

# ANNUAL REPORT

**22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025**

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## **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

### **Precept and budgets**

We continue to work to a 5-year business plan and produce a detailed Action Plan to monitor its delivery. These were updated and adopted for 2025-26 during the budgeting process for setting the precept. We face the same challenges that everyone is currently facing of trying to balance the budgets in the face of escalating costs.

This year we were again surprised to be informed by Buckinghamshire Council that the tax base for Haddenham was unchanged from the previous year. When we questioned this we were told that last year there was an overestimate in the forecast of new homes, but we still fail to see why the number would be exactly the same. Fortunately, the general reserves held by the Council have accumulated, mainly due to a good return on the investment of reserves, so the increase in the precept was kept modest at 2.7% by using some of this reserve.

The Council receives commuted sums from developers when adopting amenity land, play areas and street lights, this is intended to cover approximately 10 years' maintenance costs of the new assets. When received the commuted sums are held in an ear-marked reserve and used to reduce the impact on the precept as costs increase with new maintenance responsibilities. In autumn 2024 some of the commuted sum reserve was used to purchase equipment for the new in-house grounds maintenance service, which helped us to do this without passing on the cost to residents.

In preparation for the new financial year the biggest change to our budgeting has been the increase in staffing costs. The decision to bring the grounds maintenance service in-house has resulted in the direct employment of three new grounds maintenance staff, the cost of this is offset by savings on contracted maintenance. The budget also includes an additional member of staff for the office to provide administrative support that will free up the time of the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to speed up the delivery of our major projects.

The Council continues to set aside ear-marked reserves in line with its pro-active asset management approach to ensure it can responsibly manage its growing portfolio of assets. We have also set aside funds for projects where there is a significant cost in the future that we have planned ahead for which includes the new burial ground and updating the neighbourhood plan. At the end of 2024/25 a surplus in the general reserve has been used to start a new ear-marked reserve to support an extension to Banks Cottage which would provide additional surgery and reception space for the dental surgery to attend to more residents.

### **Youth Club**

We continue to fund a Youth Worker, David Rollins, who has done an excellent job of getting the club back up and running and it continues to grow with an average of 45 young people attending each week from years 7 and 8 as well as three year 9s who are helping out whilst doing their Duke of Edinburgh's award. This year we have further supported this work by funding a session with JR Sports Group at one of the summer term clubs and an activity day during the summer holiday. A fuller report by the Youth Worker is appended.

### **New Facilities**

The plans for the pavilion to serve the new cricket pitch on the Aston Road development obtained planning permission in February, so we are now working on the detailed specification with a view to going out to tender later this year. It is hoped that building work can start in spring 2026.

Also on the Aston Road site is land allocated to the new burial ground. Cemetery Design Solutions have been appointed and have prepared the detailed Ground Water Risk Assessment for submission to the Environment Agency who will now only review the assessment as part of a full planning application. We have therefore set up a new Burial Ground Working Group to work on the detailed design for the site and the rules and regulations for its future operation, which influence the design, with a view to submitting a planning later this year.

A refurbishment of the Village Hall is another of our major projects which is also progressing with an options appraisal underway with the Village Hall Committee. Once the plans are further progressed we will host a consultation with the community.

All of these projects are funded through S106 developer contributions for sport and leisure, which is held by Buckinghamshire Council and released to the Parish Council for qualifying projects. As the cost of building work has escalated in recent years the funds held won't go as far so we are having to scale back on the extent of some of our projects, with the size of the cricket pavilion reduced and the refurbishment rather than re-build of the Village Hall.

### **Grants**

We continue to support community groups with funding through our grant awards. In the 2024/25 financial year, the following groups have benefitted from funding: Haddenham Community Library, Youth Club, The Sixty Plus Club, Haddenham United Football Club, Zero Carbon Haddenham, Red Kite Radio and a donation to the Poppy Appeal.

The Parish Council has also set aside reserves to provide a contribution towards the cost of repairing public facing wicket walls, both to help preserve these unique historic features of the village, and to give a lead in ensuring that traditional materials and techniques are followed. Repairs to walls at the Paddocks, Haddenham Hall and Fort End House have been supported through this initiative.

### **Adoption of land and assets**

As the new housing developments at the Airfield and Aston Road near completion and the developers' maintenance responsibilities end, the transfer of the public open space on these developments to the Parish Council is progressing. To date we have adopted phase 1 land on the Airfield and Aston Road developments, and are very close to adopting phase 2 on both sites, there will be further phases 3 (pavilion and burial ground land) and 4 (cricket pitch) on the Aston Road site. Earlier this year we also completed the adoption of the open space at the entrance to Platers Road. The street lights on the Aston Road site are also scheduled for adoption, with an inspection being arranged prior to this.

David Truesdale  
Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee

## **HADDENHAM YOUTH CLUB: A THRIVING HUB FOR LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Haddenham Youth Club, which takes place every Thursday evening between 4-6pm, continues to be a vibrant and engaging space for secondary school-aged young people. Attracting an impressive average of 40 participants each week, the club has quickly become a key fixture in the community, offering a mix of fun, structure, and personal growth for local youth.

A standout feature of the youth club is the active involvement of both young people and adults, creating a balanced and supportive environment. Adults supervise the sessions, while young adults lead various sports activities, including football, fostering leadership skills and a sense of responsibility among the participants. The club has also benefitted from the support of Bucks CC, who have provided staff to assist with the activities, as well as occasional parent volunteers who help in different areas. This collaboration has been invaluable in ensuring the smooth running of the sessions.

The club is constantly evolving, with exciting plans for the future. The inclusion of session workers, particularly for roles such as in the kitchen, will enhance the experience for everyone involved. The club is also exploring ways to work with Bucks CC to help fund these positions, ensuring the continued growth and success of the club. With a dedicated team and clear vision, the youth club is well-positioned for continued success.

