

**MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting of Melksham Without
Parish Council held on Wednesday, 26 May 2021 at 7.00pm
at Bowerhill Village Hall**

(DUE TO THE ON-GOING COVID 19 PUBLIC HEALTH RESTRICTIONS THIS MEETING WAS HELD FACE TO FACE WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC BEING ENCOURAGED TO JOIN THE MEETING VIA ZOOM. THE MEETING WAS ALSO LIVE STREAMED VIA YOUTUBE FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO WATCH)

Present: Councillors Alan Baines, John Glover (Chair), Mark Harris, Stefano Patacchiola, Robert Shea-Simonds and Richard Wood

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk) and Marianne Rossi (Finance & Amenities Officer)

In attendance: 2 Members of public

In attendance via Zoom: Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford (Melksham Without North & Shurnhold), Wiltshire Councillor Jonathon Seed (Melksham Without West & Rural), Peter Dunford, Area Board Co-ordinator and 4 Members of public

1. Welcome, Housekeeping and Apologies

Councillor Glover welcomed everyone to the meeting and pointed out the various fire exits for those present.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Holt due to work commitments, Councillor Pile due to a previous family engagement and Councillor Pafford who was attending a Governors meeting at Melksham Oak School.

2. To receive Outgoing Chair's report on the work of the Council during the last year and the new Chair's address for the coming year

Councillor Wood as outgoing Chair reported on the work of the Council during the last year. **Appendix 1**

Councillor Robert Shea-Simonds proposed a formal vote of thanks be recorded in the minutes to Councillor Wood whose input had been immeasurable over the years, which was seconded by Councillor Baines and supported by all Members present.

Councillor Glover, as new Chair of the Council reiterated the Council's thanks to Councillor Wood for all the work he had done over the years explaining Councillor Wood had been a superb Chairman to his Vice Chairman, offering lots of advice and would be sorely missed as a Chairman and wished him well in his 'retirement', albeit he would still be on the Council taking on a very active role in meetings, as well as Chairman of the Planning Committee.

Councillor Glover explained Councillor Wood had mentioned most of what he wished to say with regards to the Council going forward, but wished to make people aware there would be a vote on the Neighbourhood Plan on 1 July and advised of the importance of residents engaging and voting at the Referendum.

Councillor Glover informed the meeting there needed to be a review of the Neighbourhood Plan within the next 2 years under current legislation, as without this, the Neighbourhood Plan would fall, with plans already underway for it to be reviewed as soon as possible.

With regard to the Local Plan Review being undertaken by Wiltshire Council, Councillor Glover explained the Council needed to continue monitoring, challenging and amending, wherever possible, in order to try and get it to meet the Council's requirements and to make sure Wiltshire Council were listening to what the Council wanted.

Councillor Glover explained Wiltshire Council had announced a preferred route for the A350 by-pass, with the Council needing to analyse what had been said and why and if there was anything that could be done to get the best mitigation for those communities affected within the parish, particular Bowerhill.

Councillor Glover went on to explain another project the Council was working on was a new Village Hall for Berryfield, with the Council deciding shortly who to award the contract to, following receipt of tenders.

Whilst the Council already had some funding, there was a shortfall, with a potential delay in Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts to help contribute towards the costs, therefore, the Council were considering applying for a Public Works Loan to cover this shortfall, which would be repaid once CIL and S106 funding had been received.

With regards to play areas, Councillor Glover explained the Council were continuing to take over these and open spaces and would be looking at those areas Wiltshire Council did not wish to take forward.

Regarding the Campus, this was coming along, with the Council working with Wiltshire Council on the Council's requirements for its own office and meeting accommodation.

The Council were also continuing to work with Melksham Town Council for the benefit of both communities in contributing to the Market Place public toilets and working on the Shurnhold Fields Project.

Councillor Glover explained a list of priorities for 2021/22, some of which had already been mentioned were available on the Council's website.

With regard to longer term objectives/priorities Councillor Glover explained the Council were:

- Looking to use less paper and become more climate friendly.

- To work to gain the Quality Gold Award.
- To provide enhanced accessibility to Council meetings, particularly when relocating to the Campus.
- To continue to work in obtaining mains drainage for Beanacre.
- To achieve the best outcome for the Parish as a whole for the A350 by-pass.

3. To receive reports from the Wiltshire Councillors for the Parish

The Clerk explained Councillor Holder's report was included in the Annual Parish Booklet (**Appendix 2**).

The Chair invited Councillor Alford, as Wiltshire Councillor for Melksham Without North & Shurnhold to speak.

Councillor Alford explained he had first met Councillor Wood some 30 years ago as a pupil, when Mr Wood was teaching Science at George Ward School and had inspired by him and had since become a science teacher himself. In the last 4 years, as a Wiltshire Councillor, he had learnt a huge amount from Councillor Wood and wished to pass on his personal thanks.

Councillor Alford proceeded to provide an update of his activities over the last year, bearing in mind Covid had restricted a lot of activities:

- Helping Melksham's community response to Covid, in keeping people up to date on what was happening within community.
- Supporting residents in Woodrow Road in their objections against a proposed housing development.
- Similarly, helping residents in Beanacre with regards to a proposed development North of Dunch Lane, and residents in Whitley with regards to a proposed development on First Lane, which was subsequently withdrawn.
- Lobbied against the merger of both the Town and Melksham Without Councils.
- Supported Shurnhold and George Ward Gardens residents with various issues, particularly with regard to the development at George Ward Gardens.

Councillor Alford explained he was only one piece in the puzzle, but when everyone worked together, a lot can be achieved, such as the Neighbourhood Plan, which was gaining significant weight in the planning system.

Councillor Alford informed the meeting he had recently been elected as the new Chair of the Area Board and was hoping to use this position to address issues in the Melksham Without Parish Council area. As Portfolio Holder for Whole Life Pathways the previous year he had worked with Children's Services and Adult Social Care looking at transitions/routes people took through these services.

More recently, Councillor Alford explained he had been given the opportunity to join the Cabinet as Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets and Asset Transfers and whilst he had only just been given this post was forming an approach to drive forward some issues affecting residents. In particular, with 5,500 council houses in the South was looking at ways to improve how the

Council worked with residents to achieve their objectives and to support residents. With regards to Strategic Assets, he was looking at town centre regeneration and to review Council assets and how these could be used more effectively.

Councillor Alford prior to finishing his update, informed the meeting he had just received an email to say the Woodrow Road planning application had been withdrawn, which was testament to the Neighbourhood Plan in having a strong impact and hoped everyone would vote on 1 July at the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum.

The Chair invited Councillor Seed, as Wiltshire Councillor for Melksham Without West & Rural to speak.

Councillor Seed explained his ward was a new one and covered Berryfield. However, he was no stranger to Melksham Without Parish Council, having chaired the Melksham Area Board for 8 of the last 12 years explaining he was delighted to be passing the baton to Councillor Alford as Chair of the Area Board.

Councillor Seed wished to join in paying tribute to Councillor Wood who had made life so much easier and looked after interests of Melksham Without Parish Council.

Councillor Seed went on to explain he had had a difficult election period, but was committed to working with the Council on behalf of residents for the next 4 years and looked forward to working with Melksham Without Parish Council.

Councillor Wood proposed a vote of thanks, which was seconded by Councillor Glover and agreed by Members, to Councillors Alford and Seed and to Councillor Holder, who was a Parish Councillor at the time, for being towers of strength in supporting the Parish against the merger with the Town Council as part of the Community Governance Review.

4. To receive update on Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Wood provided an update on the Neighbourhood Plan explaining it was a joint project with the Town Council and whilst it had taken some time, a Plan had been produced with great strides being made after appointing Place Consultants. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had also been blessed with various volunteers, with the list of all those who had contributed being extremely long.

Councillor Wood explained the Plan would be going to Referendum on 1 July, with a copy online for those who wished to look it up.

Councillor Wood went on to explain that the Steering Group would plan to start work on reviewing the plan looking for it conform with the new Local Plan, making sure any new development was sustainable with the necessary infrastructure in place before housing goes in and that housing developments are located where they make sense to the community and did not burden the town.

Councillor Wood invited the Clerk to speak to this item.

The Clerk explained polling cards were due to be distributed shortly to residents of both the town and the parish. In terms of publicity for the Referendum, there would be articles in the Melksham News explaining the importance of the plan and the Referendum.

