

Bishop's Itchington

ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING
2024

Monday 29 April 2024



Welcome to the 2024 Annual Village Meeting. This is a chance to look back on the past year, to celebrate our achievements as a community and discuss any current issues.

Bishop's Itchington Annual Village Meeting 29 April 2024 at 7.30pm

AGENDA

1. Welcome from the Chairman – Councillor Chris Kettle
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the annual village meeting held on 24 April 2023
4. Parish council annual report for the year ended 31 March 2024
5. Parish council financial report for the year ended 31 March 2024
6. Reports from Village Organisations
7. Reports from county and district councillors
8. Questions and answers session
9. Close of meeting



Draft Minutes of Bishop's Itchington Annual Village Meeting 24 April 2023 at 7.30pm

Present:

Cllr Dugmore (Chairman) Cllr Christian-Carter Cllr Gates Cllr Kettle Cllr Thomas
Cllr Tressler

In attendance:

Karen Stevens (Parish Clerk)
6 Members of the public

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Dugmore who welcomed everyone, particularly residents and those who had not attended one of these meetings previously.

1. Apologies:

Donnamarie Davenport - FoBIPS

2. Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting 25 April 2022:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Annual Village meeting held on 25 April 2022 as a true and complete record of that meeting. (Proposed Cllr Kettle, seconded Cllr Tressler, four in favour, two abstentions as they were not present at the meeting).

4. Bishop's Itchington Parish Council Annual Report Year Ended 31 March 2023:

Councillor Dugmore (Chairman) drew attention to his report included in the pack of information for tonight's meeting (previously circulated). He then went on to say:

"As you can see from the report, we have had another year of trying to get things done but with only a small handful of people. The fruits of the labours of the playground working group can be seen down at the playing fields and it is good to see a successful project progressing.

It has been good to get the Neighbourhood Plan to a conclusion, having it adopted by the Village and by Stratford District Council. Thank you to Cllrs Thomas and Tressler for all their hard work and to all those who have been involved in this over the years.

There has been the usual involvement in planning activities. There have been several contentious applications and one or two decisions have gone in the opposite direction to what we would have liked. The parish council has tried its best to represent the village but sometimes the Planning Committee sees it differently and, in some cases, we have taken the planning team to task to explain their actions.

We are down on councillors as we have the capacity for 10 councillors but presently only have six. This has made it busy for the current team and therefore we have not pushed on with all the projects we would like to do i.e. restoration of the chapel windows etc.

Thank you to all the councillors for the work they have undertaken, not just those mentioned here individually but, we have got small working groups that pull together be it on planning matters, finance, HR etc. Everyone has a part to play, and everyone brings in their own skills which is fantastic. The teamwork we have had and taken advantage of is brilliant and therefore I would like to say thank you to all my fellow councillors for all the hard work they have put in. As previously said, it is not just the councillors. The Clerks (Karen Stevens) entrance last year was on crutches and this year it is much more fleet of foot. The clerk's determination to push through despite everything that was going on to her was admirable and a bit of an inspiration to us all. I just want to say publicly and, on the record, thank you Karen.

As said in my report, in the next few weeks you get to choose your councillors. For the parish there are only five standing, so you get them regardless – do encourage friends and neighbours and people who you think have something to give to come along, introduce themselves and join the parish council. It will be 5 seats and not four as I have decided to stand down and give myself a break so I will vacate this seat shortly and let someone else take the helm. I am sure someone can do a better job and show us all how it's done, and I look forward to sitting in the audience and promise that I won't hackle".

5. Parish council financial report for the year ended 31 March 2023:

In the pack there is a financial report for year ending 31 March 2023 which is subject to audit.

Q: Under miscellaneous there is a figure of £145.10 compared with the previous year's figure of £143,908.46 – why?

A: This is because of the payment received from the Furrowfields development and this money has paid for the playground refurbishment.

6. Reports from Village Organisations

WI:

Jane Thomas advised that everything is in the report within the booklet. They advised that they have got four new members but are always looking for more.

Memorial Hall:

Carolyn Went advised that they have had a busy year. Need to say thank you to the parish council and the clerk for pushing on and finding the deeds enabling the Hall to be registered so charitable status can be applied for.

Therefore, although there is a list of things that they want to undertake at the hall, any major refurbishment will wait until charitable status has been obtained so that VAT can be reclaimed as this will make a big difference as it will be a 20% saving.

The hall is being well used by a variety of groups with activities every day, the most recent addition being Line dancing on a Friday.

There was a flood that meant that the kitchen had to be re done. The film nights are proving successful and are good for bringing in new members of the village.

Bingo and particularly the Coronation Bingo has brought in people from all areas of the village and has been a real laugh.

The Memorial Hall has a small committee, and they always need new members.

Thank you to Cllr Christian-Carter for being on the committee for a number of years and thanks to Cllr Tressler who has taken over from her.

There is money in the bank making them as financially secure as you can be in a small village.

There is a vision to get the toilets refurbished, maybe a small extension on the back of the hall and a sensory garden to the rear.

Following the flood, several activities/parties were relocated to the community centre and a good working relationship with the community centre is developing.

Pam Reason advised that reports for BIFC, BISA and Friends of the Yellow Land and BING are in the booklet.

BIFC:

As per the report, BIFC had qualified for three cup finals. An update to this is that, unfortunately, they lost the Bethell Charity Cup. The cup competition raises a lot of money for charity and last year, three groups in the village received charitable donations from the organisers (included the school and the playground).

They won the Division 1 cup final and then finally, they lost the Challenge Cup final to Long Itchington. The team has also got through to the George Dutton cup final that will be played later this week.

BISA:

BISA is always looking for new members.

Friends of the Yellow Land and BING:

Three new people have joined, and they have received an enquiry from another lady. One young person is working with them to do his community service part of his Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Work to repair the fence on the Yellow Land should be undertaken in the next couple of weeks. Also, Friends of the Yellow Lane are looking at using some of their funds to install a butterfly information board (cost approximately £300). It will have photos and information relating to the butterflies found on the Yellow Land (site specific).

Cemetery and Churchyard:

No additional information to add to the published report.

Planning:

No additional information to add to the published report.