The commitment to providing quality equipment for activities is also evident, with the club having purchased footballs and basketballs that have lasted several months, providing long-lasting fun for the young people. The club has also been fortunate enough to receive generous donations, including a pool table and table football table, which will further enhance the range of activities available.

The relationship between the youth club and the local school continues to strengthen. Regular communication with the school caretaker ensures the facilities are well-maintained, with the school taking care of the cleaning before the sessions start. The club's leadership also works closely with the school to ensure that everything runs smoothly and any concerns are promptly addressed.

Looking ahead, the future of Haddenham Youth Club is filled with exciting prospects. Plans are already in place for special sports activities, including sessions led by coaches such as James, and a summer event designed to bring the young people together for a memorable experience. Additionally, the club is eager to invite Year 6 students from the local school to join the sessions after the half term, helping to bridge the gap between primary and secondary school.

With a growing number of young people involved and an ever-expanding range of activities, Haddenham Youth Club is proving to be an essential and positive part of the community, providing local youth with the opportunity to connect, grow, and have fun in a supportive and well-structured environment. The energy and enthusiasm at the club are evident and with the backing of Haddenham Parish Council, it is clear that it will continue to thrive in the future.

David Rollins, Youth Worker

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

### The Work of the PC Planning Committee

- The PC is a **statutory consultee** on planning and listed building applications. We review all applications and submit comments to Buckinghamshire Council which determines them in its statutory role as the local planning authority. We must respond within set time limits and concentrate on “material” planning matters.
- **During 2024/25** we had 16 meetings and reviewed 70 planning and listed building applications. This represents a serious volume of work with briefings prepared by the Chair and Clerk for each application.
- The majority are **householder extensions**, but can still be controversial, for example because of overlooking, loss of daylight, inadequate parking provision, or inappropriate design or materials. We give informal advice to applicants and neighbours.
- On **larger developments**, the PC concentrates on the details of any assets to be transferred to the PC: open space, playgrounds, street lighting, and S106 obligations in respect of sport, leisure & recreation. We attend site meetings and deal with the legal documentation of land transfers.
- The Planning Committee leads on **major projects** currently including Aston Road cricket pavilion, the new burial ground, upgrading the Village Hall and dental surgery.
- **Cricket pavilion** The PC has obtained planning permission for a cricket pavilion with community meeting space next to the new cricket ground at Aston Road. A detailed specification is being prepared for tendering.
- **Burial Ground** The PC has commissioned from specialist consultants, Cemetery Design Services, a report on groundwater risk assessment to comply with Environment Agency requirements and a layout and planting scheme which will all go forward for planning permission later this year. A working group has been established to advise on the future management of the new burial ground at Aston Road.
- **Flooding** We mapped and submitted a report to Bucks Council’s flood & drainage team following the storm on 23<sup>rd</sup> September and requested that a “section 19” review be carried out under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010. Further flooding occurred with heavy rain on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Discussions on appropriate action are taking place at the time of writing.
- **Witchert grants and repairs** We have given small grants to encourage sympathetic repairs to public-facing witchert walls. We maintain a contact list of local contractors and consultants who may be able to help with heritage work and approvals. We have repaired and partially re-built the witchert wall between St Mary’s school and Churchyard using traditional materials and techniques.
- **Community Speedwatch** We support a team of Community Speedwatch volunteers who conduct regular sessions concentrating on speeding hotspots like Stanbridge Rd (the biggest problem), Thame Rd, and Pegasus Way. Offenders are referred to Thames Valley Police for follow-up action.

### Significant Developments

- **Land east of Churchway** (opposite Redrow). In June the Parish Council attended a 2-day public inquiry into Buckinghamshire Council’s refusal of planning permission for 89 dwellings. The Inspector upheld the appeal and granted permission. Although not

allocated for development in the VALP, the local authority's failure to maintain a 5 year housing land supply meant that the "tilted balance" applied in favour of development. The land has now been sold to local developer Greencore who are preparing a reserved matters (ie detailed) planning application for an amended scheme, which has been presented at an open day and an on-line briefing.

- **Land adjoining Carwithen Close.** In June an application was submitted by Lands Improvement Holdings for a scheme of 15 homes. The PC did not object in principle but made representations about the access. Bucks Council's decision is awaited.
- **Land west of Churchway/north of Rosemary Lane.** In November Redrow submitted a reserved matters planning application for Phase 2 on the western part of the site for 120 dwellings. The PC responded in detail, particularly on new pedestrian access points on the western boundary. Bucks Council's decision is awaited.
- **Land south of Lower Road.** In December Rectory Homes submitted a revised application for 86 dwellings on land east of Stanbridge Rd accessed from Lower Road then south towards the Garden Centre behind the homes bordering Stanbridge Rd. The PC submitted a comprehensive update of our previous objections, particularly on local infrastructure impact. Bucks Council's decision is awaited.
- **Land on the northern part of the former airfield.** Land Improvements Holdings are preparing a planning application for up to 800 homes and have held public meetings as work progresses.
- A full list of all housing development in Haddenham since 2007 is available from the Parish Council.

### **Bigger Picture Planning News**

- In December the Government introduced major revisions to the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**. The 5-year protection for newly adopted local plans has been removed which will impact on the decision still to be made on the Rectory Homes site on Lower Road as the "tilted balance" will now apply. Changes to how housing needs assessment is calculated will impact the new Buckinghamshire Local Plan by doubling the number of new homes to be planned for, as will the opening up of "grey belt" areas for development.
- **Local Plan for Bucks** Buckinghamshire Council has just announced a delayed programme of work on its Buckinghamshire-wide Local Plan for new development until 2045, partly because of Government changes to the NPPF. Public consultation is now expected later this year, with submission of the draft Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in December 2026 with final approval at the end of 2027. This potentially leaves us vulnerable to further hostile planning applications.
- **PC response: Neighbourhood Plan or Statement?** Previous experience and the changing policy landscape have meant we have concerns about the value of a new Neighbourhood Plan. The recent changes to the NPPF have retained neighbourhood planning and the way they are implemented. Due to our reservations about going straight ahead with a neighbourhood plan, we have discussed taking a different approach to raise awareness of Haddenham's vulnerable situation through a mapping and a scoping exercise. This could lead to a neighbourhood plan, or could be used to produce a neighbourhood statement, which in turn could support our responses to planning applications and the Local Plan for Bucks.

