark looking good. Notices in the Parish magazine and on the village notice boards.

**Next Meeting**

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 3rd March 2020 at the Church Hall starting at 7.00pm.**

**MARCH 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

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**Dogs and sheep – Walking with dogs:**

This is the time of year that there are a lot of sheep with their lambs in fields around the Parish so please **take extra care** **when out and about walking with your dogs.**

It can be all too easy to become complacent when walking your dogs, after all it's something we do every day. But remember, the resulting loss of life if your dog escapes your control - even for a moment - can be devastating.

Don't be caught out - follow these top tips

* Be aware of the effects of sheep-worrying, and let others know too.
* Make sure you know where your dog is at all times.
* If you're letting your dog off the lead be confident there are no livestock nearby.
* Be sure that your dog will return to you promptly on command and if in doubt, keep them on the lead.

**Update on Hinkley National Grid pylons:**

National Grid are preparing to build T-pylons in our area. Stock fencing has been put up and they have started work to clear vegetation along the route of the new overhead lines. National Grid will continue to carry out surveys and investigations along the route as they prepare to start construction in May 2020. These include checking the condition of local roads where they will build accesses to construction areas. Temporary traffic lights will be used while surveying the road surface. The first work will be to build temporary accesses from the public roads into fields where T-pylons will be constructed. Temporary construction roads will be built along much of the route to help reduce the amount of construction traffic on local roads.

National Grid will be holding a Public Information Session for the Mark community on Tuesday 5th May 2020 in the afternoon at the Church Hall and will also be speaking at the Annual Parish Meeting in the evening. Information will be posted on the Parish Notice Boards nearer to the event.

**Fly Tipping:**

Fly-tipping is a crime punishable by fine or imprisonment, a blot on Somerset’s lovely landscape and a potential threat to human health and that of wildlife and domesticated animals through injury or by polluting the environment. A lot of it is going on around the Parish. There is no excuse for fly-tipping and we all need to fight it together. The advice is simple:

* Never fly-tip yourself
* Check that anyone taking waste away for you has the right licence and ask them where the waste will go
* Never pay cash
* Always get a proper receipt
* Record names, contact details and information about vehicles
* Take particular care in using social media to get waste removed

If you know about those who fly-tip, inform your district council immediately. To report a fly-tipping incident, or information about fly-tippers, [contact your district council customer services](http://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/contact-us/).

**Mark School Parking at Drop Off and Pick up Times:**

Mark First School was originally built to educate the village children. It now attracts pupils from outside of the village, which has resulted in the increase of parking and traffic at drop-off and pick-up times along Mark Causeway. Most parents/guardians respect the limitations of Mark Causeway. While speeding is often cited as a high risk, the amount of traffic at drop off and pick-up times means that it is normally impossible for road users to speed. Traffic jams are not unknown and incidents can and do happen.  The risk to residents and road users during term is:

* The exponential growth of parked cars and pedestrians
* On both sides of Mark School to a total distance of about 800 metres
* For an hour or more twice a day during term-time.

Negotiations to improve road safety and maintain the quality of life for those affected by the increased parking during term time and maintain road safety will be held and continue with the School Governors. Using the Highway Code as a guide, the Parish Council has requested that drivers turn off engines when waiting, do not park in front of access to properties and do not use private driveways for three-point turns.

**The Planning Process:**

Planning is probably the most contentious and most difficult subject that our Parish Council has to address and sometimes results into impoliteness. Some applications can be administered, after due consideration, usually by voting using e-mail with the result posted to our Parish Clerk. Others may result in debate either within the Parish Council or during representation from members of the Public either by letter/e-mail or verbally at meetings, such as with the affordable housing project.

It is important to appreciate that the Parish Council is a Consultee, as are members of the Public, and vote either *Recommended* or *Not Recommended*.  Applications are then passed to Sedgemoor District Council where they are reviewed by the Development Committee, in an executive role, which votes either *Approved* or *Refused*. It can and does override Parish Council recommendations, which happened with virtually every application from National Grid. Applicants also have right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol against a decision of the District Council.

**Methods of Publicising Applications**

* Sedgemoor District Council notify residents in the vicinity on applications with details of how to make representations.
* Sedgemoor District Council post notices near the entrance to sites, such on telegraph poles or a gate.
* Sedgemoor District Council broadcasts planning applications to the local press e.g. Burnham Weekly News and on line.
* Five days before the next scheduled Parish Council meeting, planning applications due for consideration are listed on the two Parish noticeboards at the Village Shop and the lay-by at Laurel Farm.
* The Parish Council lists results of planning applications in the monthly Parish Briefing.

**Public Clock:**

Many of you will have received information concerning the refurbishment work required to the clock at the Church which was financed many years ago by the Parish and remains in their ownership and responsibility of the Parish.  Applications have been made for financial assistance from local organisations and the PCC and we have made an appeal to the community for donations to assist with the cost of the work.  If you would like to contribute it’s not too late. Payments may be made by:

BACS - Sort Code 60-04-12, Account No. 54174783, Ref. Parish Clock

Or by cheque made out to Mark Parish Council, and sent to the Parish Clerk, Mr Richard Young, 5 Channel Court, Burnham on Sea, TA8 1NE

or to The chairman, Mr Simon Emary, Mallards, Fishers Lane, Mark, TA9 4LZ

Or to any Council member.

