

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2018-2019

During this year several valuable members of the Parish Council decided it was time to leave. Consequently we said goodbye to Keith Humphries, Marion Barton and Paula Doherty. Thanks go to them for all the hard work they have put in to help make Edgmond Parish as successful as it is.

Your Parish Council continues to operate as a transparent organisation. All meetings are open to members of the public who can attend to put forward issues that are of concern to them. It has to be said, however, that although notice of issues in the Parish are quickly dispatched to T&W things at their end do not always happen very quickly. Consequently we do have to exercise some patience.

I can report that during the summer the route of the walking bus was repaired. This now means that school children and walkers can expect muddy puddles of water to be kept at bay for the foreseeable future.

Your Parish Council has not forgotten that the car park badly needs resurfacing. Your Clerk is constantly reminding T&W about this issue but it appears that it isn't at the top of their maintenance list at present. She will continue to pursue it.

The adoption and implementation of the Edgmond Neighbourhood plan has raised issues that were not anticipated during the writing phase. The Localism Act gave the clear message that it was intended to give local people a greater say in the development of their environment. Consequently they were encouraged to write Neighbourhood Plans so that development could be more closely monitored. It has turned out that, as far as T&W Council is concerned, the Neighbourhood Plan, and indeed, the Local Plan are not being given the importance the Government led us to believe they would have.

T&W planners have told us that N Plans are only one of many documents to be referred to when a planning application is received. T&W planners have even ignored N Plans when considering planning applications. This is of concern and will continue to be of concern to your Parish Council.

Street lighting is gradually being upgraded to LED lighting. The yellow mercury vapour lights are now illegal and must be replaced. LED lights are a logical replacement as they last longer, are cheaper to run and can be programmed to reduce in brightness during the middle hours of the night then return to full brightness early in a morning as residents are starting to be up and about.

Your Parish Council embarked on a community speed watch campaign, as speeding through the village and along Marsh Road was becoming a safety issue. This campaign is operated by volunteers from the community, who monitor the speed of traffic as often as possible. But bear in mind that they are volunteers and may not be standing by the side of the road as often as you may wish.

Results have identified some speeding in the village and some very high speeds through the 30mph speed restriction along Marsh Road. Results are sent to the police who have sent over 90 advisory letters so far. The big worry is that drivers

may slow down when they see the large speed watch signs but may speed up on days when the speed watch is not operating. Speed watch can only operate in areas specified by the police, for safety reasons, and so may not be able to operate in areas without a pavement or a long enough sight line to measure the speed of a car.

Your Parish Council tried very hard to introduce a Smartwater initiative in the parish. Unfortunately the take-up was very poor and so it looks as though the large signs that have been put up in Newport, Church Aston and Waters Upton will not be available for Edgmond.

It is recognised that Smartwater is a deterrent, only, and will not prevent burglaries taking place, but knowing that any property recovered by the police will be returned to its rightful owner may help to make burglars think twice.

I can report that Councillor Jones represents Edgmond on the Helicopter Noise Liaison group.

Councillor Edwards represents Edgmond on the Newport Regeneration Partnership group.

Although she is no longer a councillor Paula Doherty is still fully involved with footpaths and rights of way and maintains the web site. Thanks go to her for this.

Martin Reid represents the Parish Council on the bus user group. We extend our thanks to him for this.

John Keeping continues to include his reports, as Parish Warden, in the Parish Magazine and also keeps the Parish Council up to date. Thanks go to him for this.

Our two Ward members Steve Bentley and Stephen Burrell continue to do sterling work for the Ward of Erroll Magna and Edgmond. They make every effort to ensure that issues affecting the Ward are kept at the forefront of applicable agendas. Their hard work has recently seen the reintroduction of the Arriva 519 Saturday bus service. This Saturday service has been reinstated for a year and its continuation beyond the year will depend on how often it is used.

Our thanks must go, yet again, to our Clerk, Katrina Baker. As we have said many times, she works over and above her paid hours to do the best she can for Edgmond.

I have to tell you that Penny and Maurice Hughes are retiring from Edgmond Parish Council. They have been stalwarts for about 40 years(?) and will be sorely missed. We all wish them good luck.

We have had vacancies on the Parish Council for a long time and the retirement of Penny and Maurice will add two more to the list. I hope that the forthcoming elections will enable Edgmond to realise its full complement of Parish councillors at long last.

Robert Higginson (Chairman)

Magazine Article

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Many of you will have noticed that part of the wall at the car park was recently knocked down. I still can't work out how it happened as the bricks were pushed into the car park meaning that the offending vehicle must have mounted the kerb. Naturally no one has owned up.

The damage has been reported to T&W council but there is no time frame for repair. Rest assured that the Clerk is pursuing things, however.

I hope everyone has been able to celebrate the good news that the Arriva 519 Saturday bus service has had a reprieve for a full year. Costs are mainly being paid by local councils but this will not necessarily go on beyond the end of the year. The future of the service will depend on passenger use so I'm afraid I have to say 'use it or lose it'.

Local council elections take place on 2nd May and the Parish Council elections will also take place at this time. We hope that, as a result of the elections, the Parish Council will have its full complement of councillors for quite a long time.