

**WHITEPARISH
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
24th MARCH 2020**

Introduction

By Wiltshire Councillor Richard Britton

It is once again my privilege to introduce Whiteparish Parish Council's Annual Report to the village.

Much of the PC's meeting time is devoted to the consideration of planning applications so I'd like to start with a general comment about the government's manic drive to build huge numbers of houses. Personally, I am of the opinion that the housing numbers local planning authorities are being instructed to deliver are over-stated and a time will come when the brakes to development begin to be applied. But we're certainly not there yet and in the meantime villages like Whiteparish are being eyed up by developers. Indeed, we are already seeing development taking place in the village which many regard as unwelcome. However, we must accept the reality that there is almost certainly more - perhaps much more - to come.

Against this background the Parish Council has a really important role to play - even though it is not the final decision-maker on planning applications. It can object to an application if it feels it has sufficient planning grounds to do so and in those cases the council normally asks me to exercise my power to call in the application for determination at a public meeting of the Southern Planning Committee (of which I am Vice Chairman) rather than leave it to be determined by planning officers under their delegated powers. This I am usually willing to do although I must feel free to exercise my own judgement as to whether the planning grounds cited by the council are sound and give us a chance to get the application in question refused by the Planning Committee and subsequently by a Planning Inspector.

It is really important that members of the public make their views on particular planning applications known to the parish council (preferably by attending the council meeting at which it is to be discussed), and to the Local Planning Authority and to me.

But of course, the Parish Council does very much more than consider planning applications. The range of its work is described in this Annual Report which I do hope everyone will read and note the important and wide-ranging work done by your councillors to look after the village and further the interests of its residents.

I hope residents feel able to accept from me an assurance that Whiteparish has a strong Parish Council with highly-motivated and committed members under Trevor's firm and experienced leadership and with Maria's professional guidance and very capable administrative support.

Richard

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee has responsibility for overseeing the financial aspects of the Parish Council, including providing proposals for the annual Budget and the financial assets of the Council.

The Budget for the financial year starting April 2020 shows a total increase of £22,550 (from £39,850 for the year 2019 to 31 March 2020 to £62,400 for the financial year starting 1 April 2020).

The principal changes to the Budget have arisen due to:

- General inflationary increases in insurance costs, the annual inspection of the skate ramp, litter picking
- £5,000 included for initial surveys and legal costs in relation to a new village cemetery
- £20,000 included for repair where practical and replacement of the fence on the Memorial Ground (north side of the football pitch)
- one off expenditure relating to the development of the new PC website which will not be repeated in the forthcoming financial year

Despite this expenditure, the Parish Council precept for the financial year starting April 2020 will be £1.36 per week for a Band D property.

Planning and Enforcement

Every application for development within the Parish is given due consideration at Parish Council meetings; primarily within the context of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. We always welcome contributions from members of the public in writing, by email or in person at our meetings and these are helpful and informative when we are making our decisions. Over the past 12 months in Whiteparish, there have been 37 planning applications, as well as 5 applications for tree works.

As part of Whiteparish is within the New Forest National Park, the Park Authority invites the Parish Council and members of the public to comment on planning policy reviews. This includes changes to existing policies which may have been less successful than hoped, policies which are no longer relevant or new policies to protect the Forest.

The Parish Council is becoming increasingly frustrated with Wiltshire Councils procedures when accepting changes to planning applications believing it makes some applications lose sight of what was originally submitted. The Parish Council has asked for clarification from Wiltshire Council planning department.

Alleged enforcement issues appear to be increasing and we thank the members of the public who bring these to the attention of the Parish Council. We lodge an issue with Wiltshire Council enforcement department who then investigate.

New Cemetery

As stated in the February 2019 notes, following enquiries from the Parish Council and after consultations with a funeral director, the Parochial Church Council indicated that there will be a need for a new burial ground in the near future.

Informally the Parish Council has tried to obtain land suitable for a new burial ground. Disappointingly there have been no offers from land owners to sell their land to date.

Environment, Transport and Highways

There is one vacancy on the Parish Council. Would you like to contribute to the working of the Parish Council and be involved in decision making? Meetings are held approximately every 5 weeks on a Tuesday evening. If you are just the person to help make a difference and create a better future for local residents please contact the Parish Clerk for further information.