**Our thanks to everyone who has already made a donation.**

**Planning:**

The following applications were considered during the month:-

**33/19/027** Erection of a single storey extension to link bungalow and garage, Rowena, Churchlands, Mark – Recommend permission

**33/16/029** Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of dwellinghouse and formation of vehicular access, Norville, The Causeway, Mark - Recommend permission.

**33/19/031** Application for prior approval for depositing waste material, Moorhouse Farm, Southwick Road, Mark,- Permitted Development

**33/19/032** Formation of cricket pitch and square and erection of a pavilion to the west of Vole Road, Mark, – Recommend permission

**33/19/033** Erection of a single storey extension to rear and side elevation Laurel Dene, Southwick Road, Mark – Recommend permission

**33/19/034** Erection of agricultural building for livestock, Reed Farm, Southwick Road, Mark - Recommend permission

**33/20/003** Erection of a single storey rear extension, on site of existing conservatory to be demolished. Installation of oil tank in the front garden.  Meadowside, Vole Road, Mark – Recommend permission -

**Help Keep Mark Tidy:**

Were you aware that Mark has an annual litter and general debris clean-up day? Why not join the Parish Council and local residents, on Saturday 29th February at 10am at Mark Village Hall. Vole Road as we need your help to keep Mark looking good.

**Next Meeting:**

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 3rd March 2020 at the Church Hall starting at 7.00pm.**

**APRIL 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

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**A Meeting of Mark Parish Council was held in the Church Hall, Vicarage Road, Mark on Tuesday, 3rd March 2020 at 7.00 p.m.**

**The following are some of the topics discussed.**

**Report of the County Councillor**

County Councillor Huxtable reported upon an improving financial situation at the County Council. He hoped that a highway safety scheme in the vicinity of Mark First School would soon go out to consultation. He undertook to chase up the provision of revised signage to enable the extension of the speed limit at Blackford Road to be implemented. Extra finance would be available to support rural bus services and he would shortly be chairing a meeting of Town/Parish Council representatives to discuss the funding of the 67 Service during 2020/21. A new climate change grant scheme would also shortly be launched to support green initiatives.

**Public Clock**

It was noted that applications had been made for financial assistance from local organisations and a public appeal had been launched to assist with funding the cost of the work. A grant of £5,000 had been secured from the Nuttall Trust and £1,000 had been promised by Mark PCC. Public donations to date amounted to £2,230. It was agreed to request that work does not commence until after the VE 75th Anniversary Commemorations on 8th May 2020.

**Finance**

**Balance of Accounts**

It was reported that our accounts at 31st January 2020 were in order and in line with the expenditure agreed in the budget April 2019 to April 2020. Authorisations for Payment were approved for GWB Services - grass and hedge cutting and Parish Clerk - expenses & sundry payments.

**Risk Management Report/Statement of Internal Control 2019/20**

Members considered and approved a Risk Management Report and a Statement of Internal Control for 2019/20.

**Reserves**

It now appeared that adequate balances would be available at 31st March 2020 and it was agreed to give detailed consideration to the subject of reserves during the formation of the 2021/22 budget.

**Public Areas Portfolio**

**Highway Matters**

It was agreed to report defects at Vole Road, Kingsway and Merryfield and to request refurbishment of the white lines at Littlemoor Road. A landowner would also be requested to cut back a hedge overhanging the carriageway at Southwick Road. It was noted that all recent fly-tipping deposits had been reported to the District Council and subsequently removed. A Meeting would be held with the school governors to discuss the issue of parents parking near the School for long periods with engines running and obstructing residential driveways. The Litter Pick Day on 29th February 2020 had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. It was agreed to thank a parishioner for his valuable work regarding litter picking and to request a further Community Payback Scheme visit.

Councillor Francis gave an update on the refurbishment of historic finger post signs. Burtle Parish Council had contributed 50% of the cost of the work to the sign at River Bridge. He also reported upon the operation of the shared SID scheme.

**Play Area**

It was noted that no urgent issues had been raised in the annual safety inspection report. A wooden picnic bench however had become dangerous and it was agreed to remove this item and to purchase a suitable replacement bench.

**Public Rights of Way**

There were currently no issues relating to the local public rights of way.

**Village Hall /Football Pitch Area**

It was noted that the Mark Community Association were investigating improvements to the football pitch area including refurbishing the goalmouth which required remedial action.

**Web-site Portfolio**

Councillor Mrs Weekes reported upon statistics relating to visits to the web-site during February which had shown an increase on the previous month.

**Cemetery**

It was agreed to amend the cemetery regulations to prohibit large plastic framed floral tributes.

**Next Meeting**

**The next Meeting will be the Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council to be held on 5th May 2020 starting at 7.00 p.m.**

**Help Keep Mark Tidy:**

It was with regret that it was decided to delay, as reported earlier, the annual Mark litter and general debris clean-up day on Saturday 29th February. Our sincere thanks to those community members who came to the Village Hall on Saturday to help with the planned clean-up.

**National Grid T-pylons work starts – public information events**

From May 2020, we are starting work to build the world’s first T-pylons from Bridgwater to Loxton, where they will connect with the underground cables we are installing across the Mendip Hills. Our first activity will be to build temporary road accesses and a temporary haul road along the route of the new overhead line. This will help us to keep construction traffic away from local roads.

