



Standish Parish Council



NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2023

Introducing Standish's Newest Parish Councillor

The vacancy on the Parish Council, reported in the winter newsletter, was filled by the co-option of Andreas Biermann in April. Andreas lives at Green Walk, together with his wife Marta, children Leonardo and Frida, both of whom are passionate football players for Stonehouse FC and Quedgeley Wanderers respectively, and two cats. Andreas moved to Standish in October 2023, having previously lived in Coventry, London, Paris, and Incheon. He is a senior energy and climate policy expert and is Director of Sustainable Finance with Globalfields Ltd., a family business now based at the old Standish Hospital site. Andreas has over 26 years' experience in academic, national, and multilateral contexts, focusing on climate change for the last 17 years. He has worked at the International Energy Agency, the European Bank for Reconstruction in London, and the Green Climate Fund.

Andreas decided to apply to join the Parish Council as he is a firm believer in local democracy, and strongly interested in helping Green Walk to integrate fully as part of the parish.

Would You Like to be a Local Councillor?

Elections for District and Parish Councillors will take place on Thursday 2nd May 2024. Although still some months away, we know already that three of the current six Parish Councillors will not be seeking re-election. We are naturally very keen that the positive work of the Council should be carried on, with new ideas and new enthusiasm. If you think you might be interested in becoming a Parish Councillor or a District Councillor, please think about attending Stroud District Council's 'Be a Councillor' event on Wednesday 6 September 2023 in the Council Chamber at Ebley Mill. You will have the opportunity to learn more about what being a Councillor entails and to hear first-hand from current Councillors on their experiences.

The 'Be a Councillor' event will begin at 6pm for anyone who is interested in becoming a Parish Councillor and 7pm for anyone who is interested in becoming a District Councillor. The event promises to be a great opportunity to learn more about the Councillor role.

Email democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk to register your interest for the event or, for more information, call 01453 766321.

If you are interested in becoming a Standish Parish Councillor, you are welcome to have a chat with any of the current councillors. Please feel free to get in touch. See the back page of this newsletter for contact details. **SUE HARTLEY**

2023 Review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries

The Boundary Commission for England has completed its review of Parliamentary Constituencies and the new boundaries will come into effect at the next General Election. The proposal to move Standish (as part of the Hardwicke ward) to the new North Cotswolds constituency has been confirmed. The Parish Council twice submitted objections to this plan but these have, unfortunately, been discounted. The benefits of constituency boundary reviews are said to be:

- ensuring that the number of electors in each constituency is more equal, and
- making it easier for people to understand which constituency they are in, and
- ensuring that MPs and local authorities liaise in the course of their work.

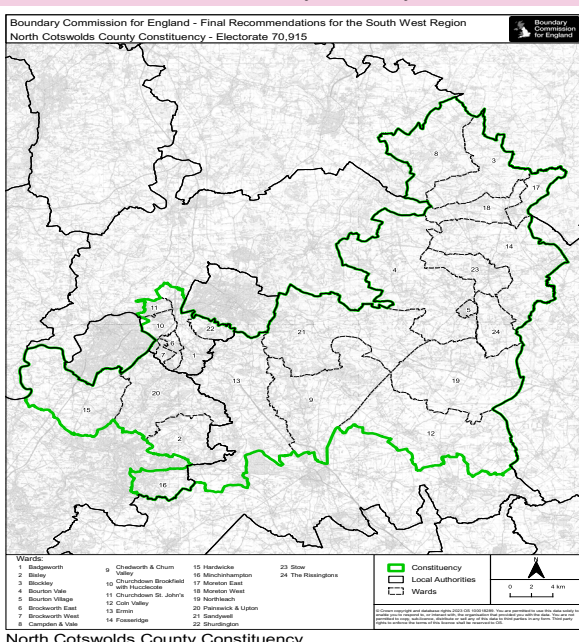
In the Parish Council's view, the only one of these factors which is relevant is the smoothing out of numbers between constituencies. The change does not make it easier for Standish residents to understand which constituency they are in, since all their links are with Stroud and Stonehouse. As Standish is on the outer edge of the new constituency, it is hard to see how it will improve liaison between our new MP and the District Council. Bisley, Minchinhampton and Painswick & Upton wards are moving, with Hardwicke, out of the Stroud constituency into North Cotswolds.

SH

Community Governance Review: A Change to the Standish Boundary

As reported previously, Stroud District Council has undertaken a Community Governance Review to consider changes needed to parish arrangements, following the development of Great Oldbury. The Review report proposed the creation of a new parish of Great Oldbury, with resulting changes to the boundaries of the existing parishes of Eastington, Standish and Stonehouse to accommodate the new Parish. For Standish, this involves a small section of the Great Oldbury employment area, currently in Standish, becoming part of the new Great Oldbury Parish. The report was discussed at the District Council meeting on 20th July 2023 and the changes were agreed. The boundary changes will take effect in April 2024.

A further Community Governance Review for Standish Parish is expected in the future, as the development at site PS19a becomes established. **SH**



Hardwicke ward is at 15 on the map

Standish Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP): Perseverance Starts to Pay Off!

