

BRILL PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020



Introduction

It has been a pleasure to serve as Chairman on the Parish Council over the last 10 months. As we write this report, we are aware of just how much the coronavirus has changed the world. Therefore, our priorities have shifted to making sure people in need in the Brill community are supported. To that end, I hope you have seen a leaflet from the Parish Council asking you to let us know if you would like support, or if you would like to offer support. It has been very uplifting to see so many people volunteering to help others. So, if you need support for things like provisions, or would simply like to talk to someone, please contact us.

In response to Government guidelines on social distancing we have cancelled the monthly meetings as well as the Annual General Meeting which was to be held in April. Nonetheless, we continue to function as a Council, primarily using email, and we expect legislation soon to approve us meeting virtually. If this happens, I expect we will be able to publish the details of these meetings on the 'www.brillparishcouncil.co.uk' website so you can join as an observer – which will be a good replacement for 'EastEnders'!

Another consequence of the coronavirus crisis has been the postponement of the May 2020 local council elections to May 2021. Most councillors will be continuing in their role, but there may be a few vacancies before May next year. So, don't hesitate to let us know if becoming a councillor would be of interest.

Cllr Mark Dickinson – Chairman

COVID 19 Community Help

Brill Parish Council is co-ordinating a service for those people who need help in Brill during this difficult and uncertain period. Each household was delivered a form on March 19th to be completed if you are someone who needs help or if you can volunteer to help. We've had a great response so far. If you are self-isolating or are in a position to help, please complete the form.

Please contact the Clerk below if you require further information on this:
brillparish@btconnect.com

War Memorial

It has been a few years since any work was carried out on the War Memorial and as the weather has started to erode the stonework it was decided that it needed a little care and attention. Work required included replacing some of the plinth stones, which must be cut to a pattern of the existing stones, and a good clean. The PC received quotes from four different stone masons and interestingly the prices to do the same work ranged from £3,600 to £15,000. The lowest quote came from a local firm of stone masons who work on the Oxford colleges. We are pleased to say the work is now done and it looks excellent.

Playground Maintenance

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) inspect the children's play area every year as part of the PC's commitment to maintaining the safety of the equipment. Each year they highlight some of the issues that need addressing and the PC employ a couple of very useful local craftsmen to bring the apparatus up to scratch so that all our children can play safely.

Thames Water

After many years of disruption to the village's water supply, the PC are maintaining a dialogue with Thames Water regarding the updating of the pumps that are the cause of the outages. It is not always obvious whether the PC is given an accurate picture of the progress being made, as Thames Water are consistently wary of direct questions and often reluctant to acknowledge existing problems. It also appears to be an uphill struggle to persuade Thames Water to repair leaking mains, with some leaks still not repaired despite several reports filed over a period of some months.

Common

The Common remains a permanent agenda item always with something to discuss. On a positive note, with the volunteers doing their very best to maintain and enhance one of the village's greatest assets, the common is looking splendid.

One of the important roles of the Parish Council is to ensure that that access to the Parish's common land is managed properly. In this respect there have been a number of issues, some going on for a couple of years, which have now all been resolved, though unfortunately not without some significant expense to the council. Further details can be accessed in the February minutes. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the common land, e.g. boundaries, access, use etc, please discuss them with the Parish Council.

Expressway

The decision on the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway route continues to be delayed, and there is an expectation that the rationale for the entire project will be reviewed by Government, though there is no information regarding the timetable of such a review. All local Parishes and local authorities have made their objection public and our local MP, Greg Smith, has also been fighting against it in Parliament. Brill Parish Council has signalled its objection to the scheme and will continue to support the 'No Expressway Group - Brill' as appropriate.

Parking

We are still concerned about parking in the village, in particular around The Green. We have started a process of looking at how we could improve the situation, acknowledging that car parking is something we have to accommodate. We are investigating how to optimise the use of our existing village parking spaces. Our aim is to create an alternative to the ad hoc, unsightly and sometimes obstructive parking we have now.

Proposed Footpath

The Parish Council are exploring the possibility of funding a new footpath across the cricket field from the Sports & Social Club to the alleyway leading to Temple Street. As this is a well-trodden path and in light of the particularly wet weather this winter, the P.C. would like to create a path from materials that are not hazardous to the cricketers but robust enough to be usable all year round. Once the materials are agreed, permission from the landowner will be sought.