Construction activity in your area will include:

* temporary entrance and access roads
* temporary haul road
* pylon foundations and structures

Over the coming weeks you may see us carrying out surveys and vegetation clearance. Before we start work in May, we will write to properties close to the route and meet with the parish councils to keep them updated.

We are also holding public information events where you can come along to meet our project team and find out more.

Woolavington Village Hall

Tuesday 21 April 2020

4.00pm – 6.30 pm

and

**Mark Church Hall, Vicarage Lane**

**Tuesday 5 May 2020**

**3.30pm – 6.30pm**

The Hinkley Connection Project is a new high-voltage electricity connection between Bridgwater and Seabank near Avonmouth. It will connect low-carbon energy sources, including EDF Energy’s new     Hinkley Point C, to UK homes and businesses. The new connection will be 57 km long: 48.5 km of overhead line and 8.5 km of underground cable through the Mendip Hills.

To minimise the impact on the local landscape and make way for the new connection, we’re removing over 67 km of existing overhead lines and pylons.

We recognise our work will cause disruption and we are sorry for any inconvenience. We’re working with our contractors, Balfour Beatty, to minimise disruption as best we can.

If you would like more information on our project, please see our project website [www.hinkleyconnection.co.uk](http://www.hinkleyconnection.co.uk/) or call our community team on 0800 377 7347.

**MAY 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

[**www.markvillage.co.uk**](http://www.markvillage.co.uk/)

**Mark Village Community Support.**

We would, and know, the whole community would also like to give grateful thanks to the volunteers who have expressed a desire to provide support to members of the community who need support in these difficult times. More than 80 have come forward offering to pick up shopping or deliver medicine to the most vulnerable. The founder and administer Jan Horn said the response has been “overwhelming”. Thank you all.

What a caring and compassionate community we live in.

**Walkers please pick up your pet dog’s poo.**

In these difficult times it’s important that we keep clean our village lanes and countryside. There has been a marked increase in the amount of mess being left on roads and footpaths. Please pick up your dog’s poo and either dispose of the bag responsibly in the poo bin or any waste bin, or take it home with you.

Don’t hang the bag in a hedge or leave it on the grass. Why even bother picking it up if you are intending to just chuck it down again? It's not like it is just one person doing it - We see it all over the place. Dog poo bags hung everywhere – Why? Poo left on the ground for someone to step in –Why?

Unsightly unnecessary rubbish spoiling our beautiful countryside

**Public Clock**

With the present virus emergency in progress the repairs of the Public Clock may well have to be delayed until much later in the year. Be assured that the Parish Council fully intends to have the repairs carried out as soon as it’s possible for the work to be undertaken.

Public donations to date amounted to £2910 and grants have been received from the Nuttall Trust for £5000 and Mark PCC for £1000. Our thanks to you all for the generous donations/grants received so that our vintage Public Clock can be refurbished and put back into good order.

**Cancellation of May meeting**.

We are sorry to advise the cancellation, due to the current virus emergency, of the Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council due to be held on 5th May 2020.

National Grid have also had to cancel their information event which was planned to be held in the afternoon of 5th May 2020.

**JUNE 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

[www.markvillage.co.uk](http://www.markvillage.co.uk/)

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENT**

We are sorry that due to  the current virus emergency we had to cancel holding the Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council which was due to be held on 5th May 2020.  National Grid also had to cancel their information event which was planned to be held in the afternoon of 5th May 2020.

As restrictions are starting to be relaxed, we are planning to hold a short open air meeting in the Village Hall car park, Vole Road on Tuesday, 9th June at 7.00 p.m. with members standing 2 metres apart, to agree the essential business. In the event of lock down measures being reimposed such meeting would of course be postponed.

**Mark Village Community Support**

We would, and know the whole community would also, like to give grateful thanks to the volunteers who have expressed a desire to provide support to members of the community who need support in these difficult times.  More than 80 have come forward offering to pick up shopping or deliver medicine to the most vulnerable and deliveries are being carried out by these dedicated community minded volunteers all over the parish.  The founder and administer Jan Horn said the response has been “overwhelming”. Thank you all.

What a caring and compassionate community we live in.

**Walkers please pick up your pet dog’s poo**

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Fly Tipping is another problem and there has also been a marked increase of rubbish being deposited along tracks, footpaths and the River Pill.

Unsightly unnecessary rubbish spoiling our beautiful countryside.

**Public Clock**

With the present virus emergency in progress the repairs of the Public Clock may well have to be delayed until much later in the year. Be assured that the Parish Council fully intends to have the repairs carried out as soon as it’s possible for the work to be undertaken.

Public donations to date amounted to £2910 and grants have been received from the Nuttall Trust for £5000 and Mark PCC for £1000.  Our thanks to you all for the generous donations/grants received so that our vintage Public Clock can be refurbished and put back into good order

**JULY 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

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**Special Meeting of the Parish Council**

The minutes of the last meeting of the Parish Council are published on the Village Web Site.

It was a special meeting at which the financial statement year 2019/20 were formally approved. The

Annual Governance Statement as required by the External Auditors was agreed and the 2019/20

Accounting Statement also required by the External Auditors was formally approved. It was noted

that the 2019/20 Internal Audit had been completed and the Internal Auditor had no issues to raise

with Members of the Council.

