

Kidlington Parish Newsletter 2019

Annual Parish Meeting - Thursday 23 May at 7.30pm

This public meeting is an opportunity for Kidlington residents to hear what the Parish Council has accomplished in the previous year and how your Council Tax is spent. It is open to all residents and refreshments are provided.

If there are questions that you would like to ask that are related to Parish Council activities then please contact us in writing to Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, Kidlington, OX5 1AB or by email – clerk@kidlington-pc.gov.uk before the end of April.

Exeter Close – play area and gym

We hope that residents are enjoying the new Play Area and Outdoor Gym at Exeter Close. The Council invested £175,000 in the project which includes a dual zipwire, sandpit with hidden dinosaur fossils, trampolines, basket swing, climbing frame and much more. The Outdoor Gym located behind the Pavilion has been a big hit with residents, do come along and try it out. Towards the end of the year we installed solar lighting along the path through Exeter Close to encourage more people to use this to access the village centre.

The Council is now looking at making improvements to the play area at Ron Groves Park on Maple Avenue which may include a new Multi Use Games area and new play equipment.



Become a Parish Councillor

On Thursday 2 May elections will be held for Kidlington Parish Council. Parish Councillors must be 18 or over, on the electoral role and live or work in, or within three miles of, the village. No previous experience in local government is necessary, just an interest in making a difference in your community. If you are interested in becoming a Councillor, come along to one of our meetings, contact the Clerk or one of the current Parish Councillors to find out more. Nomination packs will be available from Cherwell District Council later this month.

Update on CDC Partial Review

As we write this newsletter the Examination in Public of Cherwell District Council's proposals for 4,400 new homes, in and around Kidlington, is underway. Most of the proposed sites are outside of the village in Begbroke, Yarnton, Gosford and Woodstock but they would undoubtedly have an impact on Kidlington residents.

The Parish Council has objected to the proposals at every stage and employed the services of a Planning Consultant who is representing the Council at the Examination supported by the Chairman of the Council. We will not know the outcome until later in the year.

Gala Day, Fireworks and Christmas Lights

The Council put on three community events in 2018. The Gala Day in July was a great success with hundreds of local families enjoying free activities throughout the day. This year's event had a rural feel with donkey rides on the back field and a petting zoo near Exeter Hall. There were drumming and circus skills workshops, go karting, climbing wall and fairground rides as well as plenty of local charity and community stalls.

We enjoyed a fine clear evening at the Fireworks Display at Stratfield Brake. This year's event was so successful that we were able to make a donation to the Royal British Legion from the ticket sales.

The Christmas Lights switch on event, sponsored again this year by the Pye Charitable Trust was a festive treat for all who attended. Local school children sang carols on the stage, there was a live nativity scene in the Kidlington Centre, donkeys, stilt walkers, Santa's grotto, delicious food and it even snowed, although it wasn't the real stuff.



Keep Kidlington Tidy

Kidlington will be taking part in Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean. On Saturday 30 March we will be coordinating efforts across the village. Get together with your neighbours and friends and get involved. We can help by providing rubbish and recycling bags, litter pickers and gloves courtesy of Cherwell District Council. We can also arrange for the rubbish to be taken away. Contact Les in the Parish Council office on 01865 372143 to sign up.

Kidlington in Bloom

Kidlington was once again awarded Silver Gilt in the national In Bloom competition. We hope that residents enjoyed the colourful beds and baskets across the village. This year to mark the 100 year anniversary of WW1 you will have noticed the displays of poppies and cornflowers at either end of the village along with the silhouette of a soldier – Lest We Forget.

This year's colour theme is red, orange and yellow so the village should look resplendent come the summer. We are always very grateful to villagers who work so hard to make their front gardens look attractive. We will be running our Front Garden competition again this year with a top prize of £100 so please think about entering.



