

**Draft Minutes of the Marsworth Annual Parish Meeting held on  
Monday 3 April 2023 in Millennium Hall, Marsworth at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Cllrs R Kennedy (RK) (Chair), R Brown (RB), D Cornwall (DC), C King (CK), G Monks (GM), S Smith (SGS) and K Thomasson (KT) and Clerk to Parish Caroline Smith

**Apologies:** None

**Others Present:** Buckinghamshire Councillors Derek Town and Chris Poll  
Dale Canfield, Area Operations Manager, CRT  
and 11 members of the public

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 April 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**Chairman's Report, Councillor Bob Kennedy**

Welcome to this Annual Parish Meeting (APM).

It is a statutory responsibility of every Parish Council to hold an open meeting every year for all Parishioners and organisations which operate within the Parish to allow views to be expressed, questions asked and answered, and inform other Parishioners as to what is going on. It is not a Parish Council meeting, that will follow on after this meeting and you are all welcome to attend if you wish.

Our council welcomed 3 new councillors, Christine King, Keith Thomasson and Steve Smith replacing John Woodruffe, Hayley Chalmers and Dave Brown.

The key Planning matters over the past year have been:

An application by Ainscough Strategic Land to build c320 houses on Marsworth Airfield (south site) thus creating a 'new village'. We mounted a strong campaign of opposition, objecting as a council on numerous grounds. We also mobilised village support through the distribution of a flyer to all houses encouraging objection, and as a result over 200 objections were lodged with the Planners. Ainscough withdrew their application, but their website signals their intention to re-apply. Using the argument that the site is brownfield gives them the opportunity in the event that Bucks County fails to deliver its housing targets laid down by government, and we shall continue to press Bucks to keep on top of this.

The recently announced Special Area of Conservation (SAC) around Chiltern Beechwoods has caused delay to planning approvals, since Bucks has yet no policy for mitigating the damage caused by new development within 12.7km of the woods. This has prevented approval of the second White Lion application to be turned into 2 dwellings, a situation further clouded by the passing of John Keen.

The application for changing the Anglers Retreat into housing, which we opposed, has been withdrawn.

The redevelopment of Bulbourne Yard is now complete and we look forward to its full occupation.

Underenforcement of Planning Restrictions at the south Airfield site continues although we regularly complain but the planning authorities seem powerless to stop flagrant breaches of the rules.

There is a major 1400 housing development going to appeal in neighbouring Tring which we have opposed on the grounds of insufficient infrastructure. We hope the Planning Inspector agrees with us.

The new Freight strategy for our area which should reduce HGV traffic along Lower Icknield Way is now progressing, we expect to see new signage advising truck drivers of the 7.5 ton limit shortly.

Our key achievements have been:

-Obtaining further funding support for the Food Bank working with our local Community Board and Helping Hands.

We introduced a new Speed Indicator Device (Smiley Face) in an effort to keep drivers below the limit on the Icknield Way. Having run a comparative speed check on the before and after effects I am pleased to say that 10% fewer drivers exceeded 30mph than before the sign was put up. However around 7 vehicles an hour still exceed 35mph and we are therefore supporting the set-up of a Community Speedwatch group in the village in coming weeks.

We have arranged maintenance of the footpath alongside the Icknield Way to Pitstone to keep it clear, and will continue to do so.

We are beginning a programme to replace all our street lights with more energy efficient bulbs

We are pleased to report the village again had a record Bonfire Night on our Recreation Ground, and the Steam Rally used it for parking in June which also allowed it to enjoy record attendances.

We are supporting the establishment of a community garden which will hopefully conclude by summertime.

### **100 Club – Dick Brake, 100 Club Organiser**

The 100 Club is run through the Village Hall Committee for the benefit and upkeep of the Hall. Collections will take place this summer for the new year. The running of the 100 Club is being passed to Stephanie Hurley, and will again be an annual membership, running September to August. The monthly draw now takes place at the Hall Committee Meeting.

If for some unknown reason you're not in the 100 club! You can join anytime.