- Carolyn Went raised the issue of the development behind her house and will speak to Cllr Chrisitan-Carter about it.
- Houses in Starbold Road – if there is a Neighbourhood plan, why have these been allowed. The parish councils' position was a clear objection to the development. The application went to planning committee and both Cllr's Dugmore and Kettle were in attendance and put across some coherent arguments based on planning policy, but the committee opted to go with the planning officer's recommendation which was to grant permission. It was not a unanimous decision as three members of the committee did agree with the parish council. This happened after the Neighbourhood plan was voted on in the village but before the plan was formally adopted by SDC.
- Carnival: There has not been a carnival since 2017. A new enthusiastic committee has been formed and a small carnival will be held this year. Road closures have been applied for, insurances are in place, first aid cover arranged, acts, bands and stalls are being booked. The intention this year is to contain it to the pub car park to get an event done and they will build on this in following years. There is also an intention to bring back the Christmas event as well.

Attendances:

There is a summary at the back of the pack of councillor attendances at parish council meetings.

7. Reports from County & District Councillors:**Stratford District Council (SDC):**

Cllr Chris Kettle advised that as it is SDC elections this year, (4 May 2023) he is not legally able to write a report.

With regards to planning committee and the Starbold Road application: the process was a 'mockery'. Sometimes these things happen – we have a neighbourhood plan, there are planning policies that clearly dictate what is acceptable/unacceptable. It is however a planning balance so there is not a right or wrong. It is referred to as a quasi-judicial process, so evidence is examined in favour of an application and evidence examined against it. If the parish council and/or ward member are not going to be involved then the decision made by the planning officer, in this case both the parish council and I made it quite clear that we did not

think it was an appropriate development therefore it went to committee. Cllr Dugmore spoke very well on behalf of the parish. Sometimes it comes down to the way the planning officer presents, and he has to say he was unimpressed with that individuals grasp of knowledge of this village, and it was disappointing. I received quite a bit of flak from residents on social media regarding the outcome. It would be quite nice if there was a little bit more support from people within the parish.

The merger with Warwick did not happen because SDC became increasingly concerned about Warwick's financial position. A positive to come out of the proposal was the joint contract signed waste collection. The start of the new contract did not go well as it was the hottest week of the year. Stratford is a rural district, and previously all the collections came from the depot in Stratford. When the new contract started, these collections came out of East Warwick, and they were not used to doing rural collections. They initially found this difficult particularly as they did not have the systems that Stratford had (personal digital assistance (smart mobile phones effectively)) and were relying on paper maps. Within ten days of starting the contract, absenteeism had reached 30% so short cuts were taken resulting in chaos. There was no opportunity for training before the new contract started, it had to be an immediate switchover but what was not anticipated was that the Warwick depot would have such challenges, so it was very much the rural areas of East Warwickshire/Stratford that had all the teething problems. The issues got ironed out and as a result, recycling rates are up by 30% whilst the waste that goes to landfill has reduced by 30%. The next stage is to look at much more carbon efficiency and particularly vehicles.

At Stratford, his portfolios have continued to include Environmental Health and Community Safety.

Environmental Health has two side, the Licensing Team, and the Compliance Team (look at issues of noise, smells etc including issues around HS2).

Community Safety is a challenging area as it includes a statutory responsibility to work with crime reduction. The team is led by Karen Stanley who has two Anti-Social Behaviour Officers, two rural crime advisors (look at villages and farms) and a CCTV team and a permanently staffed CCTV room who are in live contact with the police monitor 134 cameras across Stratford district. Some of the larger villages pay SDC to monitor their CCTV cameras. Currently, the impact of county lines (drugs) on the district is one of the main concerns. There were 23 different county lines going into Stratford, this was reduced to 17 because as SDC took out 6 of the smaller businesses using CCTV etc. It is now down to 5. Unfortunately, this is not due to SDC/police but large drug dealers taking out smaller ones. Unfortunately, every county line effects every community – every member of a community is vulnerable either as a victim or as a family member of a victim or someone who has their home broken into to provide funds for people to buy/deal drugs etc. There is also the issue of human trafficking associated with the growing of drugs.

Warwickshire County Council (WCC):

Painted the new lines outside the school and will shortly be painting lines at the bend on Chapel Street (by the entrance to the playing fields). These have been funded from the budget he gets as a county councillor (approximately £35,000 per annum) for road improvements across the entire county division that he represents (12 villages). The largest project in the village (approximately £5,000) will be undertaken in the layby outside the cemetery reconfiguring the drainage to alleviate flooding/mud at the entrance of the cemetery.

Challenge with school buses particularly to Southam School as during the year, some changes came into effect from the 2001 Act whereby children who had been on a bus, particularly those with facilities to support those with special needs, physical needs rather than learning needs) can not share the same bus unless there were specific features on the bus and most bus companies did not have these features. This resulted in a reconfiguration to find a way to ensure those children who needed a bus to get to school could.

WCC is responsible for pavements. Issues with pavements can be emailed to Cllr Kettle or reported using 'Fix my Street'.

8. Close of meeting

Cllr Dugmore thanked residents for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 20:26

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....



Bishop's Itchington Parish Council Chairman's Review of 2023 to 2024

Welcome to this year's annual parish meeting. This is not a Parish Council meeting but a meeting for all members of the parish and those groups and societies in the village to talk to our community here in Bishop's Itchington about what we all do. It is traditionally chaired by the Parish Council Chair.

The Parish Council has as always had a busy year, starting with an election in May which led to a big change in the Parish Council.

Two Councillors stood down in May, Cllr Dugmore, the previous Chair of the Council, and Cllr Christian Carter who, as many of you will know, had spent many years on the Council. I would like to thank both of them for their contributions to the Parish Council.

With only four members of the Parish Council, we issued an invitation for new members and were delighted that following that invitation, six residents volunteered and were coopted onto the Council. Three former Parish Councillors, David Howatson, Simon Tagg-Wilkinson, and Adam Dugmore along with three new Councillors, Selena Ogden, Kate Williams and Alistair Lamont.

In January John Gates resigned as he is moving abroad and, in March, Kate Williams found her commitments both in her work and as a member of the Carnival Committee, were taking up more time than she anticipated, and she stepped down. Thank you to both John and Kate for their contribution. In March we therefore were delighted to co-opt two new members, Amanda Colton and Orlaith Horsman.

During the year the Parish Council completed one major project, and Cllr Thomas, who led the project, has reported on this separately, being the refurbishment of the play area with money specifically paid for by the developers of the Furrowfields estate.

