

HOLCOMBE ROGUS
PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2020 TO MARCH 2021

ANNUAL PARISH REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN

APRIL 2020 TO MARCH 2021

Holcombe Rogus seems to have a strong sense of individuality possibly because it lies on the eastern edge of Mid Devon District Council's area, nudges the border with Somerset and isn't on a main route to anywhere; almost not Devon and not quite Somerset. It's just itself!

The 2020 Annual Parish Meeting was cancelled because of the Government's restrictions imposed to control the spread of Covid 19 infections so this Report gives an idea of what the Parish Council has been doing.

Parish Councils have been permitted to hold meetings virtually using the Zoom facility. Our Parish Clerk, Leslie Findlay, quickly learned how to arrange and host Zoom meetings so that from April 2020 we conducted meetings in this way. Notices of these meetings included an invitation to members of the public wishing to observe the meetings or participate in the Open Forum, to contact the Clerk for instructions on how to achieve this.

I thank our Parish Councillors and our Clerk for making this unfamiliar format work very well. I don't think that any of our business was hindered by the virtual meetings. Face to face meetings will resume from May this year. I hope that more members of our Community will come along to see how we work; it's painless to watch!

We had full membership for a while until one Councillor chose to resign. However, this did not have a significant impact on the spread of Councillors' responsibilities. I hope that the Vacancy will soon be filled, maximising the breadth of discussion of items of importance to our Community.

Councillors have worked hard; repeatedly entreating our Neighbourhood Highways Officer to repair our roads, setting up a Snow Warden scheme to clear our roads in Winter, working to maintain and improve our footpaths and making input about Planning Applications in the Parish.

Historically, Mrs Mary Fewings had leased the Play Area to Mid Devon District Council for our Community's use. When Mid Devon was no longer able to continue this arrangement, the Parish Council agreed to lease the Play Area so that it would remain available for our youngsters' use. Unfortunately, in the early months of 2020, before the new lease could be completed, Mary Fewings died. However, it turned out that she had bequeathed the Play Area to the Parish Council, for which we are very grateful.

Drawing up the Transfer documents has been considerably delayed by Covid 19 working restrictions affecting the legal profession.

When the Transfer is complete we can start updating the Playground equipment using some funds gathered from Planning 106 agreements and from Solar Farm payments.

None of the Parish Council's business would proceed so smoothly without our Parish Clerk's hard work, her careful financial management and good humour.

Adam Pilgrim
Chairman of Holcombe Rogus Parish Council.

HOLCOMBE ROGUS PARISH COUNCIL

Planning Report by John Butler, Chair of Planning Committee for Council Meeting

on Thursday 22nd April 2021

1. Planning Applications considered in 2020 and January 2021

1.1 The Council and its planning committee considered some 23 applications for planning permission, listed building consent and notifications to carry out tree works (in the Conservation Area) during the above period. In the main, these were not contentious. There were however, applications for approval of reserved matters (pursuant to outline planning permissions previously granted) for three new dwellings in Twitchen which were outside the Conservation Area. The Parish Council and members of the community raised objections to the scale of the proposals, the adverse impact on neighbouring properties and the street scene generally. Although the comments made by the Parish Council and others did lead to some changes to the submitted plans, Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) took the view that, in the main, the proposals were not unsympathetic to nearby properties.

1.2 The Parish Council also made representations about a planning application submitted to Devon County Council relating to the construction of an asphalt plant and associated development at Broadpath, Uffculme. This proposal would, it is understood, involve the transfer of the existing asphalt plant from Westleigh Quarry and potentially reduce the number of quarry lorry movements to and from the Westleigh Quarry.

2. The MDDC Local Plan Review 2013/2033

- a. The Local Plan Review was adopted on 29th July 2020.
- b. Annex 1 to this Report contains a copy of the Policies Map for Holcombe Rogus. This shows the extent of the settlement limit for Holcombe Rogus and also the Conservation Area.
- c. Annex 2 to this Report contains a copy of Policy S13 – Villages and also Policy S14 – Countryside. Holcombe Rogus is designated as one of 22 settlements that are considered appropriate for a limited amount of development within the specified settlement limit based on physical characteristics and the availability of three essential services identified as
 - an educational facility,
 - a convenience store,
 - a public transport facility.
- d. Accordingly, the new Local Plan is already out of date given that there is no longer a convenience store within the village. This will need to be considered again when the current plan becomes subject to further review.
- e. Development proposals outside the defined settlement limit in Holcombe Rogus will fall to be considered under Policy S14 relating to the Countryside.
- f. There are no specific site allocations for housing in Holcombe Rogus.