Thanks to everyone who has supported Lynda and me over the last few years of running the Club.

### **Millennium Hall, Dick Brake, Chair**

The past year has seen the Hall decorated and low energy lights fitted to reduce costs. The main user is Marsworth Pre-School, and other bookings by smaller associations. In this last year we have lost our Chair person, John Kearsley, and Dick Brake has been voted into the position, John Kelly has joined us as Treasurer, we now have eight on the Committee but would appreciate younger villagers joining the Committee to help run and maintain the Hall. My thanks to the Committee for all the work they do.

### **Canal and River Trust**

A warm welcome was extended to Dale Canfield, Area Operations Manager – Grand Union South.

Dale as Area Ops Manger is responsible for the daily running of the canal from Rickmansworth to Iron Trunk (MK). His team ensure the water levels are correct, maintain locks, manage fly tipping and does some light repair works. He may not be able to answer regarding strategic business responses. MPC sent Dale some questions (as below) from our residents.

We sent him some questions (as below) from our residents.

Is he aware of the anti-social behaviour that occurs in Startops Car Park, day and night – drug dealing. *Dale is moored nearby so he'll monitor it, but it is a police issue, not a CRT issue.*

Why are the banks of the reservoir mowed regularly in the wild flower growing season? We were given the answer from CRT previously that it is so the integrity of the banks can be observed. Surely leaving a couple of months a year will not be a serious risk of collapse given how long the reservoirs have been there. We all know the importance of pollen for bees and other insects. It would also save CRT money not to be continuously mowing. CRT is risk averse since the issues at Toddbrook Reservoir in Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire. *Mowing takes place regularly to preserve the integrity of the banks.*

What was the purpose of the stone steps and metal hand rails on Wilstone Reservoir? We were told by the workman it was for anyone who fell in to get out easily! They are all on same side of reservoir and not that far apart, so don't think that can be right. It just encourages people to go into the water. *The stone steps were installed in case anyone fell in, similar to Startops.*

What is CRT doing to discourage/stop use of the reservoirs as a lido in hot weather – swimming, remote controlled boats, dinghies. Current signage is ineffective, small and not enforced. *CRT we will challenge this behaviour if we see it .... However that's a challenge as we don't always have staff on site .*

What was the purpose of the wooden rail on the side of Startops Reservoir, just down from the road that runs between Startops and Tringford Reservoir? Surely not to stop people falling in as not elsewhere along the banks of the reservoir. *Safety issues.*

We often see illegal fishing, not least lure fishing. What is being done to stop this? *CRT will challenge people.*

Why is CRT still intent on removing key habitat from the reservoirs. The Tring Reservoirs are an SSSI, the value to wildlife is embedded in this designation but it seems to have been totally ignored. I understand the original clearances were to allow observation of the banks in response to the potential dam failure up north but the clearances at that time were excessive and they continue today with tree felling (not just Ash trees!) grass cutting and scrub clearance. *CRT is risk averse since the issues in Whaley Bridge; and it is to allow easy sight of the banks.*

When the habitat destruction was carried out in the name of HSE why was there no stakeholder engagement. The reservoirs are important to a number of stakeholders: Tring Anglers, Marsworth Parish Council, Marsworth

Residents, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Canal Boat residents and Ramblers Associations to name but a few. Some notification may have been given to Tring Anglers but no discussion or engagement was held to investigate limiting the damage, challenging the decisions or explaining the actions.  
*CRT did liaise with Herts & Middx Wildlife Trust.*

Why has CRT decided to charge small charities £100 – from next year - specifically for permission for the local fun run which covers use of part of the public footway? It starts at Marsworth Rec and ends at All Saints Church, Marsworth. *CRT is also a charity and the administration of requests is a cost to the charity.*

We have an issue with the fly tipping area just by the Red Lion Bridge in Marsworth. I contacted both CRT and TfB as there was no longer any room within the brick housing for the biffa bins with the mattresses and furniture that had been placed in there. All items were too big for them to be from the boats. The area was cleared, but the biffa bins haven't returned back to the housing which has led to more rubbish being placed within the bricked area. Katrina at the Buckinghamshire Community Board was talking about making the surrounding area more nature positive and may thus stop fly-tippers. I also think putting the biffa bins back would stop some of it.  
*Dale looking into this and arranging clearance and for the Biffa bins to be put back into the brick housing.*

#### **Badminton Club – Margaret Bonham**

The Badminton Club at Marsworth has not met for at least 3 years and is not likely to reform. There seems to be no interest in the village to restart a badminton group, which is a pity, with a lovely hall and facilities.

