

Tarvin Parish Council Response to Facebook Comments on Tarvin Online Article – Drug Use, Dog Fouling, Roads and Parking

We recently published an article through Tarvin Online regarding the outcome of the appeal process for Budgens opening hours (1st March 2024). There were several comments in relation to the content of the article but also additional comments in relation to drug use, dog fouling, roads, and parking.

We would like to address some of the comments made by residents on the Tarvin Online Facebook and hope that you find the information below useful.

Smoking of Illegal Substances

There were several individuals suggesting that we should be addressing drug taking in Tarvin Village. We had no prior knowledge of the specific issue detailed and have received no recent communication from concerned individuals. If there is an issue with drug taking within the Parish, then we would strongly encourage residents to please report such incidents to our Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). Parish Councillors who regularly pick litter have previously found evidence of nitrous oxide and cannabis use (not in the area reported), and this has always been reported to the PCSO so that they are aware and know which areas need to be monitored.

Our current PCSO is James Hannath. He can be contacted via the following email address: James.Hannath@cheshire.police.uk. He regularly holds a surgery at Tarvin Community Centre if you wish to speak to him in-person. You can also report crime through 101 and the Cheshire Police online reporting system (<https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>). If there is an emergency, please report this directly through 999.

As a PC we have no powers to personally address this matter, but it is something that we should be made aware of. If you contact us about these concerns, we will always help by signposting you to the individual/organisation/department that would be able to assist you and offer support with this.

Dog Fouling

We are already aware of issues regarding an increase in dog fouling in the Parish, particularly in Tarvin village. This was last included on the January 2024 meeting agenda after a resident contacted us directly to raise the issue. An article was then written by the Council and included in Tarvin Times Spring 2024 edition and submitted for publication to Tarvin Online (11th February 2024). If you have not done so already, we would please encourage you to read this article and see that we are asking residents to ensure that they clean up after their dog/s to keep the village clean, safe and tidy for all. In recent years, we have also included articles surrounding dog fouling in the Tarvin Times Autumn 2023 edition and Spring 2021 edition. Tarvin Times is delivered by Councillors to every house in the Parish, so no household should be unaware of the problem and increase in incidents.

This is not an issue that we feel that we have ignored. We are as frustrated and disheartened as all other residents. We will continue to use our communication channels to publicly remind individuals of their responsibilities.

Condition of Roads

The PC are aware of the poor condition of both roads and pavements in Tarvin Parish. This is something, again, that is regularly discussed at our meetings. Unfortunately, we have no influence on the allocation of CWaC budgets regarding road maintenance. As a PC we also do not have the budget to resurface roads within the Parish. The responsibility of road and pavement maintenance lies with CWaC. As Councillors, we report issues as we see them and have previously encouraged residents to do the same through Tarvin Times (Autumn 2023) and Tarvin Online (1st August 2023). The more reports that are made directly to CWaC, the more likely it is that action will be taken. Please visit the CWaC website to report issues relating to pot holes via the following link:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/potholes-and-road-faults>

In addition to using the CWaC website, residents can also share concerns with their local CWaC Borough Councillors, Cllr Tom Cooper (Tom.Cooper@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) and Cllr Edward Lush (Edward.Lush@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk).

Since 2010 roads across the whole CWaC area have deteriorated as a consequence of reductions in Central Government grants. These reductions cannot be made good by increases in Council Tax because such increases are subject to a Government prescribed maximum, known as capping. Capping limits can only be breached by a public referendum to spend more. A referendum is expensive and success i.e. agreement to spend more, by no means guaranteed. In addition, CWaC spending priorities are Social Care (the very old and Looked After Children), so Highways must compete for resources with all other Council services. However, there has recently been extra resources allocated by the Government for highways maintenance as a consequence of the cancellation of the northern leg of the HS2 Rail Scheme. In the current financial year, which ends on 31st March 2024, £1.260m has been allocated to CWaC and a similar additional amount will be allocated in the next financial year that begins on 1st April 2024. However, these welcomed increases, plus the current budget for maintenance, are well below the assessed cost of dealing with the whole maintenance backlog.

The PC will continue to report known and new issues, raise ongoing concerns with our Borough Councillors and inform residents on how to report issues directly to CWaC.

Parking

We are already aware of issues regarding parking in the Parish, particularly with regards to lack of parking. This is regularly on our agenda and discussed at our monthly meetings, with it last being discussed at February 2024's meeting. Recently, after discussions at our meetings, we referred to Tarvin's Neighbourhood Plan and decided to approach the landowner of an area that was highlighted as being a possible option for off-road parking in the village. Unfortunately, the landowner advised that their position was unchanged, and the land was not for sale or lease, which we reported in the Tarvin Times Winter 2023 edition.

Several residents have contacted us recently and we have had very open and thorough discussions in our meetings about what our options are. We share residents' concerns and frustrations but are struggling to come up with any feasible options. If you have any ideas that you think we may not

have thought of, please contact us – contact us via our Clerk or attend a meeting and share your thoughts during the Open Forum.

Parking near to the Ridgeway was also mentioned in the Facebook comments. This has previously been raised directly with the PCSO on several occasions but has not been brought to our attention recently. We have previously spoken to and requested help from the local PCSO regarding this matter. If there are new or continuing issues that needed to be addressed, please contact us and PCSO James Hannath.

Engagement

There were 36 comments from 25 individuals on the Tarvin Online Facebook post. At our monthly PC meetings, on average, less than 5 members of the public join us (including a CWaC Borough Councillor). If you have issues and concerns, please come to a meeting, and share them with us.

Comments on a Facebook post is not the place to drive change within our community. Come to one of our monthly meetings to speak to us, share your issues, concerns, and feedback. If it is not something that we have the power to address, we can signpost you to the people that can and if needed, provide our support and help.

Our meetings normally take place at 19:15pm on the fourth Monday of each month in the Edna Rose Room at Tarvin Community Centre. The Open Forum section of the meeting lasts 15 minutes and allows any member of the public to speak. If an item raised during the Open Forum is already on the evening's agenda, it will be discussed by the PC under the relevant agenda item. If it is not already on the agenda, it will be added to the following month's agenda for Council to discuss. There is absolutely no pressure to stay for the entire meeting, you can leave as soon as you have spoken or have listened to your agenda item of interest.

Alternatively, you can contact our Clerk to raise any issues/concerns or to add an item to our agenda. Our Clerk (Mike Hassall) can be contacted via email (clerk@tarvinparishcouncil.org.uk) and telephone (01829 741075).

Our website holds information that residents will find useful; meeting dates, agendas, minutes, meeting notes, and electronic copies of Tarvin Times. Some of these documents are also added to the Parish Notice Boards (Tarvin and Oscroft) and shared via Tarvin Online/Facebook. Residents also receive paper copies of Tarvin Times four times per year.

If you have any issues, concerns, feedback, ideas, or comment please contact us directly so that we can work with you to improve Tarvin Parish.

- Tarvin Parish Council (March 2024)