



# **H A D D E N H A M**

## **Parish Council**

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Clerk to the Parish Council: Ms Sue Gilbert

### **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024, 7.00pm  
Haddenham Airfield Pavilion

#### **Present:**

Parish Councillors: Cllr. Kidby, Cllr. Monger Cllr. Poole, Cllr. Smith, Cllr. Thawley, Cllr. Truesdale, and Cllr. Wheeler.

Bucks Cllrs: Cllr. Smith

Clerk: Ms. Gilbert

Deputy Clerk: Mrs. Marsden

Assistant Clerk: Ms. Griffiths

Facilities Manager: Mr. Final

44 members of the public

#### **Exhibitors:**

Haddenham Community Orchard

Snakemoor Nature Reserve

Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling Group

Haddenham Rotary Club

Carrie: The Community Vehicle

Zero Carbon Haddenham & ReLEAF

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Brown, Cllr. Hoare as well as Keith and Lorraine Milmer.

#### **2. Minutes**

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were a true record and they were signed by the Chair.

#### **3. Presentation from Haddenham Parish Council Chair**

Cllr. Truesdale presented 'A Year in the Life of the Parish Council':

#### **HYFC Festival of Football Sept. 2023**

Let's start with this pavilion. For me, the pavilion came into its own on the first weekend of last September when the HYFC held their Festival of Football and invited me to help present team trophies. It was 2010 when I first got involved in getting some land on the airfield for football as part of a developer contribution from the Chilworth Gate development next to the station. In 2014 came an opportunity to acquire the freehold of a

far more ambitious playing field, and to build a new pavilion with a developer contribution by Cala Homes worth over £1m. This involved us in commissioning the drawings and specification for the project, getting planning permission, tendering, appointing a contractor and then managing the contract. Covid intervened, and escalating prices. Finally, it was finished just over a year ago. So seeing it being used for this festival was the culmination of several years' work and was really fulfilling. A brilliant event. We are now out of the 12 months defects period, so have been doing the final accounts. The total cost of the pavilion was £1.4m, 100% met by developer contributions, plus our own uncosted blood, sweat & tears. I suspect few parish councils could undertake a project like this, and a significant community investment.

### **Unveiling Thame (Haddenham) Airfield Memorial July 2023**

On a cold wet day in July we hosted the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust (ABCT) for the unveiling of this memorial stone. It's in memory of the Thame (Haddenham) Airfield opened 1/1/1941, closed 9/12/2018 and dedicated to all units and personnel based here. Present were Kenneth Bannerman of the ABCT, with our clerk Sue, and Thame's mayor.

### **Buckinghamshire Design Awards October 2023**

In October 2023 the pavilion was entered for the annual Design Awards run by Buckinghamshire Council. Some of you may remember Haddenham was successful back in 2015 when AVDC ran these awards and Spicers Yard & Printers Piece earned a place in the final shortlist. This time we were runner up in the Climate Change & Nature Category.

### **Best Kept Village Runner Up July 2023**

In July we were runner up in the Bucks Best Kept Village competition. The judges particularly commended our renovation of the railings around the war memorial which we carried out last Spring. They said they often came across rather neglected war memorials. This was taken at November's Remembrance Sunday. It's a fixture in the PC year to arrange the road closure and buy the PC wreath for me to lay.

### **New Witchert Wall St Mary's Churchyard August 2023**

During St Mary's School's summer holidays, we re-built this wall in the churchyard near the School's gate. The old wall had collapsed a few years ago, but being within the curtilage of a Grade 1 listed building, we found a heritage contractor with the necessary traditional craft expertise. It's always dangerous to make claims, but I think this may be the first new build as opposed to repaired witchert wall in Haddenham for many years, an honour shared with a rebuilt wall at Cobweb in Rosemary Lane around the same time.

### **Christmas Tree Art Competition Winner Dec 2023**

In December, back by public demand, was the Xmas tree at Banks Park. With the Junior School we organised an art competition to go on the banner on the railings at the foot of the tree by the double roundabouts.

Eldriges, the company which looks after our streetlights, provided prize money for the winners at a school assembly attended by Ian, our Facilities Manager.

### **Reviewed 65 planning applications**

Our Planning Committee met 16 times and reviewed 65 planning and listed building applications, sending our comments to Bucks Council (BC) which determines them. Last

year's star prize for most contentious development went to Redrow. 23 planning applications, 2 enforcement notices and 1 stop notice later, I can report that things did improve when responsibility passed to Redrow's Northampton team since when we have seen much better liaison with the community. All the drainage measures were eventually approved by Bucks and have now been installed. We now await the details of Phase 2 for another 120 dwellings.

This year we've had 3 particularly contentious planning applications. Two of them were hostile applications by local landowners on sites **not** allocated for development in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan. The first is on the fields opposite Redrow east of Churchway for 91 dwellings by Richborough Estates. This went to Bucks Council's Planning Committee in January with an officer recommendation for approval.

I got 3 minutes to speak at the Committee, as did Sue Lewin (as a local Bucks Cllr) & Richard Hirst (for the Village Society). We managed to persuade the Committee to refuse the application. But that's only the first battle: expect an appeal.

### **Rose and Thistle RIP Feb. 2024**

And here's the 3<sup>rd</sup> controversial application for change of use to residential. This went to BC in Feb. Again, I had my 3 minutes' worth, and gave the Committee 6 sound planning reasons for refusing, but I'm afraid we were unsuccessful. This time the Council granted planning permission. CAMRA also put in an objection, but said afterwards that 1200 pubs closed last year, so we really do need to cherish the 2 we have left.