g. Policy J 27 – land at Junction 27

This policy identifies the site of approximately 71 hectares adjoining the southbound carriageway of the M5 motorway adjacent to junction 27 for major development. The allocation is for the provision of a major high-quality regional tourism leisure and retail attraction supported by ancillary roadside services and supporting infrastructure including a pedestrian bridge across the M5 motorway linking the site to Tiverton Parkway railway station.

h. Development Management

The Local Plan Review contains detailed policies relating to development proposals. Of particular relevance to Holcombe Rogus are the following policies:

- Policy DM1 - Sustainable development principles;
- Policy DM 2 - Renewables and low carbon energy;
- Policy DM3 - Transport and air quality;
- Policy DM4 – Pollution;
- Policy DM5 – Parking;
- Policy DM6 - Residential Development -rural exception sites;
- Policy DM7 - Travellers sites;
- Policy DM8 - Rural workers dwellings;
- Policy DM 9 - Conversion of rural buildings;
- Policy DM10 - Replacement Dwellings in rural areas;
- Policy DM11 - Rural extensions and ancillary development;
- Policy DM17 - Rural shopping;
- Policy DM18 - Rural employment development;
- Policy DM20 - Agricultural development;
- Policy DM 21 - Equestrian development;
- Policy DM22 - Tourism and leisure development;
- Policy DM23 - Community facilities;
- Policy DM 25 - Development affecting heritage assets.

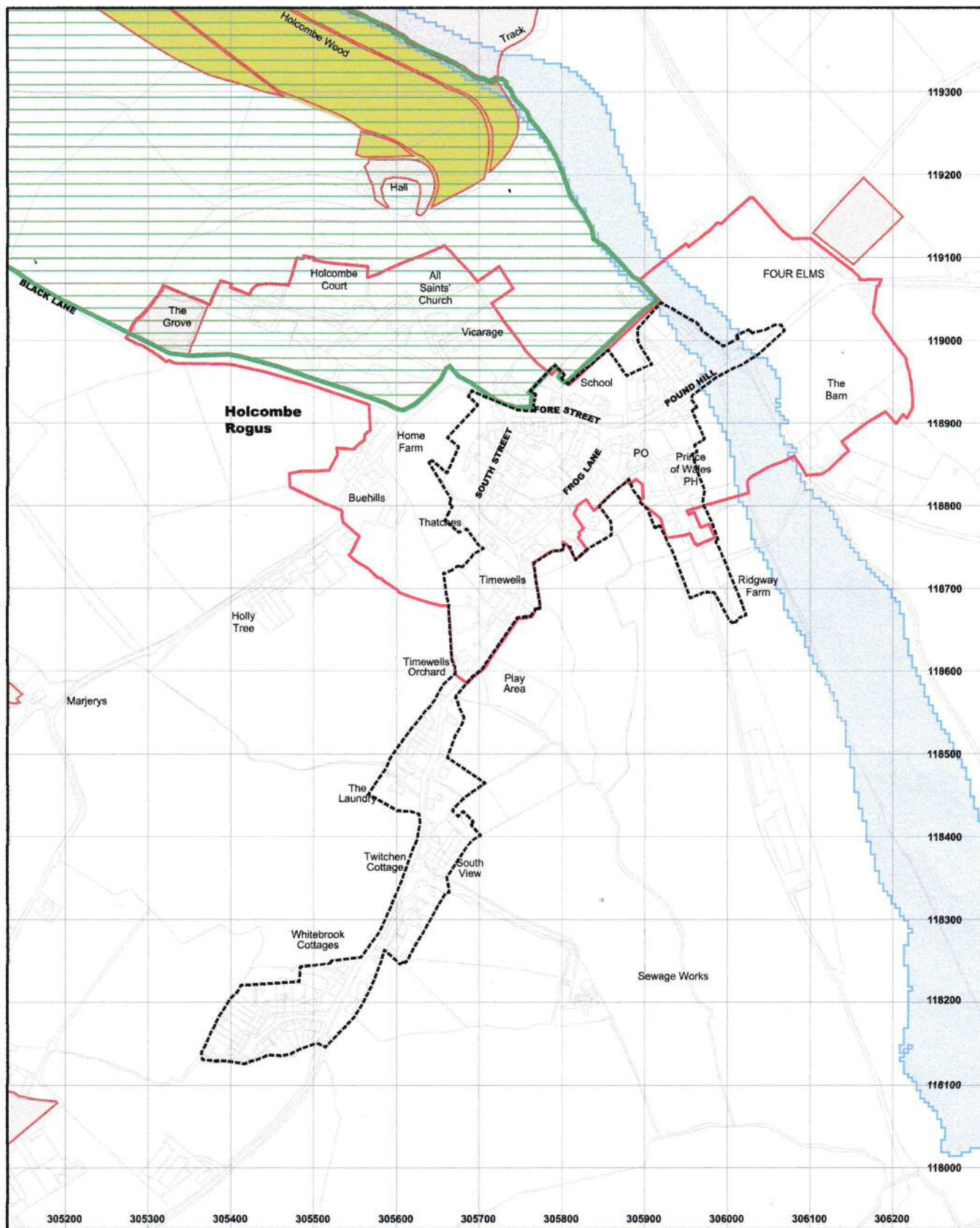
3. Changes to Legislation and Planning policy

