



Kemble and Ewen Parish Council

Annual Report 2013-14

You are invited to the Annual Public
Parish Meeting

Friday 16 May 2014 at 7.30pm

in Kemble Village Hall

This report is a summary of the Parish Council's activities over the last year.

We aim to deliver a copy to households in Kemble, Kemble Wick and Ewen.

It is also available to view at www.kemble.co.uk

Agenda for Annual Parish Meeting: 16 May 2014, 7.30pm

- AGM for the Village Hall committee
- Apologies for absence
- Approve the minutes of the meeting held on Friday 3 May 2013
- Report on any matters arising from the minutes
- Speakers to include:-
 - Shaun Parsons – County Councillor
 - John Birch – District Councillor, Thames Head Ward
 - Roger Pettit – Chairman, Kemble and Ewen Parish Council
- Finance - a summary of the past 12 months
- Any other business

Chairman's Address

The major issues of our last report have moved on. Despite some slippage against the original plan the railway project is now scheduled for completion this August and we have made encouraging progress in discussions about further renovation of the station buildings including the footbridge, although the water tower has proved more of a problem. The new owners of the farm have moved forward with their disposal of the Top Farm site and we are engaged in discussions about the detailed proposals for the new development with the preferred purchasers.

Looking forward, our focus for the year is on planning for the future of our Parish; how the villages should look and what facilities we should have are the key considerations on which we shall be seeking your views.

The Annual Parish Meeting is your opportunity to review events and more importantly, to let us know your wishes for the future and give a public airing to anything you may have on your mind.

I do hope you can join us and I look forward to seeing you on 16 May.

Roger Pettit, Chairman, Kemble & Ewen Parish Council - May 2014

Summary of the year's activities to 31 March 2014

Our nine parish councillors represent the electorate of Kemble and Ewen across a variety of topics and issues. Discussions in council meetings are often lively and occasionally controversial. Each councillor has an area of 'special interest', such as local policing, the play area, the cemetery, highways, planning, footpaths, and so on.

Residents are welcome to contact councillors about local issues – details of how to reach us are on the back page.

Finance

The council's main source of income is the local council tax, known as the precept. The Precept was £20,000 in the year ending 31 March 2014, and it increased for the first time in many years in 2013-14. For a typical Band D property, this equates to £42.85 per year, or less than 12p per day. No changes in precept will apply in 2014-15

The budgets of the Cotswold District Council (CDC) and Gloucestershire County Council continue to be under pressure, although the CDC has made savings by working jointly with other councils. You have probably noticed an impact on some of the services they provide on our behalf to Kemble and Ewen – particularly matters such as road repairs and cleaning, maintenance of drains, pavements, and lighting.

Planning

The Parish Council has again responded to numerous planning applications this year, (including tree orders; listed building consent and multiple applications

for the same premises). The vast majority of these are supported, though account is taken of residents' views where possible. We recently responded to a tight timescale on three potential future development sites, and were very encouraged by the turnout of some 150 residents at our consultation sessions in the Village Hall. Our work towards a Local Plan is continuing, beginning with a review of the Parish Plan from 2006-7 and we will be consulting with you further during the coming year. It is important to stress that this does not empower the PC or residents to prevent future development, but it does describe what is preferred in the way of styles and designs.

Residents will recall the significant time spent on the application for 50 dwellings at Top Farm, Kemble. This culminated in a planning inquiry late in 2012 where the inspector determined that the proposed development was sustainable, despite the overwhelming majority of residents being in opposition. The farm has since been sold to the Bathurst estate and we have recently met representatives of Bovis Homes who are interested in acquiring the site. Accordingly, there will be a chance to respond to plans and specific designs once that point is reached.

Highways and Parking

We have at last been able to offer training to several Speed Watch volunteers, and they are awaiting their certificates – following which they can start in earnest with the equipment to monitor and record speeds. We expect

the focus for attention to be the A429, especially near the pedestrian crossing, as well as the School area, and through Ewen, as these are the most often mentioned as of concern.

Car parking as a consequence of station overflow or the opportunity to park for 24 hours or longer without paying, led to a peak of complaints last year, particularly from residents of Windmill Road, Station Road and adjoining roads. Driveways blocked, abuse from drivers, and dangerous parking near junctions and the shop have provoked outcry. Having secured support from our local MP and District Councillor to press for an increase in station car parking capacity we were pleased to agree plans for an increased capacity of around 42 spaces at the Station car park as part of the track-redoubling scheme. We subsequently had several meetings with Gloucestershire Highways, District Councillors and local Police about introducing a restricted parking regime. Unfortunately, the new station parking spaces did not proceed, despite being granted planning permission, and any restricted parking scheme was dependent on that coming into use. The latest possibility is for land adjacent to Station Road (leading from The Tavern to the A429) to be developed for parking, but this awaits agreement between the railway authorities and the landowners, and subsequent planning consultation.

Cemetery

We remain aware that additional cemetery space remains a long-term issue without an obvious solution.

Community Emergency Plan

We have put in place a plan based on guidelines issued by Glos CC and with helpful input from residents.

Kemble Airfield / Cotswold Airport

Cotswold Airport has reduced its flying activities and has been more aware of public concerns, after some years of close monitoring. This last year has seen no significant complaints, beyond the odd isolated incident of late night flying or noisy aircraft circling. We are now hosting quarterly meetings with CDC and neighbouring parishes, and are pleased to report that relationships with the airport management are on a positive footing.