#### **The Bridge Club, Betty Longhurst**

Marsworth Bridge Club has yet to resume its monthly sessions after the COVID pandemic shutdown. Considerable uncertainty still remains whether there will be sufficient support in the near future to make the resumption of the Club's activities worthwhile.

#### **All Saints Church – John White, Church Warden**

##### **Churchwardens' Report for All Saints Church in the Parish of Marsworth for the year 2022.**

The year commenced in January 2022 with the continuing vacancy for a vicar. However, during January the appointment of James Grainger-Smith took place, but he was unable to take up the post until the 12th. July 2022 due to personal commitments. The church continued to run without a priest and with only one churchwarden up to the middle of July 2022 when James joined us. The Rev. Roger Hale continued to support us consistently from January 2021 for which John and the church were most grateful. We also had support over this period from Barbara de Butts, Canon David Holloway and Ian Ogilvie and their input was much appreciated. Following the A.P.C.M. on 15th. May Richard Cooper was elected to return as churchwarden to be officially sworn in at a later date.

Church attendance at the regular Sunday services averaged nineteen, with special services, Easter, Harvest, and the Christmas services averaging around sixty-five.

Marsworth Church of England Infants School also held various services. During this period there were two funerals, but no weddings or baptisms.

In November 2022 The Polish community held their Annual All Souls Day Service around the graves of their loved ones who had lived here during the 1940's and 1950s, many of whom are buried in our churchyard.

Finally I, John, would like to thank all those who helped me through this exacting time and especially I would like to thank Ken Longhurst for all his helpful guidance and advice so freely given during this difficult period when I was on my own.

##### **Fabric and Churchyard**

The first event was the arrival of Storm Franklyn which seriously damaged one of the elm trees in the churchyard to the extent that a large branch fell on the shed causing some damage which resulted in a successful insurance claim. Following the clearance of the fallen branches the tree was found to be in a dangerous condition and was completely felled and cleared shortly after the first damage.

During May 2022 it was decided to effect major repairs to the church clock which had not been working for some time. Many villagers had already enquired as to when the clock would be back in action, so it was agreed that the work was to be put in hand, and an appeal was raised which brought in some money towards the cost of the repairs. The clock is regularly wound by Richard Booth, the Tower Captain, and comments have been received as to how good it is to have the chimes working again.

Other items of repair were the stripping and retiling of the Lytchgate Roof, the levelling and repointing of the church path between the Lytchgate and the Porch. Loose stones to the font plinth were rebbed and pointed. The costs of these items were covered by a bequest specifically for matters relating to maintenance and repair of church fabric, from a former member of the church.

The maintenance of the grass and hedges was looked after by volunteers organised by Gavin Merryless.

At this point I, John, would like to express my gratitude and thanks to Jim Sheils whose unstinting work in the churchyard is so invaluable.

The cleanliness and appearance of the interior of the church continues to be maintained, with the church always looking so cared for and thanks must go to Elsie Beesley who organises a dedicated team of cleaners. Thanks also to the brass polishers and flower arrangers who add to bringing about a welcoming feeling to those coming into All Saints Church, Marsworth.

### **Fund Raising during 2022.**

Before I report on our fund raising events, I would like to mention the Ukrainian Appeal that Gill launched on the 8th.March 2022 following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. All Saints Church became the collection point for any donations of clothes, toys, sanitary and medical supplies, cosmetics, whatever the public could spare or considered suitable. The response across the village was incredible, and over the next three days the car was loaded up daily and the contents taken to the distribution centre in Pitstone. Between the 8th and 11th. of March an estimated 60 to 80 large sacks were delivered to Pitstone for onward transportation to Northampton and then on to Poland.