- a. In Spring 2020 the Government issued a planning White Paper 'Planning for the future' setting out how the Government intended to achieve the aim of the building more houses.
- b. The Government stated target is for there to be an annual supply of 300,000 new homes by the mid -2020s
- c. Planning for the Future argues that the current planning process is overly complex, inefficient and opaque and that one of its flaws is that decisions are discretionary and not rules based.
- d. One of the Government's objectives is to simplify the process of granting planning permission for residential and commercial development through eg zoning tools such as local development orders.
- e. New permitted development rights will allow a range of town centre uses to convert to housing. The Government has recently announced a short inquiry to examine proposed changes to permitted development rights.

- f. The Government propose to set deadlines for all local authorities to have updated local plans and the Government will be prepared to intervene where a local authority fails to meet the deadline.
- g. The Government's proposed changes to the planning system have received a mixed response. Whilst the house building industry have been generally supportive, there has been criticism from the Royal Town Planning Institute which has voiced a concern about the approach being taken by the Government including planning bashing rhetoric.
- h. It is understood that the Housing Secretary, Robert Jenrick, said at one point that local people would get a meaningful say at the start of the planning process when local plans are drawn up but will not be able to block new schemes after that. He claimed that local people did not have a great deal of influence over the current planning system and that few people engaged with it.
- i. The Chief Planner has indicated that the Government will issue a formal response to the planning White Paper in Spring 2021 which will set out the Government's decisions on the proposed way forward including preparing for legislation that will be necessary in the autumn.
- j. The Business and Planning Act 2020 received Royal assent on 22nd July 2020. This legislation contains various of provisions which allow eg an extension of time limits in the planning process having regard to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- k. At the end of January 2021 the Government published draft revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Changes to national policy on design, tree-lined streets, flooding, removal of statutes, isolated homes and use of Article 4 directions to restrict permitted development are among proposed alterations to the NPPF.
- l. In July 2020 the environment secretary spoke about how the Government would like to implement changes to environmental assessments. The anticipated consultation document has yet to appear.
- m. The Government's proposals in the planning White Paper on land zoning have, it has been suggested, implications for the existing system of environmental impact assessments. It is understood that the EU existing body of environmental regulation has been retained in UK law in the trade deal with the EU and that the Brexit agreement contains provisions designed to prevent the UK and the EU from undercutting one another for competitive advantage. It is also understood that divergence by either party from the existing EU environmental standards would allow the other to impose penalties in the form of decreased market access which could mean higher tariff on exports.

Annex 1

Mid-Devon Local Plan- Policies Map for Holcombe Rogus



Conservation Area

Floodplain

County Wildlife Site (2007 data)

Local Register of Historic Parks & Gardens

Proposed Settlement Limit

Priority Habitats



Mid Devon Local Plan 2013 - 2033

Publication Stage Policies Map (Proposed Submission)

Holcombe Rogus

Note: The Ordnance Survey will not have updated the base to show recent changes. Consequently, not all development may be shown.