Kemble Community Gardens

The Parish Council has recently renewed the lease for two further years until early 2016 - although the CDC has retained the right to use the land for its own purposes, as has always been known. The land has been designated as suitable for developments though many in the community are aware of the significant loss that will be felt if this comes to fruition.

Policing and neighbourhood watch

The Neighbourhood Watch scheme remains important following 2013's shocking increase in crime, mainly property thefts and attempted break-ins.

Fortunately, 2014 is much improved so far, and we have supported NW's initiatives in leafleting the parish. It remains a concern that those from outside target our villages and we urge every resident to think carefully about their own security and their neighbours.

Youth Club

The Parish Council has noted with regret that the Youth Club has disbanded.

The Railway station

The opportunity of regular meetings with Network Rail and First Great Western consequent on the track re-doubling project has been seized upon to draw attention to long overdue maintenance of our attractive, historic and listed railway station. However, nothing of note has been achieved since the reopening of the improved toilets, and we will continue to press for restoration of the footbridge, repairs to guttering and damaged stonework, and replacement of rotten windows and woodwork.

We would also hope to see restoration of the water tower, which is also listed.

Community Fund

This year the Parish Council awarded the following grants to local groups:-

Neighbourhood Watch	£150
Little Fishes	£250
Kemble & Ewen Thursday Group	£150
Kemble & Ewen WI	£250
Kemble & District Playgroup	£100

The PC has also agreed to support the provision of a defibrillator at the railway station.

Code of Conduct

Following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011, we adopted the CDC's revised Code of Conduct. This means that all

Councillors are bound by the same standards as those applying at District level.

Internal Audit

The Parish Council pays for an independent 'internal audit' to ensure it is following correct procedures for authorising payments, record keeping, and reporting its finances. This was completed in April 2014 with a clean bill of health.

People

Amy Dyke ceased to be a Councillor from early 2014 and there will be a co-option in due course. Anyone interested in the requirements of volunteering as a Councillor can speak to the Chairman or the Clerk. Our 'village orderly' until October 2013 was David Dyke, and we thank him for his services. We are seeking a replacement, so anyone who can spare an hour a week to inspect Windmill Park play area is welcome to contact the Clerk for more details. The village orderly is a paid position.

Special thanks to:

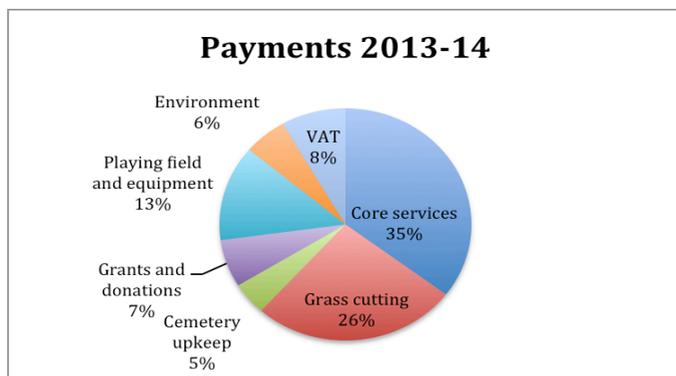
Steve Marsh who runs the village website www.kemble.co.uk; the Parish News editors and Pat Ayres for communications; Brian Ayres for maintaining the war graves; the Village Hall committee and all those many others who volunteer to give their time free of charge to run and support community parish councillors.

Financial Summary

Any resident may look at the Parish Council's unaudited accounts by asking the Clerk. A copy of the audited accounts will be available from the Parish Clerk following the completion of the external audit in July 2014.

Payments (year ending 31 March 2014)

Core services	£5,488
Grass cutting	£4,100
Cemetery upkeep	£700
Grants and donations	£1,030
Playing field and equipment	£2,070
Environment	£865
VAT	£1,287
Total	£15,540



Receipts (year ending 31 March 2014)

Precept	£20,000
Cemetery	£821
Interest earned	£5
TOTAL	£20,826

Finance commentary:

We ideally keep around 3 to 6 months' precept in reserve for 'contingencies'.

One off items were not significant in this period as we rebuilt our reserves following significant outgoings on legal advice for the Cotswold Airport planning applications and a specialist report for the Top Farm planning inquiry in the previous business year

'Core services' includes: insurance, wages and salaries, training, stationery & printing, RoSPA inspections, professional accounting/audit fees, village hall hire, PAYE and subscriptions.

Kemble and Ewen Parish Councillors

Roger Pettit (Chairman)	01285 770133
David Ball (Vice Chairman)	07827 885882
Michael Binks	01285 770495
George Collins	01285 770698
Lester Napper	07977 910605
Eric Silk	01285 770979
Gabi Somerville	07900 907685
Sohrab Sorabjee	01285 770515
Nick Spindler (Parish Clerk)	07801 472495

Parish Council Meetings

Meetings are usually held on Friday evenings, ten times a year, in Kemble Village Hall starting at 7.30pm. Dates are shown on the noticeboards in each village and on the village website.

Any resident is welcome to come along to any of these meetings. You can raise issues, ask for advice, or ask questions at the start of the meeting.

How to contact us

Use the Contact section of the Village website www.kemble.co.uk

Email the Clerk: kpccclerk@kemble.co.uk

Come to a meeting

Phone a councillor

Write to us c/o 18 Old Manor Gardens, Kemble, GL7 6FF