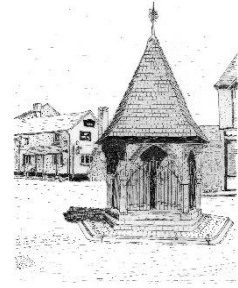


BOVINGDON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022 – 2023



Dear Resident,

This is the last report of the present Parish Council, prior to the local elections being held on 4 May 2023.

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 Christmas 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.

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Councillor Julie Steer has continued to oversee the work of this Committee. Despite the increased pressure on our budgets from the rise in inflation and the tremendous ‘hikes’ in electricity and gas prices, we have successfully managed our budgets again, although it was considered necessary to increase the precept for the forthcoming financial year 2023 – 2024.

The increase is to meet the costs of inflation and the additional costs for employing a replacement Parish Clerk. The current Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer do not have an employer pension contribution. That, along with extra hours, higher national insurance and a higher rate of pay for part of the hours has seen a significant increase.

Although total costs have only increased by just over 10% - the ‘quirk’ of precept calculations across local government is that the precept is only part of the overall income so the percentage will inevitably be larger in percentage terms because grants and other income do not increase by the same percentage.

The precept figure (net of Council Tax Support Grant and Resilience grant) is £78,411. Based on information available at the time, the Parish Rate for a Band D property increased from £31.90 to £36.68 per annum, an increase of £4.78 or 9.19p per week. A 1% increase in the precept raises approximately £600 additional income for the council. Bovingdon’s precept remains in the lower quartile of charges made by Hertfordshire County Council parishes and compares favourably with the national average of approximately £75 per annum.

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 £123,904.71 date from CIL receipts, which is ring fenced. To date £17,856.12 has been allocated including the purchase of new planters in the High Street and £4k towards the new astro-turf playing area in front of the goal post in the King George V Playing Field.

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. As we resume more normality after the COVID pandemic the Memorial Hall continues to be well used.

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. During the course of the next year or so, important and difficult decisions will have to be taken to review the usage and economic viability of the building, to meet the ever rising costs of maintenance and sustainability.

Outdoors Committee

The Committee is now chaired by Councillor Pauline Wright, and continues to be responsible for all aspects of the outdoor areas of the village.

One important aspect of the work of this Committee is to monitor the outsourced village warden contract which is undertaken by The Sunnyside Rural Trust. The 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.

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.

Hopefully many of you will have seen their teams of trainees collecting litter, planting and generally carrying out maintenance work in all areas of the village. We know that many residents express their thanks to the Trust and appreciate the work that is carried out in the parish. The Parish Council are very grateful to them for their continued commitment to 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. The Parish Council is in the process of renewing the lease on the pond for a further period of 25 years from Dacorum Borough Council.

In addition, the Borough Council has planted meadow flowers on an area of land opposite Mountbatten House on the corner of Vicarage Lane and Dudley Close. Thank you also to Harvey Mash, the owner of Bovingdon Film Studios who provided 50% of the cost with the remainder being met by the Parish Council, to plant a large area of the verge fronting Bovingdon Airfield along the Chesham Road with daffodil bulbs to provide a wonderful display of colour.

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. However, this year it has been busier than usual as the Committee have been involved in the recruitment and appointment of a new Parish Clerk. The Parish Council had made an appointment but sadly this did not work out. The post is currently being re-advertised.

Planning Committee

The Planning Committee, chaired by Councillor Philip Walker, continues to meet every three weeks. This year the number of planning applications has fallen to 116 from 177 applications in 2021- 22. The village will no doubt 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.

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

The Borough Council is still in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for the period 2020 to 2038. The work on this has been delayed by the steps being taken to preserve the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation.

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 government's 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.

Land at Grange Farm

As most residents will be aware, discussions have been taking place with the owners / developers of the Grange Farm site. A public consultation was held in February 2023 to give residents an overview of the possible benefits that may be available as part of this development.

