

Bishop's Itchington
ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING
2025

Monday 28 April 2025



Welcome to the 2025 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
28 April 2025 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 29 April 2024
4. Parish Council Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024
5. Reports from Village Organisations
6. Reports from County and District Councillors
7. Questions and Answers Session
8. Close of Meeting



**Draft Minutes of Bishop's Itchington Annual Village Meeting
29 April 2024 at 7.30pm**

Present:

Cllr Chris Kettle (Chairman), Cllr Amanda Colton, Cllr Adam Dugmore, Cllr Alistair Lamont, Cllr Selena Ogden, Cllr Simon Tagg-Wilkinson, Cllr Norman Thomas and Cllr Steve Tressler

In attendance:

Karen Stevens (Parish Clerk)
15 Members of the public
Cllr Natalie Gist
Cllr Nigel Rock

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Kettle who welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies:

Cllr Horsman, Cllr Howatson, Donna Davenport (Friends of Bishops Itchington Primary School (FoBIPS)).

2. Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting 24 April 2023:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Annual Village meeting held on 24 April 2023 as a true and complete record of that meeting.

3. Bishop's Itchington Parish Council Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024:

Councillor Kettle (Chairman) stated that the parish council had had a busy year starting with the election in May. Several changes to the parish council occurred during the year with John Gates resigning as he was moving away. Kate Williams joined but subsequently resigned due to work commitments. We were sorry to have to say goodbye to them both. At the beginning of the year, Adam Dugmore and Judith Christian-Carter, who had both been on the parish council for quite some time stepped down. We are delighted to see we have got Adam back after a short sabbatical, but Judith has decided after many years on the Council that it was time to step down. We would like to record everybody's thanks to her for all her hard work over the best part of two decades.

Cllr Norman Thomas, who is now the vice chair, lead the major work that was undertaken creating the new play area. The feedback we have received has been extremely positive and I would like to thank Norman for the huge amount of work that he did. The only slight sadness was that it did not take long for someone to decide to vandalise part of it. We are looking to put in CCTV and are taking advice from the Community Safety Team at Stratford District Council (SDC).

Thank you to the Clerk, Karen Stevens, for yet another year of unstinted support to the parish council.

We have had a slight change this year in that instead of committees, we are going to try having one individual (Portfolio Holder) supported by the other councillors keeping tabs on various areas.

Biodiversity and Climate Change - Cllr Simon Tagg-Wilkinson:

All councils must have a policy for biodiversity. Previously, most biodiversity plans have been 'wish' lists, and these 'wish' lists need to be turned into actions so there has been a large programme nationally to do a biodiversity national audit to see where everything is, what the corridors are and how different places interact with one another. Recognising that there is an enormous amount of biodiversity lost they want to do something more positive. There is also a requirement coming in as of this month under planning resulting in if you submit a planning application you must demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity of 10%. What we do not have as a parish is a clear picture of where we are now, what different flora/fauna we have got, where they

are, what needs help and how these leaks into other areas of the county. He is therefore in conversation with the ecology department at Warwick and is pulling together lots of information so that we end up with a plan of action. He would like to get all the local groups involved and working together.

Cemetery and Churchyard – Cllr Selena Ogden:

She advised that she was very new to this. It is an area she would like to be involved in and realises she has got a lot to learn and will be relying on help and support from Val Powell (Cemetery Manager) and the village and will be looking at how to support families using the cemetery and churchyard. There are things that need to be assessed and sorted out in time to get the cemetery and churchyard to the standard it should be. It was confirmed that the spinney/woodland adjacent to the cemetery is part of the cemetery.

Finance - Cllr Chris Kettle:

We are very conscious that council taxes are not going down and therefore we are doing our utmost to ensure that when we set the precept in January each year, it is based on a very sound budget. Clearly, we must meet the obligations of the parish council and any unforeseen bills outside the council's control. We go through a very detailed budget exercise. Some items we can never be quite sure of i.e. VAT refund so when we do get a VAT refund it is a bonus. This year, interest on the accounts was higher as we had been holding the monies for the playground, but this money has been spent so interest received will drop. In terms of expenditure administration and grounds maintenance was slightly lower than anticipated but maintenance in the cemetery and churchyard was approximately £3,000 more. Most satisfactorily, the playground equipment we were within £200 of our overall investment for it. Every year we allocate £10,000 for community grants to allow groups in the village to apply for part funding for various things/activities. This year the overall result is we have done better than budget and this money will be carried forward and put aside for projects we know will require expenditure in the following year.

Planning – Cllr Adam Dugmore:

Seen about 24 applications during the year so not too busy but unfortunately there were two big applications, slightly contentious and with technical issues to be resolved. One of the main ones we have seen are the site of the old car sales that is to open as a Coop with the knock on from this is the existing store will close and be converted into private apartments. The other relatively large one that will result in some change in the village is that Orbit Housing Association has put in three applications to re-develop some of the social housing sites – Gaydon Road, Starbold Road and St Michaels Close. They are looking at the applications as a group as they would use one site to displace residents. Currently the one on Gaydon Road has been granted planning permission whilst the other two applications have been withdrawn to allow some modifications. With regards to the Gaydon Road site, the parish council did push back a little on it because of the environmental sustainability considerations as the applicant had gone for the bare minimum to meet building regulations – we pushed for some more as our Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) asks for more than the minimum. We have been a little frustrated at the way officers Stratford District Council interpreting parts of the NDP and are having ongoing discussions involving our district councillors. Since the NDP was agreed 13 months ago, we see on every application it is referred to in the decisions, so they are using it so the work that councillors put in over several years was worth it as it is being used in some capacity. He advised the public that anyone considering putting in an application should attend the parish council meeting where it is going to be discussed as it really helps as you will get three minutes in the public forum to put your case forward and give the application some context. Finally, thinking back to one of the Orbit applications, the parish council came in for criticism from members of the public about the public forum being restrictive and very limited. He therefore wanted to remind people that if you have got something you want to say about a planning application, write it on a piece of paper, drop an email, pick up the phone, you can get in touch with the clerk at any time and she will ensure the parish council gets the comments/information.

You do not have to wait for a parish council meeting if you have an objection or concern. If you have got a concern, it is also very useful if you do attend the meeting and tell us about it.

Play Area/Hardcourts – Cllr Norman Thomas:

You are aware of the play area project and can see on the expenditure sheet the investment the village has made in it so we are very precious in the way it is used and any damage caused. It is worth pointing out that damage is paid for out of the budget, not insurance so in theory, the village pay for any damage from the precept. In addition to the play area that has been completely refurbished, the other the hardcourts have been completely overhauled with the old surface being dug up and a new surface laid so that is a major improvement. The cricket team is in the process of being re-established, so they have put forward a proposal to renew the cricket wicket and this currently under review with the parish council. The installation of CCTV is being looked at.

Cllr's Steve Tressler, Alistair Lamont and Amanda Colton were introduced, and the meeting was advised that the other members of the parish council are David Howatson and Orlaith Horsman who had both sent their apologies.

4. Reports from Village Organisations

Bishop's Itching Carnival:

Selena Ogden said that the carnival had been a part of the village for several years but due to various reasons it had stopped. Brian and Selena made the decision to re-start the carnival so arrange a meeting. Following working with an amazing group of people and 16 weeks of planning we managed to bring it back last year and everyone had an amazing day.

This year we are planning a bigger and better event with more entertainment for the children. It will still be a walking procession, due to rules and regulations, weather permitting.