David Truesdale, Chair of Planning Committee

## **FACILITIES COMMITTEE**

The Facilities Committee has a very wide remit covering all Parish Council owned or managed public open spaces, buildings and street furniture.

The Committee has four sub-committees with specific responsibilities for the Community Orchard, Snakemoor Nature Reserve, Sporting Facilities and Allotment Committees, their reports are included.

### **Grounds maintenance**

The grounds maintenance contract was terminated early by mutual agreement last September, 18 months ahead of schedule and the decision was taken to bring the grounds maintenance service in-house. We were fortunate to agree with the Senior Groundsman that he would transfer over to the Parish Council under TUPE, this gave us a good start and with him we have built a brand-new team of three, and purchased all the equipment needed. The new team are now working very hard to bring all our assets up to a high standard, and are busy keeping up with the grass and hedge growing season. They are a happy, friendly team so feel free to say hello. We hope the improvement is there for everyone to see and look forward to what they can bring in the future as more is brought in-house and new areas adopted.

### **Play areas**

All our play areas continue to be kept in top condition for all users. Weekly inspections are carried out by the Facilities Manager along with independent quarterly and yearly inspections completed by professional bodies. All repairs needed are carried out as soon as possible. In 2024 the Council adopted another playground on Cricketers Way and one more is imminent. The BMX track has had its annual service and comments made by the users were taken on board to slightly change the layout. With the village growing and many young families moving into it these play areas are seen as an essential part of life.

### **Street furniture**

The Parish Council continues to maintain the bus shelters. These are inspected and cleaned on a regular basis. The V.E Day commemorative shelter in front of the village hall was refurbished this year to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in honour of those that paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country. We also work with Buckinghamshire Council and our in-house maintenance team to ensure our rubbish bins and dog waste bins are emptied and cleaned regularly.

New bike stands in the form of planter boxes were installed last summer at the Post office, at Fort End next to the Bakery and opposite The Rising Sun Pub. These not only look great but bikes can be locked to them for safe keeping.

New benches have been donated and installed, with another two to come in the very near future. Should any parishioner wish to donate a bench please refer to our bench policy which can be found on our website.

### **Street lights**

Street lights continue to keep us busy as we use the reserve we have set aside to gradually replace the older columns, and make repairs as soon as we practicably can. Repairs are made as soon as possible but in some instances, this is down to our grid supplier UKPN who are slow to rectify things.

Since starting the replacement program in 2015 sixty three columns have been replaced, with ten replaced last year. Seventy eight of our columns are over 30 years old so are being

closely monitored for future replacement. We are finding there are fewer faults now that the majority of the lanterns have been converted to LED.

We are also close to adopting all the lights and bollards on the Aston Road development, once snagging repairs are carried out.

Haddenham PC once again worked with our street light contractor Eldridge Electrical and Haddenham Junior School to light up the large conifer tree at Banks Park for Christmas. A large banner was hung on the fence displaying art work from the school students who took part in a competition for some fabulous prizes generously donated by Eldridge.

### **Trees & hedges**

The Parish Council is responsible for a large number of trees in its public open spaces and has to ensure they are well maintained for public safety. The biennial tree survey was carried out last Autumn and we are working on the recommendations of this.

In addition to maintaining our mature trees we continue to support reLeaf with watering of many newly planted trees. Eight new trees have been planted at Woodways to replace the old leylandii hedge that was removed behind the container.

### **St Mary's Churchyard**

We continue to maintain St Mary's Churchyard including trimming of trees, the cutting of grass, clearing of ivy and general tidying. The grade I listed walls surrounding the churchyard are mainly of witchert construction and a survey carried out when the maintenance was transferred to the Parish Council identified a large amount of work was need to preserve the walls. This year two more walls have been repaired which has made a great improvement to the churchyard. The work is carried out by specialist contractors who are few and far between, and the raw material used is also getting much harder to obtain. We are working hard to obtain a supply from the construction sites in the north of the village. We continue to support the Church and have a good working relationship with them and have also worked closely with St Mary's school as we repair/rebuild the witchert wall bordering the school and churchyard.

### **Ponds**

Church End pond is a main focal point in the conservation area of the village and we are progressing slowly with a very exciting project to install a solar powered borehole to supply ground water to the pond. We have a plan drawn up and are now obtaining advice on what permissions might be needed from the Church Faculty of the and planning. We have already made some changes in the appearance pond with the removal of the rotten timbers that were placed around the edge, cutting back various pieces of foliage and also cutting down the drainage pipes that stretched some way into the pond.

We continue to look after both Banks and Rudds ponds with an annual maintenance scheduled in the winter to thin out the reeds, cut back foliage and tidy up the edges. We were very honoured that a Kingfisher made regular visits to Banks pond over the winter to fish and rest. A testament to how clean this pond is.

### **Best Kept Village Competition**

We entered the best kept village competition again last year and for the second year running we were placed runner-up. We have entered again this year and hope to go one better. Please help us to do well again in this event by keeping our village clean and tidy



### **Buckinghamshire Council Devolved Services**

The Parish Council has agreed to renew the devolved services agreement with Buckinghamshire Council for a further five years. Despite a 5% increase in the funding available for 2025/26 the amount paid to Haddenham has reduced due to a revision of the maps, although in reality we seem to be cutting the same amount of grass! Whatever the funding the Parish Council have to significantly top up this up to carry out sufficient cuts to keep the village looking tidy.

