



I am pleased to report that Berryfields Parish Council has had a very successful year working for our ever-growing community. The past year has included much planning, negotiations and many changes to the Parish Council itself. A copy of this report will be available on the Berryfields Parish Council web site at www.berryfieldspc.org

During the past year, the Parish Council has built on the work undertaken in previous years, planning and creating new facilities for the village, as well as providing various activities and fundraising events. The Parish office provides the central point of contact, offering advice, assistance and management of the parish for all. We are always delighted to meet residents and to hear from you.

We were sorry to lose Duncan Satterly as our Chairman, along with David Williamson, James Wilks and Wendy Phillimore who had served on the Parish Council from the early beginnings. Their contribution to the Parish was immense and under Duncan's leadership, we all successfully created community events and other exciting plans for the parish. Their input and enthusiasm in the Parish Council will be greatly missed.

We have welcomed Councillors Monique Foster and Councillors Ashley Waite who were co-opted to the Council, bolstering the team with their own experiences. Our current vacancies for Parish Councillor's are being advertised and this will be followed by Co-option, if we receive permission to do so from Electoral Services. If you are interested in local and community issues and would like to be considered for the role Parish Councillor, please contact our Parish Clerk.

Parish Council meetings are held in the Community Rooms on the third Wednesday of each month (except August and December) and everyone is welcome. This is your opportunity to ask questions, raise issues and meet your councillors. (Our annual parish meeting for 2019 took place on Thursday 2nd May).

Planning matters

While we are not the responsible Planning Authority, the PC does receive applications as a 'statutory consultee'. During this year our Parish office has worked with Planning Officers at the District Council, applicants and householders to ensure the Parish Council provides feedback on all applications. Whilst the majority of Berryfields development was agreed under the MDA (Major Development Area) plan, there are always amendments to the original plan, which we evaluate and comment on.

The Parish Council has applied for planning permission for the Roman Park development project and is awaiting the final decision. Plans have been drawn, following public consultation in 2016 and once permission is received, we will start construction. To meet the requirements of the Village Hall, we will be organising a Working Group including Parishioners and Councillors to confirm the final details of the Village Hall. Thanks to the persistent work of the Parish Clerk and her team, we have been awarded a £500,000 grant from Aylesbury Vale District Council New Homes Bonus to assist with the project with many more applications being processed. We have also recently received £76,200 from Bucks County Council for Early Years provision for

a dedicated building to offer Berryfields residents this very much needed facility, close to commuter routes and without the need to cross town in the morning rush hour.

Recreational Areas

We have suffered considerable vandalism during the year under review to our public areas. This is of major concern to the Parish Council as it has a direct impact on the availability of the facilities for the Parishioners with the increasing costs shared by the whole community via the Parish Precept (Council Tax). Further to much consultation and site visits to view active systems, the Parish Council has installed a CCTV mast with ANPR capability at Berryfields Green. There are of two fixed cameras and one PTZ rotating camera with a 270° rotation and 200m range, even at night. The system will be monitored and is seen to be best solution by Thames Valley Police.

Under current plans, Berryfields will have a total of 13 play areas, many of which includes accessible equipment. There are also 200 plus acres of public land for all to use and enjoy. As the number of parks and play areas increase, so does the responsibility of upkeep. To ensure we are able to effectively manage and support all aspects, including Health & Safety, we have trained 3 people to certificated RPII standards. This will ensure that all play areas and park equipment is safe for our children. However, should you observe any issues when visiting the parks, please contact us immediately at parks@berryfieldspc.org

Our new skate park beside Martin Dalby Way has been named after Daryl Hewitt. Daryl was a keen skateboarder whose family has given permission for the park to be named in his memory. It is hoped that an official opening event will be held. A big thank you to the Consortium for this very well thought out and kind gesture.

Litter picking

The Parish Council supported the Great British Spring Clean campaign on the 22nd March. A huge thank you for all those that helped on the day and for those that made it all happen. If everyone picked up their litter, or placed it in bins, we would save money and resources for more interesting things and also make Berryfields a more pleasant and comfortable place to live.

We have been impressed by the number of children and adults alike that are frequently picking litter in their own time. A big thank you to you all.