The long saga of the NDP continues, with a small group of resolute parish councillors, helped by ex-councillor Sue Oppenheimer, working on revising the NDP to bring it to a standard that will satisfy an Independent Examiner. It is a long and detailed task, but we are receiving good support from planning officers at Stroud District Council, who are nearly as keen as us to get the NDP over the finish line. Now that we are redrafting the NDP ourselves (rather than using an independent planning consultant), we are able to bring more local detail into the plan and to relate it more closely to the Stroud Local Plan. We are making steady progress and expect the revised NDP to come out to Standish residents for consultation in the autumn.

The Parish Council continues to believe that the NDP is the means to give some protection against excessive development in inappropriate locations. With a site for 700 houses allocated in Standish in Stroud's Emerging Local Plan, currently before the Independent Inspector, this is not an academic point. The NDP once approved, will enable the Parish Council to have some influence on this and any other sites allocated for development in the future. **SH**



Hard at work on the NDP

Safe and Sustainable Travel in Standish

Alongside the NDP, the other big project at the forefront of the Parish Council's work is the Standish multi-user path. Having the infrastructure to move safely around the parish without a car has been a local aspiration for many years. In 2017, the Council received a grant from the Police and Crime Commissioner to fund a study and we have been working on this project in earnest since then. Our scheme for a multi-user path from Horsemarling roundabout to Black Bridge, secured significant grant-funding and we

commissioned design work, completed in October 2022. In parallel to our efforts, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) was developing plans for a strategic cycling/walking spine from Gloucester to Stroud, and it became clear over time that our path would coincide with a section of the much longer GCC path. Following a meeting late last year with GCC and their consultants, Atkins, work has been ongoing to develop the Standish plans and bring them closer to being 'shovel-ready'. With Stroud District Council's agreement, the Parish

Council has committed funding arising from the Standish Gate development to the construction of a short section of the path.

There is a lot more work to do, but we are increasingly hopeful that building the Standish section of GCC's strategic path will receive some priority. The Parish Council will do all it can to ensure that the strategic path links up to the proposed 700-house development (PS19a) and to existing bridleways and footpaths used by local residents. **SH**



A recent "incident" on Roddy Lane

HGV Damage to Roddy Lane

Over recent years, and also prior to the start of the development at the former Standish Hospital site, a significant number of unsuited HGVs have attempted to drive up Roddy Lane. On finding there is no thoroughfare (as already advised by road signs) the vehicles attempt to turn around or reverse back down. Considerable damage is done to the lane and its verges, destroying the ditches.

The lane is regularly used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Since there is nowhere for them to go if a large vehicle comes along the lane, this has led to incidents where lives have been put at risk. Highways have visited the site and, whilst the responsibility for repairing the damaged ditches lies with the adjoining landowners, they will carry out some ditch repairs.

The common theme from almost all drivers is that they were following their satnavs and so chose to ignore the warning signs. These satnavs are not the type designed for HGV operations and often have out-of-date maps. A possible solution to mitigate inappropriate traffic would be to have a sign telling drivers to ignore their satnavs but, sadly, such a sign is not available for Highways to use.

The Parish Council is investigating what, if any, measures it can take to improve the situation. **ROBERT KELLIE**

Symmetry Park

The Parish Council continues to monitor the Tritax Symmetry planning application for distribution warehousing at Javelin Park. There are various issues with the planning application that was originally submitted in October 2021 and Stroud District Council are continuing to determine the application. The principal concern is that Junction 12 of the M5 is already operating beyond capacity and road safety and congestion of both Jn.12 and the B4008 are in question. National Highways has removed its holding objection to the application, while effectively saying that it cannot proceed until the increase in size of Jn.12, to include an additional bridge over the M5 and dualling the road from Javelin Park to the junction, can be delivered. The junction upgrade will need developer financial contributions from more than 10 schemes in order to be delivered; the initial budget figure for these works is £9.4m. It is likely that the final figure will be far higher. Tritax has offered to contribute only £179,313.00 towards the junction improvements. It is now starting an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate for non-determination of its application. In parallel with this, it is preparing a new application. It is also making representations at Stroud's current Local Plan Inspection to develop more land south of the incinerator and is meeting resistance due to the lack of agreement between the County Council, National Highways and District Council on the nature of the upgrades for Jn.12 and the traffic volumes required to trigger them. A further problem is that the timing of other developments is not aligned and therefore their respective contributions towards the Jn.12 upgrades are unknown. It is a troubling picture, and the Council will maintain a close watching brief. **OLIVER KIRKHAM**

Supporting Swifts

Many of the birds that used to be common in places like Standish are now facing extinction. The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) Red List is a list of birds in the UK, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man in most urgent need of our help. They work with other organisations to create the lists based on data sent in by thousands of volunteers who count birds, do surveys and send in their findings.

Their data is then evaluated and assessed by experts who compare it with other sources and similar reports created in Europe. The most recent list can be found here:- [bocc5-report.pdf \(rspb.org.uk\)](https://www.rspb.org.uk)

One of our iconic birds, a migrant who flies 6,000 miles from Africa to breed and spend the summer in the UK, is the swift. Swifts spend most of their lives flying, even sleeping, eating and drinking on the wing, and they only ever land to nest.