Carnival raffle tickets are now on sale. 50% of the money raised from the raffle tickets goes to the cancer charity Annie's Angels. Any raffle prizes would be more than welcome.

The Christmas event we had last year which was undertaken in conjunction with the church was so wonderful with the lantern possession so we will be doing a similar event this year

BISA Badminton:

Linda Hassall said that the report was in the paperwork. The badminton club is held in the Memorial Hall. There is a lady's session on Tuesday morning for all abilities. Tuesday nights are run by Steve and that is mixed session again for all abilities. Early Wednesday evenings are for children/young people followed by intermediate/advanced adults.

BIFC:

Pam Reason advised her report is in the papers for the meeting. A couple of updates are that the first team reached the finals of the Challenge Cup which they managed to win. The senior team has been managed by Tom Cooper for 11 years and this is his last season as manager, and this is the one cup that had eluded him. Tom will be very much missed. The reserves played in the Cancer Cup final last week and played at Leamington's ground. The reserves play in Division 3 and their opposition was Long Itchington who play in the Premier Division so there was quite a big gap and although they got off to a good start scoring the first goal they lost in the end.

The Saturday side did finish as champions of their league and should get promoted. The reserves played in the semi-final of the George Dutton Cup on Sunday but unfortunately lost on penalties. She would like to thank the Greaves Club for their sponsorship which helps pay for

insurance, first aid, fees etc and they are grateful to the parish council for allowing them to use the pavilion and pitches.

BISA:

The sports association is an umbrella organisation that tries to identify the need for sports and leisure facilities in the village and tries to provide these. BISA is in the lucky position BISA these days as the parish council took over the ownership and maintenance of the hard court, but BISA is responsible for the hiring them out and therefore get the money to reinvest in other things.

The courts are all free for villagers unless you want to book a specific time slot. They are used by a tennis group, five-a-side football group, walking netball, a cricket group and a netball team and some boys football teams from outside the village who use it for training as we do not have a boys' team in the village. BISA have again given some money to the school (region of £400) for various items of sports equipment. Also, about to part fund a scout leader to go on a hill walking leaders' course. Cricket group has expanded. Had a couple of new members this year but are always looking for new members/ideas and meet every couple of months unless there is something pressing.

WI:

Jane Thomas advised that they now have 48 members, and everything is going well with crafting, gardening, walking, netball, drama etc. Their darts team won its first game. The WI will have been going for 100 years next year so they will be having a party.

Memorial Hall:

In the absence of Carolyn Went, Kirsty Shakespeare advised that they are undertaking the process to apply for charitable status to help them access grants for works required to the building particularly the replacement of the hall floor. They are trying to get more support for managing the hall. Fundraising is still needed so they are still undertaking things like quizzes, bingo, film evenings, and are organising a murder mystery evening later in the year and are looking for other innovative ways to fund raise.

Cllr Steve Tessler added that the main challenge over the last 12 months and thanks to Karen Stevens as well, has been to get the charitable status over the line as it had fallen at getting the ownership/land registry sorted. There is a thriving use of the hall, and it amazes him at the number of different people who come in. There are some people using it from outside the village but predominantly it is used by local villagers. The key part of it is that it is all non-paid work so everyone who puts their time and effort in, which is admirable, is doing it for free. The team are very proud of their location and there are opportunities that they aim to continue investing into the property and one of the key areas is the floor.

Community Centre:

Amanda Colton advised that Orlaith Horsman has done a report detailing everything we have at the community centre. Amanada's involvement is mainly to do with the youth groups as herself and a small group of parent volunteers got together about a year ago and managed to re-start the younger children's youth club (ages 8 to 11). It is held once a month and has been well supported with nearly 50 children/young people attending each month. For a similar amount of time, they have been trying to get together a group of volunteers to do something for the older young people (from year 7 upwards to the age of 17). Although there are a number of sporting groups there is not a 'hang out' place for them, there is not a safe place for them to go and as they get to that older age and are wondering around so would like to open up the café area and welcome them in for a older youth club. Happy to say that the first meeting of the volunteers for

that older youth club is on 1 May with the first meeting of the older youth club being held on 24 May. They are raising funds for the older youth club on the back of opening the community centre on carnival day and later at the Christmas tree switch on. Has some volunteers organised for this but could always use more.

Cllr Chris Kettle congratulated Amanada as she has now become chair of the community group. It is also worth noting that Pete Wilson for all his work at the centre.

Cricket Club:

Mathew Horsman introduced himself and advised that he is also a member of BISA. The cricket club has been going for two years and meet on a Monday for training at the hard courts. They advertised for new members and now have over 21 members although they do not all come to training. So far, they have arranged 4 away friendlies including Wellesbourne, Long Itchington and Southam cricket clubs and is trying to arrange a few more. Looking for new players aged 12 upwards. Recently had a donation from the Co-op of £345.00 to buy equipment/kit. They are looking at getting funding/support to replace the artificial wicket and Warwickshire Cricket Board are visiting the grounds on 16 May. The goal for next year is to have home and away matches.

Friends of Bishops Itchington Primary School:

Donna Davenport stated that she has been on the FoBIPS for 9 years, eight of them as the Chair and her children are now migrating towards secondary education so is coming towards the end of the natural cycle within FoBIPS. She has put a lot in the report for those who are interested but one of the things she omitted to mention is that they have been really successful in finding volunteers in what they call a 'an hour here and there' group which is basically if you cannot sit in a group at a certain time but can do various things here and there i.e. wrap presents, buy father's day gifts or create a spreadsheet with teddy bear names on it etc, then we will absolutely use that support because what that does is take away the menial tasks her team have to do allowing them to focus on the bigger tasks i.e. risk assessments or organising inflatables and making sure all the safety elements are right. This has been successful. From this we hope to grow the team going forward and are looking potentially to put out a celebratory event to thank them all for their contributions. By the time she leaves she will have raised £40,000 for the school with her team. Without this funding the school would not have iPads, some of the laptops, some of the experiences and trips the children have been on, coding robots, sports kit etc. The school is appreciative for what FoBIPS, and this is her opportunity to thank every single business or village community member that supports them because we have huge amounts of support, our fairs run, and we see 250 adults and 250 children walk through the doors and support our school. Without the village community that supports and gets behind it we would not be able to achieve what we achieve so thank you.

Friends of the Yellow Land and BING (Bishops Itchington Nature Group):

Pam Reason advised that the group meets at 10.30am every other Sunday morning for a couple of hours and everything is provided except for drinks. There are currently around 10 members, but it is very much open to volunteers who come when they can. There are two sites, the orchard and the Yellow Land and it is hoped that everyone knows where the yellow Land is. The Yellow Land is a small parcel of land where the new path goes through to Bishops Hill and currently the cowslips over there are beautiful. The rest of the site is managed by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. We maintain the sites with the Yellow Land being important for the small blue butterfly – there are four rarities, the small blue, grizzled skipper, dingy skipper and brimstone and all are early butterflies so they should be around now, but the poor weather has delayed them. The orchard is apple and pears, and it is there for people to enjoy, not just the site but

also the fruit. We have occasionally work with young people undertaking their Duke of Edinburgh Award and people who want to undertake volunteering in the community. For those who do not know, the reason for it being called the Yellow Land is because when it was transferred to the parish council the boundary outline on the map was yellow, hence the name Yellow Land.

