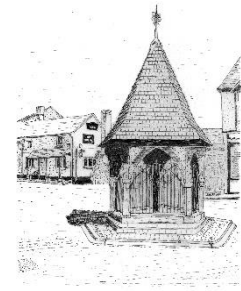


**BOVINGDON PARISH COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021 – 2022**



Dear Resident,

This is the third Annual Report of the present Parish Council, following the local elections held on 2 May 2019.

2021 - 22 has been a year of exceptional times due to the on-going issues caused by COVID-19 and over the past few months the conflict in the Ukraine. Whilst we try to return to 'normality' the long term implications of the pandemic continue to affect us.

As a Parish Council, we try to do what we think is best for our village to make Bovingdon a better place to live in and to protect it from the various challenges we will face during the coming years.

The Council normally meets on the first Monday of every other month and each meeting has time scheduled for parishioners to raise any concerns, which help guide the direction of the Council. A full schedule of all the Council and Committee meetings is available on our website.

The team of councillors consist of myself, Mike Foulds, Alison Gunn, Ben Richardson, Hugh Schneiders, Julie Steer, David Stent, Philip Walker, Adrian Watney and Pauline Wright. Mike was co-opted onto the council to fill the vacancy created by Julia Marshall who moved from the village. The Parish Council is fortunate to have been made up of some very committed individuals who give their time voluntarily to the benefit of the village and I would like to extend my thanks to all the councillors for their hard work over the last year.

We are also grateful for the support of the office team who are all part-time comprising Mike Kember, Parish Clerk, Lisa Edwards, Assistant to the Parish Clerk and to the Responsible Financial Officer, Dave Kirk.

In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the other members of our community who have shown tremendous support for the Parish council during the year. In particular Clare Norton for chairing the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Brad Gunn for his contribution in respect of the Charismas Street lights and fayre and Gary Cullum for his on-going involvement and support.

Finally, I would also like to thank our two other Dacorum Borough Council Ward Councillors, Stewart Riddick and Gbola Adeleke and our Herts County Councillor Richard Roberts for actively supporting the work we do in addition to the teams at Dacorum Borough and Herts County Councils.

Graham Barrett

Councillor Graham Barrett, Chair, Bovingdon Parish Council and Dacorum Borough Councillor

The Annual Parish Report contains a summary of the work carried out by the Parish Council over the past twelve months. The day- to- day work of the Council is carried out through its Committees.

Due to the pandemic, the Parish Office was closed for the majority of the past year and the administrative team have been working from home. Despite the exceptional times, the Parish Council and Committee meetings continued to be held remotely via video conference facilities and now we have returned to face-to-face meetings. In all, a total of 29 meetings have been held not counting numerous working group meetings, including those of the Neighbourhood Steering Group.

### **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Councillor Julie Steer has continued to oversee the work of this Committee. We have successfully managed our budgets again, although it was considered necessary to increase the precept for the forthcoming financial year 2021 – 2022 due to increased costs and to comply with statutory regulations. The precept figure (net of Council Tax Support Grant and Resilience grant) was £64,996. Based on information available at the time, the Parish Rate for a Band D property increased from £29.77 to £30.67 per annum, an increase of 89p (3.0%) or 1.7p per week. A 1% increase in the precept raises approximately £600 additional income for the council.

At the same time, we have been able to build up reserves in support of future projects and for other increasing demands on the council's finances.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a way of collecting contributions from developers towards the provision of infrastructure required to support growth in Dacorum. CIL is a non-negotiable planning charge introduced by the government under the Planning Act 2008 to provide local authorities with a more flexible and transparent means of funding infrastructure projects across their local area. The levy is charged per square metre of new development (floorspace) and the charge may vary according to the size, location and type of development.

As the charging and collecting authority, Dacorum Borough Council are responsible for setting the CIL charge, collecting CIL money and allocating money for infrastructure projects.

The CIL charge was introduced by Dacorum Borough Council on 1 July 2015 and is applicable to developments that received planning permission on or after 1 July 2015.

