**Parish Council Minutes 2022**

 **A Meeting of Mark Parish Council was held in the Church Hall, Vicarage Lane, Mark on Tuesday, 14th December 2021 at 7.00 p.m.**

**Finance**

**Balance of Accounts**

It was reported that the balance of accounts at 1st December were as follows –

Current £15,847.59, Reserve £28,505.41.

**Authorisation for Payment**

It was agreed that the following payments be authorised:-

000942 GWB Services   grass cutting                                                           £576.70

000943 Parish Clerk       expenses & reimbursement of sundry payments £688.06

**Estimates 2022/23**

The Council considered the draft estimates for 2022/23.

It was agreed that the Estimates be approved, the precept for 2022/23 would be kept at the present level of £17,600 and the Clerk’s salary be fixed at £4,000.

**Planning**

It was agreed to confirm recommendations of permission made in respect of the following applications –

031 Erection of replacement dwelling, The Homestead, Northwick Road, Mark – W. Howard

032 Erection of single storey dwelling and formation of access, Vicarage Lane Farm, Vicarage Lane, Mark – R. Catton and Mrs S. Campbell.

033 Remove deadwood and crown to nearest suitable growth, Walnut Tree, 23 Grange Paddock, Mark – D. Hanlon

The following new application was considered -

036 Proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to flexible use, Laurel Farm, The Causeway, Mark – Mr & Mrs J. Griffin – recommend refusal.

The Chairman outlined a letter received from a local resident regarding issues concerning response to a number of recent planning matters in the village. A draft response would be circulated to all Members for comment prior to despatch.

Concern was also expressed at the condition of buildings at Wainbridge Farm. National Grid had advised that they were in the process of transferring ownership from the Hinkley Connection Project team to National Grid UK property team who would then be responsible for the property. It was agreed to request an update on their plans for repairs and to raise concerns at the condition of the barns which were collapsing with a risk of endangering users of Harp Road. County Highways would also be alerted to this risk

.

**Public Areas**

**Highway Matters**

It was agreed to report fly-tipping at Blackford Road, near Totney Farm. Mr Bickers would be requested to repair railings at the junction of Northwick Road and Vole Road. County Highways had still not provided repeater signs at Blackford Road and it was agreed that consideration be given to a village gateway at a future date. Meetings had taken place to give detailed consideration to issues relating to parking in the vicinity of Mark First School. It was felt that greater police presence was required to deal with inconsiderate parking by parents.

Councillor Mrs Corkish had taken part in a Zoom Meeting organised by the Somerset Bus Partnership and representations on behalf of the Parish Council had been sent to the Minister for Roads, Buses and Places. It was agreed that a quotation be sought for the supply and installation of an additional dog waste bin at Littlemoor Road.

Councillor Francis reported that, following assistance from County Councillor Filmer, the new poles required for the additional SIDs had been installed by the County Council. One pole was incorrectly sited and this would be relocated to its correct location by Easter.

**Play Area**

It was noted that the play equipment annual inspection report did not indicate that any urgent repairs were required. The Chairman had arranged for the purchase of a new “No dogs” sign for the play area gate

**Public Rights of Way**

Members reported upon work carried out by National Grid to help clear AX23/15 and a need for further work.

**Village Hall /Football Pitch Area**

Councillor Mrs Weekes reported upon an issue of dog fouling on the football pitch.

**Web-site Portfolio**

Councillor Mrs Weekes reported that work was taking place to update information on the web-site.

**H.M. The Queen – Platinum Jubilee**

Members agreed in principle to commemorate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022 by installing a new seat and planting a standard weeping willow tree at Jubilee Green and making a grant to Mark Community Association towards the cost of a village celebration event.

**Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next Meeting be held on 1st March 2022 starting at 7.00 p.m.

**CHILDRENS' PLAY AREA MARK VILLAGE HALL – DOGS NOT ALLOWED**

During these difficult months it has been encouraging to see that the Play Area and other facilities at the Village Hall have been well used and given an opportunity to many for outside recreation. However, we have received complaints of dogs being taken into the Play Area which is an infringement of the usage rules posted on notices at the site.

Dogs in children's playgrounds can represent a major health and injury hazard:

1. Toxocariasis - a rare infection caused by roundworm parasites, most commonly found in cats, dogs and fox’s faeces.

2. Children and young adults are usually affected due to contact with contaminated soil or sand within play areas.

3. There is evidence that dogs can also carry E. coli and hepatitis in their faeces.

4. There are over 7,000 admissions to hospital for dog bites and attacks annually in the U.K

**Dog Fouling on the Village Hall Football Pitch**

We understand that the football pitch has to be cleared of dog poo before every match is able to take place.  If you walk your dog on the field at the hall **PLEASE** clear up after it.

