

KIDLINGTON PARISH NEWSLETTER

2018

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2018 edition of the Kidlington Parish Council newsletter. 2017- 2018 has certainly been a busy year for the Parish Council with several important issues needing to be addressed by the Councillors. These include dealing with Oxford's unmet housing need through the Cherwell Local Plan review, bringing Stratfield Brake under a new management structure and trying to get the best deal for the village from the Co-op development.

There have been a few changes to the Parish Council this year, Maurice Billington stood down as Chairman of the Parish to concentrate on his role of Chairman of Cherwell District Council. His shoes were filled by myself, Nigel Simpson who now has the honour of leading the Parish Council in delivering on the exciting projects we have planned for the coming year.

We also have two new Councillors joining our team. Chris Pack returns representing the St Mary's ward and we welcome Helen Kingsley who will be representing the Dogwood ward. Both have already proved to be key members of the Parish Council.



Members of the public are invited to attend ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

To be held at Exeter Hall starting at 7.30pm On Thursday 15 March 2018

The public are invited to submit questions or resolutions for consideration at the meeting.
Please contact the Clerk of the Council at clerk@kidlington-pc.gov.uk by Monday 12 March 2018

AGENDA

- 1. Welcome**
Cllr Nigel Simpson, Chairman of Kidlington Parish Council
- 2. Minutes** – to confirm the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17 March 2017.
- 3. Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017** – to receive the statement of the Parish Council's audited accounts.
- 4. Report by Thames Valley Police**
Superintendent Mark Johns and Inspector Steve Hookham
- 5. Report by Gosford Hill Medical Practice**
Dr Mark Wallace
- 6. Report by London Oxford Airport**
James Dillon-Godfray, Head of Business Development
- 7. Report by Cherwell District Council**
Cllr Barry Wood, Leader of the Council
- 8. Questions** – to consider any questions or resolutions

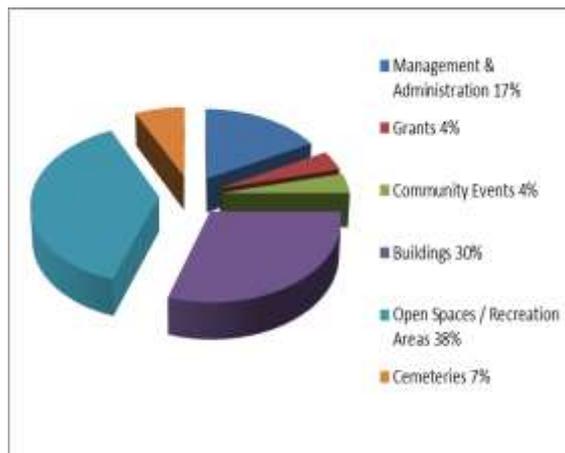
FINANCE

Following the annual review to calculate the amount of Council Tax needed to support Kidlington Parish Council's plans for 2018/19, it was agreed that an increase of 5.85% is required which equates to an annual increase of £7.67 per household for a Band D property.

The Council appreciates that this is a larger increase than in recent years and the main reason for this is the increased costs of running Stratfield Brake following the decision to outsource the management of the facility to a third party. The Council has been considering this option for the last few years as it felt it was important to invest in the grounds and building to allow increased access for the wider community.

There are also some increases in the Parish Council staff costs due to the government scheme for auto enrolment in a pension scheme.

The Council has made some savings in other areas by reducing the need for external contracts and utilising the expertise of the existing staff. Over the coming months we will be investigating areas where we can make further savings in order to ensure the best value for money for residents.



Make up of the councils 2018/19 budgets across the areas it is responsible for.

KIDLINGTON IN BLOOM

We are pleased to report that we were again awarded Silver Gilt for Kidlington in Bloom - the second highest award from the Royal Horticultural Society. Additionally we won the top award for our brightly coloured floral arrangements. This is due to the hard work and talents of a great many people and our thanks are due to the professional staff at Cherwell District Council and Kidlington Parish Council, members of the Kidlington Garden Society and St Mary's Fields Group, the Green Gym, local Brownies and Scouts.