Our own fund raising events began on 8th May, 2022 with the now well known Fun Run supported across counties, and by nearby clubs. Village support was excellent with supporters joining together in All Saints churchyard to welcome back the competitors and to partake in a choice of cakes and drinks. The event raised £1,896.00.

On 4th June we held a plant sale with stalls in the churchyard and refreshments served from within the church. The flow of customers was more than encouraging and the sale proved to be well worth all the time and effort it took to produce such a variety of stock for sale. Once again Canon David Holloway acted as "man in charge of the cash" and some interesting, variable charges were made if a price tag had come adrift! Everyone seemed to be very happy with their purchases and consequently, and much to our relief, we were left with only a small amount of stock which lingered over the following few days with passers by calling in to make last minute purchases. Our final takings amounted to £875.00 - a worthwhile amount.

All Saints church arranged with Marsworth W.I. that the Institute would run the refreshment tent this year (2022) at the local Steam Rally to be held on 19th.June. The W.I. President, Chris King, had agreed to take on the responsibility of running this event, along with help from the church and W.I. members. Chris had a great team of supporters and helpers on a day which is always long and onerous with much preparation both beforehand and afterwards.

As predicted the Rally was, as always, well attended, with a constant flow of customers for refreshments starting well before the scheduled opening time, with stall holders wanting teas and coffees, and serving continuing well into the late afternoon. The running of the refreshment tent makes a massive financial input for All Saints church and in 2022 raised £1,326.00. The church is so grateful for all those kind bakers and helpers who donated their time towards making the event so successful, and special thanks to Chris for taking on this taxing role.

On 14th October we held our Harvest Supper Evening in the Millennium Hall, Marsworth. This is never intended to be a fund-raising event, but nevertheless All Saints Church always seems to make a considerable profit after deduction of expenses. A three-course supper with a choice of main course and a selection of desserts was served at a very acceptable charge. The hall was decorated on an autumnal theme and seating was available for those wishing to join in from across the Benefice and village. We also held a raffle. Thanks were given to the cooks who kindly produced such lovely dishes and to the helpers during the evening whose services were invaluable. £365.00 was raised for church funds on this occasion.

A Quiz Night followed on 12th. November. Again, this was a well-attended fund raising event, and will be reported more fully elsewhere.

For the second time A Living Advent Calendar display took place across the village. There were 24 windows on display and all participants enjoyed putting their crafty talents into practice. The displays were admired by all and raised almost £200.00 for church funds.

Church Floodlighting ran from the 1st. December 2022 until the end of January 2023. Public demand for this is so well supported hence the extension of floodlighting onto the end of January. There have been many comments on how lovely it was to see the church lit up from quite a distance away. The flood lighting of the church raised £810.00.

### **Marsworth Charity – Matthew Carter, Chairman**

The Charity Trustees have had one meeting during the last 12 months. An annual report is submitted each year to The Charity Commission in accordance with Charity regulations.

Our objectives are to apply the income of the Charity for such charitable purposes for the general benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish of Marsworth as the Trustees think fit. We included an article in the Newsletter but we have not had any requests. We agreed to support the Church clock fund if the fundraising falls short of the required amount. We have agreed with the Parish Council to work together if a project is identified that the Charity can assist with.

In the mean time we continue to receive our income from our farm tenant and our capital fund gradually grows. We will have to find a new Trustee to represent the Church to replace John White who is retiring from being Church Warden. We will be approaching the new vicar.

### **Marsworth Food Bank, Richard Cooper**

The Marsworth Food Bank is in good shape and is now delivering to 13 people every week, which is over double the number being assisted this time last year. Three of these are Ukrainian refugees, two of whom arrived last summer and one arrived in February 2023. We are currently also helping a family with two young children, who are trying to get back on their feet. The council are moving them to Aston Clinton but this is taking a long time to arrange.

