

## Loxwood Parish AGM

Welcome to everyone joining us at the Loxwood Parish AGM. We have recently purchased a sound system which I hope will benefit everyone in such a large hall making it easier to hear what speakers are saying. We will use this at all meetings.

I wish to introduce myself. I am Valerie Woods. I have lived in Loxwood since March 2019. I am now the new chair of Loxwood Parish Council. I would like to express my thanks to Rick Kelsey who has been the chair. He has stepped down but I am very pleased to say that he is remaining as a member of the Parish Council. He cannot be with us this evening and I agreed happily to take his place tonight.

What has the Parish Council been doing?

Last year it was clear that the residents attending the AGM wished Loxwood Parish Council to complete a new Neighbourhood Plan and we committed to do so. Charles will tell you about what we have been doing later this evening.

### **Other aspects that the PC has worked on has included:**

Speed checks have taken place throughout the year, regular weekly checks of the play area and equipment at North Hall, tree safety checks.

We provide funding for some groups within the community, three of those include: North Hall where at the beginning of the year, work got underway to improve the sight lines for drivers and extend the parking which benefits all users of this wonderful resource. We gave a donation to Billingshurst Emergency Team as it monitors our defibrillator which is situated by the old village store. We made a donation to the Wey and Arun Canal Trust following the damage done to their equipment by vandals.

There are three layers of responsibility within West Sussex- West Sussex County Council, Chichester District Council and in third place Loxwood Parish Council. If there is a problem with public rights of way

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– we contact West Sussex – Fourways House! We contact Chichester District regarding planning, the emptying of dog bins and fly-tipping. And at Loxwood Parish Council we are responsible for bus shelters, Jubilee Gardens, noticeboards and seats to name a few. Our role is to signpost who is responsible and hopefully there will be a resolution to the problem. This can take a considerable amount of time.

Dominic Smith from I-Transport - has been working with us since 2022 and is here this evening to present his proposed plans on how we can improve road safety in the village.

Information will be available at North Hall where residents can see the planned improvements. The dates are Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June and Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July both between 4pm -8pm. Tonight the plans are available on the stage following the APM.

There will be a full consultation for residents. Go to the website to make comments.

Last year saw no drinking water available for the community. Thanks goes to our two district councillors – Gareth and Charles and many others who came to our aid and ensured that water was available to those in need. From this grew a desire to be better prepared within the community for unexpected emergencies. A training we intend undertaking in September 2024 under the title of ‘What if’ is to assist us in preparing for a range of possible emergencies. There are many, many capable people in the village who I am sure would want to be part of this new initiative as they can offer help and assistance. More to follow after the training.

There is also a Cyber Safety Presentation on 23<sup>rd</sup> July at 7:30 in North Hall. Both presentations are open to everyone.

### **Finally**

In 2022 Queen Elizabeth celebrated 70 years since becoming queen. How would we mark this amazing achievement? Oak trees were planted at North Hall, a bench purchased, a party for the children

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and an evening event for the adults took place. One further celebration initiative was to develop a heritage trail!

Keith McIntyre, who lives in the village has been involved in uncovering the history of Loxwood.

When we asked him to help us, we didn't appreciate what a remarkable project this would turn out to be, and in fact the main part of the village history had been largely forgotten.

### **Some background**

- ✓ The first mention of Loxwood came in 1248.
- ✓ The village started to develop from its mill at Brewhurst and a Manor House at Loxwood – opposite the village pond.
- ✓ Drungewick Manor was the Bishops of Chichester's rural retreat and they gave permission for a place of worship to be built in Loxwood in 1404 at Church cottage and was used as a place of worship.
- ✓ Over time a chapel was built and the cottage became the priest's house.
- ✓ 500 years of worship was celebrated in the centre of Loxwood during the Victorian era.
- ✓ Whilst the road between the pond and the old church site had been known as 'Chapel Green' for centuries it was renamed 'Station Road'.
- ✓ Although not much is known of Moated Manor Houses, these were mainly dug between 1250- 1350 it is known the Loxwood Place moat went across – what is now the road and is thought to have run across towards the village pond.

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A history artist has brought to life with a sketch of the moat at Loxwood Place, the Chapel and the cottage. This will eventually become a painting and be displayed here in North Hall.

I am sure you will agree that this is a fascinating project and one that we would like the village to continue and become more involved in.

There are printed leaflets available tonight with more information that Keith very kindly prepared for us.

### **Stop Press**

Did you know?

- ✓ All black bins in the village can have litter and dog poo. The red bins continue to have poo only.
- ✓ The Parish Council meets on Tuesdays!
- ✓ Antler Homes has ...

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### **20 minutes**

**I would like to welcome Dominic Smith from I-Transport to talk to us.**

Thank you very much Dominic. It has been helpful to be able to share your plans with many of the residents tonight and they will be able to look at them in more detail shortly.

### **5 -10 minutes**

**I wish to Introduce the Reverend James Forward who is the new rector of Alfold and Loxwood churches. He came to Loxwood in September 2023 with his wife and two children. I hope he is feeling settled and enjoying life in this village.**

Many thanks James for finding the time to join us tonight. It is much appreciated and great that residents have the chance to meet you tonight.

### **10 minutes**

**Our final speaker is our own Charles Todhunter who is both a Parish Councillor and One of our district councillors. He is going to talk about the Neighbourhood Plan.**

Thankyou Charles. The knowledge you have gained in such a short time is amazing.

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This process is in progress and will continue through the next year – ultimately our Neighbourhood Plan has to align with Chichester’s Local Plan so the timescale will be determined by Chichester.

What we have done is to engage a consultant to support us in preparing it. What we need now is to set up a Steering Group – and for this we need some volunteers from the village. A large part of the previous plan remains valid and relevant. It was heartening to hear that our consultant considers that we were not starting from scratch! So, the work of the previous steering group has been very helpful. The Neighbourhood Plan is not just about planning although that is a large part but it is also a chance for the village to set out what it would like to see over the next 15 years. Like it or not, additional housing will be imposed by the UK government whoever is in power – currently about 220 new houses in the period. However, this will bring additional funding and we as a village need to decide in advance how we would like to use it.

The next stage is for us is to ‘Call for sites’ we are required to do this. This is a formal stage of completing the Neighbourhood Plan. We will be writing to all residents in the parish shortly.