### **Community Litter Pick**

A number of community litter picks have taken place both at the Airfield and Banks Park and we provide litter pickers for residents who volunteer to litter pick regularly.

Look out for the date of the next event either in our newsletters or on our website or you can sign up to be contacted when the next litter pick is due.

Cllr John Wheeler  
Chair of Facilities Committee

## **SPORTING FACILITIES COMMITTEE**

The Parish Council continues to work with the local sports clubs to improve and increase the sporting facilities within Haddenham.

The specialist grounds maintenance of the sports pitches continues to be an ongoing project. Our two football grounds are very different, with Woodways being on clay soil which makes it water log when the weather is wet and the Airfield where it drains well but needs improvement on the surface. The Council continues to invest more than £20,000 annually on pitch maintenance and this year has signed up to the Football Association's Pitch Power program. This involves regularly assessment of the condition of the pitches and recommended action needed. Pitch Power also provides grant funding which goes towards pitch improvements. One area we can't predict is the weather, from wetter than average winter, to the driest Spring this year. It makes keeping the pitches in good condition very challenging.

The development of the new cricket ground has moved forward with Dandara's specialist contractor. All the drainage channels are in and has been seeded. Additional top soil is ready for phase 2 this year to improve the playing service. An artificial wicket will be installed right at the end of the project. It is hoped that the cricket club may be able to play some cricket there in 2026.

The new Cricket Pavilion received planning permission this year. We are currently going through the specification stage with the view to going out to tender in the autumn and construction in 2026. This Pavilion will also be used as a community facility for residents to hire.

The administration of bookings for the Haddenham Airfield and Pitches has been passed to Active in the Community. There has been a few teething issues initially, but now seems to be running smoothly and we have increased the usage of the Pavilion for a range of activities.

Table tennis continues to be a popular sport within Haddenham with clubs based in both the Woodways and Airfield Pavilions.

The Parish Council continues to support new sports in the village. We were delighted that Haddenham Netball Club has been formed. Whilst netball courts are only available at Haddenham Junior School, the Council were successful in getting an outdoor court put in as part of the playground design at the new Redrow housing development.

Woodways Pavilion continues to serve as the home of the Sports and Social Club (trading as The Whistler). The Whistler is a non-profit organisation that has, over recent years, made significant investments in improving its facilities. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of its Committee, the Club has grown its membership and, at the close of its financial year, reported an operational surplus. In accordance with the terms of its lease at Woodways, any surplus income is reinvested into the Woodways Sporting Clubs. Following discussions with the Parish Council, a portion of this surplus was agreed to be allocated as a financial contribution towards their annual licences.

The Parish Council provided grants to Haddenham Tennis Club and Haddenham United to undertake a refurbishment of the containers on the Woodways car park.

As Haddenham continues to grow there will be a wider discussion regarding the future development of Woodways. We hope that we can start these discussions later this year and include all sporting stakeholders.

## **SNAKEMOOR REPORT**

Activities and achievements in the past year:

- Widespread planting of saplings and hedgerow plants, in cooperation with ReLeaf,
- Planting of another Black Poplar, by kind donation of Florence Nightingale Hospice,
- Significant improvements to the orchard area,
- Clearing and disposal of redundant bird boxes,
- Promotion of Snakemoor by Red Kite Radio,
- Several new volunteers have joined our group.

Areas in which we would appreciate additional support from HPC:

- Supply of wood chippings, generated from HPC-commissioned tree surgery or other village works,
- Loan or rental of a wood chipper and competent operator, to clear unsightly brush from hedge laying and other work at the reserve.
- H&S training in the use of our eco power tools (a group of 4-6 volunteers)

I would like to give special mention to Michael Whitney for his hard work in mowing the meadow last autumn.

Finally - the help, advice and support of the HPC staff team is very much appreciated by all in the volunteer group.

Julian Watson, Snakemoor Volunteer Leader

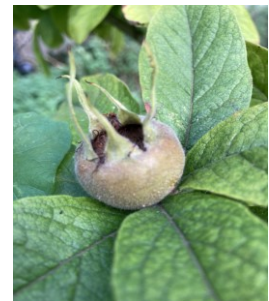
## TOWNSEND COMMUNITY ORCHARD

The Orchard continues to mature as a project and gain a special place in our community's heart. Visitors report spending "many a sunny day in the orchard with my children playing in and out of the benches in the core" and it being "a wonderful space"



During the last year we have increased our volunteer involvement and attracted new wildlife species through a greater diversity of planting and leaving wild areas for new habitats, this in turn is supporting the pollination of our maturing trees. We are currently supported by over 100 volunteers on our Orchard community mailing list who support us in various roles throughout the year.

During the year there has sadly been some minor damage to branches, however through the social media page, members of our developing support network have been able to communicate these to the committee quickly as a result repair and pruning work has been able to be carried out quickly to support the trees to recover. On the whole the area is being respected and is developing to be a meeting place, drawing a wide range of visitors. The quince trees have attracted attention this year with a large crop on both trees, creating great discussions on when they are ready to harvest for the best produce.



During the year with the support of local funding streams and our volunteers we have made the following developments to enrich the area:-

- In April, three espalier were trees planted alongside the fruit bush trellis. One of which was kindly donated by Haddenham Horticultural society.
- The trellis and posts of the fruit frame were repaired at the same time making a lovely feature to the area.
- In December a freezing work party planted a test area of 200 bluebells and 20kg of daffodil bulbs to attract early insects to the area.
- We have added a lavender hedge planted behind the bench in the sensory garden which will support the wellbeing of our visitors through calming scent and colours. We hope this will also attract more pollinators to the area next season.
- We have also purchased new pruning tools to support and educate our volunteers in the pruning of our trees. Which were funded by the Beer Festival.