The Parish Council in conjunction with Dacorum Borough Council are monitoring the schemes, which are eligible to pay the CIL. The Parish Council currently receives 15% of the receipts from developments in the parish. This could potentially increase to 25% if we have an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. The CIL Regulations states that CIL receipts must be used to support the development of the local council's area, or any part of that area, by funding

- (a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or
- (b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

Since its inception in 2015, the council has received just over £102,786 to date from CIL receipts, which is ring fenced.

### **Memorial Hall Management Committee**

Councillor Julie Steer continues to be chair of this Committee. The Memorial Hall is owned and managed by the Parish Council with all councillors automatically becoming trustees on their election to the Council. Again this has been a difficult year for the Hall due to the restrictions on usage caused by COVID-19. However, the Memorial Hall has remained open throughout the past year for the Bovingdon Pre-school to look after the children of key workers, the NHS Blood and Transplant Service and the Child Health Clinic. We are pleased that due to the easing of the restrictions on COVID-19 the building is now fully operational.

The council has taken advantage of applying for two more grants totalling £10,667 made available via the National Lockdown Business Support Grant scheme to help make up for the loss of income from hirers during the pandemic.

As many of you aware, the Memorial Hall was built in 1921 to commemorate the lives of the thirty-seven villagers who died in World War 1. The Hall was built at a cost of £3,000 with the money raised by public subscription and a generous donation of £2,000 from Mr Whichello who lived at Bovingdon Grange. The Council has replaced the clock on the front of the building with a new one bearing the inscription 'Memorial Hall 1921 – 2021' to mark the

100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hall. A lamp has also been installed to illuminate the clock at night.

### **Outdoors Committee**

The Committee, initially under the Chair of Councillor David Stent is now chaired by Councillor Pauline Wright, and continues to be responsible for all aspects of the outdoors of the village.

Despite COVID-19, the Sunnyside Rural Trust whose personnel carry out the warden duties have continued to work safely throughout the past year within the measures and guidelines laid down by the government. We are very grateful to them for their continued commitment to the village. The Trust have worked hard to continue to provide the basic requirements of the contract and have also taken on further works to improve the environment around the village and to maintain the surrounds of the Memorial Hall.

The Sunnyside Rural Trust was founded in 1990 as a small, horticultural project for young people and adults with learning disabilities. It is now a thriving charity and social enterprise, offering training and work experience for over 130 vulnerable people in the local community.

Hopefully many of you will have seen their teams of personnel collecting litter, planting and generally carrying out maintenance work in all areas of the village.

The Committee continues to organise and monitor the annual contract for the maintenance of the pond and surrounding area on Bovingdon Green and to care for the surrounds of 'the docks'. The Council has been looking into the possibility to carry out major improvements to the pond but quotations for the work have exceeded the budgets the council has available for the project. In the meantime, the Sunnyside Rural Trust have carried out some environmental improvements at a more modest cost and will continue to maintain the environs of the pond for the forthcoming year.

In addition, the Borough Council has planted 38,000 various bulbs on the triangular piece of land by the bus stop on Bovingdon Green and it has produced a wonderful and lasting display of colour for several weeks.

### **Personnel Committee**

Councillor Ben Richardson is chair of this Committee, which meets as necessary, usually once or twice a year to review personnel practices and

procedures and to monitor the terms and conditions of the employees.

### **Planning Committee**

The Planning Committee, chaired by Councillor Philip Walker, continues to meet every three weeks. This year the number of planning applications has increased as people have had more time to consider improvements to their properties. The village will doubtless continue to be under pressure from developers and the Parish Council is committed to maintaining the village environment and will endeavour to defend any proposals that threaten to harm the Green Belt. Generally, new planning applications and planning issues continue to occupy a considerable amount of time for the Council.

It is clear from the 177 planning applications considered by the Committee during the year that a number are becoming more complex and require several amendments to the schemes. This represents a 13.5% increase in applications over the previous year. Some of the applications, for instance the redevelopment of older style detached properties in the Chesham Road with terraced and semi-detached houses is clearly having an impact on the street scene in the village.