Swifts will come back to the same nest year after year. They like high, deep crevices to nest, but because we've lost many old houses and buildings, and as roof spaces are filled or mended, their numbers have declined dramatically.

We are fortunate that swifts nest in the roof of Standish Village Hall. To support this colony, the Village Hall Management Committee applied successfully to the National Grid Community Matters Fund for a grant to install swift boxes on the Hall. Two double swift boxes will be put up on the front of the Hall and two bat boxes on the rear.

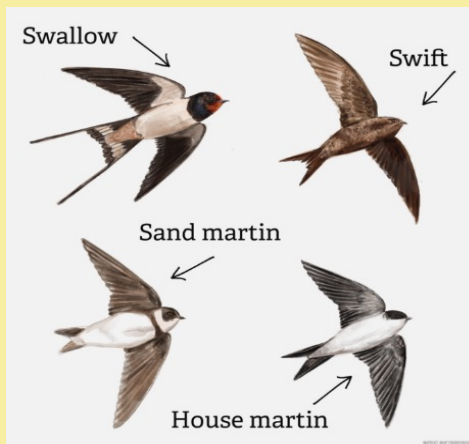
Both swifts and house martins are in real trouble and you could help by putting up a nest box on your house or outbuilding. It will need to be placed high on the vertical wall of a building, ideally under the eaves, and it should be 5m (15 feet) above the ground, with an unobstructed flight path. It shouldn't be in direct sunlight, so an aspect between north and east is usually best. Boxes are available from several sources including from the RSPB (<https://www.rspb.org.uk>) or Peak Boxes (Swift Boxes — Peak Boxes).

Swifts are gregarious birds that mate for life and like to nest, feed and migrate in groups. So if you have space, why not put up a number of boxes, near each other? An easier and cheaper way to help is to grow flowers to encourage and support a range of pollinators as swifts feast on small flying insects by catching them in flight.

Stroud Swift Group is working with the Stroud Valleys Project to protect swifts in our area.

Welcome Back our Swifts — Stroud Valleys Project

ALISON WIDGERY



Wildflower and Butterfly Walk



About 18 intrepid villagers met up in sunshine at Shortwood National Trust Car Park on Sunday 9th July. Led by Juliet Bailey and Roy Widgery, we headed off to look for wildflowers and butterflies. Juliet pointed out some beautiful thistles and interesting flowers and we spotted a small tortoiseshell, a small blue and quite a few marbled white butterflies but - before we even got to the good butterfly areas - the rain came down. We sheltered under trees for a short while, but then we had to give up.

Thanks to everyone who came. A special thank you to Juliet (who got particularly soaked), who didn't have a chance to share ways to help with wildflower identification and to Roy who didn't get to the much more prolific butterfly locations.

I hope we can do the walk again. **AW**

Celebrating Standish Trees

Standish has many wonderful trees, but perhaps the most impressive are the pedunculate oaks (*Quercus robur*) at New House Farm on Standish Lane, known locally as the Edward II oaks. According to legend, after Edward II's death at Berkley Castle in 1328, his body rested for the night in Standish on the way to being buried at Gloucester Cathedral. Supposedly, a row of oak trees was planted to mark the route of his funeral procession, seven of which still exist in Standish and Haresfield. In April 2023 the Arboricultural Association hosted a meeting of the Action Oak group at the Malthouse. Action Oak is a national organisation of industry professionals, aiming to work with owners and managers of oak trees and woodlands to help protect oaks from the many threats they face. The Association took the group to visit some of the Edward II oaks, and all agreed that they were magnificent specimens worthy of celebration and protection. Action Oak Subcommittee Chair Tony Kirkham MBE VMH, Vice President of the Arboricultural Association and former Head of the Arboretum at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, said "These trees rival anything which might be found at better-known sites such as Windsor Great Park." We are very lucky to have such amazing living legends right on our doorstep.



One of the Edward II oaks

JOHN PARKER

Green Walk Matters

In April, the long-awaited reopening of the bridleway through Green Walk took place, albeit on a temporarily diverted route.

In May, we learnt that plans for the multi-user path on Horsemarling Lane (which the Parish Council has been actively working for since PJ Livesey acquired the site, and which have gone through a number of discussions and revisions) have finally been approved by the planning authority.

A number of concerns have been brought to the Parish Council's attention by Green Walk residents. These relate to the lighting scheme,

lack of cycle storage, electric vehicle (EV) charging points, absence of visitor parking provision and progress on the natural play area. District Cllr. Mark Ryder took these up on our behalf. We understand that some changes have now been made to the lighting to bring it in line with the site permissions. There are some EV charging points installed by or for residents who asked and paid for them; they are not for general use. Cycle storage is only provided for those

living in apartments. There was no provision in the original scheme for visitor parking, so no planning grounds on which this can be taken further. The natural play area - or possibly a number of small areas - which is a condition of the development, is in an early planning stage and the Parish Council has recently provided PJ Livesey with details of local natural play areas for reference. As we have more information, we will keep you posted. **SH**

