

A brief report prior to questions and answers at the Parish Council meeting

I have been pursuing concerns with Highways re roads in the ward, I am very pleased that work will shortly begin to resolve drainage issues impacting on the surface of the Church path at Whitchurch Canonicorum

You will have noticed that our footpaths have been used more and more this last year, Indeed some of our footpaths have even been featured in 'Trail Running' magazine, according to our younger son!

Since my last report the consultation on the new Dorset local plan has commenced. This is arguably one of the most important things the Dorset Council will do, that is have a plan which guides to where development takes place. Central to this is deciding where homes will be built The Council has set out its thoughts guided by the idea that homes will be allowed to be built predominately where they are reasonably close to major services not least of which are schools and hospitals. This is an important piece of work, especially given the demand for houses in the County and high house price/ earnings multiple. You may also believe that it is a good idea that houses for those working in our hospitals and care homes etc should be available locally. Please remember that the local plan should be seen as a guide.

Thus it is an established fact in planning case law that the Local Authority does not have to slavishly follow the local plan and I am the first to remind officers of that when I hear concerns from those in the Ward

You may recall the release of the Government's planning for the future white paper released in 2020. The white paper is focused very heavily on the supply of new houses of all types and tenures.

There are a proposed series of changes to local plans and development management, to include proposals for each local authority to divide up their administrative areas into three land-types- growth, renewal and protected areas. Protected area zoning seems likely to cover a high percentage of rural England, including all rural businesses and communities within them.

I continue to press for assistance for the village shops and the 11 village halls in the Ward. I have received e mails of thanks from a number of village halls in connection with Covid lockdown grants. Please as a matter of priority let me know if any hall is missing out, I say this as the Council will not because of GDPR send me details of all grants paid to all village halls for all lockdowns