The key points of the proposals are as follows:

- Delivery of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) for walking and recreation.
- Development of Grange Farm will have a lower impact on the Green Belt and countryside beyond the village than any of the other competing sites.
- Retention of existing trees and new tree planting within the development, to reinforce screening, including the creation of buffer planting zones on the edges of the site.
- Retained employment area.
- A 3 Hectare site was retained for the provision of a new school, but the County Council have advised that the present school site is adequate for the future needs of the village and, therefore, it is proposed that an additional 50 homes will be built on part of the land thereby creating income for the village as follows:
 - Total Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from 150 homes is £2,500,000
 - Additional CIL from 50 further homes is £840,000
 - The 200 new homes will thus generate an overall CIL contribution of £3,340,000
 - 25% of those combined CIL contributions will be passed by Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) to Bovingdon Parish Council (BPC) being £840,000
 - An additional contribution of £2,500,000 will be given to BPC by Grange Farm as an enabling development fund, from the 'extra' 50 dwellings above the original 150 homes
 - A further payment of £1,000,000 will be paid to BPC from the development,

assuming that planning consent is granted locally (i.e. not at a contested appeal)

- Those 50 homes will be built on half of what would otherwise be the 3 Ha school site.
- The remaining half of the 3 Ha school site will be donated to BPC for free, to be used for community purposes
- The new scout hall, and its access and car park, will be located there (estimated to cost c. £400,000, to be paid for out of the £3.5 million above, as a parish-led project).
- The balance of £3,100,000 (together with BPC's £840,000 of Grange Farm's CIL) will be used by the parish on the community land uses, and to facilitate the improvements to the High Street, new Memorial Hall, car parking improvements and whatever scheme the people of Bovingdon support.
- Space will be made available within the community land for the bowls club (if they ever wish to relocate), allotments and other open spaces.
- A community orchard will be provided within the development by the developers of Grange Farm, at their expense as marked on the current plans.
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In addition to all of the above, which relates to the 3 hectare 'former school' part of the site, the original proposal for 150 homes will still provide the following original package of benefits:

- Sustainable and accessible location, well related to the existing settlement of Bovingdon .
- 150 new homes, with a range of types and tenures to support residents' housing needs.
- 40% Affordable Housing (60 new affordable homes).
- Provision of Extra Care elderly accommodation, 60 units, meeting an identified national and local need.
- Surface Water Drainage enhancements to mitigate existing flooding issues.
- New doctors' surgery.
- New pedestrian and cycle linkages, connecting all new facilities via Pembridge Close, and creating a new safe pedestrian and cycle link through to Bovingdon Green.
- New Public open spaces, including equipped play areas and community

orchard, for the benefit of the whole village.

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

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 Jarman's 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.

The Parish Council received a grant of £10,235 from the Neighbourhood Planning Programme, funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, to help with providing planters and bollards as part of the High Street Regeneration improvement work carried outside the Co-op (now NISA).

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.

Neighbourhood Planning

The Steering Group under the direction of the Chair, Clare Norton and our consultant, Jacqueline Veater have made a lot of progress over the past year. The Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan has been drafted and a consultation period held between 5 January to 17

February 2023 with an Open Event held in the Memorial Hall on 22 January 2023. The responses are currently being analysed. The draft NP will then be sent to the Parish Council for our comments and approval.

All the documents can be accessed on

[Neighbourhood Plan - Bovingdon Parish Council](#)

Community Safety

Councillor Ben Richardson reports to the Outdoors Committee on matters of Community Safety in the village. The role covers matters relating to road safety, close liaison with local police officers, reporting on crime and antisocial behaviour as well as managing the Parish Marshal patrols.

The village is a relatively safe place for motorists and pedestrians although problems persist with High Street congestion, inconsiderate driving and parking as well as speeding on some local roads.

Road Safety

Following a long delay, it is anticipated that the village will finally benefit from the Police Commissioner's Road Safety Funds secured prior to the COVID epidemic. These funds are deposited with Hertfordshire Highways for them to improve the three main village gateways and to install, advisory 20mph signs on the approaches to the Bovingdon Primary Academy in the High Street. In addition, following a further bid for road safety funds, there is to be permanent speed monitoring technology installed in Chipperfield Road. This will provide speed monitoring 24/7 instead of the few hours each week achieved by the original team of DriveSafe volunteers

Parish Marshals

In the last year, volunteers (including some Councillors) have continued to patrol regularly in Bovingdon achieving over 225 hours of volunteer patrol in 12 months.

The Marshals always walk in pairs and are there to deal with a wide range of local issues including; traffic problems, fly tipping and to engage with local residents. Currently the top seven issues addressed are:

1. Street Patrol (being seen and engaging with residents, shop keepers and visitors).
2. Deal with Fly Tipping and Fly Posting (removal and collecting evidence of offences).

3. Close Liaison with Staff at HMP Mount (visible patrols and liaison to improve security).
4. Joint patrols with police officers (work with Safer Neighbourhood & Response Teams).
5. Reporting damaged road furniture to Herts Highways.
6. Reporting abandoned motor vehicles to Dacorum Borough Council for removal.
7. After all that, Marshals play a highly visible part in events such as the Christmas Fayre.