### **Chiltern Beechwoods**

Dacorum Borough Council has recently published updated evidence on the condition of the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation in the shape of the Footprint Ecology Report. At the same time the Borough Council published Natural England's updated guidance on dealing with planning applications in light of the new information.

More information can be found on the Borough Council's website at:

<https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/planning-development/planning-strategic-planning/new-single-local-plan/chilterns-beechwoods-special-area-of-conservation>

### **Dacorum Local Plan (2020 – 2038): Emerging Strategy for Growth (for consultation)**

During the latter part of 2020 and the early part of 2021, Dacorum Borough Council carried out an

extensive consultation on the Borough's emerging strategy for growth for the period 2020 – 2038.

The Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan for the period 2020 to 2038. Once adopted, it will replace the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted July 2017), the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted September 2013) and those "saved" parts of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan (adopted May 2004). The Local Plan is being prepared in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) (adopted July 2020).

The Bovingdon Delivery Strategy states that at least 240 homes will be provided over the period 2020-2038. The compact and built-up nature of Bovingdon limits opportunities for development on previously developed land in the settlement area. It also states that there is scope for some further redevelopment opportunities on the High Street and on the former Bobsleigh Hotel to the north east of the village. Included in the current allocation is land already allocated under the old plan for 40 homes on the site adjacent to Chesham Road/Molyneaux Ave. However, the majority of the growth is to be accommodated through 'a sustainable urban extension of 150 homes' on a greenfield site on the village edge i.e. Land at Grange Farm, Green Lane (corner of Leyhill Road / Green Lane). The Borough Council has decided at this time against additional development on Land south of Homefield, Land rear of Green Lane / Louise Walk and Land at Duckhall Farm, Newhouse Road and on other sites that had been promoted by various land owners in and around the Village.

The Parish Council has always been protective of the Green Belt and regrets any proposal that seek to remove land from the Green Belt for development. However, it would be unrealistic to expect the Village not to bear some of the governments requirements for new homes and in principal we support the Borough's proposals, which are in line with the suggestions for growth in the other large villages in the Borough, namely, Kings Langley and Markyate. The additional development will provide funding towards improvements to infrastructure within the Village.

### High Street

The Parish Council has set up a small working group comprising councillors and business owners to look at the High Street and how it might be improved both functionally and aesthetically. In addition, the Parish Council continues to work closely with stakeholders in the village and other agencies, including the Aspire Academies Trust, Bovingdon Primary Academy, the County and Borough Councils and the Scouts, in an attempt to look at long term solutions for improving the High Street. This includes options to create additional parking and to provide better quality and more appropriate community facilities.

The first result of this multi-agency working, has been the recent improvements to the area outside the parade of shops comprising Jarmans and the Co-op and the entrance to Old Dean. Bollards have also been installed at the top of the High Street opposite the Tesco Store in an attempt to prevent inconsiderate parking by people who are predominately using the store.

With the convergence of the work done within the village by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, and the announcement of the proposed Dacorum Local Plan there is a real opportunity for the Parish Council and the community of Bovingdon to pull together an extensive Village Improvement Programme. Both the Neighbourhood and Dacorum Local Plans identify the infrastructure challenges that already exist for the village, and the further impact on that infrastructure of the proposed new housing developments.

The Parish Council will keep the residents informed of its progress in this major task.

### Neighbourhood Planning

A close group of volunteers and Parish Councillors have taken the Neighbourhood Plan forward this year as a Steering Group. We have been able to meet both online and in person, pulling the final draft of the Neighbourhood Plan together following further community consultation.

The group presented their draft policies in a presentation and sought feedback from the community in June 2021. Over 400 people responded with broad support for the policies:

- Residential development on Grange Farm and Molyneaux Avenue sites

- Strategic gap maintained with all neighbouring settlements
- Develop a Design Code
- Protect the proposed Green spaces and Views
- Protect existing and promote new retail employment
- Improve road safety and reduce congestion

The group has secured support from Locality and Central government to develop a Design Code and to carry out an Affordable Housing for Sale Needs Assessment which is further influencing our policies. Additional funding has also been secured from Central government to improve High Street parking through the High Street Regeneration and Social Infrastructure Fund.