Last summer, a major resurfacing took place of the A27 through the village. The Parish Councils expressed its disappointment and frustration when one section near Meadow Court was not undertaken at the same time as the rest due to poor communications of Wiltshire Council Highways and the contractor. The Parish Council has also made Wiltshire Council Highways aware of the standing water which occurs near to the bus stop at Newton Bungalows. We have been advised that this is a tie in issue and is not an easy fix and there will be some additional patching to both areas.

The Parish Council continues to pursue Wiltshire Council Highways after submitting a report in 2016 regarding issues of ice at the junction of Miles Lane and the A27 along with the general poor condition along most of its length. We have been advised more works are due in the coming financial year. Land owners throughout the Parish are being reminded to keep their ditches clear in order to prevent excessive water build up with inadequate drainage.

The Parish Steward is scheduled to visit Whiteparish once a month however they have been dealing with potholes throughout the county since Christmas. The Parish Steward undertakes minor highways works and should you become aware of aspects of highway maintenance that will improve the safety and environment of our village please inform the Clerk. Works he can carry out include maintenance on roads (minor potholes), pathways, verges (highway strimming) and drainage areas. Over the winter he has worked hard clearing the leaves off the footpath and layby by the Church, along the pseudo footpath as well as clearing and cleaning road signs, clearing of small grips, culverts and road gully tops. To report issues like potholes, dog mess, graffiti and litter please use the My Wiltshire App, the council website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywilts or by calling 0300 456 0105. Reports can be made anonymously, but it only takes a few minutes to register. Registration is free and once you have joined you can track the reports you have made. Wiltshire Council needs to be made aware of all issues. Please continue to notify the Clerk as well as reporting to Wiltshire Council.

Whiteparish W.I continues to voluntarily litter pick within the village. Whiteparish Parish Council is extremely grateful for the generosity of the W.I. members time and dedication particularly on such an onerous task. The Parish Council also thanks all residents that help keep the village smart and tidy.

The Skate Jam to officially launch the new skatepark was a success and the skatepark was well used throughout the fine weather.

Inconsiderate parking throughout the village continues to be a concern. Please can residents and their guests be mindful of where and how they park, especially near road junctions and bends. The parking of vehicles on junctions/corners reduces visibility and thus safety. Please take into account emergency vehicles such as ambulances and fire engines. Can they access the area and if so, can they do so without the need to mount pavements? Also please be aware if you are obstructing pedestrian access anywhere, potentially effecting the vulnerable.

The X7 and X7R buses continue to service Whiteparish along with visits from the Mobile Library to Ashmore Close.

Wiltshire Council have installed a new street light base station in Ashmore Close. Frustratingly there was no consultation with the Parish Council. We have been told this is in readiness for when the new street lights are installed as the communications box connects to the other lights in the area. It allows the control of lighting levels and reports when they are not working to enable quicker repairs. When all the lights are converted to LED in 2021, we are advised there will be greater flexibility of operation as Wiltshire Council will be able to control the dimming and timings remotely.

Whiteparish came 1st in its category in the first round of 2019 Best Kept Village Competition and 2nd in its category in the County Round. Particularly well-achieved as they visited when the A27 was being resurfaced. The Parish Council would like to thank all the villagers for their support and hard work in making Whiteparish such a wonderful area.

Parish Council grants were awarded to the Whiteparish First Responders (£450) and Whiteparish Memorial Trust (£2000).

Further to professional advice the Parish Council now has its' own website: www.whiteparish-pc.gov.uk along with a new email for the clerk: clerk@whiteparish-pc.gov.uk. We hope you find the website very easy to access with all the information you need.

Area Board and CATG

Wiltshire is divided into 18 Area Boards. We are within the Southern Wiltshire Area Board along with parishes from Downton to Winterslow but excluding Salisbury City. The board receives presentations from a range of organisations such as the police, fire service, health service and Wiltshire Council, as well as more local organisations.

The Members of the Board are the Wiltshire Councillors who represent the communities in the area. Members of the public are welcome to attend and there are always opportunities for both the public and parish councillors to contribute or ask questions throughout the evening. As part of its work, the Area Board supports a number of projects, with those attending the Board meeting determining priorities. The Area Board also provides community grants and this year Whiteparish benefited from a grant of £5,000 towards the new skatepark. All of these decisions are made in public at the Area Board meetings.