As always our maintenance programme continues, we have organised 10 work parties between Feb-Dec. During the growing session we have also had weekly mowing volunteers. Our orchard watcher volunteers have made monthly inspections and the raised beds have been refreshed after the extreme dry conditions of the summer. We have restocked with more herbs and strawberry plants. In July we had a monitoring visit by Woodland Trust to assess how well the hedge saplings were doing two years after



they had been donated. The Woodland Trust representative commented favourably on how well they were being cared for and the good amount of growth they were displaying.

In 2023 our events calendar had something for every season. On Jan 28th we held a Wassail supported by local musicians and a lantern parade in collaboration with the village hall. This was well attended with many bringing their creations to the parade. To support the scarecrow festival we held a family mini scarecrow making day in collaboration with a local art hub Renboga on June 4<sup>th</sup>. With thanks to Rosie from Renboga, this was a hugely energetic day where we saw families enjoying and exploring creativity in the core of the Orchard. We were delighted to have Rosie's infectious energy with us for the day and look forward to collaborating with Renboga and other organisations in the future. We welcomed the late summer with two further events. On Aug 12<sup>th</sup> we held a Bat and Moth night/walk - This was wonderfully attended and supported by Brian Fattorini and equipment lent to support the event by BBOWT. The night saw many community members joining together to watch bats in flight and explore the night life of the orchards up close, despite heavy downpours of rain a great night was had by all, some seeing the Orchard for the first time. Our closing community event for the year was on Sep 1<sup>st</sup> when we held a Music picnic, a splendid evening of enjoying music in the late summer. This raised funds for the charity WaterAid and the local food bank. We thanked our wonderful volunteer team and celebrated the continued growth and success with our volunteers with a social evening with a cheese and biscuit evening. With thanks to the generosity of our neighbours we were able to do an entry for the village Xmas light festival which was appreciated by many community members as the winter draws our season to an end.



The future will continue to see the Orchard develop to deepen the relationship with the wildlife and the community through some exciting collaborations and events. We have plans to develop our communication through display boards which have all events and how to be involved in the Orchard, including a donation code to help the community support us instantly, we also have up and coming collaborations welcoming in the local cubs to build a new bug hotel with us.



We welcome new orchard committee members or volunteers if you are interested you are very welcome and can register your interest in helping out via the Chairman, Diccon Proctor, by emailing [communityorchard.haddenham@gmail.com](mailto:communityorchard.haddenham@gmail.com).

You can also follow any news and updates through following our facebook page - Townsend Community Orchard.

## **ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE**

The allotments remain a well-used and valued facility in Haddenham. At present, a small number of plots are still available for new tenants. With the continued expansion of Haddenham, a new area of land, formerly a small paddock, has been designated for future development to provide additional allotment plots.

The allotment community continues to support the *Grow to Give* scheme by generously donating surplus produce. To sustain and strengthen this excellent initiative, additional volunteers are needed to help coordinate the collection and delivery of vegetables.

We would like to extend our thanks to three Allotment Holders from the Allotment Committee who have volunteered to become Trustees of the Parochial Charities. The largest of these charities, John Willis, is the owner of the allotment site.

Cllr John Wheeler  
Chair of Allotments Committee

## CLIMATE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

### **Launch of EV hire service powered by Zimbl**

We are delighted to be launching the new EV hire service tonight at the APM! There will be two electric vehicles permanently based in the village, available with a minimum booking duration of 1 hour. Registration via the Zimbl app is free of charge – you only pay for the time you book the cars, plus any electricity used over and above the 5kW allowance that comes with each booking (which will cover approximately 15 miles).

The unique feature of the Zimbl service is that the vehicle is delivered to and collected from your door (with an in-person briefing at the beginning of your first hire). The idea is to come as close as possible to the convenience of car ownership. Our target is for owners of little-used second vehicles in particular to opt instead for a shared vehicle, in the process cutting transport emissions, saving them money and reducing the number of parked vehicles around the village.

The Parish Council is also working to increase the number of **public EV chargers** through the Village – the installation of faster chargers at the Airfield Pavilion Car Park off Tibbs Road has unfortunately been held up by land ownership issues, but we hope these will be resolved soon. We are also about to launch a **salary-sacrifice EV leasing scheme** that will help staff members to decarbonise their transport at no additional cost to the Council.

### **Our carbon footprint and carbon literacy**

Whilst our ambition is to facilitate net zero across the entire community, the Parish Council also wants to lead by example and we have signed up to the Climate Essentials service in order to calculate and monitor our carbon footprint. As the Parish Council grows along with the village as a whole, as well as adding new premises, it is inevitable that this footprint will increase, but the service will help us identify areas where emissions can be cut. The new buildings themselves will also be increasingly environmentally friendly: plans for the new cricket pavilion include a ground source heat pump with no gas grid connection, along with solar PV and rainwater harvesting. We are also pleased that our Deputy Clerk, Emma Marsden, has been certified as Carbon Literate, and we have resolved for the Parish Council to explore how to become a Bronze-accredited Carbon Literacy Organisation.

### **Home energy**

We held a second successful Energy Efficient Homes fair in October in conjunction with Buckinghamshire Community Energy (BCE), which also showcased the successful Village Hall decarbonisation project. There was a good range of exhibitors, covering everything from heat pumps to solar, natural building materials, ventilation and energy efficiency for historic buildings, plus a programme of talks that also explored home battery storage and gave people the opportunity to ask a panel of local home-owners for their real-world experiences of living with low-carbon technologies.

As attendance was down slightly on the previous year's fair, we have resolved to explore a different approach. The Parish Council held a strategy meeting with Kirsty Shanahan of BCE we are exploring the opportunity of supporting local residents with an low EPC certificate the opportunity to have a one to one with a Home Energy expert.

