

Kidlington Parish Council Newsletter



A message from the Chairman of the Parish Council, David Robey

It has been a very difficult year, with great hardship and distress for many, and sadly more to come as the economic impact of Covid 19 makes itself increasingly felt. But thanks to the remarkable volunteer organizations in our area, together with the services provided by the local authorities, emergency support systems have been available to those most affected.

The two local foodbanks continue with their invaluable work, the North Oxfordshire Foodbank operating from the Baptist Church, and the Cherwell Community Larder, which has provided surplus food distribution and much else from Exeter Hall. We have also worked closely with Kidlington and Surrounding Areas Coronavirus Community Help (KASA), who provided essential support services for those in need. We have systematically published information on our webpages about available help and support facilities, as well as services provided by local businesses.

The Council adapted well to on-line meetings at the beginning of the pandemic, and even after the emergency some will continue in this form. But they inevitably lack the stimulus, support and give-and-take of physical meetings. Our administrative staff have worked remotely throughout, and our grounds staff have ensured that our open spaces and facilities are safe and well maintained.

The lockdowns and limits on social contact in 2020 meant that we had to cancel the annual Gala Day, Fireworks Display and the popular Christmas Lights Switch-On event. We were able to join with other organisations to mark a socially distanced Remembrance Sunday (with a video on our website). However, we are busy planning events for 2021 with enthusiasm and optimism, and hope that you will be able to join us: details of future events are on the back page.



You are invited to attend Kidlington's Virtual Annual Parish Meeting

**To be held on Zoom on Thursday 29 April
2021 at 7.30pm**

This is an opportunity for Kidlington residents to hear what the Parish Council has been doing and its plans for the future.

Speakers

Kidlington Parish Councillors

Layla Moran MP

Gavin Staniland - Thames Valley Police

Emily Connally - Cherwell Collective

If you have questions related to Parish Council activities that you would like to ask then please contact us by email at clerk@kidlington-pc.gov.uk.

The agenda for the meeting and joining instructions will be available on the Council website (see last page) a week beforehand.

Working with the Community

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Kidlington Parish Council has been supporting the work of the Cherwell Collective. The Cherwell Collective is a not-for-profit community interest company which comprises:

- **Cherwell Larder**, operating from Exeter Hall to distribute surplus food to local residents by delivering parcels to those shielding or allowing local residents to shop for free at its weekly market.
- **Climatarian Kitchen**, providing a café and teaching people how to cook nourishing meals using surplus and seasonal food.
- **Harvest@Home**, helping people to grow their own fruit and vegetables at home or to get involved with community gardening projects. Any surplus from Harvest @ Home is given to Cherwell Larder.



Parish Council Grants

Each year we are able to give a number of grants, to local charities and voluntary organisations. This year's recipients included Lilacs Dementia Care, Kidlington Youth Football Club, Garden City Football Club, North Oxfordshire Food Bank, Oxfordshire Play Association, Cherwell Development Watch, Kidlington Recreational Trust, Cycling Without Age and the Citizens Advice Volunteer Drivers.

"The Parish Council Grant awarded to Daybreak has been crucial to us continuing to support those with dementia and their families, even in these difficult times. The award has enabled us to hire staff to phone clients regularly, to write and send out weekly newsletters and to plan for our re-opening."

If your organisation needs help with funds, please find the Grant Application Form on our website. The Council considers applications four times a year.

Kidlington **Community** Grants
Here to help

Could you help to make Kidlington a more Dementia Friendly Community?

There are currently around 850,000 people with dementia in the UK. This is projected to rise to 1.6 million by 2040. A Dementia Friend is someone who learns a little more about what it's like to live with dementia and then turns that understanding into action.

Earlier this year, KPC staff and councillors took part in on-line training provided by Lincroft Meadow Care Home, to become Dementia Friends. The home has agreed to run a public session for local residents who would like to understand more and become a Dementia Friend. The one-hour course will be held via Zoom at 10am on Thursday 29 April. Please contact Suzi Morgan on 01865 950500 to book your free place.

Your Council Tax

The Parish Council has set its budget for the financial year starting in April and has asked for a precept of £728,300, which represents an increase of 1.6% on the previous year. Due to a reduction in the number of properties or residents eligible to pay council tax, this has resulted in a 1.9% increase in real terms, still below the projected rate of inflation. The Council uses these funds to fulfil its statutory functions including the provision of burial grounds and allotments. The Parish Council is also responsible for the maintenance of Exeter Hall and the Sport Pavilion, the provision of play areas and open spaces, Stratfield Brake, St Mary's Fields.

Bicester Road Cemetery

Major works to improve the drainage at Bicester Road Cemetery were completed last year. A substantial new network of drains and paths has been installed which has significantly reduced the problems of waterlogging we experienced at times in the past. Although this may not remove the problems completely in extreme weather, the new paths will make access to graves easier whatever the condition of the ground. We are now proceeding with additional landscaping of the site and plans to expand the burial ground. Visitors to the cemetery may have noticed the addition of a water butt which they are encouraged to use instead of the tap. This is all part of the council's drive to preserve water and tackle climate change.



Civil Parking Enforcement

As many residents will know the enforcement of parking is low on the police agenda and the Parish Council has been pushing for parking in Kidlington to be decriminalised. From late 2022 this will no longer be dealt with by the police but by officers employed by Cherwell District or Oxfordshire County Councils, the same arrangement that currently exists in Oxford City and West Oxfordshire. In practice it will mean that in areas where there are parking restrictions they will be enforced on a more regular basis.



