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# Washington Parish Council Newsletter Summer 2021

## Chairman's Message

As the slow return to normality progresses, we are delighted to resume distribution of this newsletter to the parish, our first since Autumn 2019. During this period, we have maintained a quarterly update in Sussex Local magazine, whom we thank for their support in the production and distribution of this newsletter. The quarterly updates will continue, and a full newsletter will be issued twice yearly.

The Parish Council held its final scheduled meeting over "Zoom" on May 4th. The use of this app has meant that parish business has continued effectively online during the lockdown periods, and we are delighted that so many members of the public attended virtually and got involved. The emergency powers permitting councils to meet remotely ended on 7th May, and we now look forward to resuming live meetings for the first time since February 2020! In line with the government road map, we have scheduled the first live meeting for Monday 21st June (providing that no further changes are announced).

Following a review of council finances, a long standing 30-year loan to finance repairs to the Village Hall roof has been repaid early, thus avoiding ongoing interest charges set at historically high rates. The finances are in good order, and members once again agreed unanimously to freeze the level of precept charged through local council tax. The rate of £38.22 per Band D property is now the third lowest of the 32 parishes in Horsham District, and only 25% of the rate charged by the highest.

We are pleased to announce Councillor Geoff Lockerbie's appointment as Vice Chairman of the council this year. Geoff has chaired the Open Spaces committee and has been instrumental in concluding a new stewardship agreement with allotment tenants, giving them a higher level of self-management and engagement with the council. Our previous Vice Chairman, John Henderson, is moving from the area, and we thank him for his past valuable contributions.

Looking forward, the Parish Council is engaging in a number of key issues. A grant from parish funds has been agreed to the National Trust to enable it to proceed quickly with the upgrade of Georges Lane between the A283 and the Warren

Hill car park – long a bone of contention with local people and visitors. The grant is conditional on the work being completed this year and supports additional funding from the Forestry Commission and the Trust itself as part of a new Warren Hill Management Plan.

Development in Old London Rd is now under way for construction of 16 homes. This is the parish's only designated development area in the joint Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan, and the entry road to the development is to be named "Vineyards Close" after the original property on the site. When considered alongside the residential conversion of the former Chardonnay restaurant and WSCC depot sites in the road, it is clear that additional pressure will occur at the junction of Rock Rd with the A24 northbound. The parish council has pledged to work alongside residents in support of creating a safe slipway access onto the A24 northbound at the junction.

Councillors are also keeping an eye on the situation at Longbury Hill Woods, and questioning implementation of effective re-planting of the felled trees along with the scheduled closure of the temporary access point.

Look out for our new parish website – which we hope will be up and running by the time you receive this newsletter. It includes many upgrades and improvements and has been designed to display more effectively on phones and tablets. Incorporated into the new site is live weather and traffic information, improved navigability, and an easy-to-use contact form. All details of councillors, meeting dates, agendas and minutes are available to see. Please check it out often at [www.washingtonparish.org.uk](http://www.washingtonparish.org.uk)

Parish Council meetings are open to the public and all are welcome. They are usually attended by the local members of Horsham District and West Sussex County Councils. The next full council meeting dates are Monday June 21st and Monday July 5th commencing at 7.30pm at Washington Village Hall (Dore Room).

*Cllr Patrick Heeley*



## Our Parish

### About your parish

Did you know that Washington Parish comprises two wards, with 11 parish councillors?

### Washington

This ward has 5 councillors and incorporates the village, A24 down to North Farm, Old London Rd/ Montpelier Gardens, Spring Gardens, Rock Rd (part) and the A283 as far west as (and including) Millford Grange.

### Heath Common

The ward has 6 councillors, and includes “The Lanes” – Hampers, Sanctuary, Georges, Bracken, etc together with Newhouse Lane, Merrywood Lane (part) Rock Rd (part), Muttons Lane and Takeham Copse.

### Your parish needs you – we have councillor vacancies....

### What qualities are needed for a good parish councillor?

Cllr Christine Beglan writes “Councillors come from many different backgrounds which means we bring varied views on all the topics that come up at meetings. All you really need is to live in the parish, cherish all the good things that are already in place and want to have a say in how things go forward in the future.

All members are volunteers and there are no political affiliations..... we simply want to make our parish as warm and welcoming as it can be, whilst ensuring that all assets, including recreation facilities, are maintained to a good standard and are safe to enjoy. We are consultees to local planning applications, providing an unbiased local view to the planning authority.

Our parish council meets to discuss a great variety of topics and to ensure that the services we provide are suitable and good value for money. We meet usually twice a month on a Monday evening and do our very best to help address parishioners' concerns and keep a close eye on changes that are in the pipeline.

If you feel you would like to contribute and can spare the time please contact our Clerk Zoe Savill on 07776 771921 or by email at [clerk@washingtonparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@washingtonparish.org.uk) and she can tell you more.