Windmill

Last Summer saw our Windmill cloaked in scaffolding as the Brill Society arranged for the outside to be repainted. The whole process took 4 weeks plus some time to erect and dismantle the scaffolding. The Brill Society exists to maintain the amenities of the village and part of their responsibility is the management and upkeep of Brill Windmill. The Society relies on volunteers to welcome visitors during the Summer months for its income which is also supported by donations from the Parish Council and other private individuals. If you would like to offer to help with the windmill, please send an email to volunteer@brillwindmill.org

Brill Parish Council
Budget Position 31st March 2020

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Audit	350.00	339.00	11.00
Computer	100.00	0.00	100.00
Insurance	2,000.00	1,916.49	83.51
Legal	500.00	2,605.00	-2,105.00
Membership	350.00	368.76	-18.76
Office Rent	800.00	1,085.98	-285.98
Phone	600.00	487.97	112.03
Print	300.00	228.50	71.50
Website	300.00	0.00	300.00
Salary	7,500.00	7,434.00	66.00
Stationery	200.00	57.52	142.48
Training	400.00	41.10	358.90
Bins	1,100.00	820.28	279.72
General Maintenance	3,750.00	2,141.62	1,608.38
Common Maintenance	3,450.00	2,787.85	662.15
The Walks	2,500.00	4,293.80	-1,793.80
Grass Cutting	4,800.00	4,733.40	66.60
Street Lighting	4,000.00	3,650.64	349.36
Donations	2,000.00	1,839.00	161.00
Hall Grant	2,000.00	2,000.00	-
Election Reserve	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00
Windmill Grant	2,000.00	2,000.00	-
	<u>41,000.00</u>	<u>38,830.91</u>	<u>2,169.09</u>

Reserve Spend

		Gross	VAT	Net
Website	16 April 19	500.00		500.00
Windmill Electrics *	21 May 19	414.36	69.06	345.30
PC Laptop	16 July 19	1,270.91	211.82	1,059.09
Use it Lose it **	16 July 19	140.00		140.00
Windmill decoration *	20 August 19	25,880.22	4,313.37	21,566.85
Windmill Electrics *	15 October 19	677.76	112.96	564.80
Hall Roof *	21 January 20	7,158.00	1,193.00	5,965.00
Legal Settlement	24 February 20	6,000.00		6,000.00
				<u>36,141.04</u>

BRILL PARISH COUNCIL

BANK RECONCILIATION – FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

Balance as per Bank Statements at 31 March 2020

Current Account	£2,939.92
Less Outstanding Cheques	<u>(£1,659.16)</u>
Balance	£1,280.66
Deposit Account	£74,995.56
Total Bank Account	£76,236.22
Net Bank Balance at 31 March 2020	£76,236.22

Total Cash

At 31 March 2020 **£76,236.22**

Cash Book

Opening balance 01 April 2019	£80,426.21
Add: Receipts	<u>£80,163.11</u>
	£160,589.32
Less: Payments During Year	<u>(£84,353.10)</u>
Closing Balance per Cash Book	
At 31 March 2020	£76,236.22

Total Cash

At 31 March 2020 **£76,236.22**

Godfrey's Close

Due to pressure from the Parish Council and the owners of adjacent properties, a redevelopment to a house in Godfrey's Close has been completed in accordance with the original planning permission. The developer had deviated from the approved plans resulting in a building that had a significantly detrimental effect on the surrounding houses. Only through much correspondence with the planning and enforcement teams at AVDC, together with a representation at AVDC's planning committee meeting was this outcome secured.

The Walks

There has been a significant amount of bramble bashing over the last year and the pond area has improved. We now hope that the present water tables are high enough that the water remains during the summer months. Water troughs have been put in place for the sheep which should be grazing again as you read this. Dead, dangerous or diseased trees have been attended to, mostly sycamores, and this will be ongoing. Some trees have their trunks left upright as these are superb feeding and nesting sites for woodpeckers in particular. The aim will be to plant new trees every year to replace those that have not survived. 13 have already been planted. Hopefully the area spoilt by the heavy vehicles has started to recover by the time you read this.