St Michaels Church:

Heather Boyd reported that they had started 2023 with a fantastic year celebrating with the village community the 150th anniversary of the current church building. They had a series of events throughout the year starting with a women's breakfast. The Passion Play at Easter, folk concert, murder mystery, Christmas tree competition and the lantern parade were all very successful. Yarn bombing involved a lot of people from outside the church and provided friendship groups. A tangible legacy of the year is a set of display boards paid for by the parish council which can be used by any village organisation.

The foodbank for Bishop's Itchington/Harbury/Fenny Compton is run by volunteers from the church as part of supporting the community. The foodbank has been busy and last year delivered 186 food parcels to families in the village and Harbury. The church has collections on a Thursday between 2.00pm and 3.00pm when people come to the church to collect their food parcels. If they cannot drive or are housebound, they will deliver to them if they need it. They are part of the Fosse Food Bank with all groups working together and have received some brilliant contributions. The pub has been collecting used cooking oil, and they use the money to buy goods for the foodbank, the Greaves Club at their Easter raffle raised £170 and the golf club gave them £200.

Crafty Cuppa:

Richard Cox advised that he represents the Crafty Cuppa which held on the last Friday of the month in the Memorial Hall between 10.00am and 11.30pm. They raise funds for the local air ambulance. Last month they gave them a cheque for £3,000 as the monies raised during the last year. The Crafty Cuppa has been running for 22 years. There are table sales, and they have regular sellers, most of it is craft items. They charge £5.00 per table, and this goes towards the fund raising. You can get drinks and cake and there are two raffles, one for a hamper and the other is for various prizes that have been donated.

Senior Residents Organisation:

The Senior Residents Organisation raises funds for senior residents of the village. They have two functions per month – the third Wednesday of the month there is Bingo at 8.00pm in the Greaves Club and on the third Thursday of the month they hold a coffee morning between 10.00am and 12.00noon again at the Greaves Club. Any money that comes in for Bingo we pay back in prizes. At the coffee morning they sell teas and coffees and there is always homemade cakes and biscuits available. We do charge for it but it is a donation which helps raise funds along with the raffle that is held. People can meet/make friends and have a general chit chat. The funds are used to subsidise trips and the Christmas meal.

Public Footpaths:

Gordan Smith advised that he was happy when he was informed that the parish council had taken an interest in public footpaths again. There are several outstanding issues with the public footpaths:

- Promised by Folletts and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust a hard footpath coming out opposite the cemetery. Several years ago, he had met with Karl Curtis to discuss the possible root of the path, but nothing had come from the meeting and no footpath had been created. There are two informal paths, but most people would not be able to use them
- One long outstanding footpath is from the top of Station Road directly across the fields into the southwest corner of the wildlife area. The landowner is not keen but there is legal application lodged with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) for it to be undertaken
- The long-established path from the bottom Works Lane parallel to the railway and comes out on Ladbroke Road has not been open for some time but was well used. This issue is still with WCC

He also advised that older people find stiles difficult to use and many are in poor condition. Consideration should be made to change stiles for gates giving better access for all.

Baby and Toddler Group:

This is not just for mums and babies/toddlers but also dads, grandparents and carers of young children up to the age of five. They have toys, craft activities, messy play, singing and have snacks as well. They meet in the Memorial Hall on Thursdays between 10.00am and 11.30am during term time. The cost is £2.00 per child or £1.00 for each additional sibling.

5. Reports from County & District Councillors:

Stratford District Council (SDC):

Cllrs Nigel Rock and Natalie Gist were introduced to the meeting.

Cllr Rock advised that their report had been circulated therefore would not go over it. Due to Boundary Commission Changes, a new ward was created that encompasses Bishop's Itchington and due to the size of the ward, there are now two councillors representing it and they are both here to help anyone they can do and are always available to speak. They work closely with the parish council and the Warwick County Council Councillor and will help anyone they can

Warwickshire County Council (WCC):

Councillor Chris Kettle is the WCC councillor for Feldon patch which incorporates Bishop's Itchington, and he has also been the Chairman of WCC this year which has made life quite a challenge as it includes the whole County. In the Feldon patch, he splits the role between two main issues – constituent issues and Nigel, Natalie and he work very closely in trying to resolve the issues. There are issues that the community have and need help with and that is their role as elected councillors outside the parish council. Some of the cases they come across are seriously challenging and the fact that they are happening within our communities is a big worry. Contact them if you need help and more importantly if you know somebody who needs help who should be talking to them as quite often people won't because they think we are too busy but the reason we stood for office and got elected is because we know we can help but we need to know, need people to talk to us.

The key areas that he often runs into include:

- potholes (in an independent review Warwickshire has the third best maintained roads in the country),
- speeding - every community has a perceived speed problem and want traffic calming measures, cameras etc,
- As a highways authority they do focus on where there is accident track record (i.e. Harbury lane crossroads),
- HS2 (the longest section of HS2 in any one councillor's patch in the country is Feldon). There are two companies one to the north of Southam and one to the south. There are major problems with road closures and the procedures used i.e. removing trees, changing from night road closures to complete road closures for weeks at a time etc. There just seems to be a complete reliance on the Act which enables them to do work, and they think this gives them the authority to do whatever they like regardless of the impact on the community. All councillors in the area have been working continuously since they started building it to try and keep the impact on communities to a minimum including an upcoming meeting with the Construction Commissioner Sir Mark Worthington who is the one person that the construction sub-contractors are fearful of and all the issues that have been raised will be raised
- Schools including admissions and school transport.

6. Close of Meeting:

Cllr Kettle thanked residents for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 21:15

Signed..... Chairman

Date.....



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

Firstly, I would like to welcome you all to the Bishops Itchington 2025 Annual Parish Meeting.

For those who have not attended before, although this meeting is organised by the Parish Council and the Chairman of the Parish Council acts as chairman, this is not a Council meeting. It is a meeting for

all village organisations to talk and explain what they do and how they contribute to life in the Parish, of which of course the Parish Council is one of many. I would therefore like to welcome all those village organisations participating tonight.

Together they make up the community that is Bishops Itchington, supporting the more senior citizens and the younger members of our community as well as those interested in activities, sporting or otherwise, in the village.

The Parish Council meets on the first Monday of every month and holds several other meetings every month as and when the pressure of work requires.

This year we have adopted a practice of having one member of the Parish Council to be responsible for one particular area of activity allowing that individual to focus on some of the regular and more complex work the Council must deal with including:

- Planning
- The Playing Field
- Biodiversity action plan
- Properties
- Finance
- Human resources,

The Parish Council continues to manage the village estate on behalf of parishioners and to engage with the two local authorities, Warwickshire County Council and Stratford District Council, on a wide range of issues from traffic and roads, flooding through to Planning. This year has seen a major challenge for the Parish as the District Council continues its development of the new local plan for the District.

I would like to thank our Clerk, Karen, who, as our senior employee, is responsible for the day to day running of the Council, and our other staff and the various contractors who you will see working around the village. Our Cemetery manager Val, has an important role to play both organising the various burials, with the families' funeral directors, along with the day to day upkeep of the cemetery. This is a challenging role and we are grateful to Val for her hard work.

I would also like to thank all members of the Parish Council for their hard work over the last year.

It is also time a time to say goodbye to our clerk Karen, who after five years is leaving, and is moving house to live in the North East. We wish her well for her move. We have also seen a number of Councillors retire. Being a parish councillor can be a significant commitment and I would like to thank those who have decided to step down for their contribution.