There are many dog walkers who regularly clear up after their dog but there is still a minority we hope who do not and who do not keep watch on what your dog is up to! We, as a Parish Council, are always asking that you clear up after your dogs. Please take some dog poo bags with you and use them.

There are two dog bins - one on Jubilee Green and one at the Village Hall provided by the Parish Council. **PLEASE** use them!!!

**Tackling dog fouling on the football pitch!**

Please don’t let your dog foul up our Football Pitch.

As a dog owner or dog walker, you are required by law to collect and dispose of dog waste properly.

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**March 2022**

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**Litter Picking Day Friday 18th March at 10am**

We are delighted to let you know that on Friday 18th March at 10am the Parish Council are holding a litter picking day and we hope you can join us to help at the Village Hall car park at 10am. We are grateful that National Grid are joining us this year to help litter pick as part of their Community Support Programme.

For 18 years the Parish Council have held a litter picking day in February/March but unfortunately last year this did not happen due to Covid Restrictions so there will be plenty to do this year.

We would ask you all to please **KEEP OUR VILLAGE TIDY.** Unfortunately, there are a few who do not i.e., cans/ litter/ dog poo, to name but a few of the items left around our roads and grass verges. There are two Dog Rubbish bins in the village - one on Jubilee Green opposite the White Horse Pub, with the other at the village hall car park and The Council is looking to place another dog bin along Little Moor Road.

The Parish Council would like to thank Mick Lockyer and other folk who do litter pick on a regular basis around the village, so if you can please all of you **TAKE YOUR LITTER HOME**

**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.

If you know about those who fly-tip, inform your District Council immediately. If you see fly-tipping take no risks. **Do not touch anything fly-tipped or approach fly-tippers,** but when it is safe, please contact our [**local council customer services**](https://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/contact-us/) at Sedgemoor District Council with any details.

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.  In the meantime, the Parish Council will continue to report deposits, at present about once a week.

**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 is 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.

Do not 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 always.
* If you are 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.

**Next Meeting**

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 1st**

**March 2022 at the Church Hall starting at 7.00pm**

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**APRIL 2022**

**A Meeting of Mark Parish Council was held in the Church Hall, Vicarage Lane, Mark on Tuesday, 1st March 2022 at 7.00 p.m.**

**National Grid**

David Woodcock and Laura Griffin from National Grid gave a progress update on the Hinkley Connection Project which started in 2018 and was scheduled to be completed in its entirety in 2025. 16 T-pylons had been erected in Mark and 16 Western Power pylons would be removed. Restoration work would take place from summer 2022. They indicated that Wainbridge Farm would be sold later in the year and Members requested that remedial work should take place in the interest of public safety in the meantime. Details of community work in Mark were also outlined and it was noted that a litter pick would take place on 18th March.

**Finance**

**a)  Balance of Accounts**

It was reported that the balance of accounts at 1st February were as follows - Current £9,477.56, Reserve £28,505.89.

**b) Authorisation for Payment**

 It was agreed that the following payments be authorised: -

DD        Sedgemoor DC      payroll                                             £975.00

000944 MCA                       grant                                             £3,900.00

000945 MCA                       jubilee grant                                     £500.00

000946 GWB Services       grass cutting & maintenance work   £790.60

000947 Smith of Derby       clock maintenance                           £372.00

000948 Parish Clerk           expenses & reimbursement of sundry payments £274.09

It was noted that the Parish Council were unable to make a grant to Mark PCC towards the cost of improvements to the kitchen and toilets in the Church due to legal reasons. However, Members indicated their support for the project.

**c) Risk Management Report and Statement of Internal Control 2021/22**

The Council approved a Risk Management Report and Statement of Internal Control for 2021/22.

**Planning Portfolio**

It was agreed to confirm recommendations of permission made in respect of the following applications –

037 Erection of replacement double garage with first floor games room, The Potlatch, Blackford Road, Mark – S. Winchester

040 Erection of replacement stables with haybarn and riding arena, Brook Farm, Dutch Road, Mark – D. Sears.

001 Erection of self-build dwelling adjacent to Webbers Cottages, Southwick Road, Mark – S. Vincent

003 Erection of a storage and animal shelter building opposite Portland House, The Causeway, Mark – S. Kerton.

004 Application for prior approval of change of use of an agricultural building to a dwelling and demolition of adjacent barn, Corndell Farm, The Causeway, Mark – Mr & Mrs J. Griffin.