Scale
1:6000

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February
2015

Annex 2

Extracts from Mid-Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 Policy S13 -Villages and Policy S14 - Countryside

Rural areas

Policy S13

Villages

The following rural settlements will be designated as villages suitable for limited development:

Bampton, Bow, Bradninch, Chawleigh, Cheriton Bishop, Cheriton Fitzpaine, Copplestone, Culmstock, Halberton, Hemyock, Holcombe Rogus, Kentisbeare, Lapford, Morchard Bishop, Newton St Cyres, Sampford Peverell, Sandford, Silverton, Thorverton, Uffculme, Willand and Yeoford.

Development will be limited to proposals within their defined settlement limits and to allocations for:

- a) Small scale housing, employment, tourism and leisure;**
- b) Services and facilities serving the locality; and**
- c) Other limited development which enhances community vitality or meets a local social or economic need.**

2.75 There are a number of settlements which do not function as market towns, but which provide a limited level of services which support vibrant rural communities. These are locations which are suitable for a limited level of development meeting local needs appropriate to their individual opportunities. Sites for affordable housing may also come forward in locations that are not designated villages in Policy S13 above, subject to local need as demonstrated through a local housing needs survey or other suitable evidence. Policy DM6 (rural exceptions sites) explains the Council's approach to considering 'exception sites' for affordable housing.

2.76 The 22 settlements set out in the policy are considered to be appropriate for a limited level of development, based on their physical characteristics, and the availability of the following three essential services identified:

- Educational facility
- Convenience store
- Transport service

2.77 Yeoford does not have a shop but is considered appropriate for inclusion in Policy S13 due to its accessibility to other settlements and the availability of public transport including an hourly train service. The settlement limits of the villages defined in Policy S13 are shown on the Policies Map and site allocations are set out in the relevant section of the Local Plan.

2.78 Rural areas are expected to accommodate approximately 10% of the housing requirement for Mid Devon up to 2033. 483 dwellings have been allocated and are considered available, suitable and achievable, capable of coming forward within the first 10 years of the plan. It is also likely that a small number of windfall developments will be built within settlement limits or through the rural exceptions policy (Policy DM6). Given that more than half of Mid Devon's population currently resides outside the main towns, this is considered a sustainable approach which will maintain the vitality and viability of rural settlements.

2.79 Proposals for more than 5 dwellings in villages will be required to provide 30% affordable housing, which will be in the form of off-site contributions for sites of 6-10 dwellings. Exception sites may also come forward outside settlement limits, but these will need to demonstrate a need for affordable housing, and any element of market housing must be limited to the lowest amount possible to facilitate the provision of affordable housing. In appropriate circumstances, self-build housing will be permitted through the exceptions policy (Policy DM6). Other development management policies will also be applied, along with the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Meeting Housing Needs.

2.80 Historically, employment sites in rural areas across Mid Devon have been delivered primarily through windfall sites with limited provision on allocated land. The 2012-2013 Mid Devon Employment Land Survey noted that since 2006 only two small parts of allocated land at Willand and approximately 50% of allocated land at Bampton had been completed. The Council recognises the importance of retaining and providing rural employment opportunities, but the combination of permitted development rights and supportive general policies is considered sufficient to deliver employment according to demand in rural areas. However, recent permissions indicate there is demand for employment in Willand so the Willand Industrial Estate is retained along with Scott's Quarry at Bampton because the development has planning permission and is deliverable. In general, site allocations within the towns meet the overall target for commercial development across the district, providing flexibility and choice in the market.

Countryside

Policy S14

Countryside

Development outside the settlements defined by Policies S10-S13 will preserve and where possible enhance the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside while promoting sustainable diversification of the rural economy. Detailed development management policies will permit agricultural and other appropriate rural uses, subject to the following criteria:

- a) Affordable and low cost housing to meet local needs, gypsy and traveller accommodation, residential conversion of appropriate existing buildings, replacement dwellings, housing essential to accommodate a rural worker and accommodation ancillary to a dwelling;
- b) Appropriately scaled retail, employment, farm diversification, tourism and leisure related development (including appropriate conversion of existing buildings);
- c) Appropriately scaled and designed extensions and other physical alterations to existing buildings;
- d) Agricultural and equestrian development;
- e) Community facilities, such as educational facilities, buildings associated with public open space, transportation and infrastructure proposals (including green infrastructure); and
- f) Renewable energy and telecommunications.