Christopher Kettle
Chairman



Bishop's Itchington Parish Council

Portfolio Holders Reviews of 2024 to 2025

Biodiversity/Climate Change:

In 2024 the PC engaged with the Parish at the Carnival hosting a stand on Biodiversity. Supporting material had been provided by the Hedge Hog Trust, RSPB and WWLT. Pamphlets were available for anyone who was interested to take home, and it was hoped that this would encourage wildlife gardening and care for flora and fauna in our Parish.

We also engaged with the school, meeting with the Head Mistress Jacky Sykes to learn about the school biodiversity activities and again to pass on leaflets from the various charities to encourage new projects. One local contractor also passed on a wildlife camera to the school to enable the children to film any wildlife in and around the school.

The Parish Council have supported the continued maintenance of the Yellow Land and Pam Reasons team of volunteers. A meeting with Pam was held to promote any further ideas and to communicate back to the Parish Council as and when support was needed.

Responding to the South Warwickshire Plan the Parish Council included significant biodiversity information as part of our attempt to save our local countryside.

The Parish Council has used Biodiversity considerations when reviewing local planning applications consistent with our Biodiversity Policy. This included a number of TPO tree felling notifications in the Parish.

There is still a job to map the Parish Council green areas and buildings including hedges to assess their condition and develop short term and longer-term maintenance plans, which can then be budgeted for so that the areas can be maintained, not allowed to get out of hand but also promote biodiversity and support habitats and exiting nature.

An exiting hedge behind Mandale Close was deemed unfit and in poor condition earlier in the year requiring its removal. However, in consultation with WWLT a new planting plan has been established shared with the local residents, who had voiced concern at the hedge's removal. The plan, now approved for tender will hopefully provide a better habitat and richer biodiversity environment for all to enjoy, with work starting in November 2025.

Cllr Simon Tagg-Wilkinson

Cemetery and Churchyard:

We would like to take this opportunity to share an update on the ongoing care and future plans for our village cemetery.

After completing much-needed remediation work on many of the headstones, we are now bringing in a trusted third-party specialist to carry out regular risk assessments. This will help us continue to ensure the safety and respectful upkeep of the resting place of our loved ones.

We are also mindful of the future and continue to explore options for creating additional space in the cemetery. This includes the possibility of acquiring further land, so that we can continue to provide a peaceful and dignified environment for years to come.

Over the Christmas period, we were pleased to open the chapel to give families a quiet space to visit and reflect. This was warmly received, and we hope to continue this in the future, providing comfort and a place for remembrance during special times of the year.

We are aware of ongoing drainage issues in certain areas, and we want to reassure you that the Council is actively exploring solutions. Our goal is to reduce the risk of future damage to both existing and future headstones, and to care for the cemetery environment as a whole.

We would also like to gently remind families to kindly follow the cemetery guidelines, particularly around decorations and the use of spikes. These rules are in place to help us maintain the safety and dignity of the space for everyone and assists with maintenance. We greatly appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

Finally, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Val Powell, our dedicated Cemetery Manager, to Karen Stevens, our Parish Clerk, and to the Friends of the Cemetery. Your hard work, care, and commitment are deeply appreciated by the entire community.

Cllr Alistair Lamont

Play Area/Hardcourts/Playing Field:

The now "not so new" children's playground continues to be very well used both by local residents, and visitors alike and it seems to be standing up to wear and tear quite well, although the rotating "Wehopper" had to be repaired in October under warranty and at no cost to BIPC.

More recently, it has been noted that some of the items have been subjected to aerosol paint graffiti which is disappointing.

The pathway running through the playground is not so good - it is suffering from erosion and in hindsight, the wrong specification was installed.

The annual safety inspection carried out in November presented no significant issues.

The fence separating the playing field from the neighbours in Ivy Villa is in a state of disrepair and children are, on occasions, trespassing into that property from the play area - a new secure fence is required.

The fence between the playing field and the adjacent field is also in a state of disrepair in places and needs to be fixed.

There is ongoing discussion from the recently formed cricket club about a new cricket wicket - they are reviewing options to replace the existing synthetic wicket.

Whilst there is still only one senior (Sunday) football team using the pitches, the Parish Council has been approached by Stockton Youth Football Club to seek permission to use pitch for their games.

The hard courts were resurfaced last year, and these continue to be well used by several different groups for tennis, netball and football.

A new working group has been established to manage a project for the renewal of the pavilion, the condition of which continues to deteriorate.

The playing field area regular grass cutting continues to be well carried out by the contractor.

The facility would benefit from a specific youth shelter located outside of the playground, and this project needs to be the next project to be discussed with the PC.

CCTV is another project for discussion, the playground is exposed without any security.

Cllr Norman Thomas

Human Resources (HR):

The Parish Council has two portfolio holders for Human Resources (HR) Orlaith Horsman and David Howatson.

The Parish Council has three employees:

Clerk to the Parish Council:

Karen Stevens is head of the council's administration and is also the responsible finance officer. Karen deals with all aspects of parish council business and can be contacted on **07450360453** or **01926 613902** or clerk@bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk.

Cemetery Manager:

Valerie Powell manages the cemetery on behalf of the parish council. Any enquiries re burials, interment of ashes or erection of headstones should be directed to Valerie on **0779 241 8642** or cemeterymanager@bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk.

Play Area Inspector:

Jules Kirton is our play area inspector. Jules carries out a weekly basic inspection of the play area and its equipment. He has completed the RoSPA certified routine playground inspection course. Members of the public can also help by reporting any damaged or broken equipment, fencing or furniture that they come across, to the parish council office on **01926 613902**.

We also employ a Grounds Maintenance team who are responsible for looking after all the public open spaces, verges and greens in the village, including the cemetery, churchyard and playing field. Our grounds maintenance contractor is:

Thomas Fox Landscaping & Maintenance

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of grounds maintenance, please [contact](#) the clerk on **01926 613902**.

Sadly, we will lose our Clerk, Karen, at the end of April 2025 although Karen may stay with us for a further short period whilst her replacement is identified. We wish Karen every happiness and success in this next chapter of her life.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Karen for all her hard work, commitment and support since joining the Parish Council in 2020. The job can be an isolated one with a great deal of responsibility and we are conscious that Karen goes over and above to meet the demands of her role. As a fairly new Councillor, Karen has helped me to understand the role and responsibility of a Parish Councillor and has guided me in accessing any training needed to undertake this role.

Karen manages all of the legal, Statutory, administrative and financial matters on a day-to-day basis and is advisor to the Parish Councillors in all things pertaining to Parish Council business.

Karen has been at the forefront of the recruitment drive to identify her replacement, and we are hopeful that as a result we will find a suitable candidate soon. The closing date for applications is the 20 April

therefore we should be able to update further at the Village meeting on the 28 April about whether this round of applications has found us a new Clerk or whether further efforts will be needed. In case we haven't found a suitable candidate I attach the job role details below and contact details for anyone who may be interested (see Appendix 1).

Once again, we thank you Karen and we wish you well.

We also have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor which we are keen to fill:

Councillor Vacancy:

Bishops Itchington Parish Council is seeking a passionate and dedicated individual to join us as a Parish Councillor. We currently have a vacant position and invite applications from residents who wish to make a difference in our community.