The Steering Group finalised its policies and submitted the Screening assessment to Dacorum Borough Council. At this point, Dacorum found they must carry out a Habitats Regulation Assessment to safeguard the Special Area of conservation at Ashridge and Tring. Consequently, the Neighbourhood Plan cannot promote specific sites for residential development until mitigation is in place to protect Ashridge. The group will shortly proceed to Regulation 14 consultation and referendum on the revised final Neighbourhood Plan.

The draft policies are available to view here <https://youtu.be/UyneNI1hPQ>

and all the documents can be accessed on [Neighbourhood Plan - Bovington Parish Council](#)

### **Community Safety**

Councillor Ben Richardson continues to report to the Parish Council on questions of Community Safety.

The village continues to be a relatively safe place for motorists and pedestrians although problems persist with High Street congestion, inconsiderate driving and parking as well as speeding on local roads. This is also the situation with levels of crime,

where often, the perception of law breaking is higher than reality.

### **Road Safety**

In July 2021, the Police Commissioner's DriveSafe Campaign operated by volunteers in Chipperfield Road ceased its activities. After almost six years of operation a wealth of data have been built up about excess speed on this road. Over the six years, a total of 51,158 vehicles had been checked and 7,148 reported for excessive speed. These data have now been used as part of a further bid to the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office for funding to install permanent speed monitoring equipment in Chipperfield Road. This, if approved, will provide speed monitoring 24/7 instead of a few hours each week by the DriveSafe Campaign.

This latest bid will augment the already funded improvements to the village gateways and installation of part-time advisory 20mph signs on the approaches to the school in the High Street. There have been meetings between the Police Commissioner and Hertfordshire Road Safety Partnership together with contact from Bovington Parish Council and County Councillor Richard Roberts to progress these works.

### **Parish Marshals**

Over the last two years, Councillors and volunteers have worked with Hertfordshire police and fire services in an effort to create a new local citizen patrol scheme. Although the proposed scheme had many benefits, it was clear that local volunteers would have to commit to working throughout Dacorum rather than giving their time to the village.

As a result, at the meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022, the Parish Council approved the setting up of a Parish Marshal scheme, unique to the village. The first patrol took place three days later on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January, with Parish Marshals wearing their distinctive orange HiVis jackets.

The new scheme made the front page of The Villager newspaper in February which raised local awareness further. The Marshals have conducted patrols for over 80 hours in the first four months of operation, dealing with a wide range of local issues including; traffic problems, fly tipping and complaints from local residents. They also met with local shop keepers in the lead up to the recent road

works in the High Street as well as conducting extra patrols while the road was closed.

The Parish Marshals' aims to improve community safety fits closely with the activities of the High Street Improvement Team which aims to improve many aspects of the village centre.

### **Reported Crime**

The village continues to experience low levels of crime and social disorder. There is regular contact with the local, Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team with officers regularly reporting to the Parish Council public meetings. There have been occasions where local police and Parish Marshals have worked together to solve issues.

### **BOVINGDON PARISH 10 and 3k Fun Run**

We were fortunate to have a break in the COVID-19 restrictions in September 2021 to allow the fourth 10k run and 3k fun run to take place. Considering the restrictions of the pandemic, there was a very good turn-out of runners and it was as usual a very enjoyable event. Date for diary - the next event is planned to take place on Sunday 4 September 2022.

### **Grants awarded from surpluses made at this event:**

#### **Bovingdon Cricket Club**

Grant of £400 towards the cost of purchasing a replacement roller.

#### **Ladybirds**

Grant of £436.80 towards the cost of providing four new folding tables for use at events.

### **Christmas Street Fayre / switch-on of High Street Christmas lights – Sunday 28 November 2021.**

A very successful event took place last year and saw the first switch-on of the new Christmas lights. ITV kindly arranged for Regan Gascoigne and his professional skating partner Katrina Mantras to switch-on the lights and we are delighted that they went on to win the Final of this year's Dancing on Ice.

The Parish Council has entered into a new five-year contract with SparkX based in Wendover for the provision of our Christmas Street Lighting.

