

**FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting  
Held on Wednesday 20th May 2020, commencing at 7.30pm  
Held remotely via Zoom video conferencing**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>Cllr Janet Foster (Chairman)</b>
	<b>Cllrs Neil Bonter, Tim Brake, John Davis, Mike Sanders, Bryan Timms, Simon Thomas and Anne Tomlinson</b>
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	<b>Sarah Goudie, Executive Officer (EO)</b>
	<b>2 members of the public</b>
	<b>Jo Tsigarides (AEO)</b>
	<b>District Councillor Ingrid Thomas</b>
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	<b>Cllrs John Hammond and Shaun McCarthy</b>

**20.49 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

**The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and briefed all attendees on how the meeting would proceed. The Chairman then invited items for discussion under the Open Session.**

**20.50 OPEN SESSION**

Cllr Timms remarked how different this meeting was to his first, this week, some 29 years ago, and subsequently asked whether anyone had any information on the health of a former member of the Parish Council. As no-one had, it was agreed that he would make contact directly.

Cllr Davis wished to raise the issue of the clearance of the meadow area on the land to the rear of 131 Winchester Road and adjacent to the SINC. The disturbance had now been ongoing for 11 days. He wished to thank District Councillor Tennyson on how hard she had worked in trying to resolve this issue, including liaising with the local member of parliament. Cllr Davis expressed disappointment over the police's lack of intervention, even though it was confirmed that this is a criminal matter. Cllr Davis was reminded that the open area was not part of the SINC, that is the copse area, and although the area is area abundant with wildlife, there is only guidance on how it should be managed rather than enforceable conditions on this. Cllr Davis questioned whether there should be a plan in place when intended use for open space areas go wrong, which was noted.

***There were no issues to raise, the Chairman closed the open session and opened the formal meeting at 7.40 pm. Standing Orders were applied.***

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**20.51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs John Hammond and Shaun McCarthy, the apologies were acknowledged and accepted.

**20.52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chairman reminded all Councillors of their obligation to declare any declarations of either pecuniary or personal interest in any Agenda items.

There were no declarations of interest.

### **20.53 COUNCIL MINUTES**

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020, previously circulated, following proposal as an accurate record of the meeting by Cllr Tomlinson, seconded by Cllr Thomas, agreed by all Councillors. The Minutes would be signed by the Chairman at the next meeting held in person.

### **20.54 TO APPROVE THE DEFERRAL OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

The EO advised that the legislation had been changed under the current restrictions which allows the deferral of the Annual Meeting of the Council until May 2021, should the Council choose to do so. A decision needs to be made whether to defer the meeting until next May, which would mean that everyone remains in their current appointments until that time, or whether to just defer the meeting until the Council are able to meet again in person. The change in legislation allows the meeting to take place virtually, but it is historically a long agenda with Community Governance documents to be approved with continual voting, therefore more practical to hold this meeting in person rather than on line.

*District Councillor Thomas joined the meeting.*

The initial proposal, to defer until May 2021 was discussed and agreed in principle by Cllr Davis, and was supported by other members, however Cllr Thomas wished to amend the proposal. As it is not certain yet as to when it will be safe for the Council to meet in person, and with guidance changing frequently, he suggested that the decision should be deferred for six months until September, to agree potentially holding the Annual meeting in October.

Following proposal of the amended motion by Cllr Thomas, which was seconded by Cllr Tomlinson, and with full agreement from all Councillors, it was therefore RESOLVED to defer the decision until September.

### **20.55 EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

#### **20.55.1 Coronavirus COVID-19 Update**

The EO summarised the latest changes, and confirmed that, the skate park was now open, the tennis courts were open to family groups only, and both the Angling Club and Archers had sought permission to restart following their respective body's guidance on social distancing and other measures that would need to be in place. The children's play area, MUGA, and outside multi gym all remain closed. The Benians Pavilion also remains closed, so there will be no facilities available.

The Chairman confirmed that the Council were happy that both the EO and AEO continue to work from home until further restrictions are lifted.

#### **20.55.2 Annual Parish Meeting Report.**

The EO had previously circulated the report document. There had been no enquiries or queries to date.

#### **20.55.3 Correspondence, Matters arising and items for approval**

During the current situation, the EO was circulating the correspondence list weekly, and had asked Councillors whether they would like this practice to continue. All Councillors were in agreement that this practice continues.