Following the previous years' work to the all-weather courts, sport and play equipment in the village has been improved considerably.

On other matters, planning still takes up a considerable amount of time particularly as the District Council continues its process of developing a new Local Plan. Management and maintenance of the village estate and the Cemetery continues to be an important responsibility for the Council, and my thanks to those who make that happen.

I would also like to thank our Clerk, Karen Stevens for her continuing support to the Parish Council and to members in the community.

Christopher Kettle
Chairman



Bishop's Itchington Parish Council Portfolio Holders Reviews of 2023 to 2024

Biodiversity/Climate Change:

Globally the impact of humans on other species has been broadly recognised. The international biodiversity conference held under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) called COP15 ran from 7 to 19 December 2022 in Montreal, Canada. A key outcome of COP15 was the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. This set out global goals to address ongoing biodiversity loss. The UK Government put in place The Environment Act 2021, which included actions to address biodiversity loss.

Bishops Itchington is based in a rural setting with extensive farming activities all around. It also benefits from a local nature reserve under the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and under the ownership of the Parish Council a corner of the reserve called the "Yellow Land". A small area of the playing field, sometime referred to as the community orchard also exists, together with various green sites around the village. With the continued hard work and support from volunteers within the community our Parish supports the varied flora and fauna around us. The Parish Council has environmental responsibilities in its care for the Parish, (Local Neighbourhood Plan) and through good practice in our procurement of services.

Local authorities have a duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their functions. This Duty was introduced by the **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act** and came into force on 1 October 2006. Parish Councils are Civil Local Authorities.

Public authorities who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. This is the strengthened 'biodiversity duty' that the **Environment Act 2021** introduces. This means that, as a public authority, we must:

1. Consider what we can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
2. Agree policies and specific objectives based on our consideration.
3. Act to deliver our policies and achieve our objectives.

Bishops Itchington already adopts the local biodiversity action plan but have subsequently developed a draft Biodiversity Policy and Action plan, consistent with the latest requirements. Work is still needed to develop a full understanding of the Parish current state of biodiversity within the Parish. This will be achieved by working with fact holders such as ecologists, local environmental groups, farmers, and landowners etc.

It is also important that we recognise the hard work of local parish groups undertaking biodiversity activities, including:

BI Nature Group / Friends of the Yellow Land – playing field,
 WI Gardening Group – village planters
 Allotments - Hidden Green, Plough Lane
 Various individuals such as litter pickers

We should also recognise our local farmers who may be implementing Agri-environment schemes.

Only by communicating, sharing our local knowledge, and working together will we maintain and improve our rural community and enhance the environment around us, today and for future generations.

Cllr Simon Tagg-Wilkinson

Cemetery and Churchyard:

Over the past year, several projects have been completed at the cemetery. These include:

1. The Chapel Windows: Some of the original leaded lights were broken and the glass/lead of the smaller windows was buckling. Over the summer, the windows were removed from the chapel and transported off site to be restored to their original state. Although the work took a number of weeks, the wait was well worth it with the windows looking great and hopefully they will now last another 100 years plus.



Before



After



Before



Before



After

2. Water Tank: The new water tank was finally installed and, with the amount of rain we have had this winter/spring is full. The tank is much larger than its predecessor so hopefully, will be able to provide water throughout the summer/autumn.



3. Reflective Area: The reflective area at the rear of the cemetery has been opened up more, a new stone path created, and a new semi-circular bench has been installed.

4. Entrance to the Cemetery: Work has been undertaken on the layby outside the cemetery to improve drainage. Previously, when it rained, the rainwater would run off and pool at the entrance to the cemetery. It is hoped that this work will alleviate the problem.
5. Opening of the Cemetery Chapel: Following the installation of the restored windows, the Cemetery Manager, Clerk and Cllr Thomas cleaned the Chapel so that it could be opened on Christmas Eve and 20 people took this opportunity to visit the Chapel. It was also opened on Good Friday. Thank you to Wendy Buckley for opening the Chapel on these occasions.

Over the next few months, a Health and Safety Risk assessment will be undertaken on all the headstones on the Cemetery and Churchyard. The Cemetery Rules and Regulations will be reviewed and updated as necessary. Also, we are hoping to paint the outside of the chapel in the summer and are looking for volunteers to help as currently, the Friends of the Cemetery group consists of just two

members. Finally, thanks to Val Powell, Cemetery Manager, for the outstanding work does to make sure that everything runs so smoothly.

Cllr Selena Ogden

Finance:

The Parish Council set its annual precept for 2023-24 at £108,840, equivalent to a charge for a Band D property of £93.60 or £1.80 per week. All of the money raised by the Parish Council is spent within, or on behalf of the residents of, the parish.

In addition, the Council had received S106 money from the developers of the Furrowfields estate to spend on play equipment. So how did we spend the budget:

	23-24 budget £'s	Play equip't S106 contribution £'s	Budget plus S106 cont'n	23-24 actual £'s	Difference £'s
Precept	108,840		108,840	108,840	-
Burials	2,500		2,500	2,658	158
Reimbursements	1,300		1,300	450	(850)
Playing Field	257		257	4,102	3,845
Interest	443		443	4,164	3,721
Misc	-		-	700	700
VAT Refund (exc play equip)	-		-	13,540	13,540
Total income	113,340	-	113,340	134,454	21,114
EXPENDITURE					
Salaries, allowances & expenses	33,347		33,347	34,053	706
Administration	13,540		13,540	10,861	(2,679)
Grounds Maintenance	28,100		28,100	23,615	(4,485)
Cemetery & Churchyard	5,369		5,369	8,300	2,931
Playing Field and equipment	21,909	135,473	157,382	157,620	238
Grants	10,000		10,000	6,219	(3,781)
Other Expenditure	1,000		1,000	100	(900)
Parish Office	5,530		5,530	5,322	(208)
Total Expenditure	118,795	135,473	254,268	246,090	(8,179)
Balance	(5,455)	(135,473)	(140,928)	(111,635)	29,293

The position at the end of the year was better than anticipated with more income being generated from a VAT reclaim, the playing field and bank interest and lower expenditure on administration, grounds maintenance and grants offset by increased expenditure on the cemetery.

The Parish Council expenditure is reviewed and compared to budget every month at Parish Council meetings.

Cllr Christopher Kettle

Planning:

We have had around 24 applications to consider in the past year. The biggest of these related to the new Co-Op building and the associated redevelopment of the existing shop, and Orbit's proposed redevelopment of three of its sites in the village.