We want to continue to provide information for our residents and we hope to provide a Home Energy Fair for 2026.

We are always looking at recruiting volunteers and will continue to be active in this field, so if anyone has some ideas or want to be involved with the Climate Emergency Committee, please contact the Parish Council.

### **Other projects**

At our first **climate collaboration forum** in June, we brought together representatives of 11 different organisations. There was a real buzz in the room, leading to a huge number of ideas for action, as well as providing the opportunity for members of different groups to connect. The event was really useful in shaping our approach and we will hold a follow-up forum this year to narrow down the focus and identify a small number of projects to push forward.

On the **food waste reduction** side, we are following up on a proposal from the charity Feedback Global to run sessions in one of the schools, as well as a competition to create designs for telecoms cabinets in the village. The idea is to improve our engagement with the wider community, whilst engaging with young people for whom climate is a key issue.

And finally, as well as continuing to work with **ReLEAF** to plant and maintain trees and hedges on Parish Council land, we are developing a project provisionally entitled the **Great Haddenham Hedge**, to survey all the hedgerows within the parish, with a view to identifying improvements and potential further planting. Hedgerows are important carbon sinks as well as a hugely important habitat for biodiversity, and the hope is that we will also be able to forge better links with local landowners.

Cllr Alan Thawley  
Chair of Climate Emergency Committee

## **CHARITIES REPORT**

The Parish Council is sole trustee of two local charities.

### **Banks Park Recreation Ground Charity (BPRGC)**

This charity dates from a 1928 conveyance amended after WW2 in 1949 when the Parish Council was made sole trustee. A linked charity from 1948 called the New Recreation Ground Charity took conveyance of land at Woodways as a playing field. This was later expanded at its southern end by Old Mill Close by a bequest to the Parish Council.

BPRGC in turn is landlord to the following premises let on leases:

- The Village Hall and its voluntary management committee
- Bucks Council premises leased to the Community Library
- Banks Cottage leased to the Dentist
- Scouts & Guides Centre
- Former health centre leased to Fit-life gym

### **Haddenham Educational Charity**

This charity was established in 1982 following the closure and sale of the former British school on Churchway with the object of helping residents with grants for education. The Parish Council is sole trustee and the majority of the awards are granted annually to coincide with the start of the academic year.

### **Parochial Charities.**

The Parish Council appoints the trustees to 3 parochial charities whose objects are to support residents of the village in need. The charities are:

- the Joseph Franklin Charity (1813)
- the Reverend John Willis Charity (1854)
- the Alms Corn Charity (1901)

The John Willis Charity owns the allotments which are leased to the Parish Council.

The 3 charities are managed in common by a small group of trustees with administrative support from Emma Marsden, the Deputy Clerk. During the year we have lost 2 trustees following the death of Steve Sharp and retirement of John Wilson, leaving John Wheeler as the only trustee. The PC is pleased to announce that after a recruitment drive John is being joined by three new trustees: Leslie Wilkinson, Hilary Davies and Frank Pitkin.

At recent Annual Parish Meetings we said we would explore the feasibility of amalgamating all the above charities into a single modern-style charity known as a Community Interest Organisation. Unfortunately, this has not been possible.

Cllr David Truesdale, Chair



## **ZERO CARBON HADDENHAM**

### **1.0 Charity Name**

1.1 Zero Carbon Haddenham (Buckinghamshire) (ZeroCH)

1.2 ZeroCH is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) regulated by the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission requires ZeroCH to provide details of its trustees, an annual trustees' report (TAR) and details of its financial position.

### **2.0 Charity Registration Number: 1193437**

2.1 The charity (previously Haddenham in Transition a non-charitable action group) was set up in February 2021 and is managed according to its constitution, details of ZeroCH are available on the Charity Commission's website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>).

### **3.0 Trustees**

3.1 There are currently 7 trustees who are the charity's voting members (see below). Trustees are appointed by a majority vote of serving trustees at properly convened meetings. Meetings are held usually monthly and are open to all interested parties. General meetings are held on an annual basis and comprise of a Chairman's report, Secretary's report, Treasurer's report, appointment of trustees and alterations to the constitution.

### **4.0 The objects of the CIO are:**

4.1 To conserve, protect, and improve the physical and natural environment for the public benefit, in particular, but not exclusively, by:

- a) Promoting a reduction in the use of fossil fuels and an increase in the use of renewable energy
- b) Promoting waste reduction by reuse, reclamation, recycling and repair
- c) Promoting good, low carbon, environmental practise in the production, distribution and consumption of food
- d) Promoting the mitigation of CO<sub>2</sub> production by local carbon sequestration projects such as tree planting
- e) Promoting the use of low carbon means of transport

4.2 To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection, and improvement of the environment in particular, but not exclusively, by promoting good environmental practice and awareness of related issues.

### **5.0 Main activities undertaken for the period 2024 to 2025 (in alphabetical order)**

5.1 Apple press - An apple press and associated equipment (pasteuriser) is available for all residents enabling them to make apple juice and cider and save wasting apples. An online booking process has been developed and the availability of the press will be promoted during the summer of 2025.

