

Oakridge Ward Annual Report

In April the Parish Council supported a motion to update our Design Statement and make it into a Neighbourhood Development Plan. One of the core themes of the NDP will be the climate. In September the Parish resolved to declare a Climate Emergency following Stroud District Council, and many local authorities around the country.

Following Rod Simcox's resignation due to a challenging health problem Tony Martin joined the Oakridge Ward of the PC in May and took on PC responsibility for Snow Warden and the What's On report, Highways and Finance were added to his task list later.

We introduced a "Dark Skies" policy for the Parish, which will inform the Planning Application process and help with light pollution and night light interference with neighbours and wildlife. It will become integrated into our Neighbourhood Plan.

The Parish Council supported a motion to use some of the money generated from the Solar Feed in Tariff to support tree planting in the Parish. It was proposed a long time ago that this income should be used to support environmental projects.

Mike Bell put forward a proposal to support kissing gates on the Wysis Way. He paid for one gate in memory of his dog and some landowners also supported it. The gates were installed and completed later in the year.

In July a diverter was installed in the pavilion to use some of the generated electricity to heat the water tanks, this will provide hot water in the summer and provide a bit of heat to the building in the winter months.

Mike Bell resigned as chairman in November prior to his move out of the Parish. This leaves a the Oakridge Ward with a vacancy for a councillor, which we hoped to fill quickly but the Covid 19 pandemic has interfered with the recruitment.

Key themes through the year have been the Climate Emergency and the NDP. Recently there have been many issues around roadside verges, people putting things on that obstruct and cover them. A plan and a policy is being made by the Parish Council to manage the verges better, very much based around guidance from the charity Plantlife and the County Council.

Roger Budgeon
Oakridge Ward Chairman