

## ANNUAL REPORT TO LEONARD STANLEY. APRIL 2021

We have met weekly via zoom with Rob and Irena and their counterparts at Kings Stanley to share information and discuss issues arising from the pandemic. These we trust have been beneficial. We wish to express our personal thanks to work of Irena and all the volunteers who continue to support local people throughout the crisis. The majority of Stroud District Council Staff and all councillors are working from home. They continue to monitor the pandemic situation. A local plan for imposing and monitoring local "Lockdown" was drawn up and overseen by a The Gloucestershire Covid-19 Outbreak Engagement Board. The SDC Councillor appointed to this Committee was Cllr. Steven Lydon who is the council's representative on the county Health Overview Scrutiny Committee.

The usual Council Committee and advisory group meetings have taking place via the Zoom facility and planning procedures are following as closely as possible the normal pre pandemic procedures The Council is working to engage with those who fall into arrears with Rent and Council Tax. These are expected to increase due to Covid-19 economic consequences.

The pandemic lockdown increased domestic problems particularly neighbour disagreements. Councillors deal with these as best they can. However this does not mean any short-cuts to normal procedures can be taken. Problems such as these\* have to follow a long procedure which does nothing to improve matters immediately. Unless the law is changed this problem cannot be eased.

During the year there were several instances of vehicles used as accommodation parked where they should not be, particularly on Selsley Common. These were eventually moved on. (\* see comment above)

We know that good work with funding from the District and County Councils has been and is being done by the Clerks of Kings and Leonard Stanley to try to help some of the less well off in our villages particularly over the Christmas Holidays. If nothing else the pandemic has emphasised that "Better Together" works.

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“Kick-Start”. SDC has pledged to help unemployed young people find work by becoming a gateway organisation for the £2billion Government-backed Kick- Start Scheme. Kick-Start provides funding for employers to create jobs for young people who are claiming Universal Credit and at risk of long term unemployment. If you have any business contacts that might be interested in joining the scheme, or know of young people who would benefit, the details are in <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news-archive/this-is-how-were-kick-starting-jobs-for-unemployedyoung-people-in-the-stroud-district>

Like many organisations Council staff are still endeavouring to cope with all the stresses and strains of the pandemic. Residents and businesses should, of course, raise issues/ problems when these arise. However we ask you to just think twice before firing of an email that bins were not emptied at the same time as last week! . Of course you are welcome to use either or both of us and we will endeavour to work with you and the council to get the matter resolved. There have been some problems ref the Council s Out of Hours Service and Emergency Repairs, and we have both raising these issues and asked they be resolved as a matter of urgency.

**THANK YOU**, Parish Chairmen, Clerks and particularly Volunteers for all your help during the Pandemic. Thank you also to all the local services, who have been able to keep going during the “Lockdown”. Without your dedication matters would have been a lot worse. May you continue and flourish as we begin to adapt to a new normal.

District Cllrs Nigel Studdert-Kennedy and Steve Lydon  
5th April 2021