The following new applications were considered -

002 Change of use from agriculture to equestrian and erection of building to include three stables and storage, Rose Farm, Yarrow Road, Mark – Mrs D. Bayliss – recommend permission.

005 Erection of single storey rear extension, 23 Grange Paddock – D. Hanlon – defer for further consideration.

006 Erection of self-build dwelling, Longfield Farm, The Causeway, Mark – D. Haines – recommend permission.

It was agreed to request the District Council’s Enforcement Officers to investigate the stationing of a mobile home and other work on land on the west side of Vole Road, near Willow Tree Farm.

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**Public Areas Portfolio**

**a) Highway Matters**

It was agreed to report potholes at Southwick and at the Kingsway/Church Street junction. Mr Bickers would be requested to paint the railings at the junction of Northwick Road and Vole Road when weather conditions were suitable. County Councillor Huxtable would be requested to give an update on the proposed speed survey at Blackford Road. Councillor Mrs Corkish had taken part in a Zoom Meeting organised by the Somerset Bus Partnership and representations on behalf of the Parish Council had been sent to the Minister for Roads, Buses and Places. It was agreed that an additional dog waste bin be installed by the District Council at Littlemoor Road at a cost of approximately £185 and a potential location was agreed.

**b) Play Area**

It was noted that a new “No dogs” sign had been fixed to the play area gate

**c) Public Rights of Way**

It was noted that some rights of way had been blocked by fallen trees following the recent storms.

**d) Village Hall /Football Pitch Area**

It was agreed to request the MCA to strengthen the hedge with new planting following the loss of some trees and bushes during the recent storm.   Councillor Mrs Weekes agreed to raise the matter at their next Meeting.

**Web-site Portfolio**

Councillor Mrs Weekes reported upon usage of the web-site.

**H.M. The Queen – Platinum Jubilee**

 It was noted that a commemorative bench had been ordered for Jubilee Green at a cost of £1,137.37. A standard weeping willow tree had also been planted at Jubilee Green with a plaque and, after discussion, it was agreed that a picket fence be erected around it. The vicar would bless the tree on 18th March.  A grant of £500 had also been made to Mark Community Association towards the cost of a village celebration event.

**Next Meeting**

**It was agreed that the next Meeting of the Parish Council be held on 26th April 2022 at the Church Hall starting at 7.00 p.m. to conclude financial matters prior to the May elections.**

**Nomination papers and details of the election timetable would be distributed as soon as they were at hand.**

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**ELECTIONS TO MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

The following people have put themselves forward to stand for Mark Parish Council at the election of eight Parish Councillors on Thursday 5th May.

As only five residents have put themselves forward there will not be an election as such and the five will stand as Parish Councillors. The Parish Council will fill the remaining three places in the following weeks after 5th May 2022:

                                            David Champion

                                            Geoffrey Francis

                                            William Human

                                            Danny Kehoe

                                            Jendy Weekes

**ANNUAL PARISH SPRING CLEAN**

Very many thanks to those parishioners who were able to contribute to our annual ‘Spring clean’ on 18 March 2022. A significant amount of litter was collected, some undoubtedly been there for some time as we have not been able to hold a litter picking day for the last two years due to Covid. We were also most grateful to eight volunteers from National Grid who came along to lend a hand.

**PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE**

The site is getting well over 1,000 hits a month, and is read from many areas throughout the world!!

Councillor Mrs. Jendy Weekes receives updates for the website, especially events in the Parish, but would very much like to receive any information that Clubs and Organisations wish to be advertised.  She also lists events that are advertised in the Parish Magazine. It is thought that some Clubs and Organisations may have changed their contact details and therefore she requests that any changes are sent to her so that the website can be updated. Jendy can be contacted either through the website or on jendyweekes@btinternet.com or both.  We would also like to receive details from businesses in the Parish who wish to be linked to the website

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

039 Application for the Prior Approval of the change of use of an agricultural building to a single dwelling and demolition of adjacent barn at Hart House, The Causeway, Mark - Mr & Mrs C. Smith. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 14.1.2022. Sedgemoor District Council REFUSED PERMISSION 10.2.2022.

040 Erection of replacement stables with haybarn and riding arena, Brook Farm, Dutch Road, Mark – D. Sears. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 5.2.2022.

2022

001 Erection of a self-build dwelling and associated works adjacent to Webbers Cottages, Southwick Road, Mark – S. Vincent. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 31.1.2022. WITHDRAWN.

002 Change of use from agricultural land to equestrian and erection of barn, Rose Farm, Yarrow Road, Mark – Mrs D. Bayliss. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 1.3.2022.

003 Erection of a storage and animal shelter building opposite Portland House, The Causeway, Mark – S. Kerton. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 14.2.2022.