The EO confirmed that the postponed HALC conference is now scheduled to be held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October, but would remind Councillors nearer the time should anyone wish to attend.

The AEO then gave a report on the Virtual VE Day race which has replaced the VE Day celebrations, and the cancelled 10k in July. The event will take place for the whole of June, giving everyone the opportunity to enter 'on-line', with a leader board. The first 50 entrants will receive a VE medal.

The Chairman then thanked the AEO for her work on this event.

*Two members of the public joined the meeting.*

The EO also then thanked the AEO for all her help with the scarecrow competition and VE day mug distribution to those that had uploaded photographs of their VE day stay at home parties.

**20.55.3.1** Following a short discussion, with the EO advising that two contacts needed to be updated, and the Chairman requesting the inclusion of contact details in the event of unauthorised encampments, it was RESOLVED to approve the Business Continuity Plan, as circulated, following proposal by Cllr Brake, seconded by Cllr Tomlinson, and agreement from all Councillors.

**20.55.3.2** Following a brief discussion it was RESOLVED to approve the Annual Grant to the Village Hall Committee of £2,000.

**20.55.3.3** As several sports clubs have suffered financially due to the COVID 19 pandemic, and also lost part of last season's use of the pitches due to the inclement weather, the EO asked for the Council to consider waiving all club fees this year, this would exclude the annual charges for the Allotments, Bowls Club and Angling Club. Cllr Brake questioned the financial implications and the EO confirmed that the Council could absorb the loss of earnings, with savings being made with less frequency of grass cutting, and utility usage. Also confirming that the Council has six months operating costs in Reserves. Cllr Thomas, having carried out calculations on the budget, believes there is enough expenditure budgeted for without having to use Reserves, and consequently suggested that all clubs should be free of rental costs this year, with Cllr Timms confirming that he believes that this is the least the Parish Council can do.

The EO then asked the Parish Council to include considering not charging the Benians Committee building rental this year, regardless as to whether the small business grant, which had been applied for was awarded or not. Cllr Tomlinson reminded the Council we had agreed to assist the Pavilion with ongoing costs should the grant be awarded, although Cllr Davis reminded the Council that the Benians Committee do have healthy bank balance despite the issues incurred last year. Cllr Sanders also agreed that all clubs should be included in the 'rent free' proposal.

Cllr Tomlinson proposed a blanket waiving fees for all clubs that use Parish Council facilities, which was agreed unanimously by all Councillors and therefore RESOLVED. The EO was asked to widely communicate this decision to the community, via Four Marks News and social media, to highlight the Parish Council's support during this time.

## **20.56 OPEN SPACES**

Cllr Tomlinson gave a brief report on the Open Spaces meeting. Highlighting the virtual run, mentioned earlier by the AEO, and encouraged everyone to participate. Cllr Tomlinson also confirmed that the dug outs had now been removed, and hopefully that will improve the anti social behaviour issues, and although it seems a long time away to be talking Christmas, confirmed that the lights switch on had been agreed for 1<sup>st</sup> December.

Cllr Sanders raised an issue with reference to the CCTV system at Oak Green incurring electrical costs by its host. The EO responded by questioning this, as they had been led to believe the system was not working and therefore how was it incurring costs? Cllr Foster also confirmed this but agreed to investigate further.

## **20.57 PLANNING**

Cllr Thomas referring to the circulated Minutes gave a brief report on the recent Planning Meeting.

There had been multiple applications from Briars Lodge, including installation, re-location of permissioned stable block and change from permeable driveway surface to tarmac. The EO subsequently advised that advise that the latter application has now been withdrawn.

Cllr Timms raised an issue with the comment with reference to one of the applications, which the EO confirmed had not been submitted, but was merely a summary of discussions. He believed that regardless of the potential

outcome the Parish Council should remain consistent in their response. Cllr Thomas responded by confirming that the Planning Committee have been very robust and critical in all their previous responses with reference to this site, but are restrained by Planning regulations, which give positive discrimination to the applicants.

Oakwood, 102 Telegraph Lane. An application for an increase in size and retention of entrance gates and walling. The EO had liaised with the case officer for clarification on several issues, and additional information has now been requested from the applicant.