## Building Washington part 2

In the last Newsletter I wrote briefly about Washington's characteristic old flint, greensand and brick cottages; such houses would have been on a timber frame and originally thatched (grander buildings, as still seen in Steyning High Street and on our parish church, might have been roofed with 'Horsham slabs', from Wealden quarries). The thick lime mortar holding the stonework in place would often be studded with 'galletting', fragments of ironstone - no-one really knows why. Early cottages had an open hall with a fire in the middle; brick chimneys appeared, often inserted, from the 17th century.

Old as these cottages seem, there are of course visible remains of far earlier Washington building-work. The crest of the Downs has innumerable relics of structures going back to prehistoric times: in Washington's case, Bronze Age round barrows, cross-dykes and most notably the fine oval hill-fort of Chanctonbury (shared with Wiston parish, though slightly more of it in ours); probably a Bronze Age sanctuary later taken over by the Romans. It was scarcely accessible to investigation, thanks to its famous 'ring' of beeches planted by Charles Goring in 1760 and later planting, until the 'great storm' of 1987 blew most of the trees down. Those of us who ventured up there soon after remember an amazing sight: the large but shallow-rooted beeches had left great sockets as they fell, revealing chalk or tessellated floors and sometimes several courses of flint-and-mortar walls, just a few inches down.. These were relics of Roman temples. The bigger one, on the summit, was evidently a tall rectangular building, painted with red ochre - a startling sight for miles round.

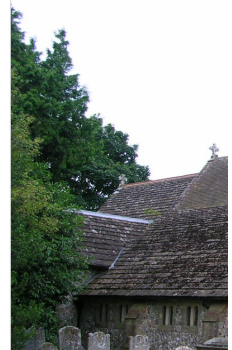
Puzzling remains to its S-W were revealed as a second, polygonal temple (nearby, a pit containing the remains of at least 84 pigs' heads - why?). Once the tree-trunks were sawn through in 1987-8, of course, the root-balls slipped back into place, and amid the brambles and scrub all you can find up there are scattered flints and many bits of roof-tiles.

The Romans built other things: in particular the E-W road now called the 'Greensand Way' that bisects the parish; parts are visible as a raised mound (though it has suffered post-WWII destruction). The fine trackway from Chanctonbury N. past Locks Farm, once connecting with the Greensand Way, is no doubt Roman or earlier. It seems likely there would have been a Roman farm or villa (as at Ashington, nearby), whose land would have formed the basis of the later estate and historic parish, but it has never been located.

This estate, however, is demarcated by a most unusual construction: an earth bank, almost rampart, surviving in many places round the old parish boundary and in part coinciding with the Greensand Way (this part, near Muttons Farm, is now a scheduled monument). It seems to date from Saxon times, when the bounds were recorded in two 10th c. charters.

There were Saxon and medieval manor houses, but we don't know where. Our great medieval building, of course, is St Mary's Church. Its glory is its Perpendicular period tower; earlier is its plain N. aisle, even earlier some indeterminate fabric at the N.-W. corner. All the rest was rebuilt by the Victorian architect G.M.Hills - yet he dealt with it rather faithfully, as early photos testify, even to reusing the Horsham slab roof. There are some good Victorian High-Church furnishings - but the most remarkable of all is concealed: the startling painted or stencilled decoration, full of 'high-Victorian vigour' (Ian Nairn), overpainted by decision of the PCC in 'magnolia emulsion' in the 1960s. It's still there, of course, if hidden: bits can be seen, notably the Evangelists in the chancel. ▶

St Mary's Washington  
Grade 2\*



## St Mary's C.E Primary

Pupils were thrilled to return following the Easter break to find a new refurbished play area at St Mary's C.E. Primary Washington. The new play area, funded by Wilson Memorial Trust features an inclined balance beam, log traverse, parallel rope walk and horizontal monkey bars. An area of astro turf has also been fitted so ball sports can be played year round and also serves as the perfect spot for outdoor assemblies.

Mrs Houston, Headteacher, explained that “the new adventure trail has been a wonderful addition to our outside space and gave the pupils something to look forward to following the winter lockdown.” St Marys C.E Primary School will be open in October for school tours for pupil starting Reception Class in September 2022. Please call 01903 892401 for an appointment.





◀ Another surprising medieval relic is the Church House barn opposite the church; its rarity as a major early 15th c. structure was only revealed recently, when the Annabel Hughes examined it for HDC in connexion with a planning application to convert it to a house (it was).

ington



But interesting Washington buildings don't cease with the Middle Ages, or even with 17th-18th cc. cottages - the story comes up to modern times, as I hope to show in the third part of 'Building Washington'.  
**Robin Milner-Gulland**

## Washington Village Hall

Has been open since 12 April for a limited number of activities. The hall is expected to be open from 17 May for all its usual activities. Taking part in a physical activity such as ballet, line dancing, yoga or pilates is a great way to lift one's spirits. Dog Training classes have resumed on the field but will be coming indoors on 18th May. You can find details of all activities on the hall's website [www.wasahall.co.uk](http://www.wasahall.co.uk) or call 0774 786 0592 or email: [contact@wasahall.co.uk](mailto:contact@wasahall.co.uk)

## Open spaces recreation and allotments

We have all been living with restrictions. This has been the same for council meetings which have been conducted by Zoom.