If you are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor, please contact the clerk via email clerk@bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk or telephone 07450360453

Cllr Orlaith Horsman

Finance:

Parish Council Annual Accounts Year Ending 31 March 2025

A summary of the annual income and expenditure, including monies set aside for future expenditure, for the year ended 31 March 2025, compared with the budget is set out below:

	Budget	Actual plus provisions	Difference
INCOME	£'s	£'s	£'s
Precept	110,000	110,000	-
VAT Refund	-	11,331	11,331
Interest	12,500	5,825	(6,675)
Other income	4,300	5,983	1,683
Total Income	126,800	133,139	6,339
EXPENDITURE			
Salaries Expenses& allowances	40,443	35,788	4,655
Administration	12,565	11,485	1,080
Grounds Maintenance	28,202	36,815	(8,613)
Cemetery & Churchyard	6,445	10,299	(3,854)
Playing Field	16,886	10,501	6,385
Grants	10,000	5,708	4,292
Other Expenditure	500	-	500
Parish Office	5,720	5,330	390
Total Expenditure	120,761	115,925	4,836
Difference	6,039	17,214	11,175

In 2024/5 we set our budget to spend £120,761 to be funded by income of £16,800, and the balance to be met by a precept of £110,000.

Income during the year was £6,339 higher than budgeted mainly due to higher VAT claims than anticipated. Expenditure, including monies set aside in the year towards future known costs, was £115,925, £4,836 less than budgeted. But within that expenditure, the Parish Council incurred significantly higher costs on tree and hedgerow works and memorial repairs in the cemetery. Other costs were lower than budgeted.

Work on each year's budget starts in November and so, setting the budget for the following year, when there are still three months of the previous year still to run does present challenges as we do not know at that stage what the outturn for the year is going to be.

This year's budget exercise resulted in the precept for 2025-26 being set at £112,500, which represents a band D charge of £93.58, compared to a charge in 2024-25 of £92.55 per band D house. This is an increase of 1.1%.

Cllr Christopher Kettle

Police Liaison:

The Parish Council having noted the escalating reports of Anti-Social Behaviour, car thefts and home burglaries in our community consulted with Natalie Gist and Nigel Rock District Counsellor's to determine how communication and liaison with the Local Police and Anti-Social Behaviour team could be improved.

There is already a process of quarterly liaison meetings facilitated by the Local Safer Neighbourhood team (SNT) and attended by local Parish and District Councillors, but Councillors were keen to foster a direct form of liaison and communication to specifically highlight Bishops Itchington's concerns.

A meeting therefore took place on the 1st of April 2025 to talk through the issues of concern. Prior to this Parish Councillors reached out to Community Members who had reported being victims of crime/witnesses to or who had general concerns about local protection issues to talk through their particular experiences and concerns.

From the meeting on 1 April, it was evident that there is a difference in reports discussed locally and those being formally reported to the Police. Following the meeting the local SNT team drafted a document for community publication detailing the methods of reporting to follow in any given circumstances and guidance on what to include in those reports (See Appendix 2 attached).

A process for businesses to formally report any concerns was also highlighted and PC 2272 Hannah Rankin Beat Manager and PC 6355 Naomi Sutton advised that they would visit local community businesses to advise of such. This information will also be available via the Parish Council website.

It is essential for formal reporting to take place so that appropriate and proportionate resources can be allocated to the area as needed although it is also clear that there are limitations on local Police resources.

There is evidence of a particular group of young people in the area causing a nuisance and, in some cases, cause for serious concern. It is essential that reporting takes place and where there is evidence of who is causing the concern names given - only then will there be sufficient evidence for the Police to act on the information. Please use the details below as a guide when deciding the best forms of communication.

The Parish Council would like to emphasise that whilst the actions of the young people are a cause for concern, they are also vulnerable young people who are likely to need additional support. Their vulnerabilities will only be suitably highlighted by consistent reporting on incidents known by the local community.

The local Safer Neighbourhood Team is committed to having a greater presence within the Community and would encourage Community members who have concerns to attend their local liaison opportunities. They intend to visit in a patrol car over the next few months and be present for some dedicated hours within all local villages. Our first will be on the 17th of April 2025 between 1pm and 3pm advised to be held in the Butchers Arms car park area.

They are also visiting our local School and meeting with staff and pupils to highlight their role and how to access their support. We anticipate that there will be further meetings and consultations.

Should members of the Community think that a community meeting with the Local Safer Neighbourhoods team would be beneficial please let us know via the Parish Council Office, Old Sorting Office, Chapel Street, CV47 2RB or clerk@bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk and efforts will be made to coordinate and facilitate such a meeting.

The Parish Council are also looking into the feasibility of having CCTV points within the Community that could be linked to Stratford Police's central CCTV system to assist in the identification and prosecution of any offenders committing crimes within Bishops Itchington.

Cllr Orlaith Horsman



Reports from Village Organisations

Bishops Itchington Men's Shed:

The sheds bee Apiary had an excellent year in 2024 producing over 160 jars. The honey was on sale in the village and sold out quickly. The wax collected during the extraction had been used by the Eco farm for locally produced products. The shed members continued to work on local and charitable projects with one of the members repaired a grass rake for the Yellow Land Group. Another member made three planters for the Women's Institute. In addition, several members have built and installed numerous bird nesting boxes in the local area. The shed looks forward to supporting the village and welcoming new members in 2025

Iveagh Carter
Chairman - Bishops Itchington Men's Shed

Bishops Itchington Football Club (BIFC):



We started this season with two teams – one Saturday and the other Sunday. The first team that had been so successful for several years with Tom Cooper at the helm decided not to continue. The Reserves took over but were allowed to remain in Division 2. After a shaky start, they have enjoyed a reasonably good season and are due to play in two cup finals.

The Saturday side started the season but after only a few games it was clear that there were problems. The Banbury League decided to promote us from Division 2 to the Premier Division despite our concerns that we did not have the players to compete at that level. Unfortunately, this proved to be the case, and we had to resign after just a few games.

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 were also lucky enough to be sponsored by local building business MKM, who bought us a new kit.

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

This year is the 100th anniversary of BIFC and we are hoping to have a special Presentation evening which will include a reunion of past players and managers. This will be on 12th July in the Greaves Club.

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. The cricket group has gone from strength to strength. After playing a few friendly games against local village teams last summer, they are looking forward to playing more this coming summer. They are also looking at replacing the worn-out wicket on the playing field with a new one so that they can play home games.

We are a small group and are always looking for new members. Sadly, we lost Judith this year and her hard work and expertise will be greatly missed. If anyone is interested in sport/leisure and would like to join us, please don't hesitate to contact us. We meet about once a month in the pub or the Greaves Club.

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, or queries about the courts.

A New Pavilion for Bishops Itchington

We are once again looking to raise the money for a new pavilion. Visitors to the playing field will be aware that the current building is no longer fit for purpose.

A small group, representing football, cricket and other interested parties and supported by the Parish Council are looking at designs and funding for a much less ambitious building than the last effort!

We have surveyed the residents about this project and have had good positive support and suggestions.

We are hoping to use local tradespeople in the project so that the building “belongs” to the whole village.

If you are interested in supporting this project in any way, please get in touch via the BISA email address.



NEW PAVILION PROJECT SURVEY

BISA are leading the formation of a new steering group to replace our old sports pavilion!

YOUR OPINION MATTERS!
The new pavilion will serve as a new asset for the village, one for all to enjoy! Thus, we would like your views to help us design the new pavilion with the village in mind.

SCAN THE QR CODE!
Simply scan the code to the left on your phone and fill in the form!

GET INVOLVED
If you want to help the new project email us on talktobisa@gmail.com

SCAN ME!

BISHOPS ITCHINGTON WI:



BIWI reached their Centenary this year, so naturally we had to have a party to celebrate! Members and guests were treated to a fabulous buffet followed by a disco, and a good time was had by all!

