

Godshill Parish Council & Burial Authority



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REPORT ON GODSHILL PARISH PLAN 2015-20

The Godshill Parish Plan set out aspirations for the village for the period 2015-20. This report provides a conclusion to items that were included in an Action List which formed the basis of the plan. Unforeseen actions arise over time and by its nature the plan therefore had to be a 'moving feast', this report provides a detailed outcome against the action list points while also bringing in other developments under appropriate action list headings.

Godshill Village Hall

The Village Hall was sold at auction in February 2017, with the sale for £100,000 being completed the first week in April. The Village Hall Management Committee had previously received the unanimous support of a public meeting to sell the hall and invest the proceeds in a replacement facility. The Management Committee currently propose to provide a replacement facility at the site of the old cricket pavilion at Central Mead.

Godshill Primary School

The School is managed by a Board of Governors and has undertaken a period of substantial transformation and now forms part of the Stenbury Federation. The positive relationship between the School and Parish Council was exemplified by the school providing the venue for meetings of the Parish Council on a temporary basis after the sale of the Village Hall and the Parish Council facilitating the use of Central Mead for school use. The latter including the maintenance of the green and renewal of electrics and plumbing at the pavilion building.

Village Post Office and Shop

The shop is owned by a subsidiary company of Community Action Isle of Wight (CAIW) and has had a change of management over the period of the Parish Plan. Concerns for its future operation had been expressed to members of the Parish Council by Parishioners and the Parish Clerk had been in communication with CAIW Chief Executive Mike Bulpitt to express those concerns. Some reassurance had been received from Mr Bulpitt as to its continued operation but ongoing losses were not deemed to see the business be sustainable. CAIW subsequently approached the Parish Council for ongoing financial support and an annual contribution from the Parish Council of £5,000 was agreed and included in the Parish Council budget. The Parish Council were mindful of the much valued contribution that the store had made to the local community since the start of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Audit of Public Spaces/Village Climate & Presentation

The Parish Council has annual site meetings at all sites which it owns or has responsibility. Central Mead was passed into the Parish Councils ownership and the Parish Council has also taken on responsibility for the upkeep of the Memorial Garden. Arising from recent site visits the following work has been undertaken –

May Close Playground	Painting and repair of playground equipment. Removal of slide following a health & safety inspection. Works at Munsley Bog in partnership with Natural Enterprise.
Central Mead	Improvements to pavilion, cutting back of significant sections of overgrowth, maintenance of green area Provision of seating, picnic tables and waste bins. Removal of Japanese Knotweed and introduction of signage in accordance with associated legislation.
Church Hill	Renewal and painting of posts at the chain fence at this approach to All Saints Church which is visited annually by thousands of tourists.
Bridgectourt Cemetery	Substantial expenditure on improving the appearance of the site including the removal of dangerous tree roots, tarmac of the turning area for vehicles, and the management of hedgerow.
Memorial Garden	Introduction of hedge on the boundary with the road. Upkeep and maintenance responsibility passed from the former Memorial Committee.
Public Conveniences	Responsibility for the public conveniences was transferred from the Isle of Wight Council (IWC) to the Parish Council with effect from 1 st April 2016. If the Parish Council had not taken over this responsibility the IWC had advised that they would be closed. The Parish Council has subsequently purchased the freehold of the building and adjacent land and will be now proceeding with a major refurbishment of the building whose condition is in need of significant attention. The Parish Council has agreed to refurbish & renew the public conveniences via the introduction of modular units provided by Danfo and successfully obtained a low cost borrowing approval from the Government to finance the refurbishment over a 15 year period. Loan repayments are to be met from

reduced costs of annual maintenance and utilities budgets. The refurbishment was due to commence in April 2021 but due to delays in material delivery it was postponed until October to avoid works being undertaken in the holiday season.

Planning

The Parish Council comments on all planning applications in the Parish which are made to the IW Council. Where there is seen to be significant public interest/concern at a proposed development, the Parish Council has called and held special meetings in order that the public have greater opportunity to input their views.

Traffic Survey

It is understood that a survey was undertaken by Island Roads during the assessment and consultation periods for the 20mph speed limit.

20mph Speed Limit

After representation of IW Councillor Downer and the Parish Council over a period of years, a 20mph speed limit was introduced in February 2018, the limit applies through the High Street to beyond the junction of West Street and Newport Road. The original proposal was to also include sections of Church Hill and Church Hollow but a decision to exclude those areas was taken by Island Roads.