The Plan covered the following topics:

- Building a strong competitive economy
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Promoting healthy communities
- Delivering a wide choice of quality homes
- Meeting challenges of climate change and flooding
- Conserving/enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving/enhancing the historic environment

In terms of a review, the Clerk explained this would start after the Referendum, and include those topics which could not be covered in time in the current Plan:

- Local Green Spaces, which can be designated in the plan and therefore protected
- Housing site allocations. Working with Wiltshire Council and the Local Plan Review on housing numbers. Whilst the housing numbers cannot be changed, it can say where housing should go and what developments should look like
- The A350 bypass
- Town Centre Masterplan
- Environmental Issues
- Implications of the canal link

5. To receive reports from Organisations and Groups in the parish (Reports in Appendix 3)

The Chair invited Paul Johnson TransWilts to speak.

Mr Johnson thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak at the meeting and provided an update on TransWilts activities at Melksham Train Station, explaining there an event was being held on Bank Holiday Monday, to showcase the improvements to the station, such as the cafe.

Mr Johnson also thanked the Council for their support via grants, which was greatly appreciated as it provided leverage when applying for other grants, in showing there was support within the community for the station and also wished to pass on his thanks to Parish Council staff for all their help and support over the years.

Mr Johnson explained the group continued to campaign for hourly services at the station and was encouraged by the recent Williams Report that emphasized the continuing support for community rail activities and the importance of connectivity through community stations. The group were also pushing the importance in terms of benefits of rail transport in climate change challenges. In terms of the A350 bypass, they have tried to ensure consideration is given to access to the station, and was heartened by the A350 consultation document recognizing the role of rail. The group were also emphasizing the need for connectivity around Melksham, including the parish and any future development of access to the station and encouraging walking and cycling.

Mr Johnson thanked Members and hoped to continue to work together in the future.

Councillor Glover invited Peter Dunford, Area Board Co-Ordinator to speak to this item.

Mr Dunford explained he had provided a report, which was included in the Annual Parish booklet, which highlighted the work of the Area Board in Melksham, including the Parish, over the last 4 years and explained moving forward wished to work more closely with the Parish in working on issues outside of the town.

Councillor Baines explained the various projects listed in the report under Community Area Transport (CATG) for the parish were also match funded or partly funded by the Parish Council and highlighted the various projects listed in the document in the Parish and thanked both Councillors Alford and Seed, and Councillor Hubbard as Members of CATG for their support with projects in the Parish.

6. To receive update on new village hall project for Berryfield and possible use of Public Works Loan to enable commencement of build in 2021

Councillor Glover explained tenders for the work had been received and reviewed and therefore work on this project was quite a way on in terms of design explaining the funding issues in the longer term were quite clear and had been identified, but as explained earlier in the meeting, there was potential for a delay in receiving some of this funding.

Therefore, in order to move forward with the building of the hall, in line with the tenders received, which had a limited time scale, the Parish Council were looking at the potential to take out a Public Works Loan and therefore needed to consult with its parishioners. To this end, there would be a full-page article in Melksham News on 10 June. Councillor Glover reiterated the Council would only be taking out the loan if parishioners agreed and also the Council would only be for as long as necessary, until Community Infrastructure Levy and S106 monies were received by the Council.

Councillor Glover went on to explain the design of the artwork to be installed on the hall was also near completion.

Councillor Seed explained he would like to help with this project and asked if he could meet with Members. Councillor Glover explained the Clerk would be in touch with a suitable date.

The Clerk explained one of the other reasons the Council wished to start building the village hall was because the Council did not want 2-3 years to pass and the builders leave and the Parish Council the come along to build the hall and dig up roads etc.

The Clerk also explained a public art meeting had taken place earlier that day where the artist involved had explained she was planning to work with pupils at Aloeric School as part of the project.

7. Comment and question time: to receive suggestions and proposals concerning any matter of interest in the parish including provision of recreational, cultural and other amenities for the parish

The Chair invited those residents on Zoom if they wished to speak.

A resident of Townsend Farm wished to thank the Council for their support in opposing the proposed development to the rear of Townsend Farm, which was currently not going forward.

Councillor Wood asked if those present wished to debate proposals for the A350 by-pass and how it would impact residents of the parish, particularly those in Bowerhill and invited a resident of Bowerhill attending the meeting in person to speak to this item.

The resident explained until the exact route was known it was difficult to get a plan of action. However, was aware of residents' concerns of the impact the by-pass would have on their lives with regards to noise and disruption.

Councillor Glover explained the route was only indicative at present with the route affecting residents of the parish whichever route it took.

A Member of the Public from Townsend Farm stated Wiltshire Council were suggesting route 10c, but understood a decision on any route was not taking place until later in the year.

Councillor Glover explained Wiltshire Council had not made a decision on the final route, but had identified their preferred route, subject to a non statutory consultation and would move forward with this proposal and undertake a statutory consultation in due course. Councillor Glover went on to explain the difficulty in stopping the by-pass, given the support from the Western Gateway which was a collective of 5-6 Councils from Gloucester to Poole, as the A350 formed a strategic route from the M4 to the docks at Poole.

Councillor Seed explained he also understood 10c was only an indicative route and may change as the consultation moved forward and was aware of concerns where the final route would eventually go.

Councillor Alford explained the need for a constructive response and the need to press for mitigation and to try and get an indicative route as favourable as possible, but appreciated the difficulties the Parish would have and expressed the need to engage with residents on this.

Councillor Baines explained having read the report to be submitted to Cabinet various suggestions for the North part of the route (Lacock) had been made and for various parts in between. The report had also acknowledged putting the by-pass between Melksham and Melksham's only secondary school (Melksham Oak) was not such a good idea and needed to go to the East of Bowerhill as well. Therefore, needed to be mindful the whole route would be in the parish from one end to the other, with only a very small piece at the South end in Seend.

The Clerk explained the Cabinet meeting was due to take place on Tuesday 1 June and had provided a link on the Parish Council's website for people to click into to access the papers and information on the meeting and reminded those present that anyone could register to speak and would be seeking a slot for the Parish Council to speak in due course.

Councillor Shea-Simonds had noted in the Melksham News a few people had commented on whether there was a need for a by-pass at all, but bearing in mind the support of the Western Gateway, would have to accept it's inevitability, with the Council having to bear in mind the concerns of residents, particularly those in Bowerhill, and the need for the Council to submit comments, as part of the consultation.

Meeting finished at 8.16pm

Signed

Full Council Meeting, 28 June 2021

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING May 26th 2021

This is my eighth Chairman's report for the Annual Meeting, and, unlike last year, I will hopefully be able to read it at an actual meeting, with councillors and parishioners present at the 2021 Annual Parish Meeting in Bowerhill Village Hall. The advent of COVID 19 has changed all our lives, and will continue to do so for many years. Our thoughts go out to all of you who have been personally affected by this very serious illness, either through contracting the illness yourselves or by the loss of loved ones. It seems as if we have experienced several false dawns since March 2020, with three waves of the virus stopping normal life in its tracks. As I write we are all cautiously feeling our way back to a semblance of normality. The vaccination roll-out has been very impressive and for the first time since early last year we may have good grounds for optimism.

Your Council has continued to function since early March 2020 by dint of the use of Zoom for all Council meetings, meetings with developers, with architects and project managers (for the new Hall in Berryfield), and of course for the Neighbourhood Plan. Our staff have worked from home and when the lockdown measures eased, used the Bowerhill Pavilion office, while observing strict social distancing. Before reviewing the Council's year, it is only right to mention the heroic response to the COVID 19 crisis from organisations in Melksham. Our own staff were heavily involved in the Community response, manning phones to react to requests for shopping, prescription collection and a whole variety of other services that vulnerable members of the community needed. Teresa, Lorraine and Marianne gave up many hours to this essential service, together with colleagues from the Town Council, Age Friendly Melksham and volunteers from across the area. Our thanks are also due to Jon Hubbard for his hard work and inspiration (plus IT knowledge!). As the crisis eases and Melksham returns to normal, however gradually, it is the Council's fervent wish that all the community effort will continue so that the legacy of the sacrifices we have all made is a coherent support system for all who need it.