A repeat application has been submitted for two dwellings to the land East of Kitwood Place, where change of use to residential was conditioned on the dwellings remaining the same size. This is an application to demolish the existing buildings and replace with two large dwellings. The previous application was refused, and a similar objection has been submitted.

The application for two dwellings at Sunnybank, Gradwell Lane, was refused.

The Janeland application for 5 additional gypsy pitches will be discussed at the EHDC planning committee the following evening, representation has been sent on behalf of the Parish Council by the Chairman, with a strong objection having been submitted at the time of application. Representations have also been submitted by District Councillor Tennyson and one on behalf of the objectors.

Cllr Timms questioned whether the application had been recommended for approval, which was confirmed by Cllr Thomas, which had been objected to by the District Councillors, hence its hearing at the Planning Committee.

Cllr Foster questioned whether the public can attend remotely, which was confirmed, and Cllr Thomas agreed to circulate the link.

District Councillor Thomas was invited to speak at this point where she confirmed that with reference to the tarmac application at Briars Lodge, the case officer had managed to negotiate the withdrawal. With reference to Janeland, although the applicant was advised to take the application to appeal due to the delay in the decision making process, the applicant chose not to. The delay however had allowed the applicant to solve issues that had been raised in the objections. Although Cllr Thomas had been liaising with Hampshire Highways to stick to their policies, this had unfortunately not been successful.

Cllr Foster briefly raised the proposal for the Wey Incinerator on the A31 and that the Parish Council should make a comment, which would be discussed at the next appropriate meeting.

#### **20.57.1 Premises variation in Licences for Tescos and Naked Grape**

The EO highlighted the proposed changes as detailed in each application for variation in their premises' licences, there were no comments on either application, other than the Parish Council should be supportive of local businesses. Cllr Sanders raised concern about the potential for street furniture being placed outside the shop, with a further comment from Cllr Brake reminding everyone that alcohol cannot be consumed in public open spaces in Four Marks. The EO agreed to contact the applicant to pre-empt any issues in this regard.

*District Councillor Thomas left the meeting temporarily while the next item was discussed.*

#### **20.57.2 Planning Application, 35561/011, 68 Lymington Bottom Road, Medstead**

As the neighbouring parish and proximity to the Four Marks border, it was decided to submit a comment for this planning application to support Medstead Parish Council. The EO presented the details of the application, including the location plan, proposed site layout and plans and elevations for discussion. Councillors' comments are summarised, as below, for submission to the planning officer.

Four Marks Parish Council, being the neighbouring Parish Council, wish to object to this application, as follows:

- The proposed dwelling is a multiple occupancy dwelling completely out of character and keeping with the existing street scene.

- The proposed three storey dwelling is overdevelopment in height, size and massing compared with properties in both the immediate and wider vicinity, high density and urban in design
- There will be a loss of privacy due to overlooking into neighbouring properties.
- There is not enough parking provision identified for residents or visitors, although the planning statement is aiming at those down-sizing, it is just as likely to be younger, first time buyers with two vehicles, and with no option for on street parking.
- The transport survey makes no mention of the builders' merchants on the opposite side of the road and the ongoing daily delivery and customer movements
- Concerns are also raised with the access, and confirmation that the appropriate visibility splay can be achieved, the wide verge referred to is only approximately 1 metre wide.
- Due to the topography of the application site, and well documented drainage issues in that area, the proposed hard tarmac surface for car parking provision will accentuate water run-off which will need to be mitigated.
- The planning statement refers to front boundary hedge screening of the site, the only current screening is a small newly planted hedge of minimal height.

Therefore, in summary the proposal is contrary to policy CP29 of the EHDC Local Plan JCS as it does not respect the area's characteristics, is not appropriate or sympathetic to its setting in terms of its height, massing and density, and for the reasons as stated above, ask the planning office to respectfully refuse this application.

*District Councillor Thomas re-entered the meeting.*

## **20.58 FINANCIAL REPORTS**

### **20.58.1 Approval of Bank Reconciliation and year end reports 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

Following circulation and with no further comments, following Full Council approval, it was RESOLVED to authorise the bank reconciliations and associated trial balance report following proposal by Cllr Thomas and seconded by Cllr Tomlinson.

### **20.58.2 Approval of Final Accounts, year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

It was RESOLVED to approve the Final Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, as circulated, following proposal by Cllr Brake, seconded by Cllr Davis and unanimous agreement. The Accounts would be signed by the Chairman for submission to the Auditors in due course.