**Temporary Closure of Pill Road**

Somerset CC has issued a notice with plans relating to temporary traffic restrictions and closure for Pill Road.  The order becomes effective on 23 June 2020 and will remain in force for eighteen months. The works are expected to commence on 7th July 2020 and last for 101 days to enable Balfour Beatty to carry out construction of two cross over bellmouths to connect the haul road for traffic associated with the Hinkley Connection Project. Follow the link below to view the road closure.

<https://one.network/?tm=117313418>

**One Number For All**

The Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline number, 0300 790 6275, is now live and will make it easier for people access any local authority help they may need, including emotional, financial, housing support and more during the current crisis.

It links together the district and county council contact centres and will be operating seven days a week, 8am to 6pm, making it the one number you need to remember for Coronavirus-related enquiries. The district and county councils usual phone numbers will be running as normal alongside the new number for non-Coronavirus related issues.

**Play Areas**

Mark Community Association and Sedgemoor District Council are sorry that they have to restrict access to play areas, across Sedgemoor in line with Government guidance.

Whilst there has been a relaxation of the amount of time people can spend out in the open air and exercising, we remind residents and visitors to parks and open spaces that use of play areas, playground and open air gym equipment is still not allowed by Government rules. This is because it is impossible to keep the equipment clean between different children using it and to maintain social distancing.

**Fly Tipping**

There has been a considerable increase in fly tipping in our countryside around the Parish during these difficult times.

However, fly tipping is a crime punishable by fine or imprisonment, a blot on the lovely local landscape and a potential threat to human health and that of wildlife and domesticated animals through injury or by polluting the environment.

Sedgemoor District Council is responsible for removing illegally dumped waste from public land and roadsides. However, the removal of illegally dumped waste from private land is the responsibility of the landowner or occupier.

If you discover fly tipped waste, please follow these simple steps:

* Do not touch: fly tipped waste may be dangerous, as it can contain syringes, broken glass, asbestos, toxic chemicals or other hazardous substances.
* Visually inspect it - try to determine what it is and how much there is.
* Note the exact location of the waste and whether it is in a ditch or watercourse.
* Do not disturb the site - there may be evidence that could identify and convict the culprits.
* Report it to the Council by completing this form: [Report Anti-Social Behaviour](https://sedgemoor-self.achieveservice.com/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-a22a51a9-4154-4a14-9637-f9fa94878190/AF-Stage-0b3e8fd6-0a0c-4d18-ac9d-18cdf7d140e9/definition.json&redirectlink=%2Fen&cancelRedirectLink=%2Fen&consentMessage=yes) on the SDC website.

If you witness someone fly tipping:

Please try to record the following details

* registration number, colour, make and model of the vehicle used.
* description of the person/s fly tipping.
* any photographic evidence.
* time, date and location where it happened.

Please do not approach fly tippers as they may be violent.

Make sure your own waste does not get fly tipped.  Everybody can help fight fly tipping.  Each individual and business has a duty of care over their waste to make sure it is properly disposed of, even after it has left their home or premises. Failure to take reasonable steps to do this means that you risk prosecution and a fine.

The Council provides a good value collection service for bulky waste items such as fridges, washing machines and unwanted furniture. To arrange a collection, contact the SDC DC on 0300 303 7803.

If you use a contractor to take away any of your waste, it is your responsibility to make sure that they are a Registered Waste Carrier. Ask to see the original licence, not a copy, and ensure you know where your waste will go. You may be held accountable if you give your waste to a non- registered carrier and it is later fly tipped.

You can check online to see if they are registered with the Environment Agency here: [Environment Agency - Register of waste carriers, brokers and dealers](http://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/view/search-waste-carriers-brokers) or call the agency on 03708 506 506\* (Mon-Fri 8am-6pm).

**AUGUST 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

[**www.markvillage.co.uk**](http://www.markvillage.co.uk/)

**PUBLIC AREAS**

**Stay Safe and reduce Litter**

The Village Hall area is a great asset of Mark managed by the MCA and has been a vital amenity during these difficult times for those who live here and who use its facilities for recreational activities.

In line with government guidelines, the Children's play area and outdoor gym equipment can officially be used from July 4th.  However, there are some specific requirements that need to be followed to help keep the different areas COVID-19 secure. Anyone using the equipment is advised to clean the equipment and their hands with sanitiser before and after use as the areas are not supervised and equipment is not regularly cleaned. Additional information has been placed in each area.

**Let's help keep the village COVID-19 safe.**

The grounds are looked after by the MCA, but, regrettably, their efforts can be undermined by a few careless people. The toddler area is generally kept litter free and most dog owners/guardians are generally responsible while using the grassed pitch. The worst area is around the youth shelter where there does seem to be a marked reluctance to deposit rubbish into one of the four waste bins dispersed around the grounds (the nearest being alongside the shelter). This often results in an eyesore litter blown by the wind to other parts of the Village Hall area.