Over the past year we have been on several outings and theatre trips including Shrek the musical at the Spa Centre and a visit to Chester with the Warwickshire Federation.

A group of us braved the weather and took part in the Village Carnival dressed as Dolly Parton.

For International Women's Day we created banners on which we stitched inspirational quotes and phrases. These were displayed on the railings outside the Memorial Hall.

Our Garden Group is still maintaining the Village flower boxes and have added two new ones. One outside the Memorial Hall to replace the baskets and one on the corner of Old Road and Ladbroke Road.

We are a friendly bunch, and we welcome new members to come and join us.

Jane Thomas.
BIWI Secretary

Friends of Bishops Itchington Primary School:

Since last year's village meeting there have been a few changes within FOBIPS. The previous long-standing chair, Donnamarie Davenport, stood down to enjoy a well-earned 'retirement' from FOBIPS and Elizabeth Scott was elected as the new chair at the Annual General Meeting at the end of September. We would like to thank Donnamarie for all her hard work with FOBIPS, she has left some particularly big shoes to fill! Also joining the committee was a new Vice-Chair and Secretary, Doug Winkworth and Ellie Jones respectively and some new committee members who we warmly welcome.



Just prior to her stepping down, Donnamarie hosted her last Welcome BBQ at the school which was fortunately again blessed with good weather and proved to be as popular as ever for families associated with the Primary School.

Immediately following the AGM attentions quickly turned to the Christmas Disco where the children had a great time and raised more than £500. Attention moved swiftly on to the Christmas Fair which was held on a Friday for the first time. This was an extremely busy event that saw over 300 adults attend with many more children. There was lots of festive fun and games, some fabulous bakes and of course a visit from the big man himself in our Grotto where the children were able to share a story with Santa and receive a small gift. Thanks to our school family's generosity we raised more than £2,700.

January and February came with a slight lull in proceedings with only a Valentines Bake Sale being held. This was again well attended and raised £170.

As we exit March and hurtle towards Easter we are looking forward to once again putting our party shoes on and dancing the night away at the Easter Disco. The children have had the opportunity during March to buy some gifts for their Wonderful Women in our gift room celebrating Mother's Day, whilst a final amount isn't known, it looks like we have again raised a wonderful amount of money. We are now racing towards our Summer Fair on **21st June 2025**. We would like to share our day with the local community and would love for you all to join us. There will be plenty of fun and games, a raffle with some amazing prizes and food to keep you going.

The FOBIPS team are extremely grateful to all our contributors and supporters that are helping us raise money for a racing track around the school grounds which will provide excellent health and well-being opportunities for the pupils at the school.

Elizabeth Scott - Chair of FoBIPS
Fobips@gmail.com

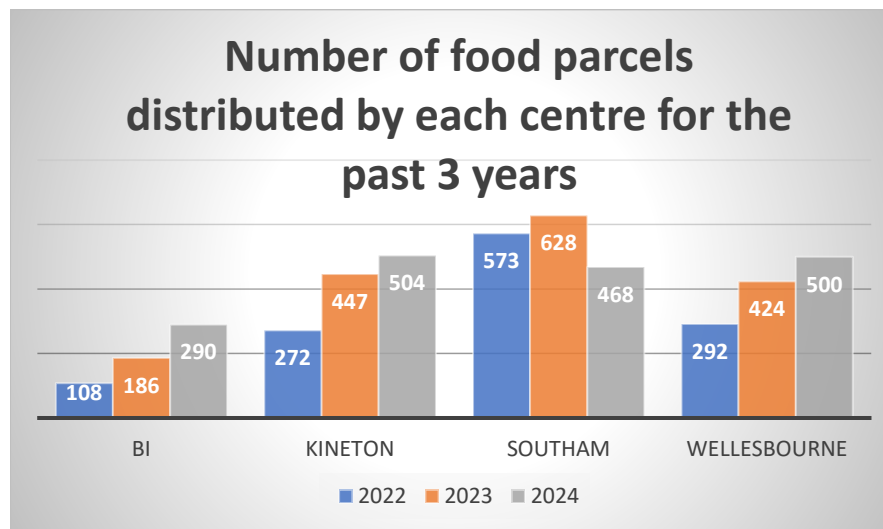
St Michael's Church:



Our Sunday worship is an important part of the life of our church. The first Sunday of the month is Quality Time which starts at 10:30. Always fun with a really good message for everyone not just the children. Our Family Services with children's activities are on the 2nd to 4th Sundays with Communion on the 4th Sunday all start at 10:30. The 9.30am communion service is on the 2nd Sunday of the month for those who like the quiet contemplative service. The Senior Residents Service is on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 2:30 where you can enjoy tea, cake and a chat.

The On-line Sunday services that started when we could not meet in church continue and can be found on YouTube or you can email Martin Green if you want the weekly link emailed to you.

The foodbank for Bishop's Itchington, Harbury and Fenny Compton is run by volunteers from the church as part of supporting our community. The food bank has been busy again, on average we are giving food parcels to 3 or 4 families a week. Demand for help is still increasing as you can see from the chart below.



The Foodbank is mainly a collection service with deliveries for emergencies and if people are unable to collect their parcel. The services are as follows:

- ❖ Monday afternoon/evening (to suit the volunteer and client) if a delivery is needed
- ❖ Thursday 14:00 – 15:00 collection of food parcels in the church hall

We provided Christmas goody bags to 8 families who are entitled to free school meals or are families in hardship, which included selection boxes, Christmas crackers and other goodies for the children and some Christmas food for the whole family. We will be running a similar scheme in the summer holidays, which we hope will have a bigger take up, to provide goodies that you would take with you for a day out or a picnic

Trussel Trust has now rebranded and is now just called Trussell.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the foodbank or would like more information, please contact Heather at bishops@fosse.foodbank.org.uk.

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. Freddie has returned to continue volunteering for his Duke of Edinburgh silver 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 31 April 2025

Another busy year throughout the Ward and the District. We have included some highlights, which we hope will be of interest to you. Further detail and information about all may be found on the District Council's website:

www.stratford.gov.uk

April 2024

New Open Space Planning Guidance Adopted

In April, Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Full Council formally adopted its revised Open Space Supplementary Planning Document. Under the new policy, all public open space, as part of new developments, will now be adopted by either the local Town/Parish Council or by the District Council. This was in response to the growing amount of public open space provided with new developments and concerns raised by residents



about:

- Charges levied by the private management companies appointed by the developers to maintain the public open space which are not always made transparent at the time of purchase, can change every year and are unlimited.
- The quality of the maintenance work carried out. Also, where a Parish or Town Council decides not to take ownership of public open space, the District Council would generally take ownership of the land, with responsibility for ongoing maintenance.

The option of passing maintenance responsibilities onto private management companies will no longer be included in Section 106 agreements. More information may be found here: [Open Space SPD | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)

May 2024

CCTV upgrade

SDC's Cabinet approves grant funding of £200,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to carry out vital work to upgrade CCTV infrastructure, software and equipment across the District. CCTV covers Stratford and the market towns such as Southam. From April 2023 to May 2024, SDC's CCTV team assisted Warwickshire Police in stopping over 91 suspected drink and drug drivers leading to arrest and prosecution.

Community Climate Change Fund Phase 1

The successful projects from Phase 1 are announced and we were delighted to see two projects in the ward – in Napton and Shotteswell – included.

June 2024

D-Day Landings Commemoration

On 6 June there were many acts of commemoration across the District to remember the eightieth anniversary of the D-Day Landings with hundreds of beacons lit across the UK and the Commonwealth.