The May 2021 parish elections were uncontested, which can be read two ways. Most optimistically, we could claim that our parishioners see the present Council as being a safe pair of hands, and so there is no need to change. There may be some truth in this, but I would love to see contested elections return. Covid may well have played a part, but every institution needs to be challenged to keep it up to the mark. It's interesting that there has been a vigorous debate about the proposed Melksham by-pass (more of which later) but no-one, however strong their views, chose to stand and put those views up to the scrutiny of the voters. We have ten councillors returned unopposed, but this is more than enough to enable the Parish to claim the General Power of Competence, which will enable us to explore the provision of a range of services, for example picking up the slack when Wiltshire Council are unable to provide services deemed important for our community.

Since the last report we were able to co-opt Stephano Patacchiola as a replacement for Stuart Wood for the Berryfield Ward. Four councillors have not sought re-election this time round. Paul Carter (Bowerhill Ward) has been a very active councillor, always willing to step in at short notice, and always responsive to the needs of the parishioners. He has played a major role in the development of Shurnhold Fields, and I'm sure he will continue to be an enthusiastic volunteer. Paul Taylor (Blackmore

Ward) has actively pursued his environmental concerns, and his input will be missed. His work commitments have made it difficult for him to attend Monday meetings. Nick Holder (Bowerhill Ward) has decided to concentrate on his role in County Hall. We will miss his input on County matters, but as he has been re-elected to his County seat, he will continue to play a major role for us and is now a Portfolio Holder at County. Last but certainly not least, Greg Coombes (Shaw, Whitley and Beanacre Ward) has been a Melksham Without councillor for a total of 27 years, first joining 52 years ago, and then off and on, also serving on District Councils, finally returning for good in 2003. Stalwart service from a great union man whose main interests were planning and pension policy. We thank them all for their service to the Parish.

We will have two new members from May. They are Shona Holt, representing Berryfield Ward and Mark Harris, from Bowerhill. We welcome them and hope they enjoy their time on the Council. We have received interest from several people regarding co-option onto the Council.

PRECEPT

The Precept set for 2021/2022 is £217,977.05, a decrease of 1.5% on last year's precept. An average Band D household will contribute £82.11 for the year, an additional £1.78 on last year, a rise of 2.21%. The Band D payment has risen because over 500 houses were transferred to the Town Council as a result of the Governance Review. As Parish Councils continue to fill some of the gaps left by County Councils, it is inevitable that more money is needed to provide, maintain and improve facilities such as village halls, play areas and playing fields.

PLANNING

Reviewing and commenting on plans submitted to Wiltshire Council are an important part of MWPC's responsibilities, one we take very seriously. This year we received 95 planning applications, including 5 large developments. Since last year's Annual meeting we have seen good progress being made on two large developments. The 150 houses in Semington Road, now has 89 occupied houses and more than 75% of the houses sold, and the Pathfinder Way development, Bowerhill, where building is well advanced on the eastern part of site and the Davey play area is open and proving very popular, even outside the estate. The Semington Road development will provide Berryfield with a much-needed new village hall, the cost of which is largely provided by the developers. We have made excellent progress on this project; tenders were recently opened for the actual construction of the building, and the selection of the successful bid will be one the first tasks when the new council convenes. The plans are approved and the public art contribution will be used for a locally themed panel on two sides of the new hall by well-known artist Kerry Lemon. The first tranche of money has been received from the developers.

The development of 450 houses to the East of Melksham is now well underway. The most visible sign being the works associated with the creation of a new roundabout to link Eastern Way to Spa Road and the new houses being built from the North of the site. The local Governance Review, which unanimously turned down the merger of our parish with the Town Council accepted our suggestion that this estate, being

contiguous to the town, should be transferred to the Town Council. The proposed community hall will therefore be built by them. Also, as part of the Local Governance Review, it was also accepted the 100 houses in Sandridge Place be transferred to the Town, as suggested by the Parish Council.

As a Council we have resolved to be very proactive on new proposals. Whether we approve of them or not, it is our responsibility to get the best deal for our parishioners in term of community gains. The current lack of a five-year land supply from Wiltshire Council has resulted in several opportunistic proposals from developers for sites which would not normally be considered at this stage. One of these proposals, for 144 houses in Semington Road, was vigorously opposed but narrowly passed by Wiltshire Council. There have been four other potential developments put forward in a speculative way to take advantage of the lack of a five-year land supply. Woodrow Road has seen an application for 150 houses (vigorously opposed by the Parish and Town), with access being a major consideration. An application for 240 houses and a 70-bed care home has been made for a site South of Western Way. This too is opposed by Parish and Town, on access grounds and a preference for employment use for the site. A site to the west of the A350 between Melksham and Beanacre has also been put forward, and again Town and parish have been concerned with the sustainability of the site for major development. The fourth application, for 50 houses near Townsend Farm, brings some cheer however, since this was recently turned down by Wiltshire planners, a major ground for refusal being that such a development was contrary to the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

This spate of opportunistic planning applications only underlines the importance of the Neighbourhood Plan. Thanks to hard work from Place Consultants, and the Steering Group, our plan has now passed all its hurdles and is to be put to referendum in the Summer. When passed, the plan will offer us the support of a three-year land supply for the two years following the Referendum, by which time 'Wiltshire's Local Plan review' should be complete. This has been a hard slog for all those involved, and a debt of gratitude is due to Place Consultants and to our Clerk for the attention to detail and willingness to go the extra mile.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Community Emergency group in Shaw and Whitley continue their excellent work monitoring the flood risks in their area. They have regular work parties and are always on hand in times of heavy rain. They always work with enthusiasm and great community spirit, and are held as exemplars of what a local emergency group can do.

SHURNHOLD FIELDS

This joint project between Melksham Without and the Town Council made further progress this year. The first meeting of councillors took place in May 2018 and from subsequent meetings a group of residents came together, to form the Friends of Shurnhold Fields, chaired by Roy Dobson. One of the first tasks of the new group was to organise the planting of the memorial wood to commemorate the 100th

anniversary of the First World War. Thanks are due to the Friends, and particularly Roy Dobson and Paul Carter for their organisational skills. Since those early days, a wild flower meadow was planted and bloomed beautifully in the Summer, picnic benches, bins and a heritage orchard have been added. Also, and very importantly, excellent environmental enhancement work has been carried out on the South Brook, with a view to increasing bio-diversity by letting more light into the stream, and to encourage the course of the stream to meander, thus helping to prevent flooding down-stream. The remaining major task should be complete this year with the construction of a small car park and improvements to the entrance.

The parish continues its successful partnership with the Town to fund the Market Place toilets, now open again after COVID19. The parish has acquired its own SID (Speed Indicator) device to deter speeding on our roads.

AT THE COUNCIL

Lorraine McRandle started just before Christmas 2019 and quickly settled in, but she certainly had a baptism of fire as COVID 19 struck. She has played a vital role in Melksham's community response to the epidemic, and soon adjusted to socially distanced working in the Pavilion and from home. Marianne Rossi continues to flourish in the office, and had taken increasing responsibilities, especially on the financial side. She's a great advert for the apprenticeship scheme, but we certainly struck lucky with Marianne. Teresa as always has worked far too hard! She is never one to shirk a challenge, and the way she led the team from the parish in the community response was very impressive; I know that some days there did not seem to be enough days in the week, as all the routine work of the Parish continued alongside. She had led the staff through this difficult time with great aplomb.

WHAT NEXT?

The Council will continue to take on play areas provided by developers. We have seen the opening of The Davey Play Area on the new Pathfinder Way estate (Mike Davey was very involved with the Air Cadets in Melksham for many years), and the new Whitworth play area on the Bowood View estate should be ready by the Autumn. (Robert Whitworth and his son William were the Wilts & Berks canal engineers.)

The Campus is finally underway and we will move in to our new offices as soon as possible. In an ideal world this will be in 2022. In keeping with this step change, one of the Council's targets for this year is to work towards being paperless. This will be a challenge for some of us, as will be the beginning of face-to-face meetings, but as we emerge from the pandemic, change suddenly seems to be in the air!

A PERSONAL NOTE

Finally, I'd like to thank all the hard-working staff who keep the show on the road in such a friendly and efficient way. The work of Teresa, Lorraine and Marianne have been exemplary, and Terry Cole has been just as cheerful and efficient as always, though his workload has increased over the past few years, and this year he had the extra burden of coping with safe and distanced working to keep himself and the

parishioners safe. We are delighted to be able to open our play areas again as the epidemic eased, and credit goes to Terry for the extra work this entailed. David Cole also stepped up and worked extra hours to ensure everything was safe and that the allotments ran smoothly. It is a great honour to serve on this Council, and a privilege to be the Chair.