2.81 National policy supports thriving rural communities and encourages multiple benefits from the use of land in rural areas. Development in the countryside in the context of this policy is defined by land outside of the settlement limits of the main towns (S10-S12) and villages (S13). A strong rural economy is promoted by national policy through sustainable growth of business and enterprise in rural areas. Development in the countryside will be managed to meet local need, promote vibrant rural communities and help provide appropriate forms of agricultural and rural diversification to support the rural economy and sustain environmental qualities of the countryside. Development management policies allow for small-scale employment development in suitable locations whilst retaining the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. These sites can come forward according to market demand.

2.82 To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing has been allocated where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. New isolated homes will be avoided in the countryside unless there are special circumstances as set out in national policy and supplemented in relevant Local Plan policies such as Policy DM6 (rural exception sites), DM8 (rural workers dwellings) and DM9 (conversion of rural buildings). In the context of the Mid Devon Local Plan, 'isolated' refers to any location outside of defined settlement limits. Such land is defined as the countryside which can include small settlements and hamlets. National policy requires that new sites for travellers should be limited in open countryside that is away from existing settlements or outside areas allocated in the development plan. In certain circumstances the development of such sites outside of settlement limits will be appropriate, providing it can meet the criteria set out within Policy DM7 (gypsy and traveller accommodation).

2.83 National policy advocates the provision of market housing in rural areas where it would facilitate the provision of significant affordable housing required to meet housing need. To facilitate the provision of affordable and low cost (discounted) housing in rural areas across Mid Devon, rural exception sites will be considered in line with Policy DM6 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Meeting Housing Needs.

Holcombe Rogus Parish Council Highways Report
April 2020 to March 2021

Having established a list of priorities for pothole repairs across the parish after the first lockdown, due to Covid restrictions and lockdowns little got done until the new year. The Kennels Bridge section of road which had become dangerous has been partially repaired with a substantial area of tarmac.

A moderate attempt at smoothing over the surface has been made on the section of road from Coppers Roost to Brinscott Cross via Pound Ground with some of the worst potholes filled in.

The road through Wardmoor is still potholed badly as is the road past Ford Farm entrance. The ditch at Ford farm entrance needs digging out by the landowner to stop erosion of the road.

A local resident at Whipcott, has complained recently at the state of the road past Whipcott, parallel to the canal. This road was second on our list but has yet to be attended to. We have called on Devon Highways through the web site several times for potholes to be repaired as is everyone entitled to do. We have also maintained contact with our local Highways Manager Phil Morgan who has tried his best for our parish.

The road ditches have been serviced by our lengthsman.

The weather this year has been kind to our roads so we have had little need of our emergency team of snow wardens.

Rupert Snook
Highways Representative
Holcombe Rogus Parish Council

P3 Public Rights of Way

Annual Report April 2020 to March 2021

Despite Covid 19's appearance in March, the period covered in this report began well with work completed on Footpath (FP) 20 to improve access by constructing a new bridge and repairs to gates etc. Similarly, the stile providing access to FP24 was exchanged for a gate to enable easier access for path users.

Changes to FP15 were also instigated with meetings with the Ramblers Association, the landowner and the Parish Paths Liaison Officer, Ros Davis, to reroute the path and change the existing stile/bridge for a gate. Land ownership questions have caused a delay to this. We are awaiting news from DCC.

Finally, the annual survey has been completed and submitted to Devon County Council (DCC) to ensure the Parish Council (PC) gets its annual funding for path maintenance via the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme (P3).

Until the Covid19 outbreak the PC had employed a local contractor to maintain paths where necessary. This has now been curtailed by Devon County and work is currently held under the auspices of our new Local Warden, Richard Spurway, who employs only DCC approved contractors. Any FP problems can now be reported via devon.cc/report-it using maps to highlight any problems.

Guy Orchard
P3 Representative
Holcombe Rogus Parish Council

ANNUAL PARISH REPORT FROM THE PARISH CLERK/RFO
FOR THE APRIL 2021 MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting was cancelled in 2020 due to the beginning of the Covid 19 lockdown and the annual report was never written. Therefore, this report will be an amalgamation of the two years from April 2019 to April 2021.

As soon as the Government legalised Parish Council Meetings to be held virtually, we have managed to hold all our meetings and only had to cancel the Annual Parish Meetings and the March 2020 Full Council Meeting. With perhaps a few misgivings to start with it has been surprisingly successful and only occasionally have we had a few technical hitches. With the vaccine roll out going so well we will be resuming our Meetings in the Village Hall from May 2021 (with a few extra cleaning commitments and masks!)