**Please don’t litter. Please deposit rubbish into waste bins.**

**PLANNING PORTFOLIO the recent applications**

**(33/19)**

030 Erection of two storey extension to rear (North) elevation. Old Oak Barn, Perry Road, Mark. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION

**(33/20)**

014 Variation of conditions on 33/13/00025 to change materials and amend design of garage, Pill Row Farm, Pill Road, Mark – M. Prosser. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 28.6.2020

015 Change of use and conversion of two pole barns and two storey barn to form 4 holiday lets, creation of new driveway, associated landscaping and external lighting, Totney Farm, Blackford Road, Mark – Mr & Mrs A. Comer. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 9.7.2020

016 Change of use of barns, demolition of Dutch barn and erection of a new dwelling to the south of Littlemoor Road, Mark – Mr & Mrs S. House. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 9.7.2020

018 Change of use of land from agriculture to Use Class B8 for caravan storage, Rookery Farm Creamery, Northwick Road, Mark – C. Petheram. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 9.7.2020

019 Installation of dormer window to south elevation, The Old Homestead Farm, Kingsway, Mark – Mr & Mrs A. Palmer

020 Outline application with some matters reserved for the erection of a dwelling and garage at The Larches, The Causeway, Mark – Mr & Mrs R. May

**HEDGES – Just a Reminder**

Landowners and occupiers are required by law under the Highways Act 1980 to trim vegetation (hedge, bushes, trees) next to public highways that are preventing passage or adversely affecting the safety of the highway user.  In Mark, the road user includes pedestrians, some with prams and dogs, and riders.  Where landowners ignore this responsibility and/or informal requests to keep public highways free of obstructions and restrictions, for instance ignoring a formal letter or email from parish councils, arrangements can be made for the work to be carried and the invoice sent to the offending landowner.

**WEBSITE**

Have you checked out the village website recently – Usage reports indicate a significant increase in usage and new residents in the village have said how much information it contains!  It tells you what’s on, who to contact for any of the clubs and organisations, photos of the village and lots, lots more!    Have a look – www.markvillage.co.uk

**SEPTEMBER 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

[**www.markvillage.co.uk**](http://www.markvillage.co.uk/)

A Special Meeting of Mark Parish Council was held on a site in Church Street/Churchlands, Mark on Thursday, 23rd July 2020 at 6.00 p.m.

**Planning Applications 33/19**

The following applications were considered:

011 Change of use of land and buildings from equestrian to Use Class B1 for the repair of caravans including internal and external alterations to the west of The Poplars, Harp Road, Mark – D. Crouch – **recommend refusal;** as the PC were concerned on the road safety implications on Harp Road of articulated traffic turning into and exiting the entrance.

013 Change of use from Estate Agent to Café including alterations and erection of extension to rear elevation, Churchlands, Mark – I. Bates – **recommend refusal**; as the PC were concerned that it would have a negative impact on the shop business and put at jeopardy the longer term viability of this facility which is important to the local community.

019 Installation of dormer window to south elevation, The Old Homestead Farm, Kingsway, Mark – Mr & Mrs A. Palmer – **recommend permission**

020 Outline application with some matters reserved for the erection of a dwelling and garage at The Larches, The Causeway, Mark – Mr & Mrs R. May – **recommend permission**

The following applications had been considered since the last Meeting. Recommendations of permission had been submitted in each case and these decisions were confirmed:

014 Variation of conditions on 33/13/00025 to change materials and amend design of garage, Pill Row Farm, Pill Road, Mark – M. Prosser

015 Change of use and conversion of two pole barns and two storey barn to form 4 holiday lets, creation of new driveway, associated landscaping and external lighting, Totney Farm, Blackford Road, Mark – Mr & Mrs A. Comer. (subsequently withdrawn by the applicants)

016 Change of use of barns, demolition of Dutch barn and erection of a new dwelling to the south of Littlemoor Road, Mark – Mr & Mrs S. House

018 Change of use of land from agriculture to Use Class B8 for caravan storage, Rookery Farm Creamery, Northwick Road, Mark – C. Petheram

We would like to remind local residents that when a planning application comes before the Parish Council, we take into consideration all of the local views about a specific proposal. If you have any concerns, objections to, or support a Planning Proposal, you should also register those concerns with the Parish Council. If you only register your comments on the Sedgemoor Planning Portal that may be after our decision has been made, so timing is critical. We also point out that the Parish Council is a consultee and not the decision maker. The ultimate outcome of any application will come from the Sedgemoor planning team.

**Finance**

The following payments which had been made since the last Meeting were approved and confirmed.

000909 GWB Services               Grass cutting                      £499.50

000910 SALC                           Affiliation fee                       £390.64

**Highways**

The PC agreed to request the County Council to install 30 mph repeater signs at Blackford Road in the section between the pinch point and the new 30 mph entry signs.

Car parking in the Parish regularly attract adverse comments.  Since Traffic enforcement is not desirable, social responsibility is expected and necessary to ensure that road safety is not compromised.

The part of Littlemoor Road from the B3139 towards Grange Paddock is often tricky for drivers because of parked cars and pedestrians.  All have a legitimate right to use the road, however the various competing risks of pedestrians, car drivers, HGV drivers and those using agricultural machinery sometimes results into disagreements.  Therefore those who park on Littlemoor Road are asked not to leave their vehicle in a position where it may present an unnecessary obstruction of the road especially to Emergency Vehicles.  This also applies to visitors.   Equally drivers of HGVs and vehicles pulling trailers are asked to consider using an alternative route.