### **Snakemoor Working Party March 2024**

On a happier note: this time last year we celebrated the work of the Orchard volunteers. This year it's a shout out for the Snakemoor volunteers, and here's a picture of the working group last month taking a tea. They've done a great job of laying the paths with shavings from various PC tree works, while the Beer Festival has funded lots of new tools and new owl boxes. Also, a memorial bench has just been installed by the Young family in memory of Chris.

### **Aston Road Cricket Pavilion Preview**

A quick update on the proposed burial & cricket grounds at Aston Road. Dandara have nearly finished the landscaping in this part of the site. Still outstanding is a footpath on south side of Aston Road.

For the burial ground we commissioned a 230-page report by specialist consultants Cemetery Design Services which is a comprehensive groundwater risk assessment. Hopefully it will satisfy the Environment Agency (EA)'s technical requirements. This report, together with a layout for a memorial garden, will be submitted to BC as a planning application. BC won't approve it unless the EA are satisfied.

The Cricket pitch itself has been laid to ECB requirements by a specialist contractor and includes an all-weather wicket. The proposed cricket pavilion will go here. It will have a ground or air source heat pump and solar slates on south facing roof – and out of harm's way should Ben Stokes come to play.

### **Also during the year we...**

- Let a new grounds maintenance contract
- Installed solar panels on Woodways pavilion and Village Hall
- Gave grants to local students, organisations & for wicket walls

- Supported the Library and the Youth Club
- Ran a Home Energy exhibition – a 2<sup>nd</sup> is planned
- Undertook further work on the “Streetscape” project
- Sadly, lost our EV Car Club
- Commissioned an independent review of the Parish Council

### **Local Council Consultancy Report February 2024**

As part of our Business Plan we commissioned the Local Council Consultancy to carry out an independent review of the PC to find out how we measure up in the local council sector. An assessor experienced in the world of parish & town councils spent time with us during February, including interviewing all staff and myself. We did find this to be a positive and useful experience, and has given us useful recommendations for staffing over the next 2/3 years.

### **With Grateful Thanks to**

**Our volunteers:** this is a shout out for all the volunteers who help specifically with the Parish Council’s work & projects. Forgive me for not naming them all, but we do want to thank Alison Watt who has stepped down as the Allotment Secretary this year after many years sterling work. I also want to thank David Moore who has taken on co-ordination of the team of 17 Community Speedwatch volunteers. They have been out 54 times this year and reported 424 vehicles exceeding the 30-mph limit. The speeding hotspots are Stanbridge Rd and Pegasus Way. The highest speed recorded was 88 mph. My apologies for any omissions in the list of volunteers.

**Our Parish Councillors** – Goodbye to David & Steve; and a big welcome to Graeme & Sascha. My personal thanks to all the Cllrs, and especially to John Wheeler for keeping our manor tidy with his indefatigable litter picking.

**Our Staff** The consultant’s report I mentioned said “In all the interviews and meetings held during the research stage of this review, it has been evident that the staff and the councillors support each other and work as a cohesive team. The staff are happy at work and value the council greatly.” He added that “they have huge respect for the Clerk”.

Any Qs?

Thank you all for coming out this evening to support your Parish Council.

Slides from the [Chair’s presentation](#) are available on the Parish Council website.

### **4. Open forum - registered electors of the parish were given the opportunity to ask questions and raise issues.**

Q: What is happening to Church End pond and the pond at the Grove?

A: The infiltration pond at the Grove site is currently managed by Dandara and is designed to manage water on the development.

A review of planting and water supply to Church End pond is included within the Parish Council’s business plan. Following the silt removal last year, the Parish Council has been monitoring the water levels to see where they naturally sit. We will be looking into options for a planting scheme around the edge of the pond, water retention, and a solar-powered bore hole.

Q: What is the Council’s policy for mowing verges, as the verge along Pegasus Way has recently been cut.

A: The Parish Council tries to balance leaving verges in appropriate areas to encourage biodiversity with safety and satisfying residents. We get complaints both when verges are cut and when they are left, so it is difficult to please everyone. Not all of the verges along Pegasus Way have been cut with the cutting focusing on areas closer to people's homes.

Q: Cycling on footpaths is illegal – how can we communicate this message to those cycling on footpaths around the village?

A: There are 'cyclists please dismount' signs on the footpath close to the Junior school. It may be possible look at installing signs on other footpaths where necessary. Cycling is permitted on bridleways.

Q: What happens when the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) expires?

A: The VALP runs until 2033. Buckinghamshire Council is currently working on a countywide Local Plan for Bucks, which will supersede the VALP. An assessment of housing sites is expected to be published later this year. Haddenham was designated a 'strategic settlement' under the VALP and it is likely further development will be allocated under the Local Plan for Bucks. The Parish Council has highlighted the challenges that the village's current infrastructure is facing, in particular the schools and doctor surgery. Unless these issues are addressed then future residents may have to travel elsewhere for these services, which undermines the sustainability of any development.

Q: Is there any news on shops at Bradmoor Farm closing?

A: The Parish Council has not been informed by the site owners of their future plans but there is currently an application for the site seeking to double the size of the sports bar. There have been 23 planning applications relating to the site in recent years, with some facilities built without planning permission. The planning applications have been piecemeal and as such the development has avoided making any section 106 contributions which could have been used to improve access to the site by installing a pedestrian crossing and separate vehicle and pedestrian access.

Q: Why has the health centre got fencing up?

A: The Parish Council has not been informed.

Cllr. Truesdale was thanked by a resident for all the work he does for the council and for his support when the resident's witchert wall recently collapsed.

The meeting closed at 20:39.

Signed: \_\_\_\_DRAFT\_\_\_\_\_  
David Truesdale, Chair