Cllr Thomas thanked the EO for the detailed explanation on the ear marked reserves.

### **20.58.3 Approval of the Annual Governance Statement, year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

It was RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, as circulated, following proposal by Cllr Brake, seconded by Cllr Tomlinson, and unanimous agreement. The Annual Governance Statement would be signed by the Chairman for submission to the Auditors in due course.

### **20.58.4 Approval of the Accounting Statements, year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

It was RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, as circulated, following proposal by Cllr Thomas, seconded by Cllr Davis, and unanimous agreement. The Accounting Statements would be signed by the Chairman for submission to the Auditors in due course.

### **20.58.5 Approval of date of announcement for exercise of public rights**

It was RESOLVED to approve the date of announcement as 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020, with the period of exercise of public rights commencing from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and ending on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Any member of the public who wishes to inspect the accounting records, will be subject to any government guidance at the time of inspection, and must acknowledge restrictions with social distancing.

### **20.58.6 Approval of April 2020 bank payments and reconciliations, as below:**

Following circulation and with no further comment, following Full Council approval, it was RESOLVED to authorise the April 2020 payments as presented and detailed below, following proposal by Cllr Foster and seconded by Cllr Sanders, which would be duly signed and filed in due course.

**List of Payments made between 01/04/2020 and 30/04/2020**

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
01/04/2020	East Hants District Council	300033	450.56		Pavilion Rates 2020/21
05/04/2020	Talk Talk Business	DD	32.70		March office phone/b/band
09/04/2020	Lloyds Bank Credit Card	DD	99.90		DJM Direct - Rec. Grd Equip.
09/04/2020	Lloyds Bank Credit Card	DD	3.00		Monthly Credit Card Fee
15/04/2020	FM04 - JT	BACS	283.92		Clerical admin support
15/04/2020	Hampshire Woodlands Ltd	BACS	342.00		Maintenance-wildlife corridor
15/04/2020	Hampshire Woodlands Ltd	BACS	576.00		Storm tree work SHP
15/04/2020	HALC	BACS	24.00		Training SG/JT
15/04/2020	Idverde Limited	BACS	1,272.60		Bin emptying Jan-Mar
15/04/2020	Eurofire Protection Ltd	BACS	89.40		Eurofire - Annual check
15/04/2020	Excel FSE	BACS	97.02		Pavilion alarm - annual cover
15/04/2020	SLCC	BACS	227.00		SLCC Annual Membership
15/04/2020	Four Marks Village Hall	BACS	18.00		March Village Hall Hire
15/04/2020	Vita Play Limited	BACS	20,625.00	S106 approval	Install/supply Half Pipe
15/04/2020	Eddie Hodkin	BACS	130.00		March Oak Green Maint.
15/04/2020	Running Imp Ltd	BACS	343.79	DC Grant 19/20	VE Day memorabilia
24/04/2020	British Gas	DD	300.94		BP gas charges Feb/Mar
30/04/2020	1&1 Ionos Internet Limited	DD	8.44		Old website monthly fee
30/04/2020	Blachere Illumination UK Ltd	BACS	1,373.66		OG Christmas light hire
30/04/2020	SSE Southern Electric	BACS	683.17		Pavilion electric Jan-Mar
30/04/2020	Studio Stone Ltd	BACS	732.00		Memorial maint.
30/04/2020	Cato Computers	BACS	498.97		Software & supplies
30/04/2020	FM01	SO	1,716.53		FM01 April Net Salary
30/04/2020	FM04 - JT	SO	263.64		FM04 April Salary
30/04/2020	HM Revenue & Customs	SO	596.62		April PAYE/NI
30/04/2020	Hampshire Pension Fund	SO	571.47		April Pension contributions
<b>Total Payments</b>			<b>31,360.33</b>		

**20.58.7 Approval of May 2020 bank payments, as below:**

Following circulation and with no further comment, following Full Council approval, it was RESOLVED to authorise the May 2020 payments as presented and detailed below, following proposal by Cllr Brake and seconded by Cllr Davis, which would be duly signed in due course.