**Holy Cross Church - Clock**

Many of you will have noticed that the clock hands and dials have been removed from the Church Tower. The **Clock** has been ringing out the hours for over 130 years and whilst Smiths of Derby were carrying out the last annual service on the clock they recommended some restoration work and repairs of the clock dials be carried out. They have, using rope access, removed the clock hands and dials which have been taken to their works in Derby for restoration. The dial works which pass through the fabric of the building will also receive full servicing attention.

The Parish Council thanks you all for the generous donations/grants received so that our vintage Public Clock can be refurbished and put back into good order. Public donations to date amounted to £2910 and grants have been received from the Nuttall Trust for £5000 and Mark PCC for £1000.

**Fly Tipping and Roadside Litter:**

The Parish Council is keenly aware of fly-tipping and discarded rubbish thrown in verges and reports such deposits to Sedgemoor District Council.  SDC Clean Surrounds has an investigation capability and will challenge suspects provided there is the evidence, such as labels, invoices, documents giving names and addresses and, of course, sightings.  Local intelligence of offenders is essential.  While ‘professional’ fly tippers tend not to leave anything linked to them, someone, somewhere knows who these people might be.

T**he local Recycling Centres reopened on 14th May:**

**It is now "business as usual" with materials now being accepted at all 16 recycling sites in Somerset. That includes cardboard as well as commercial waste and other waste you pay to dispose of – including tyres, gas bottles, soil and hardcore, vehicle parts, plasterboard and asbestos (card payment only).**

**Trailers and vans can access the sites at any time, as long as they have the appropriate permit. Although sites have been busy, the recently introduced "shop-style" social distancing arrangements – floor markings and signs – have worked well. However, please note, staff are unable to offer any assistance with unloading or handling any waste or items.**

**Unfortunately, no items brought to sites can be put forward for reuse at the moment. They will be recycled where possible until a safe way to handle them has been agreed. Anyone planning to bring items that are fit for reuse is asked to keep hold of them for the time being.**

**Library Services:**

The County’s Library service now allows people to use an online request form to receive a selection of up to 10 books, DVDs or Talking Books which staff pick out for customers, based on the types of authors or genres that are of interest to them.  The service originally operated from Taunton, Frome, Yeovil, Minehead and Bridgwater libraries and has had nearly 900 order and collect requests. From the 27 July, this was extended to Wells, Dulverton and Ilminster and from the 3rd August, Burnham-on-Sea, Williton, Wincanton and Shepton Mallet.  South Petherton Community Library will be doing the same from the 4th August. Computers in the libraries need to be pre-booked and are available for one-hour slots, with time built in for cleaning.  All current loans that would have been due back during the lockdown period have been extended to the end of August, and any overdue charges have been waived.

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 1st September 2020 at the Church Hall, Vicarage Lane, starting at 7.00pm.**

**Social distancing will be observed.**

**OCTOBER 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

[**www.markvillage.co.uk**](http://www.markvillage.co.uk/)

A Meeting of Mark Parish Council was held in the Church Hall, Vicarage Road, Mark on Tuesday, 1st September 2020 at 7.00 p.m.  Strict social distancing was maintained.

**County Councillor Report**

County Councillor Huxtable had circulated a briefing report prior to the Meeting. He hoped that a highway safety scheme in the vicinity of Mark First School would soon go out to consultation. He undertook to chase up the completion of the signage to enable the extension of the speed limit at Blackford Road to be enforced.  A Virtual Meeting would be held to discuss the position regarding future funding of the 67 bus service.  A new climate change grant scheme had been launched to support green initiatives and might be of interest to the MCA. Possible unitary authorities for Somerset were also discussed.

**Public Clock**

It was noted that grants and donations amounting to £8.979.50 had been received towards the refurbishment of the clock. It was agreed to use this year’s contribution from Hadstone to help fund the work making a total of £10,686.62 against a cost of £19,344.00. The clock faces were removed from the tower on 6th August.

**Finance**

The financial balance of accounts is satisfactory but it was noted that the implication from the cost of refurbishment of the Clock will result in the need for constraints of future expenditure if the PC year's financial budget as set is to be maintained and reserves kept at a satisfactory level.

**Authorisation for Payment**

It was agreed that the following payments be made: -

DD          SDC                payroll                                   £937.50

000911   GWB Services   grass and hedge cutting          £668.25

000912   Parish Clerk      expenses & sundry payments  £243.21

**Bank Reconciliation**

A bank reconciliation as at 30th June 2020 was checked with the original bank statements and signed by the Members who did not sign cheques as part of the Council’s financial controls.

**Planning Applications**

The following new planning applications were considered with permission being recommended in each case: -

025 Erection of a timber framed glass enclosure for swimming pool, Rowhedge, The Causeway, Mark – Mr & Mrs J. Fisher

026 Erection of single and two storey extensions, Rowhedge, The Causeway, Mark – Mr & Mrs J. Fisher. 027 Erection of extensions to rear elevation, 2 Council Houses, The Causeway, Mark – L. Edgecombe.

