Clerk’s Report for

**Thursday 6th December 2018 - Tuesday 29 January 2019**

(Points numbered according to the minutes of the last meeting.)

**4. Minutes.** Clerk has posted the previous minutes to the website and the noticeboards.

**5. Chairman’s announcements. Narrow Road for 1 mile sign.** Clerk has contacted Highways again. They have replied that the sign is at the depot and will be installed in the near future.

**6. Clerk’s Report to Councillors.** Clerk has emailed the school to ask them to check the safety of the pillar caps and regarding the space where the post box used to be.

**7. Review of forward planning document**.

**Other amenities**: Clerk has contacted **Corpus Christi** again asking for a copy of the map of the land/properties it owns in Temple Guiting parish with the aim of assessing future maintenance requirements. CC has replied that the map is still not complete but that a copy will be forwarded when available. The person responsible for this has now changed to Jonathan Love.

**Crime**: Clerk has investigated **Neighbourhood Watch** type organisations. Neighbourhood watch still exists but is now much more electronic. The structure is very loose:

* Neighbours join together to keep a watchful eye on the homes within their watch area and be a good neighbour to their vulnerable and elderly neighbours.
* You can volunteer to be a street coordinator, sharing information.
* Increasingly, with the emergence of cybercrime and fraud, members are becoming the frontline in raising awareness about practical steps to protect themselves and others from a variety of crimes.
* Research shows that crime is lower where there are active Neighbourhood Watches.
* You will get free updates from Action Fraud, bi-monthly e-newsletters and your scheme will be covered by free PPI insurance.
* Your local policing team will keep you informed about what is happening locally and how you can help, for example to look out for stolen property or help find missing people.   They will also tell you about local policing events; update you about crimes, incidents or concerning trends in your area; alert you to appeals for information or witnesses; and keep you up-to-date with the latest crime prevention information and advice to share with your friends and neighbours to help you to keep yourselves and your property safe. (FYI – this information is available to anyone by registering for alerts).
* Register at: <https://member-registration.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/30/Join>

**Changing environment**: Tree protection orders (TPOs) and Conservation Areas (e.g. Barton and Kineton). Clerk has researched the ways that trees are treated under a TPO (in or outside a Conservation Area) and when in a Conservation Area but without a TPO.

A TPO prohibits the cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage and wilful destruction of trees without the local planning authority's written consent. Applications to carry out works to trees with a TPO must give 6 weeks notice. If consent is given, it can be subject to conditions which have to be followed (for example, replanting either in the same or another place). The penalties for cutting down or destroying a tree are now an unlimited fine. The landowner can also be required to replace the tree that was removed. For less serious offences, the penalty is a fine of up to £2,500. These are decided at a magistrates court.

Trees in a Conservation Area that are not protected by a TPO are protected by the provisions in [section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/section/211). These provisions require people to notify the local planning authority, using a ‘[section 211 notice](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas#Section-211-notices)’, 6 weeks before carrying out certain work on such trees, [unless an exception](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas#section-211-notice-for-tree-size) applies. The work may go ahead before the end of the 6 week period if the local planning authority gives consent. This notice period gives the authority an opportunity to consider whether to [make an Order](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas#order-for-unprotected-tree) on the tree.

Consideration may also be given to the retention of older trees for wildlife habitat.

\* (Town and Country Planning act 1990, updated 2012)

Summary – there seems very little difference between the protection afforded to trees by a TPO and that provided by being within a Conservation Area.

Conservation areas in general

Cotswold District Council designates local Conservation Areas on the basis of whether the area is of ‘special architectural or historic interest' and whose character or appearance is worth protecting or enhancing. Local and regional criteria are used, rather than any national standard. The process includes detailed analysis of the proposed Conservation Area, public consultation and formal approval by CDC.

Although CDC has more Conservation Areas than any other part of the UK, and all maps are available online, very few of them show the appraisal and management plan online. The only example available is one prepared by Kemble itself so not therefore approved by CDC. It is available here: <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/1468752/Kemble.pdf>

There is another designation ‘Special Areas of Conservation’ (SAC) where there is special legal protection to conserve important habitats and species. These are designated at European level. The nearest to TG is between Painswick and Birdlip and protects the beech woods.

Other forms of protection of the landscape, architecture and habitat:

Cotswold AONB

The purpose of an AONB designation is to:

\* [conserve](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landscape-scale_conservation) and enhance the natural beauty of the designated landscape by placing it under the [Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Countryside_and_Rights_of_Way_Act_2000).

There are two secondary aims:

\* meeting the need for quiet enjoyment of the countryside; and

\* having regard for the interests of those who live and work there.