Reported Crime

The Parish Marshals aims are to create a public face of the Parish Council, to improve community safety and to reduce the fear of crime. Fear of Crime exists even when crime is low. This problem is reflected in the British Crime Survey. Unfortunately, even when crime is low, the newspaper reports, TV broadcasts and posts on social media make residents feel unsafe.

With local crime it is most important that residents report crime and suspicious incidents to the police and avoid publicising or discussing information on social media. Sharing information in this way (which may be key in a criminal case) could seriously damage the chances of a successful conclusion. TELL THE POLICE AND NOT SOCIAL MEDIA!

BOVINGDON PARISH 10K and 3k Fun Run

This event was held on 4 September 2022 and attracted a lot of interest. Although 182 people had signed up to run the 10k, 143 turned up on the day. This was partly due to the date of this year's London Marathon being changed which had a knock-on effect for runners as they were doing long distance runs instead. There has been positive feedback received from people who attended the run. Due to increased costs and the lower number of runners, this year's event did not make a surplus.

For the past few months, the Parish Council has tried to find another organisation to take over the responsibility for putting on this event. Discussions were held with a couple of village groups but these have not been successful and therefore, the Parish Council has reluctantly taken the decision that they will no longer organise the 10k and 3k fun run.

Grants awarded from surpluses made at this event:

'Tea Time' - Grant of £500 to help towards the purchase of equipment.

Bovingdon Community Library - Grant of £500 to help towards the cost of purchasing chairs and a display unit.

Christmas Street Fayre / switch-on of High Street Christmas lights – Sunday 4 December 2022

Once again this was an extremely successful event with an attendance of over 2,500. Joey Essex and his professional skating partner Vanessa Bauer switched-on the lights. They were both delightful and very popular and spent a lot of time to accommodate a queue of fans wanting a photo opportunity with them.

Prior to the event the Parish Council had paid for the lighting infrastructure to be upgraded

The Parish Council are grateful to SparkX our lighting contractor who are based in Wendover, for their help with the provision of our Christmas Street Lighting and for their support on the evening of the switch-on.

We are grateful to those businesses and individuals who contributed so generously to the Christmas Lights fund. Our thanks also go to Derek Procter of Marchant's Farm for donating a lovely Christmas tree, which stood lit up on the grass area in front of Archway Flats and which received a lot of positive comments from residents.

Bovingdon News

Steph Farrer of Farrspark who has edited the Bovingdon News for a number of years has taken 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. The Bovingdon News will continue to be delivered in May and November.

The Queens Platinum Jubilee Weekend – 2 to 5 June 2022

On Thursday 2 June 2022, the village celebrated the Queens Platinum Jubilee in style with a wonderful day of celebrations and entertainment centred on Bovingdon Green. There was a classic car show in the afternoon followed by music and entertainments in the evening. The day ended with the singing of the Jubilee Anthem by the St Lawrence Church Choir prior to the lighting of the new beacon followed by a magnificent firework display with music.

The Parish Council arranged for the beacon to be commissioned and installed on Bovingdon Green. We were successful in securing two grants to cover the cost. The first a grant of £4,600 from the UK Communities Foundation (UKCF) administered via

Dacorum Borough Council and the other a grant of £2k from County Councillor Richard Roberts' Locality Budget.

The Parish Council also supported a tea party which was held in the Memorial Hall on Saturday, 28 May 2022.

The Parish Council made 13 grants of £50 to people who arranged street parties to celebrate the event on Sunday, 5 June.

For many months leading up to the Jubilee, a small working group made up of representatives from

groups and organisations within the village and chaired by Councillor Pauline Wright met to organise the village celebrations. Our sincere thanks go to the group and to the many people who volunteered and helped to make this a very special occasion. Many happy memories were made and it will be an important day to remember in the life of the village.

Committees and Representatives

Finance & General Purposes Committee

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

Memorial Hall Management Committee

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

Outdoors Committee

Councillors Graham Barrett, Alison Gunn, Ben Richardson, Hugh Schneiders, 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

Bovingdon Community Library – Councillor Julie Steer

Bovingdon Primary Academy - Vacant

Community Safety - Councillor Ben Richardson

Friends of HMP The Mount - Vacant

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

Vice-Chair – Councillor David Stent

david.stent@councillor.bovingdonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Parish Clerk – Mike Kember

office@bovingdonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Telephone - 01442 833036

Parish Office – The Memorial Hall, High Street,
Bovingdon, Herts HP3 0HJ