Dog waste

As always, dealing with dog waste has taken up much time and is an area of ever-increasing expenditure in Berryfields. I am pleased to confirm that the Parish Council has been working with the developers on this issue, resulting in our team at the Parish Council office asking the Parishioners where they consider additional bins are required. We had an excellent response, however, some sites requested could not be used as they were

not Berryfields land or were located on the highway. The additional waste bins are now being installed and should all be in the agreed positions in the next few months.

Berryfields appears to have a record number of resident dogs and we ask, once again, that you pick up and put it in one of the many bins provided, or simply - just take it home. Don't allow your dog to foul gardens – this is particularly important with open plan design. There are many young children in Berryfields, dog waste is a hazardous by product as well as being very unpleasant. The same applies to farmland, if using footpaths do not stray from the route and keep your dog on a lead at all times.

Allotments

The allotments are finally taking shape, with all sheds and fencing in place and the plots mainly in full use. The hedging planted around the outside of the allotments has suffered some damage with many of the whips needing replacement, however, we are planting new hedges, not removing them!

The provision of water to the allotments has been a challenge and has been overcome so far by the use of water bowsers. Heart of Bucks Community Foundation has kindly approved a grant which has enabled the Parish Council to provide free water butts for each allotment. This combined effort has provided the much-needed water for the allotmenters, however, a permanent solution before July 2019. With grant funding, we are to install two solar powered pumping stations, providing free water for the allotments. This is a fantastic result as it is environmentally friendly and virtually free of charge.

Roman Park and the Village Hall

The Parish Council is delighted to have received the grant of £500,000 from AVDC's New Homes Bonus. As the fundraising continues, we hope to obtain grants from other bodies to allow us to deliver the project sooner rather than later. We are also investigating the option of launching a crowdfunding site to raise money for our new tennis courts that will be located to the rear of the new village hall.

During the last year, we encountered major delays to the project as we were required to undertake an archaeological dig. This additional work was directed by Bucks County Council's Archaeologist at Parish Council cost and has resulted in the hall's location having to be moved to avoid any area of potential interest. No specific finds were made, however, ongoing discussions are still taking place to finalise the plans in relation to the archaeological interests and will result in the additional cost of a watching brief at the point when the footings are being excavated for the village hall and other structures in the park.

Taylor Wimpey have gifted a temporary building which will be moved to Roman Park, adjacent to the permanent village hall site and will enable us to have a temporary community meeting place for general use until the main hall complex can be completed. This will make a real difference and offer everyone a much-needed affordable facility for meetings, parties, clubs, groups, classes and other community events. The Parish Council also intends to have an office within the building to act as a hub and administration centre for the

Parish Council staff. The Early Years provision will be met by a separate building on site as a permanent facility and will provide income for the Parish Council for future years.

Green Ridge Academy

The second brand-new school opened to all for the new academic year in September, moving into their newly completed building over the summer holiday period. The occupation of the new premises resulted in a busy summer for the staff as they moved everything from the temporary building over to the new site. Green Ridge successfully recruited over 20 new staff and brought in over 120 new children from the end of the summer to the beginning of the autumn term. It is reported that children, parents and staff are delighted with the new facilities, which include a dance studio, Design Technology/Cookery room and extensive outdoor facilities.

Finance and Governance

To enable BPC to carry out its work and to ensure we have sufficient reserves to meet unexpected expenditure, the Parish Council resolved to increase its Parish Precept to £138,000 for next year, equating to £62.72 for the year or £5.22 per month for an average Band D property.

Our accounts are audited by both Internal and External Auditors and must meet very stringent governance requirements. The accounts are sent for audit during April each year and the official period for the Exercise of Electors' Rights (where parishioners can request sight of the accounts and associated records of the PC) will be published on our website, noticeboards and social media during June. All payments and transactions made by the Parish Council are recorded, reported monthly at the meeting within our minutes and our further supported by audit and governance statements that are published on our website.

All the Parish Council's activities are transparent and as such, will answer any queries or questions at any time. All you have to do is contact the Parish Clerk on 01296 331816 or clerk@berryfieldsp.org.

As Berryfields continues to grow, there have been and will be significant growth in the responsibilities of the Parish Council over the coming months and years. We remain determined to work hard, ensuring the best value for money for all services provided. There is an expectation in Berryfields of a very high standard of service, which the Parish Council's team strives to uphold.

