

# MANNINGFORD PARISH COUNCIL

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2010 - 2011

Dear Parishioner,

**General.** This is my fourth and final annual report as Chairman of Manningford Parish Council (MPC). It has been an eventful year and this report summarises some of the key issues arising. MPC is, by definition, a voluntary body at the service of Manningford Parish. We welcome all shades of opinion and attendance at our bi-monthly meetings.

**Police.** Councillor (Cllr) Paul Pelham represents MPC on police matters. There have been no issues of major concern in the past 12 months. We continue to be enrolled in the Neighbourhood Watch (NW) scheme and NW signs placed on roads entering the parish. Home emergency booklets will be issued in due course. Point of Contact (PoC) for Paul Pelham is: mail@barset.co.uk or 01980 630036.

**Highways.** The PC has continued to pursue its policy of applying for a 40mph limit on the A345 from The Woodbridge Inn through to Pewsey. Wiltshire Council (WC) has advised that a complete review of the existing speed limits on all A/B roads in the county will have been completed by the end of 2011. C roads such as the Manningford Bruce/Abbots C52 will be surveyed afterwards, but there is no definitive timeframe for this to be completed. It is the PC view that all lanes previously designated as *Quiet Lanes* should be limited to 40mph, with a 30mph limit within all villages. This could well be reduced to 20 mph, if agreed nationally.

MPC campaigns for safer roads in the Parish, especially a reduction in the number of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) using the village as a transit route. Black signs indicating the route of the A345 for HGVs were erected in 2009, thus diverting HGVs from the C52. In addition, blue 'HGV Unsuitable' signs have also been erected at each end of the C52 by WC again to keep passing HGV drivers on the A345. Signs guiding HGVs to use the A346, due to the low bridge in Pewsey have also been erected at each A road entry point to Marlborough. Evidence would appear to suggest that these efforts have been successful in reducing the HGV traffic through Manningford.

Training was arranged and completed on hand held Speed Cameras as part of the Community Speedwatch Scheme (CSS) for some 14 volunteers from Manningford. We now have access to a speed camera for 2 weeks in every 6, and a rota system is arranged between the volunteers to achieve a random presence to record any vehicles speeding through the village. Two periods have so far been completed with over 25 cars being reported to the police for excessive speed. These drivers and those caught in the future will be written to by the police and action taken if they persist. Metrics lines were recently placed on the C52 to record traffic volume to compare with past information. We have not yet had any statistics back.

Funding has now been approved to update the signage for the 30mph "repeaters" in the village. This will also include new signs on the village gates. This process should be completed in the next 2 months. The existing parish white signboards have been smartened up, for which thanks are due to Mr Ken Stokes.

## Item 09e (1)

With the exception of the A345, no roads in Manningford were gritted last winter. Mr James Kinderman kindly volunteered to grit some roads and a ton of salt was obtained from WC, held at his farm under a WC gritting scheme.

Much discussion has been had in the PC meetings about gritting on the C52 during cold and icy weather. WC is now only gritting A and in some cases B roads. In previous years, roads such as the C52 were also gritted. Six accidents over the past winter led to the subject being again raised. Initial investigations found that WC do not have the resources to grit the C52 without a compensating reduction elsewhere but that this issue is now under review at County Hall. WC has confirmed that signs indicating that the road is subject to ice (or some standard notice) could be erected at each end of the C52 by this coming winter. A MPC review of the situation has been conducted. Feedback was in favour of 'spot gritting' together with 'road not gritted signs' but that 'do nothing' was not an option. As an afternote, regrettably, MPC voted **against** a motion requesting action by WC at its meeting on 17 May, thus contradicting the finding of the survey. Furthermore, it has since been realised that residents on the C52 on its most dangerous section between the Avon and railway bridges were not consulted at all in the survey. Given these circumstances it is with great regret that I have resigned from the Parish Council.

It remains my opinion that WC needs to be persuaded that the C52 in its entirety requires gritting, especially given that traffic of around 800 vehicles is on a daily basis and that the accidents experienced last winter were not at 'black spots' but widely distributed. I firmly believe that parishioners are entitled to go about their business without fear of vehicle accidents on iced roads and furthermore, whether we like it or not, the C52 remains safe for any vehicle in transit.

