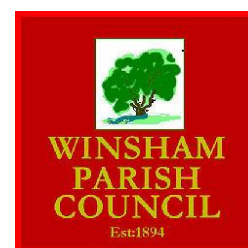


Winsham Parish Council

Chairman's Annual Report – 2019



Good evening everyone.

My Annual Report will mainly focus on the past 10 months, during my tenure as Chairman. While this report marks not only the end of another year in the life of Winsham Parish Council, it is also the end of the current Council. As we are all well aware, a new Council will take over in early May.

The Parish Council, in this final year, has had a busy, challenging, stimulating but sometimes disruptive time. There have been a number of issues which have dominated the work of the Council, and some of these have had a direct impact on the life and spirit of the community as a whole.

It is sad for me to report that a number of unwelcome and distressing incidents occurred during this period. Someone chose to impersonate a member of the Council by writing to the Somerset Football Association, making unfounded accusations about the Winsham Playing Fields. This was distressing for the Councillor and their family, the Council and Clerk, and the named organisation. Such incidents undermine trust and confidence. There have been a number of other incidents which have distressed our community.

I sincerely hope that better tempers now prevail.

One of our major issues has been the Winsham Playing Fields Trust and the associated Sports and Social Club. Around a year ago it became apparent that the 50 year old lease no longer served the needs of the village, and we started the process of transferring the management back to the Council. Whilst the process has proceeded at a good pace, we would all have preferred that the transfer could have been swift and pain free. This was never going to be the case. However the Council made the final structural decisions last night and should take over management of the Playing Fields, to be renamed 'Winsham Recreational Trust', within the next two months. We hope this breathes new life into this precious community asset.

We are all aware of the developments with our Shop and Post Office, which has been the beating heart of our village for over 167 years. After a long, detailed process of planning and application, The George submission was refused at the February Area West Planning meeting. This was a grave disappointment to the community, and a massive blow to the Shop Committee. There is no doubt that there is very strong support for the Shop and Post Office, and we must all look forward to a successful outcome.

On other planning matters, the new development at Balsom Close was further considered by the Council last night. This is a potentially highly significant development, which will provide 10 new houses, a playing area, and a car park which will take pressure off other pinch points in the village.

Meanwhile, the Council had a one-off expense to repair the 'Lower Rec' (Playground) wall after a large vehicle hit it.

Although the year has been disruptive and busy, I am pleased to report that we have remained within our budget, and been able to put £3,000 aside for depreciation.

There have been many highlights, I am pleased to report. The 100th Anniversary of the end of the First World War was marked with true solemnity and dignity. There was an impressive turnout in St Stephen's Church and at the War Memorial, before many retired to the Jubilee Hall for refreshments. The Council had arranged for the Winsham and Cricket St. Thomas War Memorial to

be cleaned, thanks in large part to a grant from the War Memorials Trust, which was appropriate and timely. The refreshments were provided by Chloe and Ann Beviss and paid for by the Council. These were appreciated by one and all.

We also submitted an entry in the national Best Loved Conservation Area, sponsored by Civic Trust. Given that there were nearly 350 entries, we were chuffed to be amongst the final 18. The subsequent poll showed a gratifying level of support for our small community. Thank you to all those that “liked” our submission.

Meanwhile Brian Turner was awarded the County Chairman’s 2018 Award for his sustained support, to the village, on so many fronts. This was richly deserved.

As I personally bow out, I wish to pay tribute to my fellow councillors. We have been blessed with very dedicated, loyal and conscientious volunteer parishioners, and I salute them. We have also been extremely well served by our District Councillor, Sue Osborne, who has worked tirelessly for us. Most of her efforts, behind the scenes and away from the Parish, are unseen and unrewarded, while at County level, Linda Vijeh has served us in equal measure. We thank you both.

I have received much needed advice and guidance from a number of parishioners and I wish to record my thanks and appreciation. The work of the Council would not have been possible without such continued support.

Most specifically I thank John Sullivan who has always been a staunch supporter of the Council and Community. Thanks to his tireless promotion we will have an election for the next Parish Council; is this the first time in over 40 years? Thank you John.

Finally, Winsham has been extremely fortunate to have benefited from the services of the best Clerk to the Council in Somerset, Teresa Pinder. She has professionally and diligently served the Council for the past 6 years, and nothing is too much trouble and no question is too difficult for her, while her exceptional knowledge of procedure has served us especially well. She will be sorely missed and we thank her most warmly.

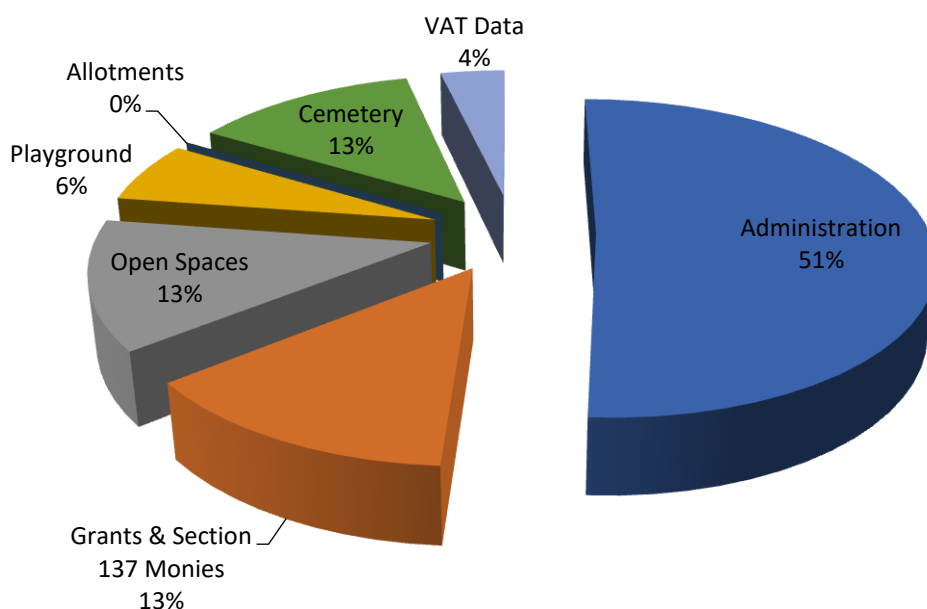
Andrew Simkins OBE

Chairman, Winsham Parish Council

WINSHAM PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES

Financials for the year ending 31st March 2019

WPC Running Costs Y/E 31-3-19



Financials for the year ending 31st March 2018

WPC Running Costs Y/E 31-3-18