**List of Payments made between 01/05/2020 and 31/05/2020**

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
06/05/2020	Talk Talk Business	DD	32.34		April office phone/b/band
11/05/2020	Lloyds Bank Credit Card	DD	3.00		Monthly credit card fee
21/05/2020	Studio Stone Ltd	BACS	192.00		Memorial remedial works
21/05/2020	Playsafety Limited	BACS	174.60		Play area annual inspection
21/05/2020	HALC	BACS	911.74		HALC Affiliation Fee 20/21
21/05/2020	SSE Southern Electric	BACS	35.54		Oak Green Electric Jan-Apr
21/05/2020	SSE Southern Electric	BACS	33.05		Bowls Club Electric Jan-Apr
21/05/2020	Semrah Landscape Management	BACS	1,206.00		Semrah - grass cutting
21/05/2020	Zarik Kuhn	BACS	460.00		Football dugout removal R/G
26/05/2020	British Gas	DD	53.91		Pavilion Gas charge April
<b>Total Payments</b>			<b>3,102.18</b>		

### **20.58.8 To consider proposal to transfer £25,000 to CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund from Reserves**

To alleviate the current financial risk due to in excess of £90,000 being held in the current account, it was RESOLVED, following proposal by Cllr Foster, seconded by Cllr Brake and agreed unanimously, to move £25,000 from the current account to the deposit account.

## **20.59 EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The Chairman asked if any representatives had anything to report on their various Committees.

### **Benians Pavilion**

As confirmed earlier, the Benians Pavilion is unlikely to open before September. The EO confirmed that their annual accounts have been requested but have not yet been prepared, and agreed to chase in due course. There had been no AGM and there was no further news on the proposed expansion.

### **Festival Committee.**

In the ongoing absence of Cllr Hammond, the village gateway signs have been put on hold, however a request for some Speedwatch area notification signs, which it had been agreed to discuss further at Open Spaces, the EO suggested moving forward with the replacement Four Marks signs with a picture, taken from the Village Sign, with a Speedwatch sign underneath. These would be for the other entrances into the village, both bridges, and Hawthorn Lane.

### **Village Hall**

Ownership and responsibility of the Ash Tree.

Several concerns have been raised with reference to the health and safety of the Ash Tree. The Village Hall Committee and Hampshire Highways are both denying ownership. The EO had sought legal advice as to whether the Parish Council as Custodian Trustee had any responsibility.

Hampshire Highways have confirmed that "the grass area in front (and arguably partially to the side) of the tree are within the highway, but believe the tree itself should be considered a 'boundary tree', meaning it was planted by a land owner and not the highway authority. Over the years boundary trees may grow/spread towards the highway, but highway rights cannot accrue through a tree and therefore even if say 50% of the tree trunk juts into the highway boundary line, it is not considered a highway tree'. The EO confirmed that her intervention has, however, prompted Hampshire Highways to assess the tree for safety.

Legal advice has confirmed that most of highways land is not registered and therefore the presumption is that it runs between boundary features, but does not include them, in this instance, the tree. Highways rights can exist over private land. It is clear that there is disparity in the documents, the deed plan shows the verge 'island' where the tree sits being part of the land which was conveyed in 1965 to the Parish Council (as Custodian Trustee), however the recent Land Registry Title Plan shows the island being outside the area that has been registered and so possibly within the highway (which may be explained by changes in OS mapping). In situations where there is sort of disparity the deed plan normally takes precedence as it is created and agreed at the time that the land is transferred, and so should more accurately reflect the intentions of those involved.

The legal advice the EO received from Hampshire Legal Services states that, 'in terms of responsibility for the safety of those using the Village Hall, the Committee would be the occupiers for the purposes of the Occupiers Liability Acts. They are in occupational control of the land and the buildings and so the onus would be on them to assess the risk posed by the tree and put in place arrangements to reduce the risk to users of the land accordingly', which by taking the action of arranging surveys and informing their insurers they have accepted this, and therefore legal advice is that the Committee would be primarily responsible for the safety of those using the Village Hall site'.

In response, the Village Hall Committee have obtained a document identifying the areas that Hampshire Highways are responsible for, which includes the verge island the tree sits on, in a bid to clarify ownership.

However, as the Committee have arranged surveys and informed their insurers, they appear to have accepted that they are primarily responsible for the safety of those using the Village Hall site.