Website

The parish website (<https://www.brillparishcouncil.co.uk/>) has been up for more than a year now. We are proud of its appearance and usefulness but have heard little back from parishioners either positive or negative. We hope that you do find it useful and would love to hear your feedback, good or bad. Please write to the clerk brillparish@btconnect.com on major matters or to andyfisherbrillpc@hotmail.com on minor niggles, or to both.

MVAS

The Mobile Vehicle Analysis System (flashing 30mph traffic sign) has been mainly used on Thame Road. It was recently moved to Temple Street after complaints that since the white line was tarmacked over people were going faster. After a three week's analysis it appears that the increase in speed is modest (only one driver in the range 40 to 45mph in three weeks,) and so the sign is back on Thame Road.

The website shows the last three weeks of data in the forms of a simple report and a graph to be found under "TRAFFIC & ROADS". More is available; if you have an interest please contact andyfisherbrillpc@hotmail.com for more detail.

Streetlights

The streetlights will be updated for LEDs which will deliver savings of approximately £2,000 per annum, a net reduction of nearly 50%. The upgrade is not only cost effective but environmentally friendly reducing the carbon footprint.

Conservation Area

Earlier in the year AVDC appointed someone to look at the conservation area in the Brill Parish, however this activity since halted. Nonetheless, some work was done, and the good news is that Brill Parish Council felt that the current definition of the conservation area is appropriate and sees no need for it to change.

Precept

The Councillors discussed the precept at the meeting in November 2019. The proposal was to increase the precept from £41,000 to £43,400 which would reflect the increases in devolved services and increased costs for the maintenance on Parish Council owned land, particularly The Walks where extensive tree work had already taken place. Some of the reserve going into 2020-21 will be spent to upgrade the streetlights which will deliver a 50% savings in costs going forward (see above). It should be noted that the precept has not been increased in 4 years and the reserve is earmarked for other essential capital and maintenance work.

Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) has passed another milestone. Following the hearing sessions into the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) in July 2018, the publication of the Inspector's Interim Findings in August 2018, as well as further discussions with the VALP Inspector, the Council has prepared a number of Main Modifications which are considered necessary to make VALP sound. Their content has been agreed with the Inspector and was put forward for public consultation which closed on the 17 December. The Council is now processing the responses received; once this has been done the responses will be available to view on the consultation portal at <https://aylesburyvaledc.jdi-consult.net/localplan/>. The Council is also preparing a response to the representations for the Inspector. The Inspector will then consider the representations and the Council's response to determine whether he can find the plan sound and prepare his final report. It's hoped that the plan will be adopted during 2020.

MUGA

The Sports and Social club are considering how a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) may be achieved in the coming few years. Watch this space, it will need a proper plan being proposed and carried through. The PC will support this project as it progresses.

Buckinghamshire Council

The new Buckinghamshire Council has started operating. This is the new Council for Buckinghamshire amalgamating the old County Council and all the District Councils previously in the county of Buckinghamshire (excluding Milton Keynes). Elections to the new Council were due to take place in May but have now been postponed until May 2021.

Litter

The Parish Council supports a twice-yearly litter pick along all roads within the Parish boundary, in Spring and Autumn. As a result of this regular clean-up, the perennial problem of roadside litter has become more easily managed. Accompanied children are encouraged to take part and certificates are awarded for their efforts. Dates for litter picks are advertised in the Bernwode News and on the Parish noticeboard.

Donations

The Parish Council made the following donations to very worthy village groups:

Unsung Hero Award	£25.00
Brill Football Club – Pitch upkeep	£250.00
Oakley Parish Council – Community Bus	£164.00
Brill Cricket Club – Pitch upkeep	£250.00
Brill Sports & Social Club – Basketball equipment	£250.00
Windmill Pre-School – Furniture	£250.00
All Saint’s Church – Upkeep of the burial grounds	£650.00
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	£1,839.00

The Annual Parish Meeting

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic this year’s Annual Parish Meeting has been cancelled.

The Clerk’s contact details are: 01844 238662 or brillparish@btconnect.com and there is an answerphone when the office is closed. Normal opening hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9.00am until 12.00 pm in the Old Library Room.

BVCH contact details bvch@btinternet.com