Cllr Richard Netherclift is the PC representative for highways. PoC is: [rnetherclift@btinternet.com](mailto:rnetherclift@btinternet.com) or 01672 562777.

**Parish Council Projects.** Playground safety measures (the slide) have been completed. PoC is Cllr Bernard Gaskin: [bernard.gaskin@btinternet.com](mailto:bernard.gaskin@btinternet.com) or 01980 630917

**Footpaths.** Bridleway No 30 (B30) southeast from the A345 near Indigo (GR 144581) to Grant's Firs (GR 176557), a distance of 4km, has been blocked off and signs removed for many years, yet remains a public right of way. MPC aims to restore this route to its rightful use. Action is with WC (Esther Daly) and Cllr Anthony Perry. It is now known that a proposal was made that its north west end should have been blocked off and that an intersection established just south of Waits Barn, thus creating a circular loop with the B25 (concrete road). However, this never happened, yet B30 remained closed regardless. It is now intended that B30 will be reopened in its entirety but that application will be made that at its north end, instead of passing through a paddock onto the A345, it should be diverted behind Indigo back to B25 (Concrete Road), thus creating a superb 8 kilometer bridleway available to all users. It is hoped that fit and active parishioners will agree with this and, once opened, use this amenity.

In the meantime, MPC has a very successful contract to ensure key footpaths are cleared on a regular basis, most notably the White Horse Trail via Bruce Mill.

The possibility of permissive bridleways (PB) alongside existing roads in the village remains an aspiration. This would only be with the agreement of relevant landowners and provided funding could be found. A similar scheme could possibly be created

## Item 09e (1)

alongside the A345, which remains a highly dangerous main road. It is noteworthy that Vitacress has kindly agreed that its boundary with the C46 from Swanborough Tump east towards the Woodborough Cross Roads may be used by walkers, provided dogs are on a lead and mess is removed, given its own concern for the salad crops being grown in that field.

A more recent development has been the opening of the Pewsey Avon Trail (PAT) which is a 28 mile walk on existing rights of way between Pewsey and Salisbury and on to the sea at Christchurch. PAT enters Manningford from Sharcott by road and then passes by Manningford Abbots old church before assuming the White Horse Trail to St Peter's Church and on to Upavon. A Guide to the walk may be purchased from the Tea Rooms in Pewsey.

Many stiles have fallen into disuse over time and it remains a cause for regret that landowners have been slow in coming forward to make repairs, as is their legal responsibility. It was thus decided that the PC would take action and to date six stiles have been repaired, with the capability for a further five repairs if required.

Parishioners are encouraged to utilise the Parish Steward (PS) scheme for minor road improvements, all bids to be placed with Cllr Anthony Perry. WC has notably 'sharpened its act' in this regard and the PC now receives feedback on PS activities on a regular basis. In addition, grants are available via the Pathways Improvements Grants Scheme (PIGS) for improvements to footpaths. PoC on footpaths is Cllr Anthony Perry ([perryatmanningford@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:perryatmanningford@yahoo.co.uk)), tel 01672 563305.

**Village Website.** Cllr Phil Hossack ([phil@skypower.co.uk](mailto:phil@skypower.co.uk) or 01672 564438) has continued to maintain the website, re-launched in 2008 and recently updated. All matters relating to PC meetings, and other village issues such as planning applications, are regularly posted and can be found at [www.themanningfords.co.uk](http://www.themanningfords.co.uk)

**Village History.** Manningford has a diverse and rich history, which features in some local history books but not within the Parish itself. It is thought that such a compilation would benefit the Parish and could include both artefacts, photographs, written testimonies and oral histories, especially from those residents of long standing in Manningford. A small volunteer committee has been established under the supervision of the village historian, Mr Peter Ward, to gather the material, maintain the archive and post it onto the website. Those interested should contact Peter: [PeterWard7@aol.com](mailto:PeterWard7@aol.com) or 01672 562638.

**Finance.** Cllr Bernard Gaskin has continued to oversee the Parish finances. MPC is always mindful of the whole community when setting the precept which is kept as low as possible and yet allows sufficient funding to maintain the facilities of the village. The precept for 2011 has been held at £6,300. The final instalment of the loan from WC for the re-building of the village hall has now been paid, leaving £2,761 available for parish projects in 2011/12. Contact: [bernard.gaskin@btinternet.com](mailto:bernard.gaskin@btinternet.com) or 01980 630917.