Policing and Crime

Berryfields is served by the Aylesbury North Policing Team and comprises of an Inspector, a Sergeant, two Constables and two PCSO's. This team is responsible not only for policing Berryfields, but also Weedon, Buckingham Park, Elmhurst and Watermead.

The policing team occasionally attends Parish Council meetings, sometimes the Tuesday morning Coffee Stop in the community rooms and are keen to talk to local residents when patrolling in Berryfields. As always, please report all crimes and concerns to 101 or 999 if a crime is taking place. The Police do not monitor

Facebook, so please do not use. Your actions are key to ensuring Berryfields remains a safe place to live and enjoy.

Speeding continues to be an issue around Berryfields. Councillors James Inch and Monique Foster have been assiduous in the continued deployment of our Sentinel speed camera which records speeds and vehicle details. This information is subsequently passed to the Police for appropriate action when an offence occurs. Please drive carefully in Berryfields, we don't want any more accidents.

Parking is an ongoing problem within the Berryfields community. With the parking restrictions and yellow lines added to the adjacent areas outside the Academy and Green Ridge, inconsiderate drivers are still parking in the restricted areas. This is not only illegal, but it is dangerous for our children and parents in the community. The yellow lines have been added as parishioners campaigned for them, let's make sure that they work!

Events

Berryfest, held in July last year was a great success, although it was very hard work with the organisation and time devoted to planning and running the event. It has been decided not to hold it this year because it is anticipated that construction access for the Village Hall will prevent the use of Roman Park but it is planned for it to be back next year. Good news, the funfair will be here for all to enjoy in July.

Father Christmas visited Berryfields in his float before Christmas, along with his elves and other volunteers led by Cllr Simon Carter. Generous donations for the village hall fund were collected along the way, raising an amazing £600. This year's plans for Santa's visits are already in hand and will be a change from the last two years. This year, he will visit parks at published times, allowing local families to bring their children along to see Santa and maybe get some gifts for the children. Depending on sponsorship, we hope to provide refreshments and mince pies for the adults as well.

Thanks

First of all, I would like to express my thanks to the Parish Councillors that sacrifice many hours of their personal time each month, with one objective, to support the residents of Berryfields. We are in the early stages of setting up working groups to involve not only Councillors, but also residents to help with things such as events. The idea of the working group is to come up with ideas for community events, village hall fundraising and planning ahead. This is an exciting opportunity for any resident that would like to be involved in improving the lifestyle and leisure events in Berryfields.

Secondly, I would like to thank Mrs. Sue Severn our Parish Clerk and her team for all their hard work. With the numerous challenges that we have faced over the last year, ranging from issues with developers, vandalism, planning permission and CCTV projects, the team has done very well to keep on top of budgets and on track with business as usual.

The 'silent soldiers of support' include Simon Lloyd who has volunteered countless hours of his time to typeset Berryfields News and ensure it looks its best, a very difficult task. Simon's work is appreciated and we hope that a fresh new look can be achieved this year with a digital edition and a simpler, more newsletter format which will allow us to let everyone know news and give information to residents more quickly.

In a parish such as ours the selection of and close working relationship with contractors is key to success.

Dave Lucas: Dave has helped with everything from ground and equipment repairs to graffiti removal, the allotments and much more. Dave and his team are always able and willing, often at short notice, to assist, not to mention also volunteering by helping at events.

Helpful Hirings Ltd: The for the various events last year, the equipment hire provided by Helpful Hirings Ltd was second to none. Always on time and never failed to support our many requests.

RTM Landscapes: RTM Landscapes have been responsible for creating our allotments and are currently working to improve the ground and grassland at Roman Park. They will also be working with us on the landscaping at the Roman Park.

Marcus Young Landscapes: Due to a major theft of equipment, Marcus Young Landscapes has had to cancel all works for Berryfields Parish Council. They did much work for us and looked after our playgrounds at Berryfields Green and Marston Brook and Noble Crescent as well as carrying out frequent litter picks and emptying bins.

Let's all hope that we have a fantastic 2019/20 and look forward to the plans and challenges that lie ahead.

Thank you all.

Simon Carter
Chairman
Berryfields Parish Council