

Little Hadham Annual Parish Assembly

Tuesday 19th April 2018 at 7:00 pm

Programme

7:00: Refreshments. A chance to chat to some of the speakers and browse the exhibits of local organisations

7:30 Meeting and discussion

Little Hadham Primary School: Mrs Liz Stockley – Head Teacher

Little Hadham Millennium Wood activities: Report from Mr Jonathan Forgham read by Cllr Gavin Tooke.

Little Hadham Charities: Mr Richard Beckett

Possible housing at Bury Green Farm:
Mrs Charlotte Lipscomb

Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Will Wright

Review of the year – Cllr Liz Lloyd-Williams,
Chair to Little Hadham Parish Council

8:50: Close

Local Police PC Nicky Hunt will be available to answer questions and offer help to residents.

This event is organised on behalf of the local community by Little Hadham Parish Council.

All residents are invited to meetings of the Parish Council - the next one is on

Tuesday 1st May 2018 at 8pm in the Village Hall.

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 122nd meeting of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday, 19th April, 2018 in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present: Cllr Mrs Liz Lloyd-Williams
Cllr Mr Tony Hoodless
Cllr Mr Graham Pearson
Cllr Mr Gavin Tooke
Cllr Mr Neil Wardrop

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Mary Wilkinson and Cllr Mr Will Wright

Mr Bev Evans – Clerk and 65 members of the public

Cllr Lloyd-Williams, Chair of the Parish Council welcomed everyone to the Parish Assembly. She mentioned that local police officer PC Nicky Hunt would be available to answer questions and offer help to residents before the presentations.

She also announced a number of amendments to the programme before introducing the following presentations:

Little Hadham Primary School – Mrs Liz Stockley, Head Teacher assisted by the School Captains, Maddie and Leo

Mrs Stockley opened her presentation by introducing her School Captains who that morning had played on the winning side in a Local Partnership Hockey Tournament. A most pleasing result for a small school.

As Mrs Stockley will be retiring at the end of the school term after fourteen years as Head, she thought she would talk about the highlights of her time at Little Hadham over the years. There were many memorable things in the course of being a teacher but she had picked out what she called the ‘Best Bits’.

- In 2011 Little Hadham School was 150 years old and it was decided that everyone should dress up as Victorians for a week. This was illustrated by two pictures one of staff and one of pupils including Maddie and Leo. The school also celebrated with a party.
- Mrs Stockley is very proud of the school becoming a National Thinking School in 2013, one of only four in Hertfordshire, accredited by Exeter University. This involves many activities in the development of thinking skills amongst the children.
- Owl Theme Day: this sticks in Mrs Stockley’s memory as she is not fond of flying birds in close proximity. This did not deter her, however, from organising an ‘Owl Day’ in the school hall involving eight different birds. These were allowed to fly freely close to the audience which proved to be quite a scary experience.
- The Queen’s 90th Birthday, 2016: this was marked by a ‘street party’ on the school field which took place in fine weather. Everyone wore red white and blue to celebrate the occasion.

- Cheer Leading: this was an event held at Watford Theatre where the school was invited to join in a 'Britain's got Talent' section. Maddie took part in this.
- Learning about diversity: in order that the children can be helped to understand about diversity, a link has been established with Cherry Tree Primary School in Watford. This school is four times bigger than Little Hadham and there are 38 different languages spoken by the pupils. Visits are exchanged and earlier in 2018 Little Hadham pupils were invited to the local mosque in Watford.
- Forest School: this has been developed over the past three years with the local Millennium Wood playing an important part in its realisation. Green play is used to promote good mental health and all the school has been able to participate in this experience.
- Visit of the Olympic Torch in 2012: the torch was accompanied by its bearer and provided a wonderful memory.
- Friendship Wall Mosaic: this was designed and built by the pupils and is displayed at the school entrance.

Throughout Mrs Stockley's presentation she called upon her school captains to contribute some memorable events of their own.