We are grateful to those businesses and individuals who contributed so generously via Collection Pot adding a further £1,190 to the Christmas Lights fund. Our thanks also go to Derek Procter of

Marchants Farm for donating a lovely Christmas tree, which stood lit up on the forecourt of the Memorial Hall.

Date for your diary – Switch-on of Christmas Lights and Street Fayre Sunday 4 December 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

### **Bovingdon Community Library**

Bovingdon Community Library reopened on 29 June 2021 and is still operating on restricted hours due to a lack of volunteers and new volunteers in training.

The library runs a Toddler Tales session every Monday and a variety of children's activities throughout the holidays.

Photocopying and laminating are available at the library. For library members one hour's free pc use is available daily.

### **Bovingdon News**

Steph Farrer of Farrspark who has edited the Bovingdon News for a number of years agreed to take over responsibility for the future publication of the booklet and the Parish Council will continue to distribute it to every household in the village via a band of 40+ volunteers.

### **Preparations for Queens Platinum Jubilee Weekend – 2 – 5 June 2022**

A major programme of events is being planned across the UK to celebrate the Jubilee.

Since last October, a small working group is being chaired by Councillor Pauline Wright to arrange the village celebrations to mark the Queens Platinum Jubilee – after 70 years HM The Queen is the longest reigning monarch in our history. The working group made up of representatives from groups and organisations within the village.

A beacon has been commissioned to be made and installed on Bovingdon Green. We have been successful in securing two grants to cover the cost. The first is a grant of £4,600 from the UK Communities Foundation (UKCF) administered via Dacorum Borough Council and the other is a grant of £2k from County Councillor Richard Roberts Locality Budget.

In line with information being published by the Pageantmaster we are focusing our celebrations on Thursday 2 June 2022 and these will take place on Bovingdon Green.

There will be a classic car show in the afternoon followed by music and entertainments in the evening. The day will end with the singing of the Jubilee Anthem by the St Lawrence Church Choir prior to the lighting of the new beacon and will finish with a fireworks display. More details can be found in the insert in the May edition of the Bovingdon News and further information will appear in The Bovingdon Villager.

There is also information on the Parish Council's website at [www.bovingdonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.bovingdonparishcouncil.gov.uk) In addition, St Lawrence Church is bringing forward their summer fete to take place on Saturday 4 June.

The Parish Council will be making grants of £50 available towards those streets who are organising street parties to take place on Sunday 5 June.

The Parish Council is supporting a tea party which is being organised to take place in the Memorial Hall on Saturday 28 May 2022.

## **Committees and Representatives**

### **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Councillors Graham Barrett, Mike Foulds Julie Steer (Chair), David Stent and Philip Walker

### **Memorial Hall Management Committee**

Councillors Alison Gunn, Mike Foulds Julie Steer (Chair) and Pauline Wright

### **Outdoors Committee**

Councillors Graham Barrett, Alison Gunn, Ben Richardson, Hugh Schneiders, Julie Steer, David Stent, Philip Walker, Adrian Watney and Pauline Wright (Chair)

### **Personnel Committee**

Councillors Ben Richardson (Chair), Julie Steer, Dave Stent and Adrian Watney

### **Planning Committee**

Councillors Ben Richardson, Hugh Schneiders, David Stent, Philip Walker (Chair), Adrian Watney and Pauline Wright

### **Council representatives**

**BP 10 Run Sub-Group** - Councillors Julie Steer (Organiser) and David Stent

**Bovingdon Community Library** – Councillors Julie Steer

**Bovingdon Primary Academy** - Vacant

**Community Safety** - Councillor Ben Richardson

**Friends of HMP The Mount** -HACCRO

**Herts Councillor representative on the Chilterns Conservation Board** – Councillor Adrian Watney

**Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group** – Clare Norton (Chair)

### **Contact Details**

Chair – Councillor Graham Barrett – [graham.barrett@councillor.bovingdonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:graham.barrett@councillor.bovingdonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Vice-Chair – Councillor David Stent – [david.stent@councillor.bovingdonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:david.stent@councillor.bovingdonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

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