In 1944, Allied forces mounted the largest amphibious invasion the world had ever witnessed. Operation Overlord, D-Day, saw over 5,000 ships and landing crafts set down more than 150,000 troops on five Normandy beaches in an action that would bring about the liberation of north-west Europe from Nazi occupation.

250th Anniversary of Oxford Canal

Nigel joined environmental broadcaster Tom Heap and about 50 local residents at Napton locks to celebrate the anniversary on 15 June. An exhibition of the history of the canal assembled by a local resident was shown. James Brindley's canal winds its way through a good part of our Ward.



July 2024

General Election

A general election was held on Thursday 4 July 2024.

Public Safety - Operation Talkative

SDC supported a new policing initiative called Operation Talkative to encourage reporting of knife carrying. If you have information or concerns about someone carrying a knife, please report it to the police by going to www.warwickshire.police.uk/report or call 101 and quote Operation Talkative. More information is here: [Operation Talkative Knife Crime initiative launched | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#) Natalie and Nigel attended an event promoting the Community Safety Partnership at the Avon Dasset Show (right)



Trees for Farmers

Applications opened for the free trees for farmers initiative again.

August 2024

South Warwickshire Local Plan

SDC and WDC's Joint Cabinet Committee endorsed a study by the Advisory Group, which is chaired by Nigel, on the number of dwellings to be delivered to meet the area's future housing needs in the next version of the emerging Local Plan for South Warwickshire. (Later, at the end of 2024 the government increased the requirement under the 'standard method' to a new figure of 2188 homes per year for south Warwickshire.)

September 2024

Climate Assembly

SDC holds its first Climate Assembly event to promote community engagement with action for climate and nature across the District, including schools, to provide a springboard for more action and to showcase local best practice.

Customer Access Terminal at Southam Library

The terminal is reintroduced for residents in our part of the District to enable them to resolve queries with Customer Services without the need to travel to SDC's offices.

Community Safety

SDC supports and funds new virtual reality to help educate young people on the realities of carrying a knife. The project is being rolled out in schools across the District.

October 2024

Delivering Local Needs/Local Choice Rural Housing

The Cabinet agreed to continue the existing approach to deliver homes for local people in rural areas with the Rural Housing Enabler working with partners to enable local communities to deliver Local Needs/Local Choice rural housing schemes.

Winter Fuel Payments

SDC's Leader, Cllr Susan Juned, wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer about the Government's decision on winter fuel payments



November 2024

Armed Forces Covenant Pledge

SDC's Cabinet approved the District Council's Armed Forces Covenant Pledge and Cllr Juned attended the WCC Covenant signing ceremony. District Councillor Dom Skinner (seen here at Galanos House right) is the Council's Armed Forces Champion. Dom is an RAF Reserve Officer. More information about the pledge may be found here: [Armed Forces Covenant | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)



December 2024

HS2

Nigel attended a series of meetings about the closures and diversions around Priors Hardwick and where councillors and MPs discussed and debated the condition and suitability of local roads to accept the traffic diversions proposed by HS2 and contractors.



Devolution and Local Government Review

On 16 December 2024, the government published the 'English Devolution White Paper' identifying the Government's intended approach to the devolution of powers from Westminster to more local "*Strategic Authorities*."

The White Paper was clear that to achieve government objectives this will also require Local Government Review. This review would result in the abolition of the remaining two-tier local government (County and District) across the country and establishing unitary government in their place (plus parish and town councils in our area).

January 2025

South Warwickshire Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation

The public consultation for the South Warwickshire Local Plan opened on 10 January. We replied to the consultation and provided our response to all parish councils within the ward. If you would like to see a copy of our response, please do let us know. Further information about the South Warwickshire Local Plan may be found here:

www.southwarwickshire.org.uk

Launch of the Parish Forum

On Thursday 30 January the District Council launched the Parish Forum, chaired by Natalie who is the Portfolio Holder for Law & Governance. The meeting was held on Teams and sixty-six Town and Parish Chairs and Clerks attended from across the District to discuss Devolution and Local Government Review, the newly created Parish Liaison Officer role at the District Council and the South Warwickshire Local Plan. The next meeting is on Thursday 26 June.

Community Climate Change Fund – Phase 2 opens

Following the success of Phase 1 of the Community Climate Change Fund, we were delighted to see two successful projects in our ward from Napton Parish Council and Shotteswell Village Hall. The new energy-saving lights at Napton sports ground (right) are reported to have made good financial savings as well. Phase 2 was launched with £55,863 available for green projects.



February 2025

Council Tax

Stratford-on-Avon District Councillor's set the district element of the Council Tax. The amount residents will be asked to pay for a Band D property is £169.12, an increase of £5. This is an increase of 3.1%, which for an average home represents just an additional 42p per month for the District Council next year.

This means that all the services provided by the District Council cost £3.25 a week for a Band D household. This contributes to meeting the cost of providing a wide range of services including recycling and waste collection, planning, street cleaning, housing, housing benefits, leisure services and children's play areas. Stratford-on-Avon remains a low-taxing authority, 18th lowest out of 164 district councils across the country in 2024/25.

Anyone who thinks they could be struggling to pay their Council Tax is encouraged to contact the District Council as soon as possible by calling **01789 260990** or email **revenues@stratford-dc.gov.uk**, where the team will be able to advise what help is available.

Budget

Following Full Council approval on 24 February, a provision was made within the 2025/26 budget to fund several items. This includes the following:

- £30,000 for Women's Aid Domestic Violence project support, training, community awareness and work with partners to ensure the availability of their services within the district.
- £50,000 Trees for Parish Councils scheme.
- £50,000 for a Business Conference, to stimulate the local economy, increase networking opportunities, showcase local talent, innovation and promote education and training for local businesses.
- £80,000 to fund a screening programme in partnership with the Graham Fulford Charitable Trust (GFCT) which focuses on prostate cancer awareness and early detection. *The dates for the screening are on the back page of your Council Tax booklet and we encourage residents to book onto a session.*
- £100,000 to support Cycle Schemes aimed at promoting sustainable transportation.

Thank you to all residents for their help, support and kindness over the past year. Please feel free to contact us at any time if we may be of assistance to you.

Best wishes

Cllr Nigel Rock

nigel.rock@stratford-dc.gov.uk

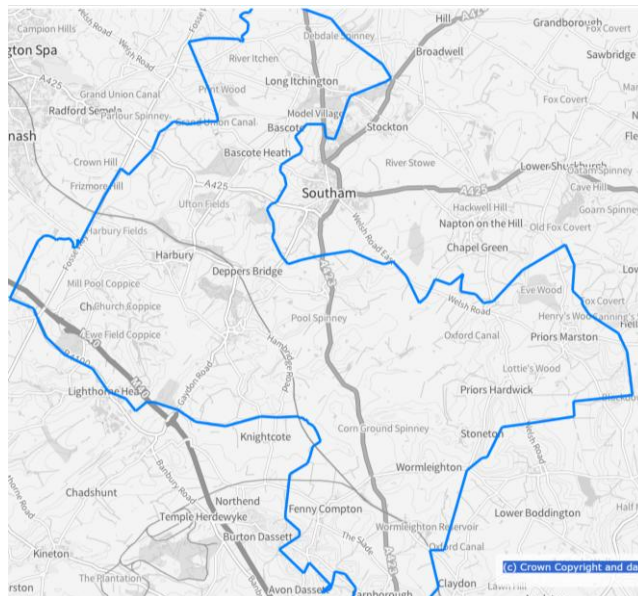
Cllr Natalie Gist

natalie.gist@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Warwickshire County Council - Feldon Division report

For the year ended 31 April 2025

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.