Maddie spoke about the following;

- Her first job as captain was to lay the wreath at the Little Hadham War Memorial in 2017
- Kingswood Activity Centre where there was so much to do you didn't have time to be homesick
- Singing in 'Young Voices' at the O2 Arena with seven thousand other children
- 2017 school visit to the pantomime Jack and the Beanstalk, in Stevenage
- Entertaining the Uganda School visitors and learning about life in Uganda

Leo's contribution included:

- The Mersea residential school trip
- Taking part in a concert at the Royal Albert Hall along with pupils from Albury and Much Hadham. Meeting with Michael Rosen who had also written the lyrics for the songs.
- A trip to the Colne Valley Victorian Day
- The visit of the Air Ambulance which landed on the school field. Some of the children were able to get on the plane but others had to miss out because the ambulance was called away in the middle of the visit to Manorfields School where a child was injured.
- Taking part in the inaugural meeting of the Bishop Stortford Pupil Voice Network at Stortford College

Mrs Stockley ended her presentation by mentioning the successful Ofsted Visit which took place on 13th April, 2018. Little Hadham continues to be a good school. A quote from the report states: 'The pupils love their School' and she felt that 'My work is done'.

A presentation by the School Captains on behalf of the Parish Council was then made thanking Mrs Stockley for her contributions to the Parish Assembly over the years.

Little Hadham Village Hall – Mrs Jan Williamson, Chairperson

Mrs Williamson has recently taken on the role of Chairperson of the Village Hall. She spoke of the privilege of taking up this position and how it has made her appreciate the hard work and dedication put in by her predecessor, Jon Fardell, over the many years he was Chair. Jon had been involved with the Village Hall since it was built in 1971 but felt in 2017 that it was time to retire along with Angela, his wife who had been Booking and Minutes Secretary for many years. Angela remains Minutes Secretary. Jan went on to thank them both for the huge amount of work they have put in to keep the Hall going.

Jan then went on to list the groups and organisations that have used the hall over the past 47 years:

- The British Legion
- The Red Cross
- The Congregational Church
- LH Friends and Neighbours Club
- Parish Council
- Parochial Church Council
- The WI
- And LH Youth Club

Over the years affiliated groups have changed and there is now

- Mother and Toddlers
- Brownies
- Keep Fit
- Badminton
- LH and Albury Gardening Club
- Indoor Bowls Club
- Farmers Market
- LH Pantomime Group
- Whist Drive
- LH Cricket Club
- Community uses such as Doctors' Surgery
- Parish Assembly and Parish Council Meetings
- The Post Office
- Thursday Lunch Group
- Occasional bookings such as School quiz night

And recently The Much Hadham Health Centre's Patient Participation Group which gave a demonstration and talk on Healthy cooking eating by Mihaly Saary for Vegetarian and Vegans.

The Hall is now showing signs of its age and needs updating. Mrs Williamson then outlined some of the many major projects needed to ensure that the Hall remains viable for local use, as well as making it attractive and current for the much needed outside bookings.

The Management Committee is currently looking at a Business Plan that can bring the Village Hall up to date and be competitive with similar facilities in the district. It is required to get costings for each project but also to commit some of its own

money for the works. It also has to demonstrate that it is able to run the Village Hall in a solvent way if grants are to be applied for.

Jobs which need to be done and will need to be costed (not in order of priority):

Wi-Fi must be made available as people now expect this as a basic facility.

More efficient utilisation of space which includes the outside buildings as well as the Hall. This means repairing the Portakabin and making it more appealing to the eye and having a good clear out of items that have not been used in years. This would help free up some space inside the hall which can sometimes look cluttered and untidy. Also, in order to create a better first impression with a more welcoming foyer, the chairs which are stored there could be removed

Maintenance of the outside - pollarding and removal of trees where necessary in order to make the outside area more usable. Unfortunately, some of the trees have caused problems with aggressive root spread to a neighbouring property which needs to be addressed. Quotes for this work are being sought and one of the Committee members has offered to do some of the lesser work for free.

Painting and decorating the outside and inside and making repairs where necessary to the building's structure where needed.

Other bigger projects to be looked into are:

Windows – the frames are in poor condition and there is no double glazing. There are also many small windows at the ceiling height which are curtained off and maybe would benefit from permanent boarding up for better insulation.

Boiler and central heating updated – The winter is a difficult time for the hall, as an antiquated system struggles to keep the building at a comfortable temperature.

Curtains – These are in a poor state and require replacement

Repair or update flooring – Again this is original and unfortunately is now starting to lift in places.

Updating of the kitchen to a standard that would compete with other halls. More cupboard space and new work surfaces

There are funds to start some of the projects which will hopefully encourage more bookings. When the business plan is ready, various grants of which there are many can be applied for. Mrs Williamson would like to think that over the next 2-3 years the Hall will be in a competitive market. Fund raising will also be considered with donations always welcome.