It was agreed to confirm recommendations of permission made in connection with the following applications since the last Meeting: -

017 Demolition of shop and erection of a new shop and access track, Trevenna, Harp Road, Mark – Pophams Saddlery.

021 Change of use of Units 2 & 3 from offices to education with associated car parking, Poolbridge Business Centre, Blackford Road, Mark – Inaura School.

022 Demolition of rear extension and erection of replacement extension, Wayside Cottage, Church Street, Mark – L. Coulson.

**Highway Matters**

Subsidence at Vole Road had recently been reported. It was noted that all recent fly-tipping deposits had been reported to the District Council and subsequently removed. It was agreed to request the District Council to carry out work to a tree near the garages at Northwick Road.  National Grid had agreed to provide regular updates on their work in the village which would include the temporary closure of roads and rights of way.

It was agreed to leave the saplings at Jubilee Green in place until the spring and monitor the number still alive. Councillor Francis gave an update on the operation of Community Speed watch and also reported that the refurbishment of the fingerpost signs had been completed.

**Play Area**

It was noted that the wooden picnic benches were being refurbished and other improvements made to the Play Area. The Chairman and Councillor Mrs Weekes will be attending the Somerset Playing Fields’ Association Field of the Year Presentation Evening on 18th September.

**Public Rights of Way**

Reports had been received about overgrown vegetation on footpaths in the parish and especially the need to clear vegetation from AX23/15 north of The Wall. It was agreed to report that action was required to the County Public Rights of Way Officer.

**Village Hall /Football Pitch Area**

It was noted that the Mark Community Association were investigating improvements to the football pitch area including refurbishing the goalmouth which required remedial action.

**Web-site Portfolio**

Councillor Mrs Weekes reported upon statistics relating to visits to the web-site during August. Usage continued to be high. There was a discussion about the need for more pages of information on the web-site, and if proven necessary it was agreed to seek an increase in the number of pages for the web-site to use.

**Mark Cricket Club**

It was agreed to send a letter of support to the Cricket Club for use in connection with their applications for grants towards the cost of developing their new ground.

**Next Parish Council Meeting**

The next Meeting will be held on 3rd November 2020 starting at 7.00 p.m. at the Church Hall

**NOVEMBER 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

[**www.markvillage.co.uk**](http://www.markvillage.co.uk/)

**Clock Refurbishment Work**

We are pleased to advise that the Church Clock refurbishment work has been completed including the clock faces being re-enamelled at the contractors works at Smiths of Derby. The clock faces were installed back on the on the church tower early in October and look very good. It’s great to see and hear the clock again.

**Update from Somerset CC on the covid situation**

There is an ongoing rise of positive Coronavirus cases recorded in the county - also reflected in the national picture where cases continue to rise. To explain the reason for the sharp increases you’ll see across all districts, a significant proportion of these cases are Somerset students who tested positive whilst living on University campuses elsewhere in the country, but still count as Somerset cases.

We are involved in enhanced contact tracing, which has informed us that the majority of these cases are isolating at their university campuses.  However, we are also seeing a steady number of schools and workplaces across Somerset report cases, a stark reminder Coronavirus is here in our communities. We continue to support these settings with public health advice and guidance as needed.

So, this week’s ‘takeaway’ message is one you are no doubt very familiar with by now.  Please remember that anyone can catch it and anyone can pass it on, so please continue to remain vigilant and follow the guidelines of ‘hands, face and space’ to prevent any further spread and help keep our communities safe.

**Play Area**

The Play area at Mark Village Hall is being used by many families during these difficult times and recently three Parish Councillor have carried out some repair work to the benches which we believe has improved the condition of the facility.

The play area is for all to use and it is the responsibility of the people using it to ensure that it is kept clean and not littered.  It is inspected regularly but we would also appreciate users reporting any damage or defects.

**Fly Tipping and Roadside Litter**

The Parish Council is keenly aware of fly-tipping and discarded rubbish thrown in verges and reports such deposits to Sedgemoor District Council.  Sedgemoor District Council Clean Surrounds has an investigation capability and will challenge suspects provided there is the evidence, such as labels, invoices, documents giving names and addresses and, of course, sightings.  Local intelligence of offenders is essential.  While ‘professional’ fly tippers tend not to leave anything linked to them, someone, somewhere knows who these people might be.  In the meantime, the Parish Council will continue to report deposits, at present about once a week.

**DECEMBER 2020**

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

[**www.markvillage.co.uk**](http://www.markvillage.co.uk/)

A Meeting of Mark Parish Council was held in the Church Hall, Vicarage Road, Mark on Tuesday, 3rd November 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

**National Grid**

Representatives of National Grid were in attendance to update Members on progress being made with the construction of the haul roads, plans for installing the T pylons, provision of a welfare cabin to the south of the Causeway, erection of a bat barn, tree planting and the demolition of Ashtrees. The availability of grants for local charities was also outlined.  They undertook to supply information for the parish website and magazine and also upon their intentions for two properties which they had recently purchased.  A parishioner would also be invited to submit detailed questions direct to National Grid for a response.

**Vacancy**

It was agreed to defer the co-option of a person to serve on the Parish Council to fill the casual vacancy caused by the resignation of Mrs J. Horn until the next Meeting.

**Finance**

It was reported that the balance of accounts at 1st October were as follows - Current £20,111.10, Reserve £36,769.89.