In summary in response to the query on how the Parish Council should proceed, as the tree is either on the highway or land managed by the Committee, there is no apparent role for the Parish Council just because they have raised concern. The suggestion is that the Parish Council write to both Hampshire Highways and the Village Hall Committee expressing their concerns and ask that they resolve this issue between themselves in order for the tree to be properly managed ensuring that the letter incorporates a disclaimer advising that the Parish Council has no liability in this regard.

#### **Oak Green.**

A question was raised over whether the sub-contractor should be returning to clear Oak Green now and after discussion it was agreed that they should be contacted to see if they wish to return, but that the decision should be theirs whether to return. However, concerns were expressed over the maintenance of the shrub beds and the overgrown weeds, and it was agreed that they are in need of some heavy-duty maintenance. It was suggested an alternative contractor be sought to try and get the beds under control and managed appropriately.

#### **Footpaths**

Cllr Timms questioned the progression on locating the kissing gate that had been installed. The AEO confirmed that this had not been on Four Marks land, and then gave a brief update on the progress to date with other kissing gate proposals. The EO then relayed to the Council the recent communication received with reference to priority cutting being cancelled for this year and that she would look at alternative options already proposed to ensure the footpaths were cleared for ease of access throughout the growing season.

#### **20.60 NEXT MEETING:**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020, 7.30pm, it was agreed that this meeting would be held remotely as it was unlikely restrictions would be lifted by this date.

#### **20.61 The Chairman closed the meeting at 21.30pm.**



## APPENDIX 1

### District Councillor Report – Cllr Ingrid Thomas

In these strange times we have been adapting and managed to work remotely, answered residents questions and solved problems in the majority of cases. It is difficult to visit sites and of course officers have suffered the same restrictions which means everything takes longer.

It has been amazing to hear the stories of kindness and the way that our community has worked together through this difficult period. The scarecrows have provided moments of fun and pleasure for many. The street parties were so well organised and done with such care that it makes you wonder how much fun we'd all have had without restrictions.....maybe by VJ Day in August we will be able to have more celebrations.

On a more negative note. The issue that has concerned more residents than should have been the case is bonfires. Whilst in normal times smokey bonfires are a nuisance, when there is a major problem with a respiratory disease this becomes very serious. We have a number of people in our community who suffer from respiratory problems for whom additional smoke is a serious health issue. Please consider others even more than usual at this time. There has also been a small increase in fly tipping.. its simple..don't do it. others do not want your rubbish dumped anywhere, now the tips are open again take it there.

Over the past few years I have spoken to and tried to help many of the residents of our new estates with the many build and maintenance issues that have occurred. It seems that not all the properties have been built to a standard one could expect and that getting things put right has been a major challenge. I have suggested to most that forming a resident group and sharing experiences and working together is a good way to tackle the problems.

Now I think we need to go further. There are residents groups who have learnt a lot about how to deal with the developers and maintenance companies. There are new residents groups who have much to learn. I would like to suggest that groups of residents meet together and share experience so that matters can be solved more quickly.

I would also say I find the need for any such groups appalling and that shoddy workmanship and poor service of management companies needs to stop. Perhaps we can make a real difference to people in the future if we can change the culture in development that allows this shocking standard to happen.

I understand that our long awaited A31 crossing at Lymington Bottom will now happen at the end of the summer. Our county councillor Mark Kemp Gee continues to chase for us. He is also working with Diana to maintain our wildflower verges.

The large sites allocation and local plan review have been hit by the need for officers to work from home and the difficulties that raises. So I still cannot give you the final news we're all waiting for .

If we can be of any help on any district council matter please contact one of us. District council deals with planning, bins, Licensing, housing, parking, enforcement, fly tipping, environmental health all details of the services and how to report problems are on the website. [easthants.gov.uk](http://easthants.gov.uk). District council collects council tax for all councils and police etc. The county council deals with roads, education, social care, household waste tips, footpaths and many other things. full details of all their services are on the website [hants.gov.uk](http://hants.gov.uk). Our parish councils deal with all the local issues like recreation grounds, cemeteries, open space, please see [fourmarks-Pc.org.uk](http://fourmarks-Pc.org.uk) for details of all meetings and contacts.

Along with many of you I hope to be released soon, I hope that you are all coping well with this difficult time. Stay safe, keep washing your hands and everything else and let's emerge into the new normal still being a strong and caring community

Stay healthy and look after yourselves, your families and friends.

Ingrid Thomas

01420 561552

District ward councillor for Four Marks, Medstead and Chawton