To achieve these aims, AONBs rely on [planning controls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Town_and_country_planning_in_the_United_Kingdom) and practical countryside management, although they do not have their own planning bodies and must work with those covering the area.

A future Cotswold National Park and Dark Skies area

The Cotswold AONB is managed by the Cotswold Conservation Board (CCB). The Clerk has contacted the CCB (Martin Lane, Director) regarding its campaign to change from an AONB to a National Park. This change would provide much greater funding and mean that a single planning authority would cover the entire area, making control much easier. The Board met on December 6 and discussed this and the issue of ‘Dark Skies’ designation. Papers are available:

**Village questionnaires/surveys:** The Clerk has contacted GAPTC and several other PCs to establish how and why they carry out surveys.

GAPTC’s response to being asked for guidance on PC surveys:

“What the pc is wanting to do is engage with the community, so I just wonder if any consideration has been given to holding a coffee morning, say, for councillors to talk to residents about issues that concern them.    Questionnaires are fine, of course, but sometimes conversations can lead to better and surprising outcomes.    I realise you cover several communities, so perhaps this is not so practical and what is important in one, may not be in the others.

The pc does not precept a huge amount, so some issues may be more of representation and lobbying than expenditure.      The usual themes for a pc are affordable housing, protecting the environment, highways matters, supporting local organisations, village hall maintenance/refurbishment, footpath maintenance, dog fouling etc.      Your questionnaire could ask residents what their priorities are by giving them a number of topics to consider.     Some informal conversations between councillors and residents may throw up some other topics.”

Examples of questionnaires**:**

***Houghton on the Hill***. 57 questions covering: energy, telecoms, facilities and services, landscape and green spaces, traffic and transport, housing, feelings about living in Houghton.

***Tidbury Green***. 21 questions. Cash prize for completed form selected. Covering feelings about th area, relationship with PC, noticeboards and newsletters, support for PC activities, bulb planting programme, village hall usage, problems in the area (score 1 – 10), willingness to help.

***Church Crookham***. 54 questions. Wide ranging. Feelings about CC, why CC, occupational profile, schooling, transport and safety, travellers’ sites, new housing, waste collection, employment needed locally, new facilities needed locally e.g. doctor.

***Beer, Devon*.** 36 questions about housing and development, renewable energy, pedestrianisation, tourism, current and ‘missing’ facilities, work location and pre3ferences, public transport, parking existing leisure and sport facilities and future requirements.

***Worlaby village, Lincs*** Asked only 10 questions each of which was an objective of the village and which required only a yes or no answer e.g. New housing to meet local needs, in particular for young families and those wishing to downsize whilst remaining in the village. Yes/|No

***Cheshire East*** has written a guide to PC surveys, which includes the following topics:

1. Assess reasons for survey
2. Set objectives
3. Map timeframe
4. Who to ask (age, number etc and response rates) and how to reach them (paper – posted or delivered; online; telephone; face-to-face).
5. Design guidance
6. Proofread and pilot survey
7. Fieldwork
8. Analysis of results

‎***Herefordshire*** has written a Community Plan Guidance brochure which includes a helpful section on questionnaires: <http://www.comfirst.org.uk/files/community_planning_guidance_herefordshire.pdf> as well as the above, they discuss rewards for completing the form, and reminders. They also have a ‘confidence’ section showing how reliable the number of respondents is.

***Naunton*** recently used CDC to send questionnaires to everyone on the Council Tax address list specifically to find out how many people backed the plan to renovate the village hall and whether they would be prepared to accept the resulting increase in the precept. This was in addition to offering an online form via the website and holding a meeting at the village hall for face to face form filling.

**Separate Note re: £30,000 ‘Growing our Communities Grant’ held by Councillor Nigel Moor**

The total sum available for grants in each electoral division is limited to £30,000 for 3 years 2018 – 2021. Nigel Moor has confirmed that funds are still available.

The broad purpose of the scheme is to invest in communities by supporting projects and activities that will make a positive difference to local communities within Gloucestershire, by giving light touch support to community initiatives that:

* Contribute to identifying and reducing social isolation
* Develop Self Supporting hubs
* Digital/Virtual support networks
* Promote Healthy Lifestyles
* Support Safer Neighbourhoods

County councillors have an essential role in assessing the merits of applications, and their recommendations will be instrumental in the allocation of ‘Growing our Communities’ funding.

It may be possible to gain funding for the ‘community spaces’ project which has been discussed. This includes establishing the need for a community space and whether that space should be the any or all of: the Village Hall; the West End of the church; or the room above the village teashop.