Community Area Transport Group (CATG) is a sub-group of the area boards that aim to find solutions for local issues such as road repairs, traffic problems, road layouts and parking. The amount allocated to CATG is dependent on the geographical size and population for each community area approximately £14,000 per group. The funding allocation is for capital expenditure and can only be used to provide new and improved highway infrastructure. The funding is suitable for small scale schemes that improve safety, increase accessibility and sustainability by promoting walking; cycling and public transport and improving traffic management. It cannot be used to fund revenue functions such as maintenance schemes or the provision of passenger transport services.

The next meeting of the Area Board is at Winterslow Village Hall, at 7.00pm on the 2nd June 2020.

Police Report

There is a new Community Policing Model for Salisbury Community Policing Team with Insp Sparrow leading the team of 2 Sergeants heading up 4 teams covering the Salisbury & South Wiltshire. Three teams cover Salisbury and the fourth team covers the rural areas led by PC Matt Holland and a PCSO for each sub area. **Alderbury & Whiteparish is covered by PCSO Simon Nash**. There is a further response team of 5 police officers to be deployed as required. This model has led to the planned closure of Alderbury Police Station which is being replaced locally by Downton Library as a Touchdown Point for officers and PCSO's.

The police now have a priority to get out into the community. This will be directed to key areas of concern, as well as engaging with the public whenever possible.

The police are keen to adopt a more intelligence led policing approach. They are working with neighbouring county police forces and in partnership with other agencies and groups. As a result, the Police are keen to emphasise the importance of reporting crimes to the Police, rather than using social media. While results may not be seen immediately, it is only by reporting that police will piece the information into an intelligence picture and enable them and their partners to take action.

There are a range of options for reporting:

999 – This should be used if there is a crime in progress and/or an immediate threat to a person's safety.

101 – This should be used if the criminal act has taken place and if there is no immediate threat to safety.

Email – Wiltshire Police now have a facility to report crimes online:

https://www.wiltshire.police.uk/Report_a_crime

Or to provide general information which is not urgent: CPTSouthWiltshire@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

Crime Stoppers – this is a way of providing information anonymously - 0800 555 111

New Forest National Park

Whiteparish Parish Council sends representation to two principal meetings of the National Park Authority namely the Consultative Panel and the Quadrant meetings.

The Quadrant meetings divide all Parish Councils within the Park into four sectors, which allows for discussion of issues that are pertinent and relevant to a very local area. The meeting has attendees representing all Parish Councils in the North West Quadrant of the Park as well as representatives of the National Park Authority, who vary depending on the specific agenda items. Discussions are open with information and feedback being shared in both directions.

The Consultative Panel has nearer 60 attendees – representatives from a very wide variety of interest groups across the Forest and local authorities, including Parish Councils. There is usually a representative from Hampshire County Council and Wiltshire Council send a representative when the agenda has a relevant item.

There are numerous opportunities to support and protect our local countryside through volunteering. The National Park always has a number of projects that would welcome a little more help – so if you have a few hours a month to spare, please make contact with the Authority direct on 01590 646600.

Community Speedwatch

The Whiteparish Community Speedwatch (CSW) team volunteers have been in action since February 2014. We are one of over 135 teams operating across Wiltshire. The team operates at six speed check sites, nominated by Wiltshire Police after road speed tests. Three are on the A27 within the 30mph limit, one is in the 40mph zone to the east of the village on the A27 and two are on Common Road in the 20mph limit in close proximity to the school.

Whiteparish shares the speed device with Landford. We have the speed device every 3 weeks for 3 weeks at a time. 7,681, vehicles have been measured this year compared with 8,201 last year. Of these 356 (4.6%) were recorded as speeding (36 plus mph within the 30 limit, 47 mph plus within the 40mph limit and 25 mph plus in the 20 limit); this slightly down on last year's figure of 363 (4.4%). Vehicles measured at excessive speeds (30mph plus in the 20mph limit, 45mph plus in the 30 limit and 60mph plus in the 40 limit) totalled 44 (0.6%) this year, lower than the 57(0.7%) last year.

| Historical speeding ratios | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Reported for Speeding | 6.6% | 5.6% | 3.6% | 3.9% | 4.5% | 4.6% |
| Excessive Speeding | 0.8% | 0.7% | 0.4% | 0.6% | 0.7% | 0.6% |

Traffic is still slower than 2014/5 and 2015/6.