Village Bypass

Plans for a bypass of the village centre have been in existence for many years but have never formed part of the Isle of Wight Councils highway capital programme. Following information received by the Chairman in 2017 regarding the possible availability of funds for this the scheme, the Clerk made contact with the responsible IW Councillor but no further action was taken as it was understood that the funds were not available to put towards this long term aspiration. The Parish Council asked the IW Council if it could generate some funds to start the project through a Section 117 Agreement to be applied to the development of 9 dwellings at Munsley Close off Newport Road, but this was not sanctioned by the IW Council.

Pedestrian Crossing/ Traffic Calming

IW Councillor Downer arranged a meeting in 2015 which was hosted by the Parish Council. The meeting was attended by representatives of IW Council, Island Roads, Parish Council, Godshill School, and of the local business community. Follow up meetings did take place but no actions have been taken other than the introduction of the 20mph speed limit. It is recommended that the content of agreed actions be revisited by the newly elected Parish Council.

Access to Car Park	Removal of waste disposal units have facilitated the rearrangement of car parking spaces with the creation of an additional disabled parking space.
Road surfacing, Pavements & Street furniture	These items form part of the responsibility of Island Roads as part of its PFI project with the IW Council.
Village Parking	The parking spaces outside The Essex were reconfigured in liason with IW Council and Island Roads, to include a disabled bay.
Signage	No formal code of practice on the standard of signage has been introduced. Regulations regarding signage are however detailed and comprehensive, the responsibility for enforcement of which lies with the IW Council. The Parish Council makes comment to the IW Council on any proliferation of signage that comes to its attention.
Access for The Disabled	The construction of kerb ramps either side of those areas where there are no pavements was included in the Parish Plan. A dialogue with Island Roads on this specific matter has yet to take place.
Local Economy	The provision of high speed broadband was achieved without requiring any input from the Parish Council. There has been no production of a trade directory as detailed in the Parish Plan but this is something that is promoted by the IW Council on an island wide basis. The Parish Council endeavours to use local business providers in all expenditures that it undertakes.
Leisure & Tourism	Through many of its actions detailed above the Parish Council has committed substantial financial resources which benefit tourism in the village eg maintenance of public spaces, the safeguarding of the future of the public conveniences. The Parish Council, at the request of a member of the local business community, offered to act as facilitator for the provision of new tourism information boards in the village, but there was insufficient interest to make a financially viable project.
Central Mead	Plans for the future of May Close Playground & Central Mead were facilitated by Nikki Collinson and presented to the Parish Council. These were put to a public consultation meeting in July 2018, together with proposals for a new Community Hall, both projects to be located at Central Mead. The proposed projects would involve collaborative working of both the Childrens & Young Peoples Charity (the owners of Central Mead) and the Village Hall Charity who held

resources for such use which were derived from the sale of the former Village Hall. The sale of the former Village Hall was presented and agreed at a public meeting as the hall was considered to be no longer fit for purpose and required substantial investment in its structure and fittings.

After extensive negotiation with Sport England, who had an historic interest in Central Mead, a final joint planning application for both projects was submitted by Godshill Parish Council to the IW Council in November 2020, and which was approved in February 2021. A very high proportion of the public comments on the application gave positive support to its content. The planning approval was subject to a number of conditions which had cost implications and a specification has recently been presented to interested contractors.

Community Events have taken place at Central Mead and the Community, Parish Council, Local Business and School were all involved in the Christmas Market held in December 2017 and in subsequent events that were organised by Yasmin Nigh.

COVID – 19

The pandemic has dramatically affected the way the world population has to conduct their lives, with great emphasis on the need to help the most vulnerable in society. Locally in Godshill a Hub Group was established to provide help to local residents and this involved assistance with the following activity –

Daily or Weekly Shopping, Gardening (light), Picking up & Sending post, Dog Walking, Picking up and delivery of Prescriptions, or just a friendly chat.

Many thanks are due to the 20+ Volunteers who gave their time and unstinting assistance to over sixty local residents over this difficult period.

Service contact is Parish Council Chairman Alison Child. (Telephone 840179).

New Parish Plan

Following the end of the 2015-20 Parish Plan period, a new Parish Plan Committee was formed, which is currently finalising a plan for the next five year period and it is hoped that the new plan will match the successes of its predecessor.

Gareth Hughes
Parish Clerk

1st September 2021.