However, nothing lasts for ever, and this coming year I will step down as Chair of the Council. I joined MWPC in 2006 having just retired from George Ward School. I was co-opted to fill a vacancy, having put in my application letter before going off on a post-retirement holiday to Andalusia. I learnt that I had been co-opted in my absence, and from 2007 until now I have either been the Vice Chair serving under Mike Mills (who is sorely missed and will never be forgotten in the Parish), or since 2013, Chair. These two offices meant that I was a member of every committee for 14 years. That is a huge number of meetings, not to mention being Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group!!

My wife has put her foot down. Enough is enough! Retiring from teaching taught me that no-one is indispensable and I know that the good ship MWPC will be in good hands; we have great staff and very able councillors, and after all, I 'll still be on the Council keeping a beady eye!!

Despite the challenging circumstances, this has been a very busy year, and I expect it will become more and more busy in the future as the very nature of local government changes. I'd like to pay tribute to all my fellow councillors. They give up a huge amount to their time to serve on the council, and actually seem to enjoy it! Long may it continue.

Cllr Richard Wood, Chairman

Councillor Nick Holder Bowerhill Division

I was delighted to be re-elected to Wiltshire Council as the Unitary Councillor for newly created Bowerhill Division in the recent election. I was so pleased to have had such a large vote share and so many of the Bowerhill residents have put their trust in me. The whole election experience, in which I did manage to meet many members of the community reinforced what a vibrant place Bowerhill is, with a clear identity and fabulous community spirit. I am so pleased the governance review which was carried out last year recommended the continued and necessary separation of the whole of the Melksham Without Parish from Melksham Town.

Since the last annual report, the focus of all of us has been the pandemic and I would like to pay tribute to the work of the Melksham Community Response Team which has been a vital resource for our community. Your Parish Council fully supported the work of the team not just financially but also by allowing officers to be diverted for their “day jobs” and actively supporting this work. I was proud to play a small part in this by getting involved in delivering Christmas meals and providing some friendly phone calls. I was also involved in the decisions by the Melksham Area Board which also provided resources to support this great work. The Area Board also agreed to support and fund my proposal to put on an “end of lockdown party” to recognise the, often unseen, work of young carers across the Melksham Area. In spite of the lockdown, I have been able to continue to respond to many queries from residents covering a variety of matters ranging from planning, highways and advocacy with Housing Associations.

I have worked, and will continue to work, closely with the Parish Council on the large planning applications submitted in Bowerhill. I am pleased the outline planning application to build houses on the land west of Semington Road was refused and this shows the impact a united approach from County Councillors, Parish Councillors and Local Residents can have on unwanted and speculative applications.

In addition to the specific objections raised by us all, an additional reason for the refusal of this application was the existence of the Draft Neighbourhood plan, which was referred to in the reason for refusal. We will all shortly be asked to vote, yet again, to approve the draft plan and for it to be formally adopted.

I have ended my role as a Parish Councillor and have passed the baton on to others. I know you will be continued to be well served by your councillors supported by the excellent officer team led by the Clerk.

Finally, if any resident needs to contact me please do so, on 07931 905520 or by email nick.holder@wiltshire.gov.uk

Councillor Nick Holder
Bowerhill Division

ATC 2385 Squadron - Annual Report

It brings me immense satisfaction to report, that firstly the Squadron continued operations throughout the pandemic, albeit virtually, but that we are now once again parading (as of mid April 2021) face to face at the Squadron HQ.

March 2020 – April 2021 saw an unprecedented change to our ways of working. Almost overnight the Squadron had to adapt to virtual parades, I am exceptionally proud of the way both the Staff and cadet teams quickly adapted to and made best use of the resources available.

The Squadron has been fortunate to be supported by a number of grants during this period. I would like to pay public thanks to: Wiltshire Community Foundation, Heritage Lottery Fund, Melksham Town Council, Melksham Parish (without) and the Wiltshire Area Board for their generosity and support during this period.

The Squadron only performs as well as it does and is the power for good in the community because of the superb Staff team I am honoured to lead. Without the commitment and drive of these individuals, the Squadron could not offer the opportunities and training to as many young people in our Town as we do.

I am looking to enhance our offering to the cadets and continue the progression and development of the Squadron. As part of the Commanding Officers “2025 Future Squadron Vision” I am specifically looking to recruit volunteers to fill the following vacancies / roles.

Public Relations Officer x 1
 Health and Safety Officer x 1
 Squadron Stores and Logistics Officer x 2
 Ground Instructors x 3
 Transport Officer x 1
 Civilian Committee x 6

If you are interested in any of these roles, or indeed know anyone who would be, further details and a contact form can be found on our website at www.2385atc.org.uk/volunteer. Alternatively for more information or to apply please email the Commanding Officer.

The Squadron has solid plans in place to deliver a variety of activities for the cadets, whilst ensuring a continued smooth *and safe* transition back to face to face parading. Over the coming months you will once again see your Town’s Air Cadets back out on activity, parade and providing community service and support. The Squadron and I, greatly look forward to engaging with the public again over this coming year.

Gregory McKay

Flt Lt G McKay BSc (Hons) MCGI CMgr FCMI MInstLM MRAeS RAFAC
 Officer Commanding
 2385 (Melksham) Squadron

Bowerhill Residents Action Group (BRAG)

2020/21 Report

Unfortunately, the work of BRAG has been severely impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. As a result meetings have not been held in person since March 2020. The AGM was also not able to go ahead because of the ban on public meetings. In the meantime we have been communicating via email and holding virtual meetings via Zoom.

The BRAG volunteers continue to meet at the picnic area on Tuesday mornings during the spring, summer and autumn months (weather permitting) and have done an amazing job maintaining and improving both the picnic site and the footpath/bridleway leading to the canal.

In conjunction with MWPC a number of benches around the Bowerhill area have been replaced and some new ones installed. Also, some new picnic tables will be installed at the Hornchurch Road Public Open Space in time for the summer. Some new litter bins have also been installed at various locations around the estate.

The litter-picking normally carried out by BRAG members/volunteers has had to be put on hold but will resume as soon as circumstances permit.

The Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Air Cadets in this area have worked closely with BRAG helping with tree/spring bulb planting and the creation of wildflower areas. This year we hope to create a new community garden on Brabazon Way.

We worked closely with MWPC, local residents and Taylor Wimpey to make sure that the new development either side of Pathfinder way delivered all that had been promised. Several public meetings were held and the developers worked hard to address the concerns of those residents directly impacted by the development.

We continue to work with MWPC to address the issue of dog fouling around the estate and we are able to access the County's Dog Warden to assist with this problem.

BRAG played an active part in campaigning against the Town Council's campaign to merge with MWPC and was pleased that the Electoral Committee recommended that the merger should not take place.

We also provided input into the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan and the Seend Parish Plan and are pleased to see that the BRAG picnic area and Giles Wood are noted as 'green no-development land'. The Seend plan went to referendum on the 6th of May and Melksham's plan goes to referendum on the 1st of July 2021.

Plans for the future

- Working with our local councillors and MWPC to ensure local residents are kept fully apprised of any future housing developments and the impact that any future Melksham bypass may have on them, the surrounding green areas and wildlife. Where appropriate gain support and campaign for change.

- Continue to work with our local councillors and MWPC to ensure that the housing development at Pathfinder Way delivers all that was promised, in particular the new infant school and that it is positioned so that it benefits the whole estate.
- Working with our local councillors and MWPC, local residents and interested youth groups to identify whether a youth shelter is appropriate and if so where it is best located on the estate.
- Arrange regular litter picks and continue to involve residents - in particular the younger generation.
- Look to obtain funding to support the addition of further benches and picnic tables around the estate.
- Continue with the work at the Picnic area and the promotion of its use - in particular to local schools and nurseries.
- Continue to source further trees from the Woodland Trust and plant them around the estate.
- Listen to residents' concerns and act appropriately to address issues that arise.
- Find new members, elect a new committee and appoint new Executive Officers in an effort to inject new life into the group and carry its business forward into the future.