The Parish Council, in collaboration with Landford Parish Council and Wiltshire Council, who gave us a grant, have purchased a Speed Indication Device (SID). This is shared with Landford. When we do not have the speed check device, we have the SID, which is currently installed by the CSW volunteers outside the Parish Lantern. The village now benefits from traffic calming activity throughout the year. We have been monitoring speeds and sharing data with Wiltshire Police as appropriate. The SID has reduced speed through the village, other Parishes have followed our example

We have lost a number of volunteers over the course of the year as some volunteers are no longer able to help us so **we need more active volunteers**. Wiltshire Police experience is that traffic speed will rise again if activity is not maintained. Furthermore, it has become clear that police activity will gravitate to areas where a CSW team is active as they can use the data gained to maximise their own results. The Parish Council has received frequent pleas for action on cars speeding through the village. Whilst the existence of a Community Speedwatch is no guarantee of any action by higher authorities on this issue, it appears that no action would be considered if there is no Community Speedwatch in place. It was for this reason that the scheme was introduced to Whiteparish.

We need more volunteers for the effective running of the team especially as we now have more sites. If we cannot keep an active team operating, we will endanger the great support we have been getting from Wiltshire Police in helping to control speed in the village.

Driving down speed will drive up safety for Whiteparish residents especially children.

- **80% of children** hit by a car travelling at **40mph will die**
- **80% of children** hit by a car travelling at **30mph will live**

If you can spare some time to help keep Whiteparish a safe place to walk, ride and drive through, contact Mike Hayday, CSW coordinator, or Maria Pennington, Parish Clerk, for more details: mike.hayday@btinternet.com or clerk@whiteparish-pc.gov.uk.

Memorial Centre and the Memorial Ground

The Memorial Trust have completed a number of key projects during 2019.

- High level lights have been fitted with new fluorescent tubes
- Decoration of the Centre is in progress. This will be a gradual process as we 'work round' Hires so as to avoid disruption. The Trustees are grateful to the Parish Council for the generous grant received.
- The Cowesfield Room has had blinds fitted to the main doors and windows to facilitate presentations when the sun is bright.
- We have listened to feedback from hirers and have obtained a smaller chair trolley and a seating aid to help less able hirers use the facility with greater ease.
- The external light bollards have been repaired.
- New Ambient lighting has been installed in the main hall, contributing to greatly increased wedding hires. The main hall is much cosier as a result of the new lighting.
- Thanks to the Parish Council, the football pitch was re-seeded and is in very good condition, despite the very wet weather. However, we have only one football team, a youth team on Saturday mornings. This is impacting sports revenue, with little reduction to costs. We have contacted the Wiltshire and Hampshire leagues to see if we can attract ad-hoc fixtures.
- Following a public vote at the June 2019 AGM, the MUGA is now kept unlocked and is free to use. This seems to have improved usage with no major vandalism so far. Whilst the Trust derive no revenue, we have saved money replacing vandalised locks.

Improving and maintaining the Centre and Grounds requires a constant funding stream and this year the Trustees been active in generating funding for future projects with fund raising events.

- The Trustees again held a Winter Ball to raise funds this year. It was a great evening and raised a large amount of money, over £3,000 to help with 2020 projects.
- The 100+ club also raised over £2,000 with an additional £580 raised at our successful Christmas Party. A successful recruiting drive in June 2019 saw us recruit 45 new members, counterbalancing the 19 memberships lost.
- In early January we worked with New Forest Forge Theatre Group to stage our first pantomime in the Centre. It was a great success with over 90 attendees and we raised an impressive £870. Many thanks to Trustee Maggie Davis for her work in booking, publicising and running the panto on the night.
- We repeated the summer theatrical event with Watermill Theatre of Newbury in June. A challenging theme and some clashes with other events reduced attendance. However, those able to attend enjoyed another thoughtful and entertaining evening. We have booked another theatrical event with Watermill on June 12th next year.

This year has seen some maintenance challenges. We have suffered two major leaks in the roof, one in the main hall and one in the roof over the male washroom. The latter has been repaired but we await specialist repair of the leaking Velux roof latter in the spring. We have also removed broken adult fitness equipment from the Memorial Ground.

