

Annual Parish Meeting April 13th 2026

Parish Council Chairman's Report, Councillor Bob Kennedy

Welcome to this Annual Parish Meeting . 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 had one change during the year, Helen Gracie joined us early in the year but stepped down for personal reasons a few weeks ago. The vacancy is outstanding with an advert for a replacement in the Newsletter and we shall fill that vacancy shortly.

The key issues over the past year have been:

The requirement for a new local plan for Buckinghamshire County with a much higher housing target, 95000 as opposed to the previous 65000 for the period up to 2040. Not only has this massively increased pressure for more housing locally it has automatically put Bucks into a position of failing to meet its 5 year housing supply target which means any planning application made before the new plan is agreed is far more likely to gain approval. Such planning applications need not be limited to sites expected to be included in the new plan.

The ongoing application by Ainscough Strategic Land to build around 320 houses on Marsworth Airfield (south site) is still undetermined and remains at risk from the target failure mentioned above, but the new plan specifically excludes it so, as long as that goes through promptly, we should escape - this time.

The 2022 Special Area of Conservation (SAC) around Chiltern Beechwoods has continued to delay both this and many other new dwelling planning approvals, most notably for us the White Lion redevelopment. Bucks has now concluded its policy for mitigating the damage caused by new development within 12.7km of the woods but there will be considerable further delay in planning approvals for some time.

In the new local plan one other site, above the pipeline in the field north of the White Lion bridge, has also been excluded, but a section of the field northeast of Stepnells and The Crescent, which was submitted by Oxford Diocese, has been included for potential development of up to 90 new houses.

The new local plan has also substantially increased housing targets for Cheddington with the possibility of up to 10,000 new houses expanding the village into a new town. This would have an enormous impact on the whole area if finally approved.

Dacorum Council have also included a 2300 house development programme for the Tring area in order to meet targets imposed by the new government. This will mean that

Marsworth children will lose access to Tring schools and demand for Doctors, Dentists , Parking and other services in the Tring area will mushroom.

Marsworth Parish Council, along with all other local PCs, has lodged significant objections to all these proposed developments but I believe we shall not be able to stop all of them.

The Parish Council has been able to use its S106 Fund to pay for a considerable upgrade in the Village Hall's audio visual facilities which I am sure will be of great benefit to our community going forwards.

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 a record attendance and payout to local and national good causes. The Rec was also used successfully for the village fun run.

We continue to press Canal & River Trust to resolve the flooding from its failed watercourse onto the Rec and also to mitigate the effect of its removal of all litter and dogbins from its land.

We have begun the changeover of streetlamps to new regulation low energy LED lights having saved for this over the past 3 years, and I am pleased to report new railings alongside the road at Startops.

Finally, I would particularly like to thank our clerk Caroline Smith for all the work she puts in for the PC as well as her many other voluntary duties.

Bob Kennedy