The judges commented that "The impact achieved by this year's colour scheme of red, orange and yellow is stunning. The fact that these colours are visible across the whole village creates a feeling of coordination and unity. They also brighten up the shopping parades, High Street and Piazza."

The highlights from the judging below:

- Residents take pride in their gardens
- Yarnton Road allotments are particularly well maintained
- The burial ground and Church Field is very well managed enhanced by new path edging
- The High Street is amazingly clean
- The wooden barrels in the High Street are attractive and fit in well with the environment
- The nature reserve at St. Mary's Fields is a treasure trove for wildlife

I would like to pay tribute to the huge contribution made over the years by the late Alan Walton of the Gardening Society, whose death was announced this January. He will be greatly missed.

To mark the centenary of the end of the First World War, the theme for 2018 is red, white and blue and we hope that residents might bear this in mind when thinking about their planting.

The popular Front Garden competition is being sponsored this year by Oxford Garden Design who are providing prizes of gardening vouchers for a local nursery. The first prize is a £100 voucher with two runners up prizes of £50 vouchers each. You can enter your own garden, or nominate a neighbour's garden. Entry forms are available at Exeter Hall or email community@kidlington-pc.gov.uk.



OXFORD'S UNMET NEED

Your Parish Council continues to work together in an attempt to stop the proposed 4400 houses being built on Green Belt land around Kidlington. This is Oxford City's problem being forced upon us without proper consultation with the people who will be most affected. The plan would result in the permanent loss of green fields and a massive increase in traffic on our already overcrowded roads with no plans for any major changes to the supporting infrastructure. We have employed the professional services of a planning consultant to give us the greatest chance of stopping this proposal from going ahead.

This is due to be debated at the Cherwell District council Meeting due to be held on Monday 26 February at 6.30pm at Bodicote House and we intend to make full representation from the Parish Council to raise our concerns and objections to this plan.

There will also be representatives from many other local groups hoping to get these development proposals rejected. The meeting is open to the public.

KIDLINGTON GRANTS

The Parish Council is able to offer grants to community groups and societies. Generally grants are given for events or projects or to buy a specific piece of equipment. In 2017 grants were awarded to the Kidlington Recreational Trust, Kidlington Community Hub which replaced the Children's Centre and, Kidlington Youth Football Club.

We were also able to support groups who use the facilities at Exeter Hall such as the Lunch Club, Royal British Legion, Bingo and the Evergreens. If you are involved in a local sports club or voluntary group and would like to apply for a grant in 2018, please contact the Parish Council for an application form.



STRATFIELD BRAKE



Stratfield Brake sports facility was built nearly 20 years ago with the help of lottery funding from Sport England. It has been managed by Kidlington Parish Council and Gosford and Water Eaton Parish Council and is the home of the Gosford All Blacks Rugby Club, Kidlington Cricket Club and Kidlington Running Club.

The facility was in need of some major investment and Kidlington Parish Council felt it needed to be more accessible to other residents for sporting and recreational use. In September, the Parish Council invested in some major refurbishment work and, working with Cherwell District Council, outsourced the management of Stratfield Brake to Legacy Leisure.

We have been delighted with the results and have had many positive comments from residents who have hired the upstairs bar area for parties, taken advantage of the new classes that are being run there or enjoyed a hot chocolate while their children participated in a game of football.

The core users of the facility continue to enjoy this excellent venue and acknowledge that the investment and the new management arrangements, whilst presenting some initial challenges, provide a much more sustainable future for this excellent venue.

ST MARY'S BURIAL GROUND

Earlier in the summer, the Parish Council had all the paths in St Mary's Burial Grounds resurfaced creating a much more attractive setting and allowing easier access for those visiting the burial ground



KIDLINGTON EVENTS

The Parish Council puts on three major events each year. The Community Gala Day in July is always a very popular day out for residents with a whole range of free entertainments provided. Last year the sun shone and children enjoyed the climbing wall, face painting and henna tattoos, an African drumming workshop, Go Karts, Punch and Judy, Photo Booth, Local Societies and Craft Fair and lots of free fairground rides. The date for this year's Community Fun Day is Saturday 14 July so please put it in your diary.