Orbit

This application stirred up a variety of opinions in the village and we had some residents in the affected properties speaking with a great deal of passion at the meeting. Many of these properties are in need of substantial repair and renovation. Orbit have proposed to redevelop sites on Starbold Road, Gaydon Road and in St Michael's Close, replacing the aging buildings with new homes to modern standards of insulation and energy efficiency. The parish council asked them to do better than the minimum in terms of net zero and minimising dependency on grid energy, however SDC has granted the application without amendment.

The Gaydon Road site now has planning permission. St. Michael's Close and Starbold Road were withdrawn so they could make some changes and we expect them to be re-submitted shortly.

Co-Op

Progress on the new Co-Op seems to be mostly complete with the interior fit out well underway. We must only be weeks away from seeing it open.

Permission to convert the existing Co-Op into residential units was granted in August last year. The Co-Op has stated, however, that they will not close the existing shop until the new one is open.

Use of the Bishop's Itchington Neighbourhood Development Plan

The neighbourhood plan has now been in place for over a year now and is often included when Stratford District Council justify their planning decisions, so we are confident that it is being taken into account.

We are hoping for some constructive dialogue with SDC officers in the future to better understand how they are interpreting some parts of it.

Planning applications in parish council meetings

If you've got a planning application in the pipeline that affects a property within the parish or have something you wish to say about one, it's always worth coming to the parish council meeting where it will be discussed. Karen, our clerk, invites applicants where we have details for them. Some time, albeit limited to 15 minutes, is set aside at the beginning of each meeting for members of the public to speak.

It can make a big difference to the council's position on an application if you come along and introduce the background to your plans.



**PLANNING
PERMISSION
APPROVED**

Please remember also, that you can raise concerns or make comments on an active planning application at any time, using SDC's E-Planning website or by contacting the parish council clerk.

Cllr Adam Dugmore

Play Area/Hardcourts:

Over the last year, the playing field area has seen two big investments which has further enhanced the village public spaces.

In spring last year, work began on the renewal of the children's playground area - a few pieces of the old playground were retained but most of the old equipment, which had given great service, was worn out and no longer serviceable so a new play area was chosen by a working group comprising councillors and members of the public.

The rebuild took a couple of months, during which time the play area was closed completely, and the new playpark reopened at the beginning of June. The feedback received from the community has been nothing but positive and Bishop's Itchington now has a play area which we can all be proud of.

Later in the year, the hard courts received an overhaul with a completely new playing surface being laid and with its new painted surface, this also looks well-presented and fit for purpose.

Towards the end of last year, the playing field area was subject to its annual RoSPA safety inspection and as would be expected with the majority being brand new equipment, there was nothing of any significance noted.

Currently, the Parish Council is reviewing the possibility of renewing the cricket strip following proposals from the cricket club which is being re-established.

Also, the installation of an updated CCTV system is being considered for the children's play area.



Cllr Norman Thomas



Reports from Village Organisations

Bishop's Itchington Carnival:

In February 2023, having talked about how good it would be to get the carnival going again, Brian and I went to a parish council meeting to see if there was support for bringing it back.



We had a follow up chat with the chairman at the time (who was part of the old carnival committee) and arranged a meeting in the pub for anyone interested in helping to come along.

We were blown away by how many turned up. We've now got about 15 members in the group.

The carnival couldn't go anywhere without some fundraising. We held a few events, including a couple of bingo nights on a variety of themes which raised over £900 and yes, some of us made spectacular fools of ourselves in the process!

After a lot of hard work, late nights and quite chewed fingernails, we made it to carnival day. The weather was on our side, the village turned out and it was a brilliant day. Hundreds of people from the village came out to enjoy live music and entertainment throughout the day and evening. It was fabulous to bring back the carnival atmosphere that some of us knew and to introduce it to new residents who moved here since the last carnival and hadn't had chance to see Bishop's at its best.



On to Christmas! In 2022 and with limited support the Christmas tree switch on was a low key event. Without Jane Cox and Angie Taylor's ongoing efforts to make sure there was a tree and remembrance stars/angels, there might not be one at all, so we were thrilled to be able to work with them to build up the 2023 Christmas switch-on event. We hope everyone enjoyed it.

As in previous years, we split proceeds between running the carnival and donating to Annie's Angels for MacMillan Cancer Support. Between the carnival and the Christmas events, we raised over £2,300 for Annie's Angels.

I'd like to thank Bishop's Itchington Parish Council, Punch Pubs, Heart of England Co-Op, The Greaves Club, Napton Buffalo and Bishop's Fryer for their donations and fundraising efforts and everyone who donated prizes and funds for 2023's events and look forward to their ongoing support for 2024.

We've already got a full line up for this year's carnival, which takes place on 6th July. We can't wait to share the day with you all. Look out for other fundraising events in the lead up to it.

Finally, because without them we wouldn't have a carnival, I'd like to say thanks to the members of the carnival committee who give so much of their time to make these events happen.

Roll on July!

Selena Ogden – Chair, Bishop's Itchington Carnival Committee

Bishops Itchington Football Club (BIFC):

This season we have fielded three sides – one on Saturday in the Banbury League and two in the Leamington Sunday League.

The Saturday side continued where they left off last season in Division 2 but have gone one better than last season. They have finished as Champions and should be promoted to Division for next season. became B1 First but remained in Division 2 of the Banbury League. Well done to Charlie and the lads.

The Sunday first team have been joined by a Reserves side this season. With all the wet weather we have endured, we are very behind with the fixtures, but the first team have reached the final of the Challenge Cup and the Reserves will play in the Cancer Cup final. Good luck Tom, the first team Manager and Ryan, the Reserve team manager, and the lads.

Running a football Club is not cheap. We are lucky enough to be sponsored by the Greaves Club. This sponsorship helps with paying for insurance, first aid and fees.

We play down the Playing Field and use the pavilion facilities. These are courtesy of the Parish Council, to whom we are very grateful.



Bishops Itchington Sports Association (BISA):

BI Sports Association has been in existence for about twenty years and tries to identify the need for sports and leisure facilities in the village and raises funds to provide them.