Play Area

The Council were in the process of leasing the Play Area land from Mrs Fewings when very sadly in early 2020 Mrs Mary Fewings died. She has bequeathed the land to Holcombe Rogus Parish Council (HRPC), which is a wonderful gift and one that will hopefully benefit many future generations of children in the village. Unfortunately, due to the Covid pandemic the transfer of the land is taking a very long time to process and it is hoped it will be completed within the next month.

The Council received 106 monies to replace the fencing around the Play Area and this was erected in June 2019 with two new gates. In addition, two picnic tables and one bench were also purchased which were well used once the play area re-opened in July 2020 after a compulsory lockdown in March.

The annual inspection of the equipment recommended removal or repair of several items and these have been subsequently removed. The Play Area Reserve Fund was set up for the purchase of new equipment and this is currently at £22,000. Once the transfer is complete the Sub Committee will start the process of raising further funds and hopefully having the new equipment installed as soon as possible.

Snow Plan

The snow plan for the parish has been published and shows the roads that will be gritted by the Snow Wardens. Currently the Council have three trained Snow Wardens but fortunately the winters have not been too extreme and very little action has been required.

Funding received

	<u>2019/2020</u>	<u>2020/2021</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Precept	11,000	11,110	
Grants	6960		106 monies for play area fencing and seating
Interest	43.62	6.021	
Solar Fund income	5596.55	5671.71	
P3	200	160	For maintenance of footpaths
VAT reclaimed	2409.76	630.78	

Training

20 Jun 19	Good Councillor course	Cllr Mathews
15 Oct 19	Annual Clerks meeting	Parish Clerk
23 Oct 19	DALC Conference	Cllrs Pilgrim & Butler, Parish Clerk
26 Nov 19	Snow Warden Training	Cllr Cooling, Parish Clerk, Dave Authers
17 Sept 20	Changes to Planning Regulations	Cllr Butler & Parish Clerk
13 Oct 20	Data Protection webinar	Parish Clerk

It is very much hoped that we will be returning to some kind of normality this summer and can look forward to getting our play area properly equipped.

Leslie Findlay

Parish Clerk/RFO/Proper Officer

Holcombe Rogus: District Councillor Jo Norton's report – April 2021

Once again – despite all that the past year has thrown at us – it has been a privilege to serve Holcombe Rogus as a district councillor for Canonsleigh. I enjoy this responsibility and am thankful to the parish council for always being so welcoming and helpful.

There was a great deal of uncertainty this time last year with meetings being cancelled and delays in council processes occurring because of the outbreak of coronavirus. This was an incredibly stressful time but Holcombe parish council have adapted incredibly well – being one of the first parish councils to start using Zoom as a format for meetings. I have been able to stay well-informed of important news and updates relating to the parish because of this – thank you.

With regard to planning this year I have represented the council and public's views towards application 19/02013/FULL (adjacent to Wardmoor) by calling it in to be discussed by Mid Devon's planning committee. The Mid Devon Local Plan was also approved by members of Mid Devon district council in July 2020. By this point, it was too late to consider changing the status of the village due to the closure of the shop, however, this should be considered for the next local plan as the amount of facilities a settlement has determines if and where new housing could and should be built. The boundary commission review was also carried out during the latter half of 2020 and although Holcombe Rogus has no direct changes, it should be noted that from 2023, Uplowman parish will also be included within the ward of Canonsleigh. As I write, the new Public Spaces Protection Order is also being finalised. This will ensure that dogs will not be allowed to enter the play area and that if owners are not following the legislation outlined in the Order, they can be fined and prosecuted for their actions.

Mid Devon District Council are constantly responding to the issues cause by the pandemic and I would like to remind parishioners that help for many issues – including non-Covid19-related issues can be found on the MDDC website underneath the sub-heading 'residents' or by clicking this link: [Community support across Mid Devon - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/community-support)

I'd also like to remind residents that I sit on the Environment Policy Development Group, the Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Group, the Licensing and Regulatory Committees and of course I represent the ward at all full council meetings. If any member of the public would like to get in touch regarding any of those areas of interest, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I wish you all the very best for the coming year and I look forward to working with you and for you all again.

Jo Norton

Ward member for Canonsleigh (Mid Devon District Council)