



'Oyez' - Clapham Parish Council Newsletter - December 2020-Issue 5

Message from the Chairman

Well, here we all are again, at time of writing, in tier 2 but at least it feels like there might be a way through back to our old lives next year. The crisis has brought out the best in people and so much kindness and comfort has been shared by everyone in Clapham that the value of community has been undeniable this year.

We hoped to have a big event at some point this year. First it was June and VE Day 75, then later in the summer and finally autumn half term, all of which proved unfeasible with COVID-19 restrictions. We will just have to do it all next year when we will hopefully have the end of the pandemic to celebrate too!

The good news is that we have now finished the playground but we may have to wait for the skip to be removed until we get a few good hard frosts so the lorry can make it across the field. The playground has passed a full independent safety inspection with a few tweaks and recommendations. The councillors and Clerk will be trained to inspect the equipment on a regular basis and an independent safety check will take place each year too. This is the reason why you may occasionally see councillors on the roundabout and slides...

In Financial news we have passed our audit giving the Parish Council a clean bill of health for the management of its finances. Thanks to the Responsible Financial Officer, Sarah Linfield, for all her tireless work with a budget that became unusually complex with all the grant money she obtained for us!

We have invested in a new website to improve our compliance with accessibility legislation. We have also taken the opportunity to make a site that allows easier access to important documents and more useful and interesting content that the council can manage in house. Please take a look and let us know what you think.

I wish you and yours a very happy Christmas and new year. Look out for each other and remember better times are coming.

Stuart Ray,

Chairman

Parish Council Vacancy - Join the Council!

The departure of Councillor Klückers, who served the Council so admirably over a number of years, means that the Council now has a vacant member position. Parish councillors give their time freely, using their skills and energy to make a difference to their community and if you think this is something you might like to do, please contact our Clerk, Sarah, who will be happy to tell you more. Our newest member, Councillor Emily Dodd, has received some virtual training through the Association of Local Councils and is by all accounts thoroughly enjoying her new role.

New Parish Council Website

The Council's new website address is [Clapham Parish Council \(clapham-wsx-pc.gov.uk\)](http://clapham-wsx-pc.gov.uk).

The Council is committed to making its website as accessible as possible by ensuring that it can be used by as many people as possible, which is so important with at least 1 in 5 people having an impairment or a disability of some type. Those affected may have impaired vision through colour-blindness, motor difficulties or dyslexia to name but a few. The Council wants to make both the design of its website and also its content accessible, so the Clerk has joined several workshops to support it on delivering this. Please let us know if there is anything else that you need us to do to improve your own individual experience.

Assets of Community Value

The Council has now submitted nominations for St Mary The Virgin, Clapham and Patching CofE Primary School and The Junction and is awaiting a decision on whether these have been successful. Arun District Council have held back from removing the restriction at Land Registry given the pandemic and the Parish Council will continue to provide updates via its website and its meetings.

Full details of the process can be found on the ADC website.

Parish Design Statement

Around the time the pandemic struck the Council issued a survey seeking feedback on a 'Parish Design Statement' to supplement the Clapham Neighbourhood Development Plan. Please take the time to read the accompanying letter - see the final page - and let us know what you think by completing the survey by 31 December, using the online form - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FY7P3NJ>). Paper copies can also be obtained from Yvette at Four Winds on The Street. There is also a very helpful web page explaining the background and the proposed policies at <https://www.claphamandpatching-westsussex.org.uk/clapham-parish-design-statement>

MP Update On Local Broadband Speeds

Andrew Griffith MP has asked the Parish Council to highlight the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme to boost local broadband speeds, as part of the Government's vision of a digitally connected Britain. Gigabit broadband enables internet download speeds of up to 100 Megabits per second (Mbps) which is much faster than current superfast speeds of 30 Mbps.

Rural premises with broadband speeds of less than 100Mbps can use vouchers worth £1,500 per home and up to £3,500 for each small to medium-sized business (SME) towards the cost of installing new fast and reliable connections. West Sussex Councils are also topping up the scheme so that rural eligible premises can now claim up to £4,000 each towards the installation cost.

Homes and businesses in rural areas of the UK may be eligible for funding towards the cost of installing gigabit-capable broadband when part of a group scheme so if you are interested please visit the website to find out more about the scheme, including eligibility and how it will work.

Patching Parish Council have already identified some local suppliers and it may be possible to combine a scheme within Clapham and Patching, given their close proximity and the shared telephone exchange. The closing date for the scheme is 31 March 2021.

If you would like to participate please email Sarah (using the contact form on the Council website) with your name and address by 31 December 2020 so that interested parties can work together to make a group application.

<https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/>

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/business-and-consumers/broadband-in-west-sussex/gigabit-capable-broadband/#rural-gigabit-broadband-voucher-scheme>

A Message from The Junction

Here's looking forward to Christmas and 2021, in the hope that we can reopen our lovely village shop/cafe. We have been working hard trying to keep our community active and would love to open within the guidelines. In the run up to Christmas we hope to open Saturday mornings again, holding distanced Christmas Sales, Singing Carols etc - please, please support us - after all our efforts it would be a shame to lose it now.

Essentially, we could operate a takeaway service, but feel that there would not be enough customer uptake to make it workable. Sadly, this year and its two lockdowns have taken a big toll on our little shop/cafe and it is going to need a lot of love, help and support to get it up and running again.

Happy Christmas Everyone - Yvette for The Junction and its volunteers.

Clapham Parish Council – Parish Design Statement



4 December 2020

Dear Clapham Resident,

How do you want Clapham to look in 10-15 years' time?

As many of you will recall, the Clapham Neighbourhood Development Plan was formally approved by the South Downs National Park Authority in May 2016.

Now that SDNPA have finalised their own Local Plan, the Parish Council has considered whether our own Plan needs updating in any way. While we didn't find anything in the Clapham Plan itself which needed updating, it did seem an appropriate moment to enhance the Plan by the addition of the Clapham Parish Design Statement.

Clapham's Parish Design Statement is a set of guidelines which are intended to flesh out some of the planning-related policies in the Clapham Plan; the aim is to help people to put together planning applications which stand a good chance of being approved by SDNPA. Planning authorities are now taking more account of what local residents think than ever before, due to the high courts placing more weight on local plans than previously.

Our Design Statement was initially developed (by a small group appointed by the Council) a couple of years ago. We received an encouragingly high level of input from residents on how they would like to see the 'look and feel' of Clapham maintained and enhanced by any future extensions or new buildings. However, the final step – a survey seeking residents' views on the proposed policies – was overtaken by other more pressing local issues, since when COVID-19 has of course complicated everything.

The Council has now decided to go ahead with reissuing the survey, which is available online at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FY7P3NJ>. If you prefer to complete a paper copy, please contact the Clerk via the council website or Councillor Kelly at Four Winds, The Street, who can supply you with one.

We should be very grateful if you would carefully consider the suggested policies, and the background to them, and let us have your response by 31st December.

With many thanks for your valuable input.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Ray Chairman, On behalf of Clapham Parish Council