Thank you to all Bowerhill residents for your continued support and a big thank you to the outgoing committee and Executive Officers for your tireless work in making Bowerhill a better place to live and work.

Mark Harris, Lead Member, Bowerhill Residents Action Group, May 2021.

Bowerhill Village Hall Annual Parish Report

In February 2020, Bowerhill Village Hall was used over 60 times by 19 groups and 7 individual users. Regularly available days and times for new groups were becoming increasingly hard to find. A month later and the story was very different! Throughout the last year the hall has been closed during lockdown and open at other times only to those activities permitted by whatever regulations were currently in force.

The trustees met regularly on Zoom and the AGM was held at the Village Hall with a multi-camera Zoom setup allowing remote attendance. During the first lockdown, hand sanitising stations were installed outside the front door and by the entrance to the main hall and cleaning procedures were put into place to ensure the hall could be used safely when possible.

The trustees took advantage of one period of closure to have the interior of the hall redecorated without any inconvenience to our users. Government grants have compensated for the dramatic fall in income and as a result the Village Hall remains in a strong position to continue serving the local community. We are looking forward to step 4 of the roadmap out of lockdown, at which time we hope to see the majority of our regular users return.

AFC Melksham Ability Count's Football

AFC Melksham's Disabled football team's association with MWPC goes back many years from an idea to what is now a great friendship.

AfcM provide weekly coaching sessions and in the summer, months use the field outside the pavilion at Westinghouse Way and Melksham Oak gym in the dark winter months.

This year with Covid being prevalent AFC applied for a grant (and we were successful), that allowed them to pay for all areas of the pavilion to have sanitiser and hand applicators saving the council budget, small return for the annual support the board give our players.

All disabled people are welcome to attend sessions (no charge whatsoever ever)

Contact Mike Rogers Chairman 07578335161.

Help Counselling Annual Parish Report

We would like to thank the Parish Council for their repeated support this year. It has helped the organisation help more people than ever. We have seen a steep rise in the under 25s and the over 65s using the service, as they struggled with the loneliness, loss of purpose and anxiety that lockdown brought. It shows us that friends, family and activities are key to good mental health.

As a society we must find ways of promoting local groups, clubs and charities, whether that is being able to use their services or volunteer in support of them. This is why the support that Melksham Without Parish Council gives to so many deserving groups matters. It keeps us all healthy, thank you!

Melksham Messy Church Annual Parish Report 2021

Messy Church is a fun, all-age and creative alternative to traditional church. Melksham Messy Church is run in partnership with Melksham Family of Churches and usually meets on the 4th Sunday of the month at Forest & Sandridge school. Hospitality is a key Messy Church value, and we love interactive bible stories, games, messy activities, music, celebration and food! Messy Church is a fantastic place for families to meet new people, explore faith and spend time in play.

During the pandemic, we have changed the way we do Messy Church to stay as safe as possible, enjoying 'Messy Church in a Bag' each month. Our Messy activity bags are available to collect on the 4th Sunday of the month from outside Forest & Sandridge school between 2:30 – 3pm. Once families have collected a bag, they can enjoy the activities and join a Messy Church Zoom at 4pm. Messy Church is free, and activity resources are provided. Although we can't gather in person at the moment, it's great that we can come together online and enjoy Messy Church with a difference!

We're excited to be running another 'Messy Church Summer Fun' Holiday Club this year, from Monday 2nd – Friday 6th August. We have a fun packed week planned with messy activities, stories, memory verses, games, songs and more. More information about Holiday Club will be released soon, in line with government guidelines.

Little Cherubs Toddler Groups

Little Cherubs toddler groups are run by the Anglican churches in Melksham, and usually meet on a Tuesday (Melksham Skills Centre, Church Lane) and Friday (St Michaels Church Room, Canon Square) during term-time. All pre-school aged children and parents/carers are welcome for free play, story time, snack, crafts, activities, music and singing.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been keeping in touch with families online through weekly Facebook Live toddler sessions and making connections through goodie bags and activity packs. We are excited to be launching 'Little Cherubs Outside' at the beginning of May. Little Cherubs Outside will run every Tuesday during term-time (weather permitting). We can't wait to gather together and explore stories, enjoy singing and dancing, nature and treasure hunts and play some games. We hope to be able to meet indoors as soon as possible.

Hannah Tarring

Melksham Messy Church Coordinator

Children & Families Coordinator: Melksham Team Ministry

For more information about Melksham Messy Church or Little Cherubs Toddler groups, please contact Hannah: hannahtarring.cfm@outlook.com.

Read Easy Melksham Annual Parish Report

During the years we have advertised locally with posters, Melksham News, contacting local schools and organisations. We did have a slot on Radio 4 a few weeks ago spoken by Richard Madeley describing how we help adults who have gone through life feeling ashamed that they cannot read and making excuses when dealing with all kinds of forms, applications etc.

We have a voluntary Management Team of 7 based in Melksham plus a Coordinator and coaches fully trained by Read Easy UK with training costs of £70 for each person plus travelling expenses.

Naturally, the lock down has caused problems but our efficient Coordinator and Coaches have found ways of continuing with the lessons remotely and currently have 10 readers waiting to start the course.

I think you will agree this is a worthy organisation in giving adults an opportunity to improve and enjoy their lives.

Relate Wiltshire & Somerset Annual Parish Report

Relate Wiltshire & Somerset is a local branch of the national charity Relate. We receive no government funding and have to raise funds locally in order to ensure our services are available to all.

Our counselling service offers a safe, confidential place to talk about their relationship difficulties such as: divorce or separation, coping with an affair, starting a new relationship, having children, losing your job, living as a step family, illness, etc. Our extensive children and young people's counselling service is for 7-18 year olds and helps them to understand and look at their problems differently and make positive changes for the future. Issues brought to counselling can include: low self-esteem, anxiety, bullying, family illness/bereavement, self-harming and suicidal thoughts.

Last year, we supported a total of 52 local residents living in Melksham Without Parish through our relationship counselling services. In line with government guidance on social distancing, all face to face counselling was ceased from March 2020, so all counselling took place remotely either via Webcam or Telephone.

To ensure our services are accessible to all, we run a bursary fund offering subsidised sessions to clients. The grant received from Melksham Without contributes towards this and is very much appreciated.

Some comments from relationship clients include: *"I cannot speak highly enough of the help Relate have given me and I would encourage anyone experiencing relationship problems, whether it's with their partner, their family, their friends, whoever or whatever they may be, to make that first step".*

Wiltshire Sight Report

Over the past 12 months we have been able to use the grant awarded by Melksham Without Parish to help us continue our sight loss advice service for people in the parish. We have supported people with sight loss living in Melksham Without Parish both over the telephone and face to face in our covid secure sight centre in Devizes.

Throughout lockdown, many events – including regular social clubs to support the most vulnerable and isolated older people – were moved online. The new technology of Zoom, Teams and others can be challenging for everyone to learn, but those with significant sight loss face greater obstacles in learning. We developed specialist training “Tablets are not just for swallowing” and our CSLA team use this to support people with sight loss to get online.

We have seen demand for support with equipment to help clients manage everyday living and clients wanting support with technology and electronic magnification in particular. This is largely due to increasing isolation during the current situation as people are not able to ask family and friends to help with their everyday needs such as cooking, helping to read post etc. Alongside this clients are spending more time at home and are becoming increasingly aware of problems such as inadequate lighting. Thanks to the grant provided we have been able to continue to be there for our clients when they need us.

Our emotional support has included regular phone calls providing advice, guidance or simple reassurance. During these calls, our CSLAs continued to identify any additional support needs. We referred people to our new volunteer befriending service if they were feeling lonely and isolated. We encouraged people to try our free audio-book postal service. One of the people using our befriending service has commented:

“I really look forward to the calls, it’s lovely to have someone to talk to, and I would feel very isolated without the regular conversations as I don’t really get out apart from going to the post box to return my talking books to Wiltshire Sight.”

Anticipating the long winter ahead we have also been able to develop new services to help people to stay active and to reduce isolation for those who are most vulnerable. With St Monica's Trust and WeSport we have created audio-described fitness sessions sent on accessible USB to people with readers at home, or available through our website.

We will continue to provide our vital support to blind and partially sighted people living in Melksham Without Parish whether that is over the telephone, in our Sight Centre or in our local community hubs when they reopen.