**Authorisation for Payment**

It was agreed that the following payments be made:-

DD               SDC                  payroll                                          £937.50

000913        GWB Services     grass and hedge cutting              £1,124.25

000914        Parish Clerk        expenses & sundry payments         £300.78

000915         Smith of Derby    public clock restoration             £18,570.23

**Bank Reconciliation**

A bank reconciliation as at 30th September 2020 was checked with the original bank statements and signed by the Members who did not sign cheques as part of the Council’s financial controls

**Estimates 2021/22**

The Council considered the Estimates for 2021/22. It was agreed that the Estimates be approved and the precept for 2021/22 be £17.600.

**Planning Applications**

The following new planning applications were considered with permission being recommended in each case:-

033 Erection of extension and other alterations, Wedmore House, Sedgemoor Manor School, Blackford Road, Mark – Priory Group.

034 Erection of agricultural workers dwelling, south of Rookery Farm, Northwick Road, Mark – C.S & J.M. Petheram.

It was agreed to confirm recommendations made in connection with the following applications since the last Meeting:-

029 Variation of condition to allow the repositioning of the pavilion, west of Vole Road, Mark – Mark Cricket Club. permission.

030 Conversion of garage to living accommodation and erection of detached garage and new boundary wall at Gables, The Causeway, Mark – N. Loney permission.

031 Formation of two concrete yard areas on farmyard, Lilac Farm, Harp Road, Mark – M. Wall. permission.

035 Erection of replacement agricultural building, Nut Tree Farm, Vole Road, Mark – Carnell & Partners. permission.

037 Erection of stable building, Southwick House, Southwick Road, Mark – C. Larkin. permission.

038 Certificate of Lawfulness for use of land as a caravan park and caravan storage, Dutch Court Farm, Dutch Road, Mark – Mr & Mrs J. Harris. permission.

039 Erection of an agricultural building to the east of Green Drove, Mark – G. Puddy. conditional permission.

040 Change of use of land to additional domestic garden and erection of garage, The Old Hay Barn, Green Drove, Mark – G. Puddy. refusal.

041 Erection of detached garage and workshop, Pudar, Southwick Road, Mark – L. Cutler. permission.

**Highway Matters**

Subsidence at Littlemoor Road and the need to refurbish the 30 mph signs and white lines would be reported along with blocked highway drains in Church Street. There were no new fly-tipping deposits to report.  There had been no update from the County Council on completion of the signage at Blackford Road to enable the extension of the speed limit to be enforced nor upon the proposed highway safety scheme at Mark First School.  The District Council had carried out work to a tree near the garages at Northwick Road.

Councillor Francis was applying for a grant towards the cost of 6 SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices) for use in Mark, Burnham Without and East Huntspill.  Discussions were taking place with appropriate Councils regarding future funding of the 67 Bus Service.  It was agreed to inform the County Council and other appropriate Councils that this Parish Council were prepared to retain their contribution at least £1,750 per year.

**Play Area**

It was noted that the wooden picnic benches were being refurbished and that Mark had won the Somerset Playing Fields’ Association Play Area of the Year Competition for 2020.

**Public Rights of Way**

It was noted that AX23/15 at The Wall had been cleared. Gary Bickers would be requested to adjust the gate fixings on the path to the south of Littlemoor Road.

**Village Hall /Football Pitch Area**

It was noted that the Mark Community Association were investigating improvements to the football pitch area including refurbishing the goalmouth which required remedial action.

**Website**

Councillor Mrs Weekes reported upon statistics relating to visits to the website during October. A number of photographs had recently been loaded onto the website.

**Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next Meeting be held on 5th January 2021 starting at 7.00 p.m.

**Dog Fouling – “A blight on our community”**

Please keep our community clean as there has been an increase in the amount of Dog Fowling around the village and especially along Church Street and along Vole Road to the village hall. Several piles of dog mess along the way.

**Dog mess is the most unacceptable and offensive type of litter on our streets.** Dog fouling is not only deeply unpleasant, it is dangerous. Whilst rare, contact with dog excrement can cause toxocariasis – a nasty infection that can lead to dizziness, nausea, asthma and even blindness or seizures.

While most dog owners are caring, responsible individuals, there are still some people who do not clean up after their pets.  Anyone who fails to clear up after their dog can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £100.  If the case goes to court this could cost the owner or person in charge of the animal up to £1,000.

The law states that being unaware a dog has fouled or not having a suitable bag is not a reasonable excuse so please clean up after your dog.

**Temporary Road Closure: ttro389806SE - River Road, Mark**
The order becomes effective on 24 November 2020 and will remain in force for eighteen months.

The works are expected to commence on **30th November 2020** and last for **6 hours (09:30 - 15:30)** to enable **Sunbelt Rentals Ltd to renew a telegraph pole on behalf of BT**.

Please follow the link to view the above road closure <https://one.network/?tm=118240838> and the link for the

**Notice 2:**   [https://one.network/downloads/tm/1111/3-notice-2\_118240838\_3257667\_27b4bea34c.pdf](https://one.network/downloads/tm/1111/3-notice-%20%20%20%20%20%20%202_118240838_3257667_27b4bea34c.pdf)

For any further information about this closure please contact Sunbelt Rentals Ltd on 0370 0500792, quoting reference: **ttro389806SE - River Road, Mark**.