Financially, despite increased utility and maintenance costs, we continue to thrive with a healthy £2,000 plus surplus reported in our mid-year accounts. This is due to party bookings as well the support of the village clubs and societies, sports clubs and exercise classes who use the centre regularly. We thank them all for their support in 2019.

Our financial strength and fundraising skills will help in financing the projects we are considering in 2020. The primary project will be working with the Partners at Whiteparish Surgery in renewing the car park surface. This work has only just started. We will also be looking at resurfacing of part of the children's playground, areas underneath the swings and other apparatus needs renewal.

The Trustees are somewhat disappointed with the lack of attendance at regular Trust meetings, we hope that more villagers will attend our AGM on June 5th 2020.

Youth

Whiteparish Youth Group (WYG) was started in 2012 by a small group of parents led by Richard Rendell, and is now a well-established village institution offering a wide range of activities for children from Years 7 to 11. The Group currently boasts 49 paid-up members, with 28-35 typically attending regular meetings at Whiteparish Memorial Centre on Friday evenings.

The Group offers table tennis, table football, pool and video games and more – plus a tuck shop and the all-important chance to meet up with friends at the end of the school week. Meetings are often enriched by special activities, which have included arts and creative sessions by Boomsatsuma, hands-on cookery from Any Body Can Cook and a range of sporting activities currently provided by District Sports South. These extra activities are funded by Wiltshire Council through the Southern Wiltshire Area Board, and the Group was pleased to receive a visit by Councillor McLennan and Karen Linekar, representing the Area Board, to one of its regular meetings.

In addition to the weekly meetings the committee organises occasional trips, which this year have included the New Forest Water Park and a visit to the ice rink in Southampton at Christmas.

The Group depends crucially on the support of parent volunteers, who help run the Friday meetings alongside a member of the Committee. Volunteers undergo DBS checks and a qualified first aider is on hand during meetings.

The Group's success has been underpinned by a dedicated committee with a stable membership, but by 2019 it was clear that the time had come for a major refresh. Several committee members had been with the Group from the start, and their own children had outgrown Youth Group. An intensive effort to recruit parents of the younger children led eventually to the formation of a new committee, with Ruth Wilson-Young taking over from Mary Bithell as Chair. The new management has been in place since September and thanks are due to committee members old and new for a smooth transition. There remain further opportunities for parents wanting to make a contribution; specifically, someone to organise the rota of volunteers and someone to replenish supplies for the tuck shop.

Financially the Group is on a stable footing, with income generally matching expenditure from week to week. Reserves are modest but there remains the possibility of applying for grant funding in respect of capital items.

We look forward with confidence to another successful year.

Rights of Way and Common Land

Whiteparish is fortunate to have a good network of Rights of Way (footpaths and bridleways): a map showing these is attached.

Owners of land crossed by Rights of Way are responsible for ensuring that there are no obstructions or overhanging vegetation along them and for the maintenance of stiles, gates and other boundary crossings. Most local landowners maintain their paths on their own initiative, and the Parish Council are very grateful to these owners for keeping the paths open for the enjoyment and convenience of all.

Some problems with stiles, overgrowth and obstructions were reported to the Parish Council this year and these matters were raised with the landowners responsible, in certain instances with the assistance of Wiltshire Council Rights of Way department.

The Wiltshire Council Rights of Way department also has certain responsibilities for Rights of Way maintenance. The Parish Council has raised a number of issues with WC RoW relating to signage and the clearance of surface vegetation and these have been mostly resolved.

Due to budgetary restraints on Wiltshire Council and priority being given to safety and serious obstructions to Rights of Way, its resources are not always available for routine clearance work. Thus, in some cases it is advantageous to the community for volunteers to undertake light clearance and maintenance. In the last year, no voluntary work has been required, but if you would like to assist in the future, please contact Councillor John Herrett.

