

Background Notes for Firsdown PC meeting September 2023

Reports:

b. The Parish Clerk – I attended the SLCC Wiltshire Clerks' branch meeting in July, where we heard presentations on charitable organisations, and the Code of Conduct. I will attend the next meeting later in September. I also attended the Area Board's Social event in July, and the LHFIFG meeting in August.

New issues raised

- a. *Purchase of parish owned speed enforcement guns* – the Community Speedwatch Team have been requested to research this and provide details of compliance with police requirements, and costings.
- b. *Installation of specific recycling bins* – Cllr Walsh will lead. An example of such a scheme can be found here:
https://www.kingfisherdirect.co.uk/ecoarc-external-recycling-bin?msclkid=8dc086026e371abc2dfee2f2316e24c4&utm_source=bing&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=Kingfisher%20-%20Catch%20All&utm_term=4574861730980498&utm_content=All
Need to think about location, frequency of use and emptying, cost of emptying. What is thrown away in the existing litter bins that could be recycled? Are the recycling bins to replace existing, or to stand alongside?
- c. *Crash at Dunstable Cross Roads and residents' petition* – the recent head on collision was discussed at the August LHFIFG meeting, and the consensus was to wait until the police have reported on the cause of the crash before thinking about what further adjustments might be required. However, it was agreed that representatives from the three Parish Councils – Firsdown, Pitton & Farley and Winterslow should have a site meeting with WC Rich Rogers to inform further discussion. This has yet to be arranged. Winterslow residents have started a petition calling on Wiltshire Council to "do something" about the speeding along the Winterslow/Firsdown road.
- d. *Appointment of a Tree Warden for the parish* –
Go here: <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/tree-wardens-scheme-to-be-relaunched-in-wiltshire>
And here: <https://treecouncil.org.uk/tree-wardens/>
For further information. The FPC could write an article for the newsletter/Facebook forum/website to see if anyone is interested in taking this on for the parish
- e. *Purchase of a plant shredder* – Cllr Walsh will lead. Need to decide how the chipped arisings are to be dealt with/disposed of.
- f. *Volunteers for the Best Kept Village competition 2024* – the FPC could write an article for the newsletter/Facebook forum/website to see if there is any interest in this.
- g. *Councillor training* – there is still time to register for the face-to-face training day (with lunch) organised by WALC on Wednesday 13th September.

Highway/Parish Steward/Footpath matters.

- a. *New Highways issues* – Cllr Brown will lead on the Firs Road carriageway repairs
- b. *Parish stewards* – the next visits are scheduled for 18th September, 16th October, 13th November, 11th December. Cllr Brown is the Parish Contact.
- c. *Footpaths*
 - i. Cutting back the BOAT from the play area to the Pitton Road – complaints have been received about the overgrown vegetation along here, and Cllr Walsh has advised his Footpaths Group find it very difficult to cut because of the deep ruts. He proposes filling in at least one set of ruts, which will allow easy access for the mowers/trimmers, and make it easier for walkers to use the path.
 - ii. Broken stile at the junction of FIRS2 and FIRS3 – this has been reported to Rights of Way, with a request that this is either repaired, or replaced with a kissing gate, work to be done when the new RoW is created between Firsdown and Pitton.

d. Report from LHFIG August meeting:

i. Dunstable Crossroads – safety mirror installed in July. Site meeting of the PC's to be arranged following recent head on collision.

ii. New dropped kerb at Firs Road/A30 junction - WC Legal Services have been investigating the status of this land and have found some limited evidence of previous work that suggests that this land may previously have been dedicated as public highway. Legal Services are trying to find the file containing the previous work to confirm if this is the case. If the land has not previously been dedicated as public highway, they have suggested that the simplest way to claim this land as public highway would be under Section 31 of the Highways Act where a case would need to be made that the public have had free and uninterrupted use of the land for 20 years or more. The Clerk has posted a request in the newsletter and to go on the Facebook forum for long standing residents to contact her with any information/knowledge they may have about the site.

iii. Firs Road nameplates - Works pack issued to Milestone. Works provisionally programmed to be undertaken during week commencing 18/09/2023. Exact date of works to be supplied to the PC once known.

iv. Speed limit assessment A30 (within Firsdown Parish) - Speed limit assessment ordered with Atkins. Completed assessment report expected in October 2023.

v. Replacement 30mph sign at Firs Road/A30 junction – second request submitted.

Other ongoing matters

a. New Parish Council laptop – now in use.

b. Bank mandate – amended mandate will be available at the meeting to be signed.

c. Replacement swing – installation date still to be confirmed. Should have an update for the meeting.

d. Roundbarrow Farm – the new RoW is supposed to be created late summer/early autumn.