Thank you once again for your continued support.

Karen Monk
Fundraiser
Wiltshire Sight

Tel 01380 723682, Email info@wiltshiresight.org Wiltshire Sight, Registered charity in England and Wales 1119462 Registered Office: St Lucy's Sight Centre, The Beeches, Browfort, Bath Road, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 2AT

Melksham Rail User Group Report for year from April 2020 to March 2021

We had planned for great promotion of public transport and station adoption work during the period, but the arrival of Coronavirus and subsequent lockdowns and restrictions threw our plans.

Through various lockdowns, we have found ourselves mandated to discourage unnecessary travel and give people covid safe advice - not only online, but also at the occasional open air event held when things were a little more open. Leaflets and banners were produced and successfully used at these events, but the speed and nature of change have been such that we have had less use out of them than in a normal year. Signage at the station and in the Town Centre bus stops has been updated far more frequently than the twice-a-year timetable changes!

We have continued to meet every 2 months - though online via Zoom rather than in person, and indeed we have used our Zoom account to great effect to talk with guest and experts from out of the area in a way not previously practical. A good year of planning ahead - we look forward to encouraging travel by public transport again this summer, and also to help build back better.

Coronavirus has effected the lives of every one of us, and key user group members have spent more time in touch than was the case before - support of questions from members and the general public . Our age profile is such that our best behaviour at time of restriction was to stay home.

MRUG has become far more active with buses as well as trains. The new 271/2/3 timetables meet the request we made (probably because they make common sense, not in deference of any 'demand' from us) and in the coming year, we plan to evolve into the "Melksham Transport" user group. We will continue to volunteer at the station and be the official friends group there. We are of course supporting the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership in their development of the infrastructure at the station, whose activities are complementary to ours, several members being associated with both groups.

All in all - a very different but busy year, and a big THANK YOU to the council for your support. It has been doubly important because we were unable to run our Santa trip last December, and weren't able to make a modest income to boost our funds from that - only the second time in 20 years that it has not run.

We have become experts at refactoring on the fly; we anticipate a very busy year ahead, promoting and volunteering as we encourage people back - subject to Covid rules and restrictions. The guidance for use of public transport may discourage use of buses and trains even where it is safe to do so, and we hope to address this. In the longer term, we are looking very much towards zero carbon, sustainability and clean air agendas which are and will continue to set significant growth requirements on public transport. Addressing this is a core part of our activity, and we plan to do so along volunteer, community and budget lines successfully established over many years.

Melksham Rail User Group.

Chair – Peter Blackburn; Secretary – John Hamley;

Treasurer – Judith Gradwell; Vice Chair – Graham Ellis - 01225 708225

<http://www.mrug.org.uk>

Melksham Gardeners Society

The Melksham Gardeners' Society ended the year (2019-20) with what was to be our last meeting in February 2020 – which was Peter Ingrams talking about Propagation, Seeds and Layering. Then the year 2020-21 was completely cancelled as far as meetings at the Rachel Fowler Centre and our Show in the Assembly Hall. We did manage to get in one outdoor meeting at Great Chalfield where members took their own cars – it was lovely to see everyone and have an evening of normalcy.

Our 2020 seed order progressed with the usual efficient help of our Admin. Secretary; and whether it was the pandemic and everyone's plans to plant bigger and better this summer, but we had a record order placed in November, and were able to get the top discount of 60% on our seed order from Mr. Fothergill.

The committee also made a plan to keep in touch with all our members by sending everyone a Christmas card with a few packets of seed. Hopefully they are planting them in their gardens for a reminder of the last year and lost loved ones.

Shaw and Whitley Garden Club Report for MWPC 2021

In a non-covid time

Shaw and Whitley Garden Club are a group which holds meeting in the Whitley Methodist Chapel on Top Lane on the second Wednesday of the month from 7:30 until 9pm. We are very friendly and members like to arrive early so that they can have time to have a hot drink and chat to each other before the meeting starts. We invite speakers to come to talk to us on a range of topics and we also have a visit to an interesting local garden attraction in the summer. We do intend to meet later this year covid permitting. This year we planned to have topics to cover:- Extraordinary bulbs, a Whiff of the Exotic, Heritage Vegetables, Propagation, layering and seeds, and The winter Garden. We have managed to rebook most of these speakers for future years. In May we have a plant sale, usually at the Methodist Church when they have a book swap morning. This raises funds to help cover the costs of our speakers.

TransWilts Annual Parish report

The past year has seen considerable progress at Melksham Station with the completion of the café refurbishment and opening of the Hub facilities. There will be opportunities for volunteering and work experience once the café is established.

The support from Melksham Without Parish Council is important to us well beyond the financial value of the grant. TransWilts, as an Accredited Community Rail Partnership, can obtain matched funding from several other funding sources, leveraging your contribution. Your funding helps us demonstrate the local community support for our activities and show the commitment to sustainable transport and rail travel in particular. The usage of the electric car charging points has already saved 226kg of CO2 in the first quarter compared to petrol cars.

We plan to complete the exterior hub area in the coming year. For the future, we will be seeking additional funding for a Wiltshire Council design study to cost a northern pedestrian/cycle access route to the station.

We continue to pursue improved connections together with an hourly service frequency.



Wiltshire Air Ambulance Annual Parish Report

Wiltshire Air Ambulance undertook 1,238 missions in 2020 – a record number since the charity became a stand-alone air ambulance in 2015.

Despite two national lockdowns due to the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020 – and a third at the start of this year – the need for Wiltshire Air Ambulance’s lifesaving service has never been more crucial.

David Philpott, chief executive of Wiltshire Air Ambulance, said: “Our aircrew has continued to operate on the front line throughout the pandemic, responding to incidents during a very challenging year – and 2021 looks like being just as difficult.

“We had to alter our operations suitably to ensure we could still be there for the people of Wiltshire and surrounding areas.

“With all of our major events cancelled and community fundraising impacted by the pandemic, this has clearly had an effect on our income.

“That said, we have been taken aback by the response from our kind donors, who have surpassed all expectations for donations received in the past 12 months. For that, we are so grateful.”

Of the 1,238 missions last year, 568 were by helicopter and 670 were in the Rapid Response Vehicles (cars).

The largest number of call outs were to cardiac emergencies - 383 - almost one in three missions, while 208 were to road traffic collisions - around one in six missions and a drop of 2% on 2019 missions.

The charity responded to 60 incidents in Melksham (it was 61 in 2019).

Wiltshire Air Ambulance, with its base in Semington, is a charity and receives no regular direct funding from the Government or National Lottery grants. Each year the charity needs to raise £3.75 million to continue flying and saving lives.

Find out more at
www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk



Melksham Area Board - Activities 2017-21

The Melksham Area Board has had an important role over the past 4 years in hosting public discussions, brokering debates and commissioning a wide range of activities, including:

THEME	ACTIVITY
Health & Wellbeing	Mental Health Awareness workshop Big Pledge community activity competition Healthier Communities project Melksham Community Meals support Mens Shed support Melksham COVID-19 Community Support Health and Wellbeing Group discussions including St Damian's Surgery closure; mental health; dementia awareness; carers support; fostering; local area co-ordination; loneliness and social isolation
Children and Young People	Family Learning Festival Healthy Schools Awards Youth Intervention counselling project Support for Young Melksham services, including after-school/ evening youth clubs, teen counselling, SEND club, young peoples' awards, street based youth work
Older People	Age Friendly Melksham initiative Older Persons themed consultation event Community Connections carer project Melksham Seniors support Celebrating Age cultural project
Community Safety	Neighbourhood Policing support Street based youth work Speed limits review and new 20 mph zones
Housing	Neighbourhood Plan consultations Seend Community Led Housing project Wiltshire Local Plan Review
Environment	Waste Management Strategy Changes to kerbside collections consultation King George V Playing Field masterplan Skate Park mini-ramp extension Shurnhold Fields mini country park Broughton Gifford Pocket Park Plus scheme BRAG Bowerhill picnic area protection

Transport	Farmers Roundabout improvements A350 bypass route options Railway Station Hub investment CATG capital enhancements – speed limits, drop kerbs, crossings, footpaths, bollards, signs, nameplates
Employment and Economy	Jobs Fair Employment and Skills Roadshow
Arts, Culture and Leisure	Muslim burial ground at crematorium Local Leisure Offer analysis Campus project at Melksham House WW1 exhibition/ commemorative tree planting 800th Anniversary Market Charter event National Armed Forces Day event

Melksham Area Board – Grants 2017-2021

Over the past 4 years the Area Board has provided funding support to projects through its Community Grants, Youth Grants, Health and Wellbeing Grants and CATG transport grants, totalling in excess of £ 350,000.