One suggestion the Committee is keen to try and set up is The Friends of Little Hadham Village Hall. This is an opportunity for residents to become involved without the commitment of being on the Management Committee. Volunteers could organise fund raising events or offer valuable practical skills that could be used on certain projects as well as making suggestions not thought of by the committee.

Mrs Williamson ended by inviting anyone to come forward as a volunteer to help in giving the Little Hadham Village Hall a new lease of life.

A member of the audience asked if the village hall was a charity – it is a charitable trust.

Little Hadham Millennium Wood activities: report from Mr Jonathan Forgham read by Cllr Gavin Tooke

This year Mr Forgham has continued to manage and develop the Millennium Wood to be both a well-used community space and a haven for wildlife. The “Friends of Millennium Wood” a registered charity with trustees who work alongside Jono, were successful this year in obtaining monies from the Stansted Airport fund. Also, they are currently part of the green token scheme in Waitrose, in Bishop’s Stortford. £1000 is allocated each month with the money being shared on a percentage of the tokens given to each cause. The other two causes this month are Bishop’s Stortford Food Bank and the recently established youth centre called Thirst Cafe.

The money raised is going to be used for things such as a magpost used for examining specimens under a magnifying glass, an owl nest box and maybe another bench or picnic table as well

Jono holds regular working group days when people volunteer to help with tasks such as chopping back trees and vegetation, and more recently re-digging the pond area. There have also been a number of very successful events for the community to attend. In December there was an enjoyable, though rather damp Christmas Carols event, and more recently over 50 children attended an Easter egg hunt in the woods.

The wood continues to be an important asset for our local school children who use it for Forest School sessions.

It is pleasing to see the wood being used more. Anyone who would like to be on Jono’s mailing list was encouraged to complete a volunteer’s form available at the meeting.

The District Plan –key points from Cllr Geoff Williamson read by Cllr Gavin Tooke

The District Plan has been eight years in preparation and has had to adapt to the National Planning Policy Framework which came in, in 2011. As a piece of work, it is highly complex and onerous with ever increasing housing targets to meet hence the long timescales to bring it to completion.

However, the District Plan was submitted for the Examination in Public by the appointed Planning Inspector and took place towards the end of last year. The Inspector asked for various amendments which have been collated as “Main Modifications” to the plan. These had to go out for a period of consultation, which has only recently finished. The Inspector will shortly be publishing her report, which, we all hope and trust, will allow us finally to adopt the plan, hopefully by early summer. Nevertheless, the District Plan already carries some weight, as seen when the proposed Albury Road development was considered earlier this year.

The situation for Little Hadham is largely unchanged from last year. The Ashe and The Ford are Group 2 in the plan, which allows limited infilling within the

defined settlement boundaries (generally meaning around up to about five houses). The hamlets are all Group 3 which presumes no development.

However, if a Neighbourhood Plan would support it, some limited development could take place outside the settlement boundaries of the Group 2 locations, and some limited development could take place in Group 3 locations. Other than these concessions, a Neighbourhood Plan has to conform to the policies laid down in the District Plan.

One of the main modifications of the District Plan is that any houses which might get built in any of the non-Group 1 village settlements will not count towards the 500-houses target for villages overall (though it will still count towards the District's overall target of 18,500), so the Group 1 villages are expected to deliver all these 500 homes unaided.

Little Hadham Charities – Richard Beckett

The Little Hadham Charities are officially known as the Charity of William Chapman and were set up with assets from a bequest made in the will of John Hammond, who died in 1720. He left £200 in South Sea Annuities with instructions that they should be sold and the money used to purchase land. Land was bought in Bury Green and the rental income from this was to be distributed to the poor, not in receipt of alms from the parish. Ten years ago, this land was sold and the monies were then managed by a financial company recently changed to KED of Stansted, for the trustees – Eileen Booth, Dr Colin Brookbanks and Richard Beckett.

The value of the fund as of 19 April 2018, stood at £87,000, (an increase from 2017 of £1,200) and needs to be maintain at this level in order to continue with the charitable handouts, which take place each year just before Christmas. The recipients are usually the elderly less well-off parishioners. In 2017 these numbered twenty-one people each receiving £60.00.

The trustees welcome any recommendations of people who might qualify as beneficiaries from this charity.

Possible Housing at Bury Green Farm – Mrs Charlotte Lipscombe

Mrs Lipscombe is a resident of Bury Green and was asked to talk about the proposed redevelopment of the land formerly occupied by the pharmaceutical company Glaxo Smith Klein (GSK) and known as Bury Green Farm.