As such we have been able to ensure that day-to-day repairs, maintenance and renovations have been carried out at the recreation ground play area to ensure safety for all users. The lines on the multi-use games area have been repainted and the court cleaned.



The council has been able to enter into new contractual tenancy arrangements with the allotment tenants which should guarantee security of tenure for the foreseeable future.

One of our major concerns continues to be tree management. There are a number of ash trees within our boundary which all have to be inspected regularly. Unfortunately the Lime tree in the corner of the first extension graveyard has been found to be significantly decayed and action must be taken to remove it.

You will have noticed that a considerable number of trees alongside the A24 have been felled by the County Council and my understanding is that this was as a result of Ash dieback.

A number of fences and gates have been repaired throughout the last year and we are in the process of planning a new link footpath from the bus shelter on London Road to the Village Hall. This will require a substantial investment in excess of £20,000 and monies have been allocated towards that project.

There are ongoing reviews in relation to noticeboards within the parish, some of which are falling into disrepair. The one at Rock Road is in a dangerous location and will have to be removed. The two redundant bus shelters on the A24 will at some stage during the next few months be removed. **Cllr Geoff Lockerbie, Chair**

## Rampion 2

### Cable routing from new off shore wind turbine development : Rampion 2

Parish residents should be aware that there is an ongoing proposal for a new wind turbine development to be situated to the west of the current Rampion 1 site which is likely to come ashore at Climping. The plan is to create 116 maximum new wind turbines considerably taller than the Rampion 1 model which will produce much larger quantities of green electricity.



It will be several years in the planning, and then in the building and is hoped to come on line in 2030.

To find out what exactly is planned please go to the Rampion 2 home page at: <https://rampion2.com> and click on Consultation to get to a Virtual Exhibition which will explain the whole process.

The current indicative route comes through Washington on its way to Bolney to tie up with the National Grid. Should the route remain as it is the cable would run through Jockey's Meadow and the Recreation Ground / allotments. These areas are designated as protected green spaces in the Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan and it is proposed that the cable will cross the area by underground drilling.

Your parish council fully recognises the need for more green energy but is asking for an alternative routing proposal to avoid the village, an area that already has serious problems with parking and narrow access points street widths making the thought of site traffic very concerning. A Second round of consultations is expected soon, once shortly after the first set of comments and objections from February's consultation have been evaluated.

### What Should You do?

This is an important issue directly affecting your parish and its amenities.

- Visit the Rampion 2 website and look at the proposals: [www.rampion2.com](http://www.rampion2.com)
- Read the Parish Council's initial response, reproduced on the back page of this newsletter.
- Respond directly to the forthcoming public consultation.
- Let your MP know your feelings – see below

### Letter from Andrew Griffith MP for Arundel and South Downs

In a letter to the Chairman of this parish council, Andrew Griffith MP wrote: "As currently proposed, the onshore cable corridor route would effectively bisect the Arundel and South Downs constituency.... Importantly, I have set up a survey to ascertain the strength and nature of local residents' concerns. This will be the best way to demonstrate the concern. As I have seen on some planning matters, often residents only get involved when it's too late and the consultation windows have closed."

To respond to Andrew Griffith's survey, go to:

**[www.andrewgriffithmp.com/campaigns/rampion-2](http://www.andrewgriffithmp.com/campaigns/rampion-2)**

Written by Cllrs Christine Beglan and Patrick Heeley

## WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



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Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

### **Initial comments to the draft Rampion 2 (Onshore) Windfarm proposals**

Thank you for allowing Washington Parish Council the opportunity to give feedback on the early draft proposals for the Rampion 2 scheme, as presented in your online village exhibition which commenced 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

The Rampion 2 proposals, specifically the indicative underground inland cable corridor through the centre of the Washington parish, were discussed at the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021.

At this early stage of the scheme, and in the absence of detailed proposals, Members agreed to make an initial response to express concern at the proposed broad alignment of the indicative cable route as this would affect the parish.

It is noted that part of the proposed route crosses the Washington Recreation ground/Allotment land which is owned and managed by the Parish Council as charitable trustees on behalf, and for the benefit, of its parishioners. These amenities, together with the Village Hall, are registered community assets. It also crosses the adjoining Jockey's Meadow which is owned by the National Trust. Both these are sensitive areas which are designated in the Neighbourhood Plan as protected Green Spaces.

Further concerns were expressed about the effect on existing tree screening from the A24 and the disturbance from construction works, including traffic generation on local roads.

In view of these issues, members request that planners urgently review alternative routing options

Attention is drawn to the relevant policies of the adopted joint Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan, published on the parish website at [www.washingtonparish.org.uk](http://www.washingtonparish.org.uk). This includes policies to minimise impact on the environment, protect the village conservation area and the special rural setting of the Parish, much of it within the South Downs National Park.

The Parish Council, an 'interested' land owner, makes these comments on a 'without prejudice' basis. A full response will be considered once detailed proposals are made available for the formal consultation planned in May

Kind Regards

Zoe Savill,  
Clerk to Washington Parish Council