Although the courts on the playing field (originally built by BISA) are now the responsibility of the Parish Council, BISA still run the day-to-day management of them. They are free for all villagers unless anyone or a group wishes to block book the courts or use the floodlights. They are currently used by a tennis group, a five a side footie group, walking netball, a cricket group, a netball team and until recently a couple of boys football teams for training.

The badminton group uses the Memorial Hall on Wednesday evenings and Tuesday mornings and evenings. Many thanks to Linda, who gives a great deal of her time to running this popular sport. We have also welcomed Steve who leads the Tuesday evening session.

This year we have continued to support the school with a variety of sporting equipment so that they can offer a wide range of activities to the students. We are also funding a Scout leader to go on a Hill walking Leaders course so that the Scouts can enjoy a new activity. The cricket group has expanded over the year and we are keen to support them and not just financially. We are hoping they will be able to play a few friendly games in the summer at away grounds.

We are a small group and are always looking for new members. We have welcomed Steve and Charlie to our ranks this year. Our email address is talktobisa@hotmail.com so that people can contact us about anything to do with sport and leisure – ideas for new activities, funding for village activities, interest in joining us or queries about the courts.

BISA Badminton:

Bisa Badminton club in 2023-2024 has seen a small but regular support and attendance. At the moment, we are running 4 clubs a week, mostly running through the school holidays too depending upon peoples availability.

Tuesday mornings is the ladies group which has seen a recent increase due to a couple of new regular ladies. 4 of us also attended the recent All England Badminton International championships in Birmingham-sadly England or any of the UK nations didn't get to the finals but we had a great time supporting the many Asian nations who are at the top of their game!

Tuesday evenings are run by Steve and most weeks he gets enough players to cover the hall hire-as with all the groups, there is room for new players-Tuesdays are aimed at adult beginners or intermediate standard.

Wednesday beginners club which especially welcomes children has had a recent increase due to 3 new adult players, but it would be great to introduce badminton to more children of the village. We did promote the club at the primary school Christmas fair but have yet to see new members join so we will also have a presence at the village carnival to attract more interest.

Wednesday advanced/experienced group is quite small at the moment due to previous members either having babies or struggling with health issues and so new blood will be warmly welcomed. We will continue to put out adverts on the village Facebook page and might even cast our net to the outlying villages.

It is now 10 years since I took on the leadership of the club and I still love the game but if anyone would like to take on building up the children's/beginners club, then do contact BISA.

Linda Hassall (on behalf of BISA)

BISHOPS ITCHINGTON WI:



With 52 members, we are a thriving village group, with our current age range being 49 to 92!

We have several subgroups, including craft, gardening, walking netball and drama. We also have an excellent darts team.

As well as inviting guest speakers to our monthly meetings, we also organise our own in-house activities. Members attend events held by Warwickshire Federation and take part in educational courses run by the National Federation via Zoom.

The WI in our village has been going for 99 years, so we are at the early planning stages of a bit of a celebration!

Jane Thomas.
BIWI Secretary

Bishops Itchington Memorial Hall:

The Memorial Hall is managed by a committee that is largely made up from representatives of the groups who use the Hall. The managing trustees have had another busy year maintaining the building and the neighbouring cottage.

The Hall provides a venue for a wide variety of user groups who provide a range of activities for all age groups. We provide a centre for community cohesion and social inclusion.

Our newest user group provides a line dancing class; the class have just celebrated their first anniversary at the hall. The group is well attended and going from strength to strength.

We are also fortunate to host bowls, badminton, Beavers, Cubs, Martial Arts, WI and Parent and Toddlers. Derby and Joan closed at the end of 2023. It is always sad to see any established village group close. Unfortunately, the numbers had declined over the year.

The notable event for this year for us this year is the registering of the land. This sounds quite dull but it does pave the way for us to continue with our application for Charitable Status and it opens up a variety of funding streams. This has happened as a result of the efforts of the Parish Council. Thank you!





The most noticeable improvement to the hall this year is the doors. We have had all new doors; this has been a costly exercise, but the doors leaked heat and were not secure. There have been a lot of compliments about the appearance of the Hall as a result of our new doors. We received a grant from the Parish Council towards the doors.

In common with all the groups within the village the need for fundraising is continual.

Our building is over a hundred years old, keeping it fit for purpose for our regular user groups and to ensure we can attract other occasional users is a constant battle.

We try to keep the hire fee realistically achievable for all. We strive to achieve a balance that allows the groups to afford the fee and their activities whilst not running at a loss. The fundraising activities make this possible, but they do require quite a commitment from a core of people.

This year we have introduced bingo and quiz nights as two new regular fundraising activities. Both have been very successful and are encouraging new people into the hall. We are also still showing films, unfortunately the percentage of the ticket prices that Live and Local charge does make the events more of a social activity than a fundraising event.

The Hall Committee needs some new members to bring new ideas and to support the activities that we provide for the whole village. If you have a few hours a month that you can spare to support the future of the Hall please get in touch.

I have commented on the work we have achieved and the need to continue to raise funds for maintenance. The works on the hall fall into two main categories the everyday stuff and the major refurbishment works. Over the last 3 years we have completely refurbished the main hall, replaced all of the doors. The vast majority of the funding for the works that we have undertaken has been painstakingly raised by the committee. We now have a problem with the floor that is getting worse. We will need to have works done to replace the floor and base. This is going to be a very expensive job.

Carolyn Went.

B I Community Centre:

Since the last Annual Village meeting Bishops Itchington community centre has continued to provide the village with a central meeting place where they can come together to share experiences, gain new skills through group activities whether crafts or exercise, hold family parties and get together, meet together to help maintain and develop community resources and infrastructure and cultivate continued community ventures.

This has been done via the many community members and groups who use the centre as a meeting place.



Current centre users are:

The Parish Council,
The WI,
The Pop-up Post Office,
Bishops Itchington Community Youth Group,
Yoga group,
Personal training and exercise (Jenny Abbott),
Men's Breakfast,
The Allotment subscribers,
Summer Youth activity providers,
Christmas Light Switch on,
Carnival Stall Holders/Pop up cafe for the local Youth group,
Local Quarterly Market,
Families for social events and parties,
Training and Conference use.

Even with this level of user groups the Centre is largely underutilised at present and has a much greater capacity for developments locally. Sadly, last year we lost Entrust who ran a training cafe for adults with disabilities as a skill-based entry to work opportunity. The reason for this being that their usage of the centre could no longer be so heavily subsidised by the Centre and without this allowance the cafe was not self-sustaining.

