



Dear Resident,

On behalf of Little Berkhamsted Parish Council, it is my pleasure to present our Annual Report detailing the Council's activities. This will be discussed in more detail at the **Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 24th March 2021**.

It goes without saying that the last few months have been hugely challenging, as the world grapples with the effects of the covid pandemic. Like many organisations, the Parish Council has had to learn to adapt by holding virtual meetings, undertaking a great deal of its work electronically, and sadly we have been unable to hold social events and other village functions due to adhering closely to the Government's regulations.

Against this challenging background, I believe the Parish Council has successfully delivered a wide-range of projects that are all designed to improve village life for residents. In this brief report I will highlight a few of these, and provide more details at the **Annual Parish Meeting being held on 24th March at 8pm**. This will be held virtually: Details of the **Zoom log in details** are **Meeting ID: 970 2401 3738 Passcode: 101879**

I hope many of you will be able to join us. We welcome questions and comments from residents to help shape our work.

Pavillion

Probably our biggest project over the last few months has been the renovation of the pavilion. Through the generosity of a local resident, Mr Lohia, and the successful award of a number of hard-won grants we raised funds to undertake a major renovation project. Repairs have been made to the roof. The interior, including the kitchen, has been modernised, plumbing and electrical works have been undertaken and we now have a pavilion that is an important asset for our community.

As well as being used by the cricket team, such a lovely sight in the summer, the pavilion is going to be used for child-care and is available for residents to use for their own events. We have ambitious plans moving forward including renovation of the bar area. Hopefully as we get back to normal life post-covid, we can hold social functions, including barbeques before too long.

Village Hall

The Parish Council has undertaken on-going, maintenance work of this lovely old building which needs a lot of care. We are grateful as always to Sandie Ash for her unstinting work taking bookings and looking after the village hall. We hope residents, and others, use the hall for birthday parties, meetings, clubs and other social events.

We have installed an **Automatic External Defibrillator** (AED) on the outside wall of the village hall. This is in a prominent central location, lit at night. The Parish Council checks it is appropriately maintained. Its location means that in the event of a suspected cardiac arrest in the village, be it on the playing field, in the pub, village shop or elsewhere, by providing rapid correction to heart-rate abnormalities, there is a higher chance of survival.

Highways

A major project has been the installation of **Speed Indicator Devices** (SID's) which have been installed following residents' requests in the village. These are situated in Robins Nest Hill and Church Road. I'm sure we would all agree too many cars and lorries speed through our village, and the aim of these devices, by highlighting a vehicle's speed to its driver is to get them to slow down. I'm aware opinions from residents about the desirability, or not, of the individual SID locations, but these were ultimately decided by

Hertfordshire Council and not the Parish Council. The bus shelter has been refurbished, and looks so lovely with its flowers. Thank you to Bridget Toomey.

New **Village Signs** have been installed coming into the village which are easier to read than the previous ones. We have also had another competition for school children to design Road Signs which you will see displayed in the village. The Parish Council has also committed itself to the “**20’s Plenty for Us**” campaign where, like other villages in Hertfordshire, we would like to encourage a 20 mile per hour speed limit in the centre of the village.

Footpaths

We continue to advise Hertfordshire Council of any gates and bridges on our local footpaths that need repair. We now have a circular footpath starting and ending in the village which makes for a great walk! Not the most glamorous side of the Parish Council’s work, but vital – we have installed an additional **dog waste** bin in the village to make it easier for dog walkers to dispose of excrement. A new **litter bin** has also been installed in the centre of the village beside the bus stop.

Planning

The Parish Council is asked by East Herts Council to comment on all planning applications in its constituency. We take this work seriously and give a careful measured response to every application. Our initial standpoint is to be as supportive as possible. The Parish Council now, with the permission of the applicant, visits each property (usually two councillors) to understand the application in more detail before it makes its recommendations.

Village Life

We completed a **village survey** to identify key concerns and wishes of residents which were shared at a village social evening. We now have a good village **database** of resident’s contact details to allow better communication. The Parish Council **website** has also been revamped. At Christmas we made up and distributed **Christmas hampers** to some of our elderly residents which were well received. In order to raise funds we have joined the **East Herts Lottery** and are a recognised “Good Cause”. Please encourage your family and friends to buy the odd ticket which helps the village. We also arranged a village **litter pick** and were so happy to see lots of residents coming along to help keep our village clean.

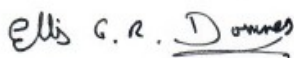
Recreation Committee

For many years, the Recreation Committee has raised funds and organised fabulous social events in the village. It has become increasingly difficult to find enough people to keep the committee going, and the Recreation Committee has taken the decision to disband. Its funds, raised at social events, have now been formally transferred to the Parish Council. These funds are “ring-fenced” and will be spent on social events and fundraising for the village, and will not be used for core activities.

Conclusion

I hope this brief written report demonstrates that the Parish Council has been busy! All councillors are unpaid and volunteer their time for the good of the village. We so appreciate the support of residents, and we look forward to providing greater detail of our work, and receiving your feedback at your Annual Parish Meeting which I hope you will be able to attend, virtually this year. The covid pandemic has challenged us all, but hopefully there are better times ahead.

Thank you for reading this report: We welcome your feed-back.



Ellis Downes
Chairman,
Little Berkhamsted Parish Council