**Village Hall.** The Village Hall continues to function as a valuable centre for the community. Events, such as the 'Big Lunch' (5 June 2011), Quiz Nights, Pub Nights and Xmas Carols are much appreciated. The VHC currently has £2997 in its account. Anyone with suitable photographs of village life, both past and present, and are prepared to donate them to the Village Hall, should contact Andrew Marshall, chairman of the Village Hall Committee (VHC): [vandamarshall@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:vandamarshall@tiscali.co.uk) or 01672 569077.

## Item 09e (1)

**Parochial Church Council (PCC).** The PCC provides valuable support to the community through the organization of a number of events and the upkeep of St Peter's Church. These have included a highly successful repeat of the Manningford Abbots, Bruce and Bohune Rounders match, Parish carol singing and a Christmas party. Services are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday each month and attendance has been good. A third Rounders match is planned for Sunday 12 June 2011 at New Barn Farm, courtesy of Mr and Mrs Peter Farquhar. All are welcome to participate and bring picnics/barbeques. In addition, a fund raising Summer Garden Party is to be held on 17 June at Manningford Bruce House, by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Alastair Macpherson. Tickets costing £12.50, to include wine and canapes, are available from Mrs Myffy Sampson on 01672 563736.

**Environment.** Cllr Bridget Lanyon is responsible (PoC [bridget.lanyon@googlemail.com](mailto:bridget.lanyon@googlemail.com) or 01672 564269) for Environmental matters. The PC is a member of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE).

**Community Affairs.** Cllr Carol Mortimer deserves congratulation for having maintained the Manningford Local Directory, re-published in September 2010. All Parishioners are invited to add their personal details, such as address, telephone number and e-mail to the Directory for its third publication in September 2011. Local businesses are also encouraged to participate. Contact: [carol@themortimers.co.uk](mailto:carol@themortimers.co.uk) or 01672 564374. Carol is also investigating the possibility that the local Mobile Library service should stop in Manningford. Sandra Hossack has volunteered her services as a Community First Aid Responder, available to respond locally to 999 emergency calls until blue light services are on the scene.

**Allotments.** If anyone wishes to apply for a plot, contact the Parish Clerk, Jacki Liebling: [cornerc@btinternet.com](mailto:cornerc@btinternet.com) or 01672 56487.

**Village Design Statement.** Cllr Reg Sampson is point of contact. This continues to be lodged with WC.

**Planning.** Cllr Reg Sampson provides excellent service to the community in ensuring that planning applications are dealt with in good time and judiciously assessed. PoC: [regandmyffy@btinternet.com](mailto:regandmyffy@btinternet.com) or 01672 563736.

**Military and Defence Related Matters.** The presence of the military around Manningford is on a day and nightly basis, with over flights by Apache Attack Helicopters, Hercules C-130s and armoured/artillery activity to the west on Salisbury Plain. WC has now established a single point of contact for issues or complaints: [Alistair.cunningham@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Alistair.cunningham@wiltshire.gov.uk) (01225 713203).

**Communication.** Reports such as this will be given a wide distribution via email to parishioners and also in hard copy through letterboxes and on notice boards. As always, comments and views from the Parish are most welcome, either by email, verbally or by letter to the Parish Clerk, Jacki Liebling at Corner Cottage, Manningford Abbots. And since we do not have our own pub, Parish and other social matters may be discussed in a convivial manner at the Golden Swan in Wilcot between 1800 and 1900 each Friday evening. All are most welcome to join in. The next PC meeting will be on Tuesday 12 July 2011 at 1930 in the Village Hall and at two month intervals thereafter. All parishioners are most welcome. MPC is happy to provide a weekly 'surgery' with coffee/tea in the Village Hall if this would be of use.

## **Item 09e (1)**

**What's in a name?** Manningford Parish Council has been so named probably since parish councils were first mooted back in 1895. Yet recent legislation does allow for a change in name to include such titles as 'Manningford Village Council' or 'Manningford Community Council'. Are there strong views on an issue such as this?

**David Benest**  
**Ex- Chairman and Councillor**  
**Manningford Parish Council**  
**17 May 2011**  
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