The Pop-up post Office continues to provide a much-needed service to the local community however there have been issues of reliability and continuity which have been raised and hopefully more recently addressed and improved. This is a fully subsidised service which provides no income for the centre.

There have been changes to the leasing agreement and the primary leaseholder is now the Parish Council with a sub-let to the Community Centre Committee. The Royal British Legion are no longer part of the leasing agreement for the centre having relinquished this at their own bequest last year. We are grateful that Folletts have agreed a further lease of five years which will allow the community Centre to continue to be a community-based organisation offering services by the local community for the local community.

The committee itself has seen relatively few changes in the last year and we continue to be a very small committee with just four serving members. Pete Wilson is a very valued member of the committee who has been the Committee secretary for many years and has played a very active role in the upkeep and maintenance of the centre, its gardens and its allotment. Sadly, Pete will be moving away, this will place the committee in a tenuous position if we are unable to recruit further members.

In case this is the last annual general meeting Pete will be in the village for we would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank him for all the energy he has put into making sure that the centre has remained operational and for the commitment he has given.

The remaining committee consists of Colin White Treasurer and all-round financial manager and advisor as well as facilitating Centre Bookings, maintenance, and events supporter. Colin was also a key person in ensuring pre-Covid that the Youth Group was able to run and become as successful as it is.

Amanda Colton heads up the Youth Group and supports the sub-Youth group Committee members and Volunteers as well as working to establish a Senior Youth Group and gain funding to help further develop the Centre and thus interest in its usage and development of youth services.

Orlaith Horsman is the Committee Chairperson currently and co-ordinates the meetings, provides updates and reports and organises summer youth schemes and activities as well as fundraising events.

The Committee would really welcome other members of the community who may want to join or who have vision for community-based activities and are in a position to coordinate/facilitate such from the Centre. Without any new volunteers there is a serious risk that the Centre will not be able to continue as it does now.

We have seen the return of the annual Carnival in Bishops which has assisted in highlighting the Centre, what it can offer and what we do as well as offering an opportunity for much needed fundraising supported by the Local Community. The Centre is represented on the Carnival Committee, and we have appreciated the opportunity to come together with other local community groups and volunteers to provide such a great annual event, similarly with the Christmas Light Switch on event in December. Last Summer we managed to fundraise over £600 to put towards Youth Group activities/forthcoming summer events.

Bookings for the Centre continue to be positive, and we believe that the Centre continues to provide an excellent and much needed base for community-based activities and events given its central position, its accessibility and affordability as a local venue. Hire costs have increased minimally despite the significant rise in living costs incurred by the Centre.

The Youth Group continues to make great progress and now runs on a monthly basis which is very well received by local families. This is an important Community resource, and we are grateful to the volunteers who give up their time to ensure that the Youth Group can continue.

Projected plans for this year are to continue to maintain the Centre to a good standard, ensuring continued bookings and use by Community Members. Ongoing facilitation of youth services and a community base for all groups who wish to access and use it. The establishment of a Senior Youth Group providing a safe space for teenagers within the local community. A continued and reliable post office service.

Ongoing fundraising activities and identification of external opportunities for grant funding to offer greater opportunities for all at the Centre. This will be done via Carnival, Light Switch on, and applications for relevant funding pathways.

We also hope to be able to put on at least two weeks of summer activities either via an external provider or through local voluntary facilitators such as Arts/Sports and Craft sessions.

We thank everyone who continues to utilise and support the Centre whether via direct use or supporting events and activities which take place at the Centre. All of which helps the Centre continue to be sustainable in the longer term and a valuable asset to the local community.

Orlaith Horsman (Chairperson of Bishops Itchington Community Centre on behalf of the committee)

Bishop's Itchington Cricket Club:

2024 is a year of enthusiasm and hope for Bishops Itchington Cricket Club. Spring training has begun with our first session having 11 children and adults playing in the tennis courts on a rainy Monday evening!

We train every Monday 7-9pm down the playing fields and it's only £2 to join in!

If you would like to join in please contact bishopsitchingtoncricket@gmail.com

As a newly formed team one of our goals for this year is to play our first set of friendlies. We have 4 fixtures booked with local teams such as Wellesbourne, and Southam and the battle of Itchington in July when we take on Long Itchington cricket club!

30th June - Willoughby CC - Away
14th July - Wellesbourne CC - Away
28th July - Long Itchington CC - Away
11th August - Southam CC - Away

We are welcoming new players from the age of 12+ to join our WhatsApp group so we can build a team and fulfil our new Sunday fixtures.

We are also encouraging the parish council to support our request to renovate the artificial wicket in the playing fields and are seeking funding via other sources to help develop the playing fields for cricket use as well as Football.

We are looking forward to completing our first season friendlies this summer and hope to grow our group to allow us to have Sunday and youth teams in 2025 and hopefully be able to host our first home game!

If you would like to help us in any way, be it funding, sponsorship, or donations of used cricket equipment then we would be thankful for the support.

BICC

Friends of Bishops Itchington Primary School:

Since last year's annual village meeting, we held our extremely successful Summer Fayre on 17th June 2023 and raised £2,584.30 we are extremely lucky that the majority of businesses from our village give donations or prizes for our raffle, and we are extremely grateful for their support for this event.

Our school year finished with several Frozen Friday's (selling ice cream) which are always welcomed by the children during the back end of the summer term.

We were also delighted that a group of mums from Year 4 joined together and hosted a very successful Swishing Party. This was a very well attended event that places sustainability at the centre of it's being and raised over £1,000 which we have "ring-fenced" to help reduce the cost of school trips given the current cost of living crisis.

Our Year 6 leavers (Class of 2023) were the first to benefit from a new partnership with Certnfase (a business from Fenny Compton) who helped provide our leavers clothing.

Over the course of the school year, we have been able to provide the school with:

Class set of glockenspiels.
Drumsticks and bucket drums,
A bucket drumming workshop,
A Stone Age workshop,
Adopted a turtle through WWF,



Supported various trips,
Class set of Thesaurus' for Year 4,
Sports kits for Key Stage 1,
Sports kits for Key Stage 2,
Class set of dictionaries for Year 5 and Year 6.

We all had a well-earned rest over the summer break and returned to school in September and held our Welcome back BBQ in the second week, it's always a popular event and one that we were blessed with sunshine and a dry evening.