2017/18	Applicant - Project	Grant
Community	Melksham football youth team - equipment for youth teams	£ 5,000
Community	Melksham Town Council - grounds maintenance equipment	£ 4,875
Community	Melksham Town Council - street cleaning equipment	£ 4,500
Community	Steeple Ashton Guides - storage project	£ 4,000
Community	Melksham Without Parish Council - new footway at Hornchurch Road POS	£ 4,000
Community	St Mary's School Building Management Committee - railings restoration	£ 3,499
Community	Wiltshire School of Gymnastics - new Tumble Track	£ 2,500
Community	Broughton Gifford Cricket Club - community mower	£ 2,250
Community	Melksham Adventure Centre	£ 1,955

Community	Melksham Forest Community Centre - 15x tables and 100x chairs	£ 1,798
Community	Melksham Remembers	£ 1,649
Community	Larkrise Community Farm - Sensory Classroom Project	£ 1,500
Community	Keevil Parish Council - kerbing in Main Street, Keevil	£ 1,083
Community	Whitley Reading Rooms – storage improvement and safety	£ 1,040
Community	Strange Old Things - The Mobile Museum	£ 1,000
Community	Poulshot Village Trust - Rights of Way Accessibility Project	£ 940
Community	Young Melksham - Membership Card Printer	£ 876
Community	Young Melksham - new pool table and sports equipment	£ 740
Community	Melksham Without Parish Council - kissing gate at rear of Shaw Playing Field	£ 573
Community	Bulkington Parish Council - 1918 Commemorative Memorial Stone	£ 281
Community	Devizes & District Opportunity Centre - garden tools	£ 280
Community	Seend Church of England Aided Primary School Parents Social Committee - replacement of chain linked fence for natural hedge at St George's School	£ 250
Youth	Community area youth activities - sports, youth work, sign posting, advice and guidance	£ 4,600
Youth	Cllr Hubbard - Melksham Schools ELSA project	£ 4,500
Youth	Young Melksham – to support the continued delivery of youth clubs for 13-18 year olds	£ 2,531
Youth	Young Melksham – No Limits SEND youth club	£ 2,500

Youth	Youth Adventure Trust	£ 2,286
Youth	AFC Melksham Disabled – to support the equipment and running costs needed for the group	£ 1,170
Youth	Steeple Ashton Guides - Senior Section Activity Weekend	£ 560
Youth	Wiltshire West District Scout Association - formation of new scout Group to serve Whitley Shaw and Atworth	£ 500
Youth	Cllr Hubbard - Melksham Family Learning Festival	£ 400
Health & Wellbeing	BoA & Melksham Health Partnership - Balance Exercise Class for Older People	£ 1,980
Health & Wellbeing	Melksham and District Seniors Forum 55+ - Older Persons Health and Wellbeing programme for age friendly Melksham	£ 1,370
Health & Wellbeing	Carer Support Wiltshire - IT training for carers	£ 1,000
Health & Wellbeing	Melksham and District Seniors Forum	£ 1,000
Health & Wellbeing	Back On Track Stroke Rehab Service - stroke rehabilitation equipment	£ 925
Health & Wellbeing	Age UK Wiltshire - Melksham Nail Cutting Clinic	£ 500
Health & Wellbeing	Melksham Baptist Church – meals for elderly and vulnerable	£ 500
CATG	Semington A361 crossing facility	£ 8,800
CATG	Melksham Kenilworth Estate 20 mph limit	£ 4,061
CATG	Whitley Middle Lane dropped kerb	£ 1,851
CATG	Melksham Coronation Road 20 mph assessment	£ 1,670
CATG	Melksham Woodrow Road – 30 mph extension	£ 469
CATG	Melksham Riverside Drive bollards	£ 321

CATG	Broughton Gifford Newleaze street nameplate	£ 146
2018/19	Applicant - Project	Grant
Community	TransWilts CIC - Melksham Station Community Building	£ 5,000
Community	Cllr Hubbard – Coronation Road 20 mph Zone	£ 5,000
Community	Acreshort Community Park Committee - community park project	£ 4,000
Community	Melksham Town Council - King George V Playing Fields Splashpad	£ 3,500
Community	Keevil Village Hall - new floor	£ 3,500
Community	Seend Lye Recreation Field - play area equipment replacement	£ 3,000
Community	Melksham Air Cadets - Minibus	£ 2,500
Community	Semington Village Hall Management Committee – replacement of doors and windows	£ 2,500
Community	West Wiltshire Ramblers Association - Bowerhill to Seend stile upgrade to kissing gates	£ 2,103
Community	Melksham Remembers - remembrance exhibition	£ 2,000
Community	Melksham Town Council – benches	£ 1,500
Community	Melksham Without Parish Council - Age Friendly Community Outdoor Seating Project	£ 1,250
Community	Melksham Shed - storage container	£ 1,250
Community	Atworth Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee - improved heating and insulation in the village hall	£ 1,000
Community	Primrose Residents Action Group - Primrose Drive Nature Reserve	£ 976

Community	Young Melksham - new tables for cafe area	£ 920
Community	St John Ambulance - radio communications	£ 750
Community	Bulkington Parish Council - storage of emergency planning equipment	£ 700
Community	1st Broughton Gifford and Holt Scouts - Solar Power Conversion	£ 515
Community	Melksham Rugby Football Club - girls rugby equipment	£ 512
Community	Pub is the Hub - community services from The Foresters Arms	£ 500
Community	Brunswick Park Residents Group - park improvements	£ 500
Community	Broughton Gifford Safer Access Group - new seats at cemetery	£ 500
Community	Read Easy Melksham - laptop and printer for the Coordinator	£ 500
Community	Atworth Parish Council - new benches for the village of Atworth	£ 499
Community	Seend Parish Council - WW1 Commemorative Bench	£ 400
Youth	Youth Intervention Project – Melksham Oak School	£ 10,000
Youth	Young Melksham - No Limits SEND Club	£ 5,000
Youth	Young Melksham - youth work project with 13–18 year olds	£ 1,716
Youth	1st Broughton Gifford and Holt Scouts - Jamboree Fund	£ 850
Health & Wellbeing	Wiltshire and Service Users Network – The Singing Group, Neurological Choir in Seend	£ 1,980
Health & Wellbeing	Arts Together – Melksham Group	£ 1,500
Health & Wellbeing	Melksham Community Meals – set up costs	£ 1,000

Health & Wellbeing	Age UK Wiltshire – Fitness and Friendship Club in Bowerhill	£ 1,000
Health & Wellbeing	Bulkington Parish Council – defibrillator	£ 928
Health & Wellbeing	Melksham & District Seniors – community outreach initiative	£ 700
Health & Wellbeing	Carer Support Wiltshire – Community Connections Campaign	£ 630
Health & Wellbeing	Melksham and District Seniors Forum - Older Persons Health and Wellbeing programme for Age Friendly Melksham	£ 630
Health & Wellbeing	Age Friendly Business project	£ 500
CATG	Seend Bell Crossroads Safety Scheme	£ 6,000
CATG	Seend High St Crossing Facility	£ 2,864
CATG	Steeple Ashton drop kerbs	£ 2,781
CATG	Whitley Top Lane Bus Stop Hard Standing	£ 2,419
CATG	Melksham Church St car park dropped kerbs	£ 1,749
CATG	Atworth Bradford Road Children warning sign	£ 178
CATG	Sandridge Lane, Single Track Road sign	£ 80
2019/20	Applicant - Project	Grant
Community	Cllr Alford – Public Open Spaces Network Fund	£ 10,000
Community	Young Melksham - replacement toilets for Canberra Centre	£ 7,500
Community	Cllr Seed – Mini Ramp at Melksham Skate Park	£ 5,000