004 Application for the prior approval of the proposed change of use of an agricultural building to a dwelling, demolition of an adjacent barn and operational development, Corndell Farm. The Causeway, Mark – Mr & Mrs J. Griffin. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 23.2.2022. WITHDRAWN.

005 Erection of single storey rear extension, 23 Grange Paddock, Mark – D. Hanlon. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 9.3.2022. Sedgemoor District Council GRANTED PERMISSION 29.3.2022.

006 Erection of self-build dwelling, Longfield Farm, The Causeway, Mark – D. Haines. Parish Council RECOMMENDED PERMISSION 1.3.2022.

**Next Meeting**

**The next Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on 26th April 2022 at the Church Hall starting at 7.00 p.m. to conclude financial matters prior to the May elections.**

**The first meeting of the Parish Council after the elections will be held on Tuesday 10th May 2022 at the Church Hall starting at 7.00pm.**

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**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

**The Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

The members of the Parish Council would like to congratulate each and every person who played a part in the most wonderful events in the Village over the Jubilee celebrations. It was apparent that a great deal of planning had taken place over many, many months and that everything was planned down to the tiniest detail. To the observer it looked like everything worked brilliantly and the different events over those days brought people together in a lovely way, mixing old with new, young with old and cementing friendships and a marvellous sense of community.

There are not really enough words available to describe just how hard the organisers and volunteers worked at those celebrations and made it so enjoyable for all of those fortunate to attend. Thank you all for your excellent contribution!

Danny Kehoe

Chairman, Mark Parish Council

July 2022

**Mark Parish Council**

**August 2022**

The Council met at the Church Hall on Tuesday 5th July 2022 commencing at 1900 hours.

Attending were D. Kehoe (Chair) G. Francis, S. Emary, D. Champion, W. Human, Mrs J.Weekes, County Councillor H. Munt and the Clerk, R.Young.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed and signed by the chair as a correct record.

The Parish Council were able to co-opt people to fill two vacancies. It was agreed that Louisa Kybert and Colin Taylor be co-opted to serve on the Parish Council.  They both signed declarations of acceptance of office and joined the meeting

The County Councillor H. Munt introduced himself as one of the recently elected county councillors for the King Alfred Division. He outlined the current position regarding the work to form a Unitary Council for Somerset and would circulate regular monthly reports from the County Council.

The Balance of accounts at the 1st June were presented and agreed, several cheques were authorised for payment.

It was noted that the internal auditor had no issues to raise in respect of the 2021/22 accounts.

Several planning applications were considered for comments.

There were no new highways matters to report, previously reported defects in Harp Road and Northwick Road were awaiting repair by the highways department together with a number of highway signs which had been damaged.

Councillor Francis reported upon a meeting held at Brent Knoll regarding SID/Speed watch when APNR (automatic number plate recognition) devices were discussed but these had yet to be approved by Avon and Somerset Constabulary.

The play area would soon be judged in connection with the Somerset Play Area Association Field of the year competition. An item of equipment might need to be replaced within the next year.

Public Rights of Way, issues relating to the Wall (Ax23/15) being obstructed by overgrown vegetation were discussed and County Councillor Munt undertook to request County Rights of Way Officer to contact the relevant Landowners to persuade them to cut back their sections of hedge.

Councillor Weekes reported that over £6000 was raised during the Jubilee celebrations and that CCTV was being installed at the Village hall.

The Parish Clock  - it was reported that the striking mechanism was again defective.  It was agreed to contact Smiths of Derby to obtain a quotation for a lasting repair.

Parish Website - Councillor Mrs Jendy Weekes had circulated details of the usage of the web-site during June and reported on a “What's New section “

Member Training  - four members agreed to attend a training course to be held by the District Council at the Canal side, Bridgwater on 12th July 2022

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on  6th Sptember 2022 starting at 1900hrs

The meeting closed at 2000hrs

**MARK PARISH COUNCIL**

**December 2022**

The Village saw Remembrance Day marked in may different ways with lovely displays of Poppies appearing in different locations beforehand and door to door collecting for The Royal British Legion by dedicated Villagers who braved the elements and, of course, the traffic in the weeks leading up to the day.  The Service at the very well attended Church on the sunday was poignant and a fitting reminder of the sacrifices made by so many for our freedoms today.

It was clear that a lot of very hard work had been put into making it a success.  Those who organised it and the Reverend Christine deserve the highest praise.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will now take place on Tuesday 20th December at the Church Hall and all Villagers are warmly invited to attend.

In the meantime, the members of the Parish Council wish you all a wonderful Christmas and happy, healthy and safe New Year.

Danny Kehoe

Chair