The Firework Display at Stratfield Brake in November was enjoyed by nearly 1000 local people. This year visitors were also treated to a fire juggler before the main event.

On Thursday 30 November, we switched on the Christmas Lights on a perfect crisp winter's evening. This year's event was kindly sponsored by the Pye Charitable Trust which made it possible to have a stage with performances by students from Stagecoach, Gosford Hill School and most of the local primary schools. We combined forces with the Kidlington Centre this year who hosted the ever popular Santa's Grotto and free face painting. Out on the Watts Way Piazza there was a Christmas Tree, Giant Snow Globe and Bucking Reindeer to enjoy. Local charity stalls lined the High Street and residents enjoyed delicious alpine food.

We hope that everyone enjoys these events which we believe to be an important chance to celebrate the community we live in.



KIDLINGTON WINTER CLEAN



The Parish Council organises community litter picks four times a year. So far we have tackled the High Street, Car Parks, alleys around Exeter Close and Evans Lane. We have already collected over 50 bags of litter in the first two sessions.

The next clean up is planned for Saturday 21 April when we will be tackling the canal towpath from Yarnton Road to Roundham Lock. Please join us at 10am at Exeter Hall if you can.

CO-OP DEVELOPMENT

Earlier this year the Co-op and Cantay Developments won their appeal to build flats at their site in the village centre. The Parish Council have opposed this development from the consultation phase because we believe the proposal is unsuitable for the site. It provides no permanent social housing, no benefits to local people, and is contrary to guidelines set out in the Kidlington Masterplan. Kidlington Parish Council and Cherwell District Councillors were unanimous in their approach to reject the application, but the developer subsequently appealed the decision. The view taken by the Planning Inspector, was that on balance the scheme was satisfactory, and that the requested developer funding provisions to fund affordable housing and school provision were not required.

PARKING ISSUES

Residents have contacted parish councillors expressing concern at an increase in inconsiderate and illegal parking which presents obstructions or real danger to pedestrians and other road users, and damage to our grass verges. The only authorities who have power to enforce parking are the Police and Oxfordshire County Council if it is on their property. Cherwell District Council is contributing funds towards a PCSO for 30 hours a week across the district, and the Parish Council are monitoring this.

Advice from the Highway Code states that parking on double yellow lines is illegal, and parking on single yellow lines is illegal during the time stated on the upright signs on the pavement, unless you have a blue disabled badge, in which case you can park for up to three hours on double and single yellow lines.

All drivers are at risk of receiving a penalty notice in Kidlington if they stop or park:

- near a school entrance
- at or near a bus stop
- opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space
- opposite a traffic island or (if this would cause an obstruction) another parked vehicle
- where the kerb has been lowered to help wheelchair users and powered mobility vehicles
- in front of an entrance to a property on a bend
- where you would prevent the use of cycle facilities



Parking on verges and footways can cause many problems, including obstructing vulnerable people who use the verge or footway, obstructing road users entering and leaving properties and reducing visibility at junctions.

APPRENTICE OPPORTUNITY

The Parish Council is recruiting for a Business Administration Apprentice to start in April who will assist with the day to day tasks in our busy Exeter Hall office. This will include helping with hall bookings, organising events, administration of burials, minute taking and answering queries from members of the public. Full training will be given and the apprentice will be working towards a Level 3 qualification in Business Administration. For more details please email: clerk@kidlington-pc.gov.uk.

KIDLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL CONTACT DETAILS

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Carmen Griffiths (Vice Chair)
Gill Hopcroft
Helen Kingsley
Alan Mackenzie-Wintle
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St Marys
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KIDLINGTON WARDS



FUTURE PROJECTS

The Council is now in an excellent financial position to deliver on its list of projects following the sale of the land at the end of The Moors. Through these community projects we are working to improve Kidlington for everyone. We are initially focusing on the future of the Exeter Close site with our first major improvement being a brand new outdoor play area and outdoor gym offering something different for all ages to enjoy.

Other developments we are working on include improved drainage and landscaping at the Bicester Road Cemetery, office refurbishment at Exeter Hall and erecting deer fencing at Station Field Allotments.