The Food Bank has received two major grants from Buckinghamshire Council via Marsworth Parish Council in 2022; £1,860 from the Community Board in May and £2,722 from Helping Hand in August. A further grant of £2,676 was received by All Saints Church directly from Helping Hand in early 2023 to fund the Food Bank until the end of March 2023. A wonderful donation of £1,000 was given by the Trustees of the Steam Rally along with a further substantial donation of £500 from a private individual. All financial donations and payments are administered by All Saints Church who provide governance for the Food Bank, two members of the Food Bank team are members of All Saints PCC, one a Church Warden and the other is the Treasurer.

Additional donations have been received throughout the year all of which have enabled us to keep solvent. There have also been regular donations left at both the box in the lych gate and at Karibu, Vicarage Gardens. These include regular donations of both dog and cat food as well as packets of dried pasta, rice and breakfast cereals and tins of just about everything that is useful including a bottle of champagne.

The Food Bank team are immensely grateful to Peter Dean and Noble Foods for their generosity in giving us several dozen eggs every week. Also P. Mead & Son Farm Shop for their wonderfully kind weekly gift of fruit and vegetables; and also to King's Butchers of Wendover for offering a generous discount on their meat.

The team work very well together and fewer meetings have been required now it is all running smoothly. During the summer we will be organising another village collection as our reserves are running lower than they have been and this will enable us to be more generous to our recipients with cupboard items.

I would like to thank the Parish Council and particularly the Parish Clerk for their input and hard work in assisting in the successful applications for funding from Buckinghamshire Council.

### **Marsworth News**

The newsletter has had another good year, though with a major set-back with the decision by Elaine Standen to relinquish the role as main editor. In this role she was an important team member and invaluable in seeking out a variety of items for inclusion, especially using social media.

After numerous attempts to get a replacement, it appeared that there was no-one prepared to take on her role. I, as layout editor, have carried on to ensure that the newsletter should remain as an important means of communication within the Marsworth community. I have been able to maintain much of the content with the help of Caroline, the parish clerk, with a regular supply of items, mostly from Buckinghamshire Council. Also latterly I have been receiving an assortment of small items from Kate Andrew who supplies items for inclusion in the Bucks Herald.

I also have the support of Richard Dinnadge, who edits the regular contributions each month, while our small team of proof-readers is invaluable in ensuring that the newsletter maintains its high standard of presentation. Another important member of the team is Annie Sanden, as Advertising Manager and Treasurer – a role which she fulfils very efficiently. The Newsletter currently has over 20 advertisers and this number stays more or less the same throughout all of the monthly issues. Financially therefore the income generated from the advertisers easily covers the printing costs.

Looking to the future, I will carry on for some time yet, but will eventually have to give it up. What happens then remains to be seen. The job is a demanding though rewarding one, but one which will have to be filled if we are to continue to have a village newsletter.

### **Thames Valley Police - Police Community Support Officer 9953 Megan Dean**

Between the 1st of March 2022 and the 28th of March 2023, there were 40 incidents reported to the Police in Marsworth. Below is a breakdown of the incidents of note:

Burglaries – 1, Theft – 6, Theft From Motor Vehicle – 2, Community Anti-Social Behaviour – 1

### **Marsworth Pre-School, Tracey Kennedy, Chairperson**

It has been another very busy year for Marsworth Pre-School, full of positive changes and new challenges to improve the already high standards that the Pre-School has achieved. Wendy, Lisa, Tracey, Zoe, Nikki and Jane make up a strong, enthusiastic, dynamic and caring team, who support the Pre-School children through fun & educational play. The staff are required to attend a variety of courses to keep up to date and to develop new skills

– and all our risk assessments and policies have recently been reviewed and updated, in line with recommendations from the Pre-School Learning Alliance, Early Years and Ofsted.

Pre-School is supported by an enthusiastic committee who meet regularly to discuss Pre-School issues and events – in November we held our AGM during which the 2023 Pre-School committee was elected, many of whom are new to the committee.