St Mary's Fields

The In Bloom judges were particularly impressed with St Mary's Fields and the committee was awarded a Regional Award for Conservation and Wildlife. The area is such a beautiful asset to the village. Anyone who would like to be part of the team of volunteers who help to look after this nature reserve is welcome to join in at one of the working parties. They meet on the first Saturday of the month (except July, August and January) in the car park at St Mary's Fields at 10am, or join them at the Big Hay Rake on Sunday 25 August. Tools and gloves are provided but stout footwear is required. We are also in need of bird watchers to identify and record species in the area. Please contact us at the Parish Council if you would like to get involved.



Rosie the Elephant

For a few years during the 1930s, Kidlington was home to the Oxford Zoological Gardens, a local attraction drawing crowds from around the county and beyond. The zoo was home to many exotic animals including local celebrities Rosie the Elephant and Hanno the Lion. Sadly, Rosie died whilst in Kidlington and is widely rumoured to be buried somewhere in the near vicinity.



In October, Kidlington Parish Council, using funds specified for local art as a result of local development, honoured the memory of this important local attraction by commissioning and installing a sculpture of Rosie on the Kidlington Roundabout. Rosie, who stands over 3 metres high and weighs nearly a tonne, is joined by a stork and a monkey. Pupils from Gosford Hill School took part in a workshop with the artist, Tony Davies, to help imagine and design the fourth sculpture, that of a female zookeeper.

Chairman of Kidlington Parish Council, Nigel Simpson commented 'Children in Kidlington are still taught today about our history as home to the Oxford Zoo and the council felt this would be a tangible and fun way to remember Rosie and Kidlington's history.'

Open Spaces Team

Graham Kearney joined the Parish Council team in January in the new position of Facilities Manager. Graham's responsibilities include the Council's Open Spaces and Play Areas, Allotments and Burial Grounds as well as our buildings including Exeter Hall and the Sports Pavilion.

Vacancy for Grounds Staff

The Parish Council has a vacancy to join the Open Spaces team helping to keep Kidlington clean and green. The position is full time with a salary of £19,544. The closing date for applications is Friday 22 March with an anticipated start date in April. If you are interested in the role please look on the Parish Council website for more details or contact Graham Kearney on 01865 372143.



Grants

The Parish Council is able to offer grants to community groups to purchase equipment or help with the costs of running an event.

This year we have given grants to Kidlington Recreational Trust, the Animation Station, Kidlington Development Watch, the Royal British Legion, Garden City Football Club, Kidlington Lunch Club, Bingo Club, Evergreens and Kidlington Scout Group.

If your organisation needs a grant please find details of the policy and an application form on the Parish Council website.



Grow your own

Kidlington Parish Council manages 5 allotments sites across the village at Yarnton Road, Hazel Walk, Station Fields, Blenheim Road and Bicester Road. There are over 140 plots being cultivated by local residents growing fresh, organic produce, although not without a lot of hard work on the part of the allotment holders. The annual cost of a plot is just £37 or £22 for half a plot. There are short waiting lists at some sites but available plots at others. If you are interested in renting a plot please contact the Parish Council on 01865 372143.

AEDs (Automated External Defibrillator)

Would you know where to find the nearest defibrillator in an emergency? The Council has an AED installed at Exeter Hall and will be running a free training morning on a Saturday in April (date to be confirmed). There are also AEDs at the library, the Co-op and the Sports Centre as well as both doctor's surgeries. You can install the Save a Life app on your phone to find out more.

Your Council Tax

The Council has requested a precept of £697,515 for 2019/20 which equates to £141.64 per Band D property per year. This is a 2% increase on last year in line with inflation. The Parish Council continues to increase efficiencies and make savings wherever possible.



Dates for your diary 2019

Keep Kidlington Tidy	Saturday 30 March
Annual Parish Meeting	Thursday 23 May at 7.30pm
Kidlington Gala Day	Saturday 13 July
Kidlington Fireworks	Tuesday 5 November
Christmas Lights Event	Thursday 28 November

Contact Details - Councillors

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