The FoBIPS AGM was held 25 September 2023, with Donnamarie Davenport being re-elected as Chair and Danson Joseph being elected as treasurer. Unfortunately, the 2023/24 year sees us operating without a Vice-Chair and without a secretary – not ideal but I'm sure many other village organisations are struggling with the same things.

Our attentions then turned to the Christmas Fayre which was held on 2 December 2023 and £1,827.02 was raised, however costs for this event were higher than in previous years. We had the usual class stalls, games, café, disco dome, raffle, and our fabulous grotto (which took 4 people 6hrs to set up) together with a visit from Father Christmas (in his new suit).

The Christmas Disco followed the fayre and then it was time to turn our attentions to our own decorations and get our houses ready for the man in red to visit.

Fast forward to March where the children enjoyed choosing gifts for the Wonderful Women in their lives from our gift room and then on the Friday the mum's got a real break in the form of the Spring Disco!

Moving into the Summer Term we have a number of events planned within school, these include our Father's Day Gift Room, sports day, Frozen Fridays, Summer Disco and our amazing Summer Fayre.

Saturday 22 June 12-3pm – Summer Fayre – we would be delighted to welcome the village community to this event so please attend if you are able to and support the school. If there is anyone out there who would like to help and support the event, then please contact us via our email address below.

The FoBIPS team work extremely hard over the school year to provide fun and entertaining events that help raise vital funds for our school and we are extremely proud at what we have already raised for our school.

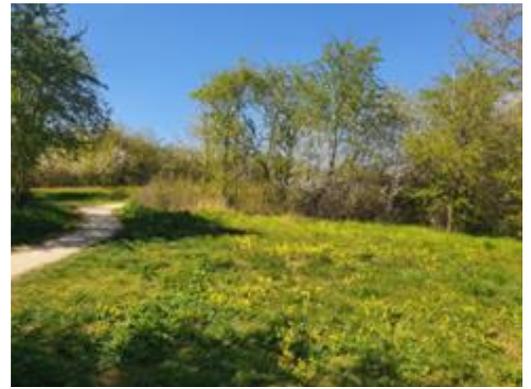
We are as always grateful for the support from both the school community and the businesses and residents of our village.

Donna Davenport - Chair of FoBIPS
Fobips@gmail.com

Friends of the Yellow Land & BING:

This group meets up every other Sunday morning for a couple of hours to manage two natural areas in the village – the Yellow Land and the mini orchard in the corner of the playing field. We have also been involved on a few occasions, helping in the Hidden Green in Old Road.

The Yellow Land is situated a short way down Works Lane and forms the entrance to the Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve. It is an area of limestone grassland and wildflowers, which supports a colony of small blue butterflies – a rarity in Warwickshire. The group works to maintain the area and prevent too much scrub regeneration, which would block out the sunlight required to allow the flowers and grasses to grow, supporting the butterflies and lots of other insects and bugs. There is a surfaced, circular path for people to walk round and enjoy the area. The wider nature reserve can be accessed from the Yellow Land.



The orchard is situated in the far corner of the village playing field. There are apple trees, pear trees, damsons in the far hedge, and blackberries growing wild. We have also planted a couple of hazels which we hope will in time produce some nuts to go with the fruit. The fruit trees should be about to burst into blossom and then hopefully bear fruit in the autumn for people to enjoy.

Our group has grown slightly again this year and now we are ten members. We also enjoyed have Freddie volunteering for his Duke of Edinburgh award. Our small friendly group meets every other Sunday morning at 10.30am and finishes around 12.30. Tools and instruction (if needed) are provided. Interested? Contact Pam on 07392 858894 for more information or to find out where the next meeting will be.



Reports from District Councillors and County Councillor.

District Councillors Report Bishop's Itchington, Fenny Compton and Napton Ward For the year ended 31st April 2024

It has been a year since we were elected as your District Councillors. It has been a very busy first year for us, and here are some of the highlights:

May 2023:

- Local elections on 4 May 2023,
- Administration formally handed over on 24 May 2023.

June 2023:

- Stratford on Avon District Council opens the process for applications for Infrastructure Projects through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and invites eligible local organisations to submit expressions of interest for the second round of funding allocation.

July 2023:

- Tom Heap, BBC Countryfile presenter, attends Napton's Eco Fair along with Nigel and Susan Juned,
- Cabinet agrees to re-introduce a Concessionary Parking Permit for state pension aged District residents.

August 2023:

- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spending Round for Stratford-on-Avon District is now open for applications for funding towards infrastructure projects and improvements.

September 2023:

- Cabinet agrees to support the designation of Lench Meadows as a Local Nature Reserve and be managed for wildlife for the long-term future.

October 2023:

- Planning Advisory Service Review takes place with the aim of improving the Council's planning service,
- Concessionary parking permit scheme for residents of state pension age goes live,
- Cabinet agrees the final list of projects to be funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). Thirty-seven community projects across the District are granted funding.

November 2023:

- Cabinet approves setting up a Community Climate Change Fund. An opportunity for parish councils, as well as properly constituted community and charity groups to apply for grant funding for green initiatives in their local community,
- Podback recycling scheme is launched.

December 2023:

- Full Council adopts a new Council Plan for 2023-2027. We aim to be recognised as a leader for supporting the health and wellbeing of our residents, protecting our environment, delivering sustainability, and innovation. The Council Plan may be found on the District Councils website by putting 'Council Plan' into the search box.

January 2024:

- The new administrations budget proposals come out for public consultation,
- Cabinet approves new medical and community facilities in Upper Lighthorne,
- Community Climate Change Fund goes live,

- Cabinet agrees to allocate Community Infrastructure Levy funds to five projects across the District. Fenny Compton Sports Pavilion and Playground project in our ward is one of the successful bids.

February 2024:

- The Council's budget is set with no cuts to services. This includes funds for the Rural Crime Advisers and funds to support the UBUS service. Funds have also been set aside for the District Council to investigate the use of waste vegetable oil in their refuse truck fleet, which can cut carbon emissions by up to ninety per cent,
- Stratford-On-Avon District Council's Rural Crime Advisers win a Neighbourhood Policing Award from Warwickshire Police,
- Stratford-On-Avon District Council expands online access to its meetings. All public meetings can be viewed as Council Meeting Webcasts on the District Council's website or as recordings on the YouTube channel.