- 5.2 Bean feasts (under development) - Project to promote lower carbon diets, raise money and improve community cohesion. The plan is for a series of community meals based on pulses – the first being a falafel night. We would book the village hall and set up tables. People could queue up at the serving hatch to collect their food/choose their salads. Bookings would be taken via Eventbrite to establish numbers. There would be no charge so we wouldn't be established as a food business, but there would be a facility to donate. Possibly run a bar. Ingredients to be purchased where possible from Blooming Fruity (the village's community-owned greengrocer) and the food prepared by the team (falafels potentially cooked off-site).
- 5.3 Bee squared - ZeroCH provides a packet of wildflower seeds to encourage residents, local schools and community groups to improve biodiversity and be more environmentally aware. The seeds are sown so as to create a square metre (m<sup>2</sup>) of wildflowers to encourage bees and other insects. First performed in 2024.
- 5.4 Café zero - A community café running alongside the Repair Café which provides a place to meet each month for refreshments and a chat with displays about the ZeroCH the group's work. The café supplies filter coffee, tea, hot chocolate, milk shakes and a range of home-made cakes and biscuits. Caffeine free drinks and vegetarian and vegan cakes and biscuits are usually available.
- 5.5 Charity Administration - Maintain and update Zero Carbon Haddenham's (ZeroCH) registration on The Charity Commission's website. Ensure ZeroCH acts within the Charity Commission's remit. Record, produce and distribute meeting minutes in accordance with ZeroCH constitution and The Charity Commission. Produce annual report for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in accordance with Zero Carbon Haddenham's (ZeroCH) constitution and The Charity Commission. Record, produce and distribute AGM report. Produce trustees annual report (TAR) for The Charity Commission. Review and update annual risk assessment for ZeroCH's charitable functions. Produce necessary documents in accordance with ZeroCH constitution and The Charity Commission.
- 5.6 Energy Cooperatives - Exploring setting up energy co-operatives with local environmental groups and businesses. A grant has been awarded, but not yet received, by the Community Energy Fund for setting up a feasibility study to explore ways to make best use of the excess energy that a proposed wind turbine would produce.
- 5.7 Library of things (under development) - Actively seeking ways to create a 'Library of Things' that can be hired including, but not limited to, tools, catering equipment and furniture. The library negates the need to purchase items that would be rarely used. Discussions ongoing with the Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board to provide suitable facilities for the library. Also, separately in conversations with Share Bee which is a service that safely connects people who want to lend with people who want to borrow using an on-line system.
- 5.8 People planet pint (under development) - Regular meetups in a local pub for unstructured chat about eco-stuff. Supported by the charity Small 99 – they buy the

first drink for everyone. ZeroCH has registered with them and had an introductory chat in early January 2025.

- 5.9 Programme of Events alongside the Repair Café / Café Zero – The HPC is funding the hire of the conference room at the village hall once a month for 12 months. A proposed draft programme includes but is not limited to: Energy advice from BCE Energy Champions. Bee Squared event. Community Energy. The Economics of a no growth economy / circular economy. Nature photography competition. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the future of farming. Food waste. Big recycling event (collecting cables, small electricals, etc). Clothes swap / fashion show. Toy swap. Mending workshop.
- 5.10 Recycling the tricky stuff - Objective is to keep stuff out of landfill / incinerators by recycling items that cannot be recycled at kerb side or locally. Grant obtained from the Thriving Communities fund a community grants scheme run by Fairhive Homes following Bucks Council's withdrawal from a pilot scheme. This has enabled us to continue with the collection of empty medicine pill packets. To date we have recycled more than 140Kg of materials. 45Kg blister packs, 57Kg storage media, 7Kg stationery, 8Kg oral care, 2Kg contact lenses, 21Kg electrical cables. Collection is once a month at the Vale Harvest Saturday. Focus is on empty pill packets but will also collect oral care, contact lenses and pens. Some of these products can be recycled locally e.g. at Specsavers and Boots but empty medicine packets are particularly problematical.
- 5.11 ReLEAF - Aim to double the tree cover in the parish of Haddenham by 2030. One of the village's goals in the neighbourhood plan is for the parish to become carbon neutral by 2030. ReLeaf is part of delivering this and is a joint project between ZeroCH and HPC. Up to 200 trees and 2500 hedging plants have been planted by ZeroCH around the village in many locations. Maintenance and watering of the trees has become a larger task as the plants become established. The team oversee a tree nursery to grow its own trees from locally collected seeds and cuttings. The team work closely with the HPC to realise their pledge to make Haddenham carbon neutral by 2030. Recently have lost some trees due to overzealous strimming by workmen.
- 5.12 Repair Café - The monthly Haddenham Repair Cafe holds events on the first Saturday morning of the month at Haddenham Village Hall. The team of volunteers are keen to repair broken things – anything portable. If it looks like it can't be repaired, we'll help find spare parts for it. Supported by Zero-Carbon Haddenham and Buckinghamshire Council, the aim is to encourage 'repairing' rather than 'replacing' as the logical first step when things break. This is because repairing keeps things out of landfill and reduces unnecessary consumption. The Repair Café hopes to be able to help tackle most repairs where a little glue or a replacement screw or part is needed. There will be some things that the Repair Café is not likely to be able to fix – broken screens on mobile phones for example. And it has had to draw the line where things are not portable – large pieces of furniture for example – but if it can be carried to the Repair Café we will look at it! Some things are (badly) designed so they are hard or even impossible to repair so even if the Repair Café can't offer a fix it can offer advice on disposal, replacement or other options for repair. Haddenham Repair Cafe has taken on over 642 jobs and succeeded in fixing over 498 items with a 78% repair success rate

to date. Advice has been given to owners on how to repair their items thus keeping them from being discarded and replaced by new.

- 5.13 Thermal Imaging scanner - Zero Carbon Haddenham have a handheld FLIR Thermal Imaging Scanner available for loan to Haddenham village residents. This device is a camera which takes special infra-red pictures which can be used to reveal any hotspots caused by poor insulation where heat is escaping from the walls, roof, windows or doors of a property. For those who have used ZeroCH's scanner in the past, this is a completely new and improved device with better resolution and the ability to merge the thermal image with a conventional photograph for better identification of features. There had been 67 loans of the thermal imaging camera for the season November 2022 to February 2023. A £10 deposit / donation per night was asked of users. On occasion people have found energy leaks from new houses and were grateful to be able to present the images captured to the developer as evidence to get remedial work done.
- 5.14 Village composting (under development) - Exploring the idea of food waste composting scheme within the village with the HPC. Could be a brilliant project, with potential to involve Blooming Fruity and other food businesses, as well as the schools.
- 5.15 Zero Waste Street Food / Summer and Winter Fest / Beer Festival - A two-part project covering recycling and reusable serve-ware at Haddenham's monthly Village Hall street food events and Haddenham's annual Summer and Winter Fest / Beer Festival events. Supported by grants from Bucks Council's Waste Prevention Fund in collaboration with event organisers. Recycling: Introduced food waste collection. Replaced general waste bins with recycling hubs to maximise collection and compliance. Reusables: Replaced disposable glasses at the bar with reusables. Provided real bowls, plates and forks as an alternative to disposables. Sourced reusable food trays.

