



# HILL CROOME PARISH COUNCIL

## December 2021

No.19



### **LATEST NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The Parish Council wishes everyone a happy and safe Christmas in these continuing difficult times.

The Council last met on 23rd November at the Village Hall, when topics included the new island on the A38 and the results of the county-wide survey on speeding. The island is progressing to plan and subject to the weather significant changes should be happening very soon that will give a better idea as to how it will look on completion. As for the survey, it concluded across the county that Parishes believe there to be an issue but it would seem the policies of the County Council and the enforcement bodies are at odds with that view. We shall continue to keep the matter on our agenda, in particular as a priority for the Local Neighbourhood Team to provide a visual deterrent when they have the time.

We have ordered replacement 'dog mess' signs for the back lane, both to replace those which have faded and broken and to help reinforce the message. There are still regular deposits both on the lane and footpaths, and it is unacceptable.

Recent incidents of fly-tipping were reported and removed from the gateway by the motorway and down by the church. Quite how this is considered by some to be appropriate behaviour is a mystery but I would ask that any deposits that are seen are reported to me soonest to ensure a swift action.

The drainage on the corner of Ash Lea continues to create a nuisance, albeit subject to ongoing investigation. When the water is across the road it would be useful if cars could pass very slowly to avoid further damage to our drive! The result of the latest activity is now causing issues elsewhere so we shall continue to press for a swift resolution to a long standing problem.

### **DEFIBRILLATOR**

The Council was in receipt of a letter requesting that consideration be given to making the equipment more readily available and obvious in the event of need.

When we originally discussed the location for it, consideration was given to a number of places it could live, including the telephone box and the outside wall of the workshop. Issues were identified with both locations, including power supply and security along with distance from the village centre.

The current location at our cottage, behind a green painted cover is in some ways a compromise, but goes a long way in providing power, security and regular checks.

After a lengthy discussion it was concluded that it will stay where it is now, albeit a discreet sign will be placed on the box and the local ambulance service be made aware of its existence. The noticeboard now has a map showing its location and everyone is encouraged to make themselves aware of its position before it is needed in an emergency.

### **VILLAGE GREEN**

Work continues with the project, with regular mowing throughout the season with areas left to grow wild. Whilst there have been some different plants showing through, the notion that it would be easy to have a flourishing flower-filled meadow has been confirmed as a long-term goal rather than a simple scattering of seeds. The fertility of the ground was identified from the outset as a serious constraint and continues to be an issue. That said, keeping the green neat whilst allowing a wild element along with introduced seed and bulbs is the priority and will continue going forward. The mower is off for a good service prior to starting the new season.

## FINANCE

The November meeting is the time when we have to set the Annual Precept to identify the level of income provided by your Council Tax for the Parish.

For 2022/23, it was decided to increase the request by 2% compared to the last financial year, giving us an increase in income of £76. Whilst a modest sum, it is identified that with the ongoing discussions into the devolution of powers down the chain of authority we must ensure we have the funds to fulfil our role. We are fortunate in that there is an absence of much of the infrastructure usually associated with Parish Councils—bus stops, benches, street lighting— but this could be subject to change and we must be prepared for any change in circumstance.

## PLANNING

The number of Planning Applications in the Parish are few and it has been the unwritten policy of your Council in recent years not to make comment for or against private applications. The justification for this approach has been to ensure that the actions of the Council and therefore by implication the Councillors, cannot be seen to be showing any bias either way. The Code of Conduct requires us to act in this way.

A recent report submitted to the Planning Department made inference as to the potential for bias in our decision making process, and whilst wholly without foundation was a cause for concern.

In order to address the matter and to ensure clarity, a new policy document, the Hill Croome Parish Council, 'Policy on Planning and Highways' is on the agenda for our next meeting for ratification. Once adopted it will appear on the website alongside all other policy documents and will be subject to regular review.

## POPPY APPEAL

This year we raised the sum of £97.67 for the appeal from within the village. Thank you to all who participated.



## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

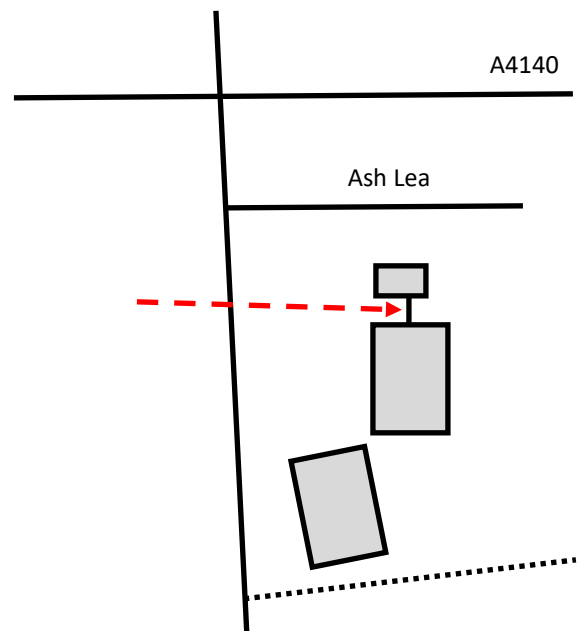
I am pleased to report that the scheme is now on the system and appears to be working. We have eleven members, each of whom will receive updates and information from the national scheme.

I do not envisage a regular local update but the scheme legitimises the use of the signage and may help with discouraging those who would cause harm and distress.

To join, visit the website <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk>

Follow the links to first join the National Scheme and then navigate to the Hill Croome membership.

## A REMINDER FOR THE DEFIBRILLATOR



For any information please contact the Clerk

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Parish Council Meeting dates for 2022

8th February, 3rd May, 2nd August and 22 November