The County Council is the largest of the three Councils supporting residents in Warwickshire and is budgeting this year, 2025-26, to spend £420 million. The most significant area of expenditure for WCC is on adult social care, budgeted at £250 million, followed by expenditure supporting Children and Families at £115 million. This sum excludes expenditure on education, mainstream and supporting those with special needs, which although paid for by the County Council is funded by the Government. Regrettably government funding for special needs support is much lower than WCC is currently spending, with the shortfall in 2024-25 alone being in the region of £48 million. This issue must be resolved because clearly the scale of expenditure is beyond the means of Warwickshire and other education authorities.

It does mean that out of the overall budget, only £55 million, net of government grants, is available to meet the budget of other service areas. This includes Warwickshire Fire and Rescue, the Environment and Waste, Roads and Highways, Climate change and health care.

Given the financial constraints, WCC has been looking across all departments for better ways of delivering those services and has identified savings of over £21 million without cutting services for the coming year.

On a more local level, during the last year, WCC have finally delivered the much-needed traffic lights on the Harbury Lane / Fosse way junction, paid for, not by residents, but by the developers of the

Lighthorne Heath site. The project took longer than expected, but now completed, the crossroads are much safer. This month we have seen the return of the sails on the Chesterton Windmill. Both projects took up a lot of my time working with officers and contractors to try to speed up the delivery of both projects.

One of the biggest complaints I have had has been about flooding and potholes.

I have funded from my Highways budget, working with the local WCC surveyor, the clearance of several blocked roadside gulleys in villages across the Feldon Division. There have also been several specific flood projects in villages where I have been working with Parish Councils, residents and the WCC Flood Risk Management Team to try to reduce flooding particularly on homes at risk.

I have also used my budget to improve pavements and road edges although there always more to do.

From my Councillor grant fund of £8,000, I have supported work in several villages providing funding community led schemes.

Trying to minimise the impact on local residents of the HS2 works has been a continuous challenge, with two constructors, BBV and EKFB, in my division impacting most villages in some way or another. Some have been successful, but regrettably not all but hopefully now work on the track in this area is well under way, further disruption will be reduced.

Less publicly, but of equal importance, I have supported several families with their challenges over schooling. It is so important that all our children are given access to the education they need, regardless of the challenges they face.

On top of my Division responsibilities, I chair the WCC Local Government Pension Scheme investment committee ensuring that the scheme delivers the returns necessary to provide the pensions for the 58,000 Warwickshire members of the scheme. I am also the County representative on the regional Local Access Panel.

Regards

Councillor Christopher Kettle
County Councillor



Record of Councillors' Attendance 2024/25

There was a total of 14 parish council meetings during the council year May 2024 to April 2025. These included 1 annual meeting, 11 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 Amanda Colton (Resigned December 2024)	1/1	3/7	1/1	5/9	55%
Cllr Adam Dugmore	1/1	11/11	1/2	13/14	93%
Cllr Orlaith Horsman	1/1	8/11	2/2	11/14	79%
Cllr David Howatson	1/1	4/11	1/2	6/14	43%
Cllr Christopher Kettle (Chairman)	1/1	10/11	2/2	13/14	93%
Cllr Alistair Lamont	1/1	6/11	2/2	9/14	64%
Cllr Selena Ogden (Resigned November 2024)	0/1	0/6	0/1	6/9	0%
Cllr Simon Tagg-Wilkinson	1/1	10/11	1/2	12/14	86%
Cllr Jane Thomas (joined February 2025)	N/A	3/3	N/A	3/3	100%
Cllr Norman Thomas (Vice Chair)	1/1	10/11	2/2	13/14	93%
Cllr Steve Tressler	1/1	11/11	1/2	13/14	93%



APPENDIX 1

CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER VACANCY

Salary within grade LC2

(SCP 26 – 32 - £36,124 - £41,511 p.a. pro-rata)

Part-time (21 hours per week) – Office based

If you have a genuine interest in helping our forward thinking and energetic Council develop and deliver timely, quality and innovative services to the local community, this post is ideal.

You will ensure that all legal, statutory, financial and other governing provisions relating to the Council are observed, all Council meetings are properly administered and decisions effectively implemented whilst developing healthy working partnerships with key local and regional bodies.

Suitably qualified (ideally with or be willing to obtain CiLCA – the Certificate in Local Council Administration), highly motivated, enthusiastic and community focused, you will bring sound leadership, staff management, administrative, communication, IT, financial and organisational skills and be flexible in approach and able to meet deadlines.

We offer excellent nationally based terms and conditions of employment for this post which may involve working evenings and weekends.

Closing date for applications: 11.50pm on 20 April 2025 (This date will be extended should there be no suitable candidates or the interview process has not identified a suitable Clerk).

For further information see vacancies at:

<https://bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk/council/vacancies.aspx>



APPENDIX 2

Dear Residents,

We all want our neighbourhood to be a safe and welcoming place, and reporting anti-social behaviour (ASB) plays a crucial role in achieving that. While social media platforms like Facebook can be useful

for sharing concerns, they are **not** an official reporting tool. To ensure issues are properly addressed, it's important to report them through the correct channels.

How to Report Anti-Social Behaviour:

✓ To the Police:

- Call 101 for non-emergency ASB (e.g., vandalism, persistent noise, public disturbances).
- Call 999 in an emergency (if a crime is in progress or there is an immediate danger).
- Report online via Warwickshire Police - [Report | Warwickshire Police](#)

Local Authorities:

The Council and the Police work in partnership and share relevant information when a coordinated response is needed.

Content of your report:

- Date
- Time
- Location
- Descriptions/Details of offenders if known
- Vehicle details, make, model, colour, registration (If seen)

What NOT to Include in Your Report

When reporting ASB, it's important to provide clear, factual, and relevant information. Avoid:

✗ Vague descriptions – Be specific about what happened, where, and when. Instead of saying, "Someone was acting suspicious," describe their actions.

✗ Unverified accusations – Only report what you have witnessed or have evidence of. Speculation can lead to false reports.

✗ Personal disputes – If an issue is a private disagreement rather than ASB, consider mediation services or speaking to your local council.

✗ Social media posts as a substitute for reporting – Posting on Facebook may raise awareness, but it does not officially log the issue for investigation.

✗ Incidents that "might" happen – Only report actual occurrences not what you think could happen.
Example: Instead of saying "A group of teenagers might cause trouble later" report, "At 8:00pm, a group of teenagers were throwing bottles in the park and shouting at passersby."

Why Official Reporting Matters:

We've noticed that some residents post incidents on Facebook or inform their Parish Councillors but don't report them to the authorities. While discussing concerns is valuable, without an official report, the police and council cannot take action. Reporting ensures:

- ☒ The issue is logged and investigated properly.
- ☒ The authorities can identify patterns and take preventative action.
- ☒ Resources are allocated effectively to tackle ASB in our area.

We encourage everyone to use the correct reporting channels while also supporting each other as a community. If you witness or experience anti-social behaviour, please report it directly to the appropriate authorities.

Thank you for helping keep the community safe.

Southam Safer Neighbourhood Team

Kind regards

Hannah



PC 2272 Hannah Rankin

Beat Manager Southam Safer Neighbourhood Team

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www.warwickshire.police.uk