The committee works to an annual business plan setting out priorities for the village hall under the five objectives headings:

- To plan and maintain a charitable business with the main aim of remaining financially viable in the long term
- To inform, direct and prioritise resources to the ongoing development of the quality and safety of the facility.
- To increase income from bookings to support upkeep and improvement of facilities.
- To promote the use of the facility to a wide variety of users.
- To ensure environmental sustainability and least impact on the environment possible.

Paddy Ford

## **HADDENHAM VILLAGE HALL**

The committee continues to prioritise improvements to the facility, with a focus on environmental impact, accessibility and sustainability of the facility in the face of rising energy costs. Due to the age of the building, there are always projects to update and improve the functioning of the services. These continue to be monitored by the committee.

Last years installation of solar panels has come into its own this year with gas and electricity cost savings ensuring that we are able to maintain the building.

The Management Committee has had a very busy year embedding the changes to energy management, alongside the day to day management of the facility, bringing their many and varied skills together to make sure the Hall is a welcoming and accessible place. The hall is used very well used and funding a time for a booking is the main issue we hear about.

We are working with the parish council on a refurbishment project to bring the facilities up to date and suitable for multiple use for a growing community. This will take shape over the next 12/18 months.

The committee continues to meet every 6 weeks at the Village Hall.

Beth Knighton  
Chair of Trustees

## HADDENHAM SAFE WALKING AND CYCLING GROUP

Our group campaigns to make the village a nicer and safer place to navigate for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as users of wheelchairs, mobility scooters, buggies, pushchairs... We also campaign for safe routes to neighbouring communities.

We are pleased to see the Parish Council's excellent **Streetscape** project is being picked up by Bucks Council's Highways department in their requirements for planning applications – for instance raised pedestrian crossings on Stanbridge Road – and that it may finally inspire some long-awaited improvements for pedestrians and cyclists on Thame Road. It is a shame, however, that the unitary council's stance continues to frustrate the ambition for **a village-wide 20 mph limit**, and it does not appear that the recent elections will have tipped the balance in favour of safe speed limits.

We have continued to focus above all on the campaign for the long-awaited **Haddenham-Thame Greenway**, having joined forces with our Thame counterparts in a dedicated campaign group. Last summer's **Family Bike Ride for the Greenway** was a huge success, attracting no fewer than 400 participants of all ages who enjoyed a fun ride around the village, and helped us create the iconic photograph of our mass gathering on Church End Green.

As the campaign continues, the project has been mentioned more than once in parliament, Oxfordshire County Council has voted to include further funding for the greenway in this year's budget and it has been included in the strategic active travel plans for Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. Communication from the councils remains poor, however, and we will continue to push for a more open approach and evidence of tangible progress. The next opportunity will be a briefing for both local MPs on May 27, which will also be attended by Thame's mayor. **If you would like to join the mailing list for updates on this crucial project, please email [haddswac@gmail.com](mailto:haddswac@gmail.com).**

The newly adopted Buckinghamshire Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan also includes a **safe route to Aylesbury** (and a connection to **Cuddington**), but resources are limited and no active work is currently underway, unfortunately. We believe that improvements to the existing footway alongside the A418 are urgently required, however, and would like to see the short missing section added so as to link it to the end of Green Lane.

Brian Bowman continues to do sterling work checking the footpath network around the village, whilst Bill Piers and his rRipple team are doing a brilliant job gradually replacing stiles with more accessible gates. We are also delighted with the improvements they have made to the footpath to Dinton, meaning that it is much more easily passable during the winter months.

Around the village, we are very grateful to the Parish Council for the first combined **planter-bike stands** by the Bakery and opposite the Rising Sun. As well as looking great thanks to Chrissie Marie Jones' planting, they further supplement the expanded provision of cycle parking at key village locations. We are also very excited to be working with the Parish Council on **Level Ways**, a pioneering project (the first of its kind in the country!) to develop a safe, trip-free walking circuit connecting the Woodlands independent living scheme housing to the village centre. Designs are being worked up and a funding plan developed.

We are also very grateful to the **Speedwatch volunteers** who give up their time to run regular speed monitoring sessions that make a real impact in reducing dangerous driving and taking uninsured drivers off the road. They are always keen for more volunteers, so if you worry about speeding in our community, please get in touch. It is also good to see that the local

neighbourhood policing team are now running speed surveys, resulting in 6 fines and 1 arrest over the latest 3-month period.

Traffic and dangerous parking at school drop-off and pick-up times are increasingly frequent complaints. We are keen to support the schools with any initiatives to tackle this, but agree with them that this must be led by parents – so if you have kids at one of the schools and are interested in **walking or bike buses, school streets or park and stride schemes**, please get in touch.

We are always keen to hear from potential new members. You can also keep up to date by following the HaddSWAC Facebook page. And don't forget to subscribe to **our newsletter, Signposts**. You'll find paper copies at various locations around the village, but the best way is to have it emailed to you hot off the press. If you download the latest issue from the Village Society website, you'll find instructions on how to subscribe inside.

Alan Thawley, HaddSWAC Chair

## **HADDENHAM-THAME GREENWAY: 400 REASONS TO GET IT DONE!**