Currently we have 27 children attending Pre-School from: Marsworth, Tring, Wilstone, Aston Clinton, Long Marston, Ivinghoe, Cheddington, Pitstone and Chorleywood! Summer term is looking good so far but we will have 14 children leaving this July. Please visit our website [www.marsworthpreschool.org.uk](http://www.marsworthpreschool.org.uk) which contains useful information such as: term dates, fundraising news, etc

Fundraising continues to be an important part of the Pre-School committee's role. Fundraising proceeds allow us to purchase new and up-to-date toys and equipment, which brings much excitement for the children. The children took part in a Sponsored Bounce last week. I'm still awaiting final numbers but raised over £500! We have a Quiz night planned for Saturday 22nd April. Only one table available! The Pre-School are very grateful to all those in the village and the local community who support our fundraising on a regular basis.

### **Marsworth C of E Infant School - Giles Monks on behalf of Mrs Angela Polatci, Headteacher**

#### **Personnel:**

I continue to work four days a week with 2 office days and two teaching days. Mrs Scott continues to work alongside me in KS1 and works three full days. Mrs Karen Holdsworth works three full days in EYFS along side Mrs Emma Williams who works 2 days a week. Miss Lisa Driscoll has now been with us a year and has settled into her role as office manager and bursar.

We currently have 34 children on roll and welcome a new child to our Nursery after Easter.

#### **Group Membership:**

The school continues to be a member of the following groups:

- Network Learning Community of Schools (Liaison Group)
- Federation of Small Schools Group
- SSSP Small School Sports Partnership
- Side by side group from the Local Authority for both EYFS and KS1
- SEN liaison support group
- PIP group for EYFS

#### **Refurbishment/Maintenance**

Our biggest project so far this year was the resurfacing of the playground, carpark and front area to the school. We have further projects lined up for the Summer and Autumn terms such as line painting and canopy repairs

#### **Curriculum.**

We implement a broad and balanced curriculum. Swimming continues for all children on a weekly basis and is thoroughly enjoyed by the children. We have had visits from the canal and river trust who have delivered some water safety assemblies. In the Autumn term we have had a visitor for BORG, Bucks Owl and Rapture Group to speak to the children about the importance of conservation. Ks1 children learnt about remembrance and Rev James met us over at the monument for a 2-minute silence and then we made our way to the church to look at the lovely displays and flower arrangements.

The children also learnt about Harvest.

We celebrated World Book Day where parents were invited in to read a story to the children, we held a book fair and the children took part in a sponsored read. The children also dressed up as a book character and they all looked amazing.

EYFS learnt about 'Space', they created a lovely space themed classroom with a rocket role play area. They also have been learning about the Hindu festival of Holi.

KS1 have been learning about making healthy food choices in DT and created their own recipes for vegan muffins, dairy free smoothies and pasta salads. This has linked closely to a mental health and well-being week which all children participated in different activities from mindful colouring, visualisation, art work, yoga, talking about different feelings and emotions and reading some stories such as a Bag Full of Worries.

Coming up in the Summer Term the children will be learning about the different countries, plants and animals and of course the Kings Coronation.

Life at Marsworth School, as you can see, continues to be varied and enjoyable. We are an inclusive school where children learn to respect each other, show compassion to others and develop a sense of curiosity with their learning and the world they live in. This is embedded not only through our values and vision but also through our curriculum. We would also like to add our thanks to the whole village for their valued support of our school – it is much appreciated.

### **Marsworth Steam Rally, Neil Kennedy, Chair**

With mixed fortunes on the days preceding, the weather set fair all day Sunday 19th June 2022. Our first rodeo for some time, this was Marsworth's most successful Steam and Classic Vehicle Rally to-date and was enjoyed by circa 6000 visitors - a fantastic achievement for all concerned.

Support from our volunteers was stronger, longer and broader than ever before...the committee had many to thank for their continued support, numerous new volunteers and of course, the support from the Parish Council as this was the first time we've utilised the recreation ground for visitor parking.

