

## **Chairman's report 2019 - 2020**

This has been a strange year for everyone with April 2019 starting as fairly normal and uneventful and ending April 2020 with everything thrown up in the air with the coronavirus. Our Clerk Polly Doyle has done a marvellous job keeping things on track despite the changes.

Councillors N. Barton and M. Barton resigned their posts moving on to other things. They contributed well for the Council and attended most meetings. I would like to thank Councillors N. Barton and M. Barton for all their time and dedicated work, it is much appreciated by the community. The two posts have been filled by Councillors Joanne Simmons and Louise Jones and we welcome them to the council and look forward to their contributions.

We are still trying to sign off the wayleave contract with Scottish and Southern Electricity but it is between lawyers of the Council and SSE and out of our control. Hopefully to be sorted shortly.

We are aware the scam telephone callers have been trying to do business in Erlestoke if anyone has been contacted please let us and the police know.

It amazing how much litter is picked up on the arranged litter picking day on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2019 a good turnout by

**Andrew Sheate**

**Jim Marshall**

**Ian Marshall**

**Rolland Barth**

**Stan Jonik**

We would also like to thank; **Jane Batt, Mandy McCaan and Mr and Mrs French** for their help in keeping the village litter free throughout the year. Unfortunately, 2020 litter spring clean day was cancelled because of the Coronavirus and may be started later this year.

We now have a village database of emails for sending out the latest information and to keep people up to date on village matters. Councillor James Durham manages the system, everyone that was spoken to reported they felt the database was a good idea.

The web site proves to be useful covering many subjects. The Highways section is automatically updated by Wiltshire Council identifying roadworks in the area with dates and times for possible disruption. Some other information covered is, Council agendas and minutes, link to WWDC for reporting problems or issues, Council finances, local Police report, Health and wellbeing, latest bus times, and local news.

Wiltshire Council have made two strategy and area changes that effect Erlestoke. The Boundary Commission have changed the Erlestoke boundary whereas we were always part on Lavington we are now part of a group of villages called "Seend, Potterne & Poulshot" this may mean a change to where our election ballots are made. Another change is that

Erlestoke will become part of a different housing area, Chippenham, rather than the Eastern Housing Area.

Highways is always on the agenda in one way or another. Overturned cars on the B3098 has prompted suggestions to slow traffic on the road. Suggested changes from Councillor Richard Gamble are a weight limit on the road except for access all the way to A342 through Market Lavington. Subsequently, those that use the road incorrectly can then be prosecuted. In the past the width of the road was not considered and an alternative change would be for the road to be downgraded. Satnavs often do not help the situation when they advise drivers to use smaller inappropriate roads.

In Erlestoke we have paid for traffic calming measures for the amount of £1026.00. These are visible as you enter the village from Lavington. Together with the Speed Indicator Device (SID) these do help make Erlestoke a safer place to live.

Every year we get reports on the Play area equipment and this year some maintenance work was required to keep the equipment safe and well maintained. We are also looking at increasing the play equipment for children with the aid of grants and funding.

The defibrillator training in November was well attended this year with visitors from Edington and Coulston together with Erlestoke got the benefit of the training. Julia Doel from the NHS will be running another training session this November well worth attending.

After complaints were received from members of the village community regarding the poor state of the bus stop the area was inspected and photos taken. It was agreed that the bus stop would benefit from a wash and a paint and that a working party would be set up. Volunteers got together and gave it a good spring clean.

The issue of dog mess in and around the woods is made worse with people picking up the mess with a poo bag and leaving the dog poo bag on the side of the path for somebody else to pick up. It will not disappear on its own. Please pick it up and take it home and place in your own rubbish bin.

It was reported that a member of Erlestoke Parish was attacked in the woods by a motorcyclist after confronting them on their right to be there. There was a witness to the incident. Others have reported being intimidated by the motorbike riders.

PCSO Georgie Dodd has requested that:

**'parishioners call the Range Control on 01980 674 951 instead of the Police, as they have more powers on their land and can take better action'.**

Erlestoke woods

The MOD have done a lot of work in Erlestoke woods installing fencing and felling trees opening the whole area. They have now planted various trees replacing all the ones felled and removed. They are looking at the Dam wall to see if its possible to repair any damage and bring the water level up to previous depths.

Councillor Morgan-Frise reported back from the Ash Dieback Community meeting on the 17th January that discussed the tree planting and 25 Ash tree felling that was scheduled for January. It was reported that Ash Dieback trees that are a danger to people in publicly used spaces will be taken down. Some have natural immunity so some will survive. Once taken down then trees will be replaced with indigenous species.

The POP UP Pubs held in the Park were very successful getting people together and catching up on local things. The proceeds from the food and alcohol sales go to the Church, we cater for about 60.

The George and Dragon pub continues to be a talking point in the village. The Parish Council reapplied for the Pub to be considered for an Asset of Community Value as the current one terminated this May. We have just received notice that the Asset of Community Value on the pub is going to continue.

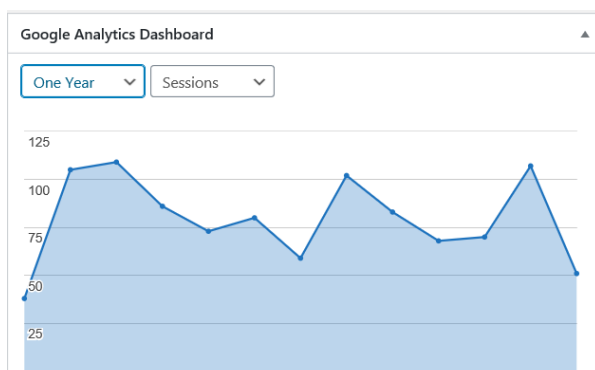
The Erlestoke Hub have continued with funding and campaigning to keep the George and Dragon as a pub as there is considerable interest in the village. The survey and feed back were very positive and we wish them well.

Clearly the Coronavirus has had a massive impact on how the Council operates, we now have Online meetings to carry out village business. We also have weekly Zoom meeting to get updates on any virus issues. The Erlestoke web site list a number of local contacts to use if anybody requires help or to collect medication or food supplies. We keep a close eye on the people who are vulnerable with visits and telephone calls.

This year we kept the same Precept as last year with no increase. The Precept of £6805.00 as approved in January.

Council web site [www.erlestoke.org](http://www.erlestoke.org)

Monthly usage:



I would like to thank all our councillors including Richard Gamble and Polly Doyle our Clerk for all their help and advice throughout the year.

Stan Jonik  
Chairman Erlestoke Parish Council