Oxfordshire County Council's Transport Strategy encourages walking or cycling as a means of exercise and travel, but pedestrians and cyclists feel intimidated by HGVs and cars travelling too fast on residential streets. Although there are 20mph speed limit zones in parts of Oxfordshire and Oxford City we are joining the campaign to extend this to all towns and villages where vehicles mix with pedestrians and cyclists. The Parish Council supports the introduction of 20mph limits across Kidlington. We welcome comments on this from the community.



Environment Group

The Parish Council is committed to reducing its carbon footprint by reducing waste and increasing biodiversity. We are working with organisations such as Wild Oxfordshire and BBOWT to enliven our green spaces and plant more trees, shrubs and flowers. We have a number of projects around the village that will soon be springing to life including Lyne Road Green and Foxdown Close.

St Marys Fields

St Mary's Fields have been a haven for us all this year and despite the restrictions we have been able to keep paths open and expand the butterfly rides. The rare Black Hairstreak has joined the Brown Hairstreak among our resident butterflies. Sightings of the Grey Wagtail have brought the St Mary's Fields bird list to 33 species.

Thanks to everyone who came to lend a hand with the annual Hay Rake in August. A monumental task: raking, piling and then dragging laden tarpaulins into the undergrowth – ideal habitat for overwintering mice and slow worms plus many other vertebrates and invertebrates. Hard work, but a lot of fun was had by all.

The flooding this year has been more extensive and lasted longer, so we wait to see the effects, particularly on the fritillaries. If you have been visiting the fields and would like to get involved in their future management, please join our monthly work-parties. We meet on the first Saturday of the month between 10am -12am – hopefully starting again on Saturday 1 May.



Lyne Road Green

Following the unwelcome incursion by travellers last summer and the subsequent installation of unsightly concrete Lego blocks, the Council has been working on a project to keep Lyne Road Green safe, whilst also making it a more interesting space for local residents and more attractive to invertebrates and birds by increasing biodiversity. Residents local to the green have received information about the plans and many have expressed an interest in getting involved to help protect the area in the future. A draft plan for trees and hedging was drawn up with help from Wild Oxfordshire. You can find this on the Council website.

Local Planning

The major planning issue for Kidlington has been the proposal to build 4400 dwellings in the Green Belt around the village. The Parish Council has fought this proposal all through the Local Plan process and now, at what could be the last battle to stop the housing going ahead, we are supporting the work of Cherwell Development Watch as the plan is challenged in the High Court.

If the Local Plan is fully implemented, what will Kidlington look like in ten years' time, when the proposed new housing has been completed? The Green Belt gap between us and Oxford will have been reduced to a narrow strip between the A34 and the railway line, after 1360 new houses have been built South of the railway. There will be 120 new houses at the South-West end of the village, by Stratfield Brake, and 430 around the Bicester Road cemetery. The size of Yarnton and Begbroke will be vastly increased, with 2490 new houses in the two villages, though we will be separated from the developments by a green gap between the railway line and the canal.

The proposed East-West Expressway, with massive traffic consequences for Kidlington, has now been taken off the government agenda. But the Council will continue to oppose the huge population increase envisaged by the associated Arc scheme. The Council is also opposing Network Rail's planned closure of the Sandy Lane level crossing.



Gala Day

We are optimistic that the Gala Day will go ahead this year and we are planning the event for Saturday 24 July.

Would you like to get involved? We are looking for local face painters and henna artists to perform on the day.

We also have the opportunity for stalls for local organisations.

Email community@kidlington-pc.gov.uk for more information.

Stratfield Brake

The sports facility has been managed by Parkwood Leisure for the last three years.

This contract has now come to an end and the facility is being managed by Cherwell District Council although the Parish Council still retains the lease.

New Additions

- Residents of Croxford Gardens requested a basket swing for their play area which was installed last year and has been well used by local children.
- Solar lighting has been installed along footpaths at Ron Groves Park and Orchard Road Recreation Ground.
- We have built a new pergola at St Mary's for the Garden of Remembrance.

Your Parish Councillors

David Robey (Chair)	david.robey@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	St Mary's Ward
David Betts (Vice-Chair)	david.betts@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Roundham Ward
Alan Graham	alan.graham@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Exeter Ward
Alison Street	alison.street@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Orchard Ward
Carolyn Sampson	carolyn.sampson@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Orchard Ward
Cheryl Foulsham	cheryl.foulsham@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Roundham Ward
Chris Pack	chris.pack@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	St Mary's Ward
Conrad Copeland	conrad.copeland@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Roundham Ward
David Thurling	david.thurling@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Dogwood Ward
Doug Williamson	doug.williamson@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Exeter Ward
Fiona Mawson	fiona.mawson@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Orchard Ward
Ian Middleton	ian.middleton@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Exeter Ward
Katherine Tyson	katherine.tyson@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	St Mary's Ward
Lucy Loveridge	lucy.loveridge@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Dogwood Ward
Neil Prestidge	neil.prestidge@kidlington-pc.gov.uk	Dogwood Ward

Dates for your diary 2021 (subject to change depending on current guidelines)

Thursday 28 April Annual Parish Meeting: 7.30pm on Zoom

Saturday 1 May St Mary's Fields Working Party

Saturday 24 July Gala Day at Exeter Hall

Saturday 14 August OPA Play Day at Ron Groves Park

19-22 August Hatwells Fair at Exeter Close

Saturday 30 October Community Planting Day at Lyne Road Green

Friday 5 November Firework Display at Stratfield Brake

Kidlington Parish Council Contact Details

Parish Council Office: 01865 372143

Clerk to the Council: Rachel Faulkner

www.kidlington-pc.gov.uk

Follow the links on our home page for a list of Covid19 support services

This QR code will take you straight to the Kidlington Parish Council Website
Just point your smartphone at it (as if you were taking a photograph) and follow
the instructions.