Community	St Marys Church Broughton Gifford – new toilets for community use	£ 5,000
Community	Transwilts CIC - Melksham Station Community Hub, car park and café	£ 5,000
Community	Primrose Nature Area – accessible pathway	£ 4,000
Community	Wiltshire Youth Canoe Club - Melksham Adventure Centre Floor Renewal	£ 2,485
Community	Atworth Village Hall and Recreation Ground committee - replacement tables and chairs at village hall	£ 2,483
Community	1st Bowerhill Scout Group - new minibus	£ 1,900
Community	Melksham Short Mat Bowls – set up in new venue	£ 1,900
Community	Melksham Cricket Club - new cricket nets	£ 1,900
Community	Melksham 800 th Celebration Planning Group - Charter Plaque	£ 1,500
Community	Melksham Junior Parkrun – set up	£ 1,500
Community	Bloom in Melksham - South West in Bloom flag supports and flag materials	£ 1,000
Community	Art House Café - new power-assisted front door	£ 995
Community	Melksham Cricket Club - new access pathways	£ 977
Community	Conigre Mead Nature Reserve volunteers - two new benches	£ 810
Community	Melksham United Church - new tables	£ 750
Community	Community Emergency Volunteers Shaw & Whitley - generator for use at the Whitley Reading Rooms	£ 745
Community	Enigma Twirl Team - trailer repairs to perform in Carnivals	£ 700
Community	Seend United Football Club - Seend Lye Field floodlights	£ 678

Community	Great Hinton Memorial Hall - replacement LED lighting	£ 650
Community	Great Hinton Memorial Hall - fire door automatic closers	£ 600
Community	Community Emergency Volunteers Shaw & Whitley - walkie talkies	£ 321
Youth	Youth Intervention Project – Melksham Oak School	£ 5,000
Youth	Young Melksham - Canberra Centre drop-in afternoon café	£ 5,000
Youth	Young Melksham - No Limits SEND Youth Club	£ 5,000
Youth	Cllr Alford - detached youth workers in King George V Playing Fields and Skate Park	£ 5,000
Youth	Chippenham and District Sunday Football League - grassroots football for young people	£ 1,960
Youth	Youth Adventure Trust - Vulnerable Young People from Melksham 2019 Activity Days	£ 994
Health & Wellbeing	Age Friendly Melksham – contribution towards costs of part-time Age Friendly Co-ordinator	£ 3,000
Health & Wellbeing	Melksham Community Response – COVID	£ 1,500
Health & Wellbeing	Melksham Community Meals - set-up costs	£ 1,000
Health & Wellbeing	Carer Support Wiltshire - creative writing workshops for carers	£ 965
Health & Wellbeing	Cllr Hubbard - Contact the Elderly boat trip	£ 300
Health & Wellbeing	Melksham Mens Shed - health and safety training for 5 members	£ 300
CATG	Melksham Coronation Road 20 mph	£ 5,000
CATG	Broughton Gifford Mill Lane HGV signs	£ 2,200
CATG	Steeple Ashton Drop Kerbs Holme / Newleaze	£ 1,960

CATG	Seend High Street High Friction Surface	£ 600
CATG	Steeple Ashton Playground warning sign	£ 200
CATG	Melksham Bath Road / Bell Court HGV sign	£ 200
CATG	Melksham Snarlton Lane Crossing Point sign	£ 200
CATG	Melksham Snarlton Lane "No access sign"	£ 100
CATG	Seend High Street – pedestrians crossing sign	£ 100
2020/21	Applicant – Project (to date)	Grant
Community	Cllr Alford – Public Open Spaces Network Fund 2021	£ 7,791
Community	Melksham Without Parish Council - car park, fence and height restriction security barrier at Shurnhold Fields	£ 5,000
Community	Buying 19 acres Seend community woodland orchard meadow	£ 5,000
Community	Young Melksham - disabled access to Canberra Centre	£ 4,950
Community	Forest Community Centre - new roof	£ 3,000
Community	Public outdoor seating for Bowerhill – BRAG picnic area	£ 2,511
Community	Bulkington Parish Council - replacement of playground equipment	£ 2,500
Community	Atworth Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee -refurbishment of changing room at village hall	£ 2,000
Community	Riverside Club – new doors and internal decoration	£ 1,820
Community	Bulkington Playground repairs	£ 1,000
Community	2385 (Melksham) Squadron ATC - Duke of Edinburgh IT support	£ 900

Community	Conigre Mead Volunteers - purchase maintenance kit consisting of an engine, brush cutter head and a strimmer lead	£ 590
Community	Steeple Ashton Guides – computer and projector	£ 500
Youth	Cllr Alford - detached youth workers in King George V Playing Fields and Skate Park	£ 10,000
Youth	Young Melksham - 4Youth Mentoring 2021	£ 4,950
Youth	Young Melksham - No Limits SEND Youth Club	£ 2,850
Youth	Whorwellsdown District Guides - COVID-19 Recovery	£ 2,048
Youth	Age Friendly Melksham - Face2Face Mobile Video project	£ 918
Youth	Melksham Oak Community School - Boxercise Intervention	£ 407
Health & Wellbeing	Cllr Holder - Support for Young Carers	£ 2,750
Health & Wellbeing	Carer Support Wiltshire - Support for unpaid carers	£ 2,500
Health & Wellbeing	Celebrating Age Wiltshire - Melksham's participation in a county-wide Lottery project, delivering arts and heritage events in community settings to vulnerable clients	£ 1,500
Health & Wellbeing	Centre for Independent Living - Community Connectors	£ 950
CATG	Broughton Gifford Traffic Management Measures	£ 10,500
CATG	Melksham Old Broughton Road – drop kerbs	£ 1,000
CATG	Atworth Purlpit Road – drop kerbs	£ 1,000
CATG	Seend New Buildings – nameplate and SLOW	£ 600
CATG	Keevil Seend Road Farm – Single Track Signs	£ 400

CATG	Keevil Towmead – Unsuitable for motors signs	£ 400
CATG	Seend Bollands Hill – warning signs	£ 300
CATG	Beanacre – ground socket for SID device	£ 266
CATG	Seend Bell Hill – SLOW marking	£ 100
CATG	Seend High Street – access protection bars	£ 100

TOTALS 2017-2021:

Community	£ 184, 760
Youth	£ 80, 740
Health and Wellbeing	£ 30, 908
CATG Transport	£ 58, 613

GRAND TOTAL	£ 355, 021

Melksham Age Friendly - Melksham Community Support

During the year ending March 31st 2021 our Melksham Community Support (MCS) project has helped hundreds of people with thousands of tasks as together we tackle the challenges of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Project Timeline: 2020/21

- March 16th The Project begins. Town, Parish, Area Board and Age Friendly agree the MCS Project.
- March 26th Melksham closes as lockdown starts and people are told to stay at home. The team are inundated with calls and volunteers respond immediately.
- July 4th Lockdown is lifted and as people start returning to a version of normal, the continuing support need is apparent. MCS had highlighted residents who were already struggling before lockdown and continue to need help.
- Nov 5th Lockdown 2. Less demand this time but still a significant increase in new users and tasks, as residents self-isolate.
- Dec 2nd As Christmas rules are tightened, we launch our Christmas Meals Project, for those unable to join their families for the festive period.
- January 6th Lockdown fatigue kicks in and supporting wellbeing is highlighted, with older people struggling with loss of confidence and reduced mobility.
- March 31st As vaccinations are rolled out, we start plans to support re-connection with the community with a review of the Friendly Phone Call service and the creation of a 'Volunteer Companion' role to encourage confidence and build resilience.

Our amazing volunteers have continued to give their time and energy to Melksham Community Support and have been a great support for people who are isolated and unable to leave their homes. The 'Round Up Of Our Work' since the beginning of the pandemic in March shows just how much we have been able to achieve with the incredible support of each and every one of our volunteers out there in the community doing whatever they can to help those in need.

Our small team of have answered the phone 3,826 times so far, to people calling for help and feedback from people using the service clearly shows how valuable it has been. We have all been moved by comments such as, 'you've really made my day and I don't know what I would have done without you'; 'It's a great service and has made me realise how important the small things that people do are'; and 'I can't thank you enough, I would give you 11 out of 10'.

It's hugely rewarding to feel we continue to make a difference to vulnerable people's lives through our support. Some practical help or one of the 1,881 Friendly Phone Calls volunteers have made can make all the difference to someone on their own.

'Round Up Of Our Work'



For further information please contact: Phillipa Huxtable (01225 667971)
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