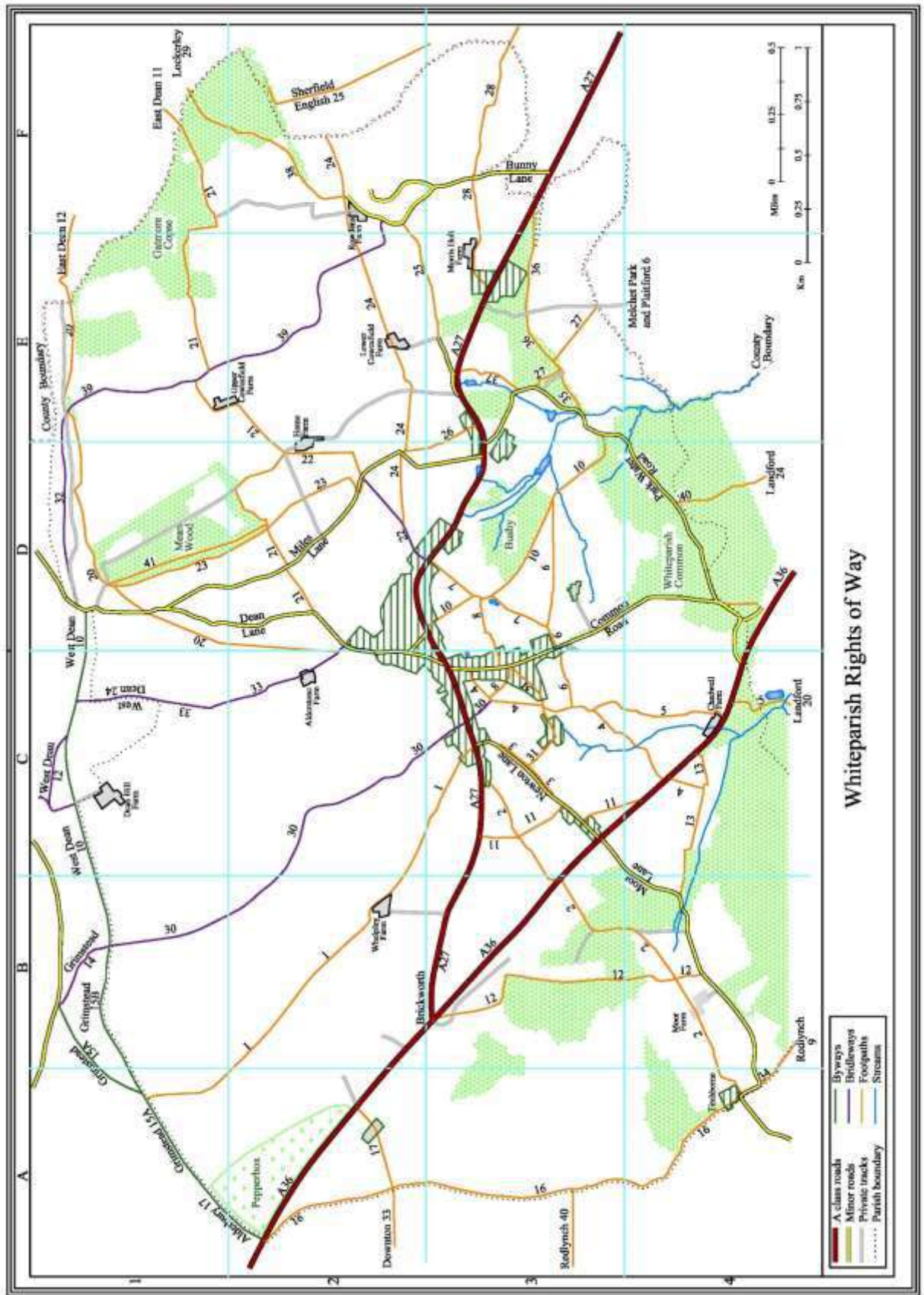
We hope you will make good use of this free and interesting local network as it is only by frequent use that Rights of Way are kept from becoming overgrown. At the same time, should you encounter any problems with obstructions, overgrowth or dilapidation of stiles and gates, please report them to John Herrett or the Parish Clerk.

During the year the Parish Council has been in discussion and correspondence with several landowners on the subject of unauthorised fencing or development (e.g. paving) of Common Land. These matters are not yet resolved.

The Parish Council wishes to remind owners of common land registered under the Commons Registration Act 1965 (this applies to significant parts of Whiteparish) that they have to obtain permission from the Planning Inspectorate, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, before carrying out any fencing or engineering works (e.g. laying down of hardcore).

Wiltshire Council is the common land registration authority for Whiteparish and holds all the relevant documentation.

Depending in which part of the village you live, you may have to also apply to Wiltshire Council or the National Park Planning Authority but an application to the Planning Inspectorate is essential, as neither of the two local planning authorities can override the decision of the Planning Inspectorate.



Whiteparish Rights of Way