



# Annual Parish Meeting - Chair's report

Wednesday 7th May 2025

The parish council has three main functions: representing the whole electorate within the parish, delivering services to meet local needs and striving to improve quality of life in the parish. This report reviews our activities for the last year (1 May 24 - 6 May 25) under these categories.

## Representing the whole electorate within the parish

Over the last year we:

- dealt a large number of queries from the public (with the clerk as the public face of the council), signposting parishioners to other services where we couldn't resolve an issue ourselves
- commented on 26 applications for planning permission within the parish
- responded to a number of community consultations, including Traffic Sensitive Streets (OCC), voluntary work in the community (The Probation Service), leisure facilities (VWHDC), 20mph and 30mph speed limits (OCC), standards in local government (MHCLG), and the Councils' Charter (OCC)
- brokered the implementation of measures to ameliorate traffic noise problems on Ware Road
- secured a number of footpath improvements from the county council, including replacement of the bridge over the River Ock and the installation of accessible footpath gates
- revised the format of our parish council newsletter to include useful local government contact details and background information

## Delivering services to meet local needs

Over the last year we:

- continued our programme of tree maintenance, tackling the high priority work remaining from last year
- maintained our grass cutting and routine maintenance activities, including repairs and upkeep of play equipment
- agreed the terms of the transfer of the Nursery End public open space, subject to completion of the remaining legal formalities
- drew up and approved an investment policy, putting us in a better position to invest and maximise the funds available for future infrastructure improvements
- renegotiated the football club lease, taking the opportunity to clarify ambiguities around maintenance and upkeep
- obtained £5,000 of grant funding from the OCC Councillor Priority Fund towards our QEII Field project
- drew up and approved a policy for use of security cameras
- funded replacement batteries for several village defibrillators
- completed risk assessments for work undertaken by our maintenance contractor

- started to implement mapping of our assets through the Parish Online service
- arranged cutting back by SSEN of trees in vicinity of power lines

## Striving to improve quality of life in the parish

Over the last year we:

- commissioned a full archaeological survey of the QEII Field, which we expect to clear the way for planning permission to be granted
- obtained significant improvements to drainage in the vicinity of Frogmore Brook/Bow Road through consistent lobbying of district and county councils for action
- agreed a programme of future bus stop improvements, to be funded by the county council through S106
- held a strategy meeting to develop some of our longer term projects, addressing issues such as transport, facilities for young people, community wellbeing, planning and development and the local environment
- commissioned the purchase and installation of a new children's play fort in the play area
- procured a new teen shelter for the skate park, due for installation in the next one or two months
- planted a further batch of fruit trees in the community woodland
- commissioned the regeneration of the garden adjacent to the children's play area, funded by the VWHDC Climate Action Fund
- obtained a reduction in speed limit on the A417 from 40mph to 30mph
- ensured a temporary pedestrian crossing was provided during the A417 junction improvements associated with River Meadow
- saw our application for a village-wide 20mph come into effect
- applied for S106 funding for solar panels on the village hall
- developed a detailed scheme for a public work of art wayfinder trial, obtained funding and commissioned an artist to produce a series of artworks in local stone reflecting the story of the village, ready for installation later this year
- arranged for the removal of unsafe features in the skate park and started the process of funding and commissioning the design and installation of a new park
- planted a further batch of daffodils around the village
- purchased and installed an additional defibrillator on the Bow Road estate
- funded new netball posts, tennis and pickleball nets for the MUGA

## General comments

I would like to thank:

- all our councillors, who give their time voluntarily for the benefit of our community
- our maintenance contractor, Darren Rolls and our litter picker, Wilf Rolls, whose work is key to the upkeep and improvement of our village environment
- our clerk, who this year obtained her CiLCA accreditation (including two 'exceptional' modules) and has continued to serve the parish council with professionalism and efficiency, and who has been instrumental in delivering much of what we have achieved this year