March:

- Corporate Peer Challenge takes place with the aim of improving the Council's work,
- Residents in Stratford-On-Avon District are still the best recyclers in England, as the District Council reaches **5th in the top ten Councils for refuse, recycling and composting**,
- New Grounds Maintenance Contract for the District Council to commence on 1 April 2024.

Please remember that we are here as **your** District Councillors. If there is anything that you think we might be able to help with, please do get in touch.

Cllr Natalie Gist

Natalie.Gist@stratford-dc.gov.uk

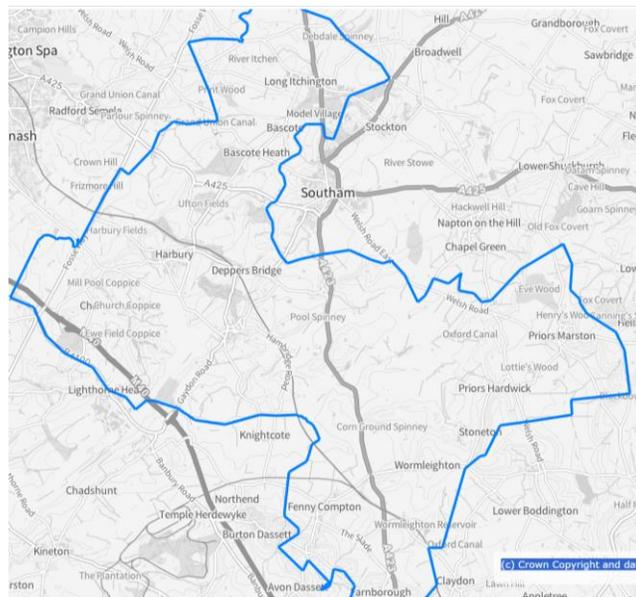
Cllr Nigel Rock

Nigel.Rock@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Warwickshire County Council - Feldon Division report

The Feldon Division covers an area stretching from Long Itchington, north of Southam, through Ufton, Harbury, Chesterton, Bishop's Itchington, Ladbroke, Fenny Compton, Farnborough, Wormleighton,

Priors Hardwick and Priors Marston and covers some 53 square miles (138 sq. kms) and has over 9,000 adult residents.



There have, unsurprisingly been a number of themes during the year that have been of concern to residents across the Division with probably the biggest issue being HS2 and the impact of its construction on residents, businesses, and the road network across the Division.

In particular, the closing of roads, with poor diversion route opportunities, has been particularly frustrating, along with some lorries not sticking to agreed access routes. Further the failure to control injurious weeds, particularly ragwort, has caused considerable concern to those with livestock businesses or equine yards close to land occupied by HS2.

Outside of HS2, the following have been of concern to residents:

- The volume and speed of traffic in villages and on our rural highways,
- The impact of new housing and the construction, and then residential, traffic from those sites on existing communities and transport infrastructure,
- It has been an unprecedented wet winter which has inundated roads and caused flooding in places where flooding had never been seen before. The flood risk management team at WCC has been looking at a number of sites along with the jetting teams who have been cleaning gullies across both Feldon and the wider Warwickshire road network,
- In addition, the wet weather, along with some early frosts, also led to a significant number of potholes across the entire WCC road network. There has also been concern about the state of roads immediately past the County boundaries, but regrettably WCC has no jurisdiction over roads in other Counties,
- The proposed reorganisation of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service and the impact of that on rural communities away from the major urban centres,
- The location and use of a number of former quarries across the District, and the licensing of activities on those sites,
- The adequacy of affordable housing provision,
- Changes to school admissions numbers, and,
- The care of those more vulnerable members of our community.

Regrettably, whilst WCC would like to be able to have the funding to address every resident's concerns, the budget pressures on the County Council means that it does have to prioritise in some areas.

The overall expenditure budget for 24-25 is £628 million which, less central Government grants of £241 million, leaves £387 million to be funded by taxpayers through Council tax. Certain of the services provided are demand led, one of which, Social Care and Support is the biggest item of expenditure within the Council's budget costing £225 million, being 58% of the overall net budget. So, for example, not every pothole can be filled on every road and the Council does not have the resources to introduce road safety measures in every village that wants them.

On the upside, the long awaited Harbury Lane crossroads improvements, a long-term accident blackspot, will be completed by the end of this month. Also, by Christmas, the sails on the Chesterton Windmill will have been reinstated and repairs made to the fabric of this listed monument.

On a personal note, I was elected Chairman of the County Council for the year 23-24 which has involved commitments across the entire County and in an executive role, I chair the Warwickshire Local Government Pension Scheme investment committee. The scheme looks after the pensions of some 57,000 LGPS members with some £2.9 billion of assets.

Councillor Chris Kettle
County Councillor



Record of Councillors' Attendance 2023/24

There was a total of 15 parish council meetings during the council year May 2023 to April 2024. These included 1 annual meeting, 12 were ordinary meetings and 2 extraordinary meetings.

Councillor	Annual Parish Council Meeting Attended	Number of Scheduled Meetings Attended	Number of Extraordinary Meetings Attended	Total Number of Meetings Attended	Overall Percentage Attended
Cllr Judith Christian- Carter Vice-Chairman (resigned May 2023)	1/1	1/1	N/A	2/2	100%
Cllr John Gates (resigned January 2024)	1/1	8/9	0/1	9/11	82%

Cllr Chris Kettle	1/1	12/12	2/2	15/15	100%
Cllr Norman Thomas	1/1	12/12	2/2	15/15	100%
Cllr Steve Tressler	1/1	12/12	0/2	13/15	87%
Cllr Simon Tagg-Wilkinson (joined August 2023)	N/A	7/9	0/2	7/11	64%
Cllr Adam Dugmore (joined October 2023)	N/A	6/7	2/2	8/9	89%
Cllr David Howatson (joined October 2023)	N/A	5/7	1/2	6/9	67%
Cllr Alistair Lamont (joined October 2023)	N/A	7/7	2/2	9/9	100%
Cllr Selena Ogden (joined October 2023)	N/A	5/7	1/2	6/9	67%
Cllr Kate Williams (joined October 2023, resigned February 2024)	N/A	2/5	2/2	4/7	57%
Cllr Amanda Colton (joined March 2024)	N/A	1/2	N/A	1/2	50%
Cllr Orlaith Horsman (joined March 2024)	N/A	2/2	N/A	2/2	100%