This being our first outing in 3 years, using different entry and parking arrangements, supported by a number of volunteers who have not been to the Marsworth rally before, we know things didn't always go to plan. The committee received lots of encouraging feedback and have over recent planning meetings, been busy putting changes and improvements into place for our next event, which we will be hosting on Father's Day - Sunday 18th June. We're particularly interested in any innovations and efficiency measures that our volunteers and supporters put forwards, to help make our event run more smoothly, whilst supporting the likely growth for years to come.

Each year, we provide feedback in the form of a risk assessment and safety officer report to our authorising body, the National Traction Engine Trust. In return we receive suggestions for improvements, or at least items to monitor and check, based on incidents and recommendations from rallies across the nation. The NTET also provide updates drawn from the Purple Guide, which is used by event organisers of many categories.

Our web and Facebook sites host a gallery of images collected on the day - showcasing Marsworth and the surrounding countryside. The turnout after so much time away was incredible. It was a pleasure to see so many happy smiling faces all day, with everyone enjoying themselves. Thank you once again for your support - the committee is looking forward to hosting again in June, hopefully the event will be as big as last year and the weather just as favourable.

### **Women's Institute, Chris King President Marsworth WI**

At last, we have had a very full year, a year that has not been marred by Covid and the restrictions that this infection has placed upon everyone. Our Annual Dinner in May, was held at The King's Head in Ivinghoe, sadly, this elegant hostelry is no longer. The Dinner was very well attended and we had fabulous food and wine, and the service was second to none. I just about managed to arrive on time, having just got off a flight from Madrid. This is always a special occasion in our year and we weren't disappointed, what a lovely time we all had. So lovely to be dressed so glamorously.

We had some notable speakers through the year, Neil Gurney being one of them. He told us all about his life and the various jobs he has had. All the while he was making two amazing flower arrangements which we were able to raffle later in the evening to raise some funds. He is so clever and so entertaining. Quite a few non-members came to watch him.

Other highlights in the year were Mark Neil, the Poet Laureate for Milton Keynes and Keith Muras who was a diplomat/spy working in Russia in the eighties. Both of these speakers were immensely watchable and interesting. Just recently we invited our new vicar James Grainger-Smith to come and meet us and he was so engaging, and spent quite a lot of time going round chatting to us all.

Elsie Beesley held her annual Afternoon Tea Party in August and we all had to dress in red, white and blue to celebrate Her Majesty's Jubilee. Gorgeous cake and lashings of tea in posh cups and saucers, were the order of the day and we were blessed with brilliant sunshine. Everyone won a raffle prize and the event was enjoyed immensely.

In June many members helped me to run the Tea Tent for the Steam Rally along with non-members. It was hard work but we were able to raise a substantial amount for our wonderful parish church. 40 pints of milk were used! That's a lot of tea!

We had our own annual meeting in November where committee members are elected. Some members stood down and two more ladies were elected to make eight of us. I was re-elected as president, but this will be my last year. Time for fresh blood.

We are in a very strong financial position thanks to a succession of very capable treasurers, and we shall not have to fund-raise for quite a while.

The book, craft and supper clubs continue to thrive and are much appreciated by the various ladies who belong to these groups. All three clubs are headed up by very capable and forward thinking ladies, so a big thank you to you all.

We have gained quite a few members at the end of this year and a very big welcome is extended to all of them. There have been some changes within the WI organisation itself, not all of which have been welcomed by our own institute. However, we are powerless to stop these changes and must bow to the march of progress.

We are a very friendly group of women, who are able to take pleasure in the company of other members, have very interesting meetings and who are mutually supportive of one another.

## **Bucks Councillor's Report 2022/23**

Firstly, a short update on some of the past year's activities and achievements for Buckinghamshire Council to highlight some of the achievements which reflect BC's four key corporate priorities, strengthening our communities, protecting the vulnerable, improving our environment and increasing prosperity.

### **STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES**

Our 16 Community Boards have continued to move forward in bringing together local communities to discuss and agree priorities to tackle local issues. In the year 2021/22, they delivered 415 projects totalling some £3.2m. Since their launch in 2020, 841 projects have been delivered totalling £4.9m.

