



Chairman's Monthly Newsletter October 2021

We have just received the very welcome news that one of our bids for grant money has been successful. This is great news for the parish, meaning we can now go ahead with the project to enhance the biodiversity of the pond and make improvements to the drainage on Church Hill. The total cost of the project will be circa £72000, including the preliminary work, of which just £3000 has come from parish council funds, so a really good result.

Unfortunately, however, our application to the South Downs National Park Authority to replace ageing play equipment on the Top Field will not be funded on this occasion. This is disappointing as the amount sought was felt to be very modest and the play area is a magnet for visitors. Quite surprising too, as The Top Field, designated and protected as a 'Local Green Space', is assessed as being of historical significance, recreational value and an area of tranquillity within the SDNPA's Local Plan. However, quite by chance, our MP Andrew Griffith has written offering his support for those seeking grants and we plan to let him know of our disappointment. Too late perhaps on this occasion, but we will be enlisting Andrew's support in future! Certainly, applications are much more likely to be successful if they receive support from the community. Any fund-raising suggestions, ideas for improvement or indeed donations would all be gratefully received!

The maintenance and replacement of children's play equipment is extremely expensive and just one of the things we pay for from the precept. The precept is the amount that the parish council collects each year – part of your council tax - to maintain the parish. We will start the budget setting process for 2022/23 at our November meeting. The money raised covers such things as the pond, War Memorial and garden, the recreation ground, including the pavilion, and also the Top Field. In addition, we have to pay for bins and their collection, defibrillators and the salary for our Clerk! We are sure most residents feel very fortunate that there is little scope for new build in our National Trust village but the flipside of this is a lack of revenue from 106 agreements which builders are obliged to contribute to local projects. This can generate large "windfall" amounts of money to parish councils who have designated areas for housing.

More good news this month too as Patrick Saintas who lives in Slindon Common has been co-opted to join the Council and we have further interest from other residents. Please do contact Sarah or speak to me if you would like further details. A passion for Slindon parish is more important than formal qualifications and full training will be provided. We still have several vacancies, so do come and join us.

We plan to hold a training session to cover the use of a defibrillator and CPR techniques on November 22nd starting at 6.00 pm. There was unanimous agreement that the last one, led by Sally, a first responder from Worthing, was excellent and significantly raised our knowledge of survival skills and our confidence to help someone in trouble. Sally is happy to come along and repeat this with another group. Please let Sarah know if you are interested or ring Jan on 01243 814360.

And finally, the Parish Council is delighted to announce that the licence with Slindon Sports Association for their continued use of the recreation ground has now been signed. This arrangement will allow sport to take place alongside the quiet enjoyment of other users. The pavilion has been refurbished, the area is looking very smart and we look forward to working together with the SSA Committee over the coming years.

Jan Rees, Chairman, Slindon Parish Council