#### **- 9,569 baby and young child checks by Health Visitors in Buckinghamshire**

between April and September 2022 · 6,736 free NHS Health Checks have been delivered to those aged 40-74, which identifies early signs of stroke, kidney disease, heart disease, type 2 diabetes or dementia.

- **An additional 555 affordable homes** were delivered via Registered Provider partners during the 12 months from October 2021 to September 2022.

#### **- IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENT**

- BC have completed 31 prosecutions, 20 fixed penalty notices and 18 simple cautions for fly tipping offences.
- As of 20 March a total of **18,900 trees have been planted** with an additional 14,900 by the end of the financial year.

### **PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE**

- Nearly 14,000 children and young people eligible for free school meals, early years pupil premium or 2-year-old funded early education are receiving additional support through the Household Support Grant in the form of supermarket vouchers for the school holidays
- Increase in in-house fostering capacity resulting in 1670 in house placements as at end of November 2022, compared to 130 in April 2018.
- There has been an increase in the number of adoptive families, up from four between April and September 2021 to 11 between April and September 2022. ·
- In November 2022, 70% of the 19–21-year-olds who have left care were in education, employment or training, compared to 57% across the South East.
- Buckinghamshire has welcomed families fleeing warzones. BC have accommodated 15 families from Afghanistan and have welcomed 1500+ Ukrainian guests into the County.
- BC have set up an innovative local crisis fund with local charity partner Heart of Bucks to provide further help to residents experiencing cost-of-living hardship

### **INCREASING PROSPERITY**

- Secured £5.8m from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which will support a range of local priorities including support local business, communities and people and skills
- The Council has continued to support local businesses negatively impacted by Covid and has paid £3.5m to 126 businesses of COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF). The fund was available to support those businesses affected by the pandemic but that were ineligible for existing support linked to business rates.
- 89.3% of schools are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted compared to 88.5% nationally (November 2022), and 98% of early years providers are also rated good or outstanding, compared to 97% nationally. · Key Stage 4 (GCSE and equivalent) results continue to be above national. In 2022, the Attainment score in Buckinghamshire was 57.3 compared to the national figure of 48.8.



### **POTHoles and highways maintenance .**

Bucks Council have as of Sat April 1<sup>st</sup> began a new contractor arrangement under the title of Buckinghamshire Highways, replacing TfB. This has been reported in the newsletters but if there is a need I am sure it can be repeated.

An additional £5M has been allocated to road repairs for this financial year from reserves

### **Ivinghoe Freight Zone**

This is one of 2 pilot schemes in Bucks, and will probably take a couple of years before the full benefits are realised. The purpose of the Freight Zone is to restrict HGV access to the area. Those HGVs that DO NOT have a business reason to be there, entering the area as a cut-through to somewhere else will be in breach of the order. This traffic should be encouraged to follow more suitable roads around the zone. HGVs for businesses based within the zone and trucks entering the zone to service commercial and residential properties in the zone will have exception and be allowed. The result of surveys made during the last few years indicate that the majority of HGVs are using this part of Buckinghamshire as a cut through to other parts of the UK.

**Phase 1** covers the installation of signage around the zone making the 7.5 tonne environmental traffic regulation order restricting HGV traffic with exception for local access legal. This started in February and is now complete.

**Phase 2** which covers the more bespoke advance notice signage on key routes around the zone, including Central Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, to alert drivers and operators about the restriction enabling them to avoid breaching the order and follow the more appropriate routes is continuing

### **Chiltern Beechwood Special Area of Conservation CBSAC**

Although this was led by Dacorum/Herts council the 12.6 Km Zone of Influence of the Chiltern SAC directly affects Bucks planning for all new domestic builds that brings additional people into the area.

This has caused a moratorium on planning applications including the White Lion.

Although the White Lion is under a section 215 which your PC and BC councillors requested last year to stabilise and tidy up the building for reasons of safety and blight It is the planned intention by the owner to acquire a new planning application to allow redevelopment of the site and solve the current unsightliness. It could be another 5 – 6 months before the application can be processed.

NB there has been 2 applications previously that timed out.