There is a proposal to build 60 houses on this site. A consultation process with the local inhabitants has been organised. However, it is felt that this has been a rather one-way affair with the developers choosing what they wanted to hear rather than opinions which represented local people. No application has been submitted yet, but it is expected in 'early summer this year.

Mrs Lipscombe has spoken to nearly everyone in Bury Green about their views on the housing development and these can be summarised as follows:

- The site could be returned to its greenfield state
- A small housing estate similar to Farm Place might be acceptable

- There is a clear consensus that the community does not want the hamlet to be doubled in size as this would change its rural nature
- The developer's proposals put forward at the public meeting are wildly at odds with what the community feels is acceptable

Mrs Lipscombe along with other residents are working to represent these views to the Parish Council, District Councillors and Parish Plan Committee and are coordinating a response from Bury Green to the proposals. Letters opposing the development signed by fifty households (out of about 60 houses) have been forwarded to the developers but have not been well received.

Mrs Lipscombe then outlined how people in Little Hadham can help to oppose the Bury Green Farm development.

She suggested that as a resident of Little Hadham, you can put forward your views and consider offering your support. Many residents fear the annexation of the parish by Stortford, and such a significant development in Bury Green rings alarm bells with many in the community. Residents can join the campaign to try to limit the scale and impact of this potential development or be kept informed by email if they wish.

She also encouraged people to engage with the Neighbourhood Plan. Although a category 2/3 parish and therefore not required by the District to put sites forward for development, the Neighbourhood Plan Committee are actively looking for sites that could be allocated for new housing. A number of sites around the parish are currently under consideration, one of them being the former GKS site. Every member of the parish will have a chance to have their say about which, if any, sites should be put forward for development on 9th June in a public meeting. Mrs Lipscombe asked everyone to come along, look at the sites under consideration and use their vote.

She concluded by saying that the community now has to wait and see what the developers will do, but if there is a concerted effort there is a better chance of achieving the right outcome for Little Hadham.

Neighbourhood Plan – Dave Willett deputising for Cllr Will Wright

Mr Willett opened his presentation by giving a brief history and description of the Little Hadham Neighbourhood Plan. It was the second opportunity to report back to the Parish Assembly since the Plan was begun in 2016. It is hoped that the Plan will be finished by the end of 2018. A parish referendum will then decide whether it will be adopted.

Neighbourhood Plans have come into existence through the Localism Act which was passed in 2011. This was intended to allow local communities, villages and parishes nationwide to develop a local plan which would have influence over planning decisions. There are about two thousand Neighbourhood Plans at the moment. They are of varying length, some, two hundred pages long and cover topics such as history, geography, geology of villages as well as planning for homes. They put forward a wide variety of opinions about the future of a community.

In October 2016 a Parish Survey was carried out and the results were collated and displayed in an exhibition in the Village Hall in December that year. The survey covered a number of topics known as aspirations and included not only housing

but also traffic calming, better footpaths, cycle routes and dog fouling. Visitors to the exhibition were then invited to comment on the results. One of the outcomes of the survey has been the setting up of a traffic calming group and other matters have been passed over to the Parish Council.

As a Group 2 village with Group 3 hamlets in the parish there is no expectation that any new homes need to be built. It was, however, thought by the Neighbourhood Plan Committee that this would not be very helpful as it would not stop developers coming forward with building plans. It was decided to engage with the developers in order to discuss any potential development sites within the Parish. Will Wright contacted seven developers some months ago. There will be a chance for people to find out about their intentions and voice their own opinions at a meeting in the Village Hall on 9th June, 2018. The plans for the former GKS site will be included in this meeting.

Mr Willett concluded by suggesting that one possible outcome of this engagement might be to provide some money for the Village Hall refurbishment.

There followed a number of questions and comments from the audience, some expressing grave concern about the approach to the developers and land owners to discuss potential sites for building. It was felt that it might well be too late for discussion about the Bury Green housing development which was being very professionally handled. It was very difficult to stop planning applications once they had been submitted. Several of the audience could not understand why the developers had been approached at all and it was more likely that landowners would want to put forward building plans as there were always people keen to develop on plots of land.

There was also disquiet about the increase in traffic which would be generated by large numbers of new dwellings. This particularly applies to the lanes in and around Bury Green.

Conversely a member of the audience said they would welcome an increase in housing stock as choices in the Parish were limited. Similarly, more houses would mean that the primary school's numbers would be kept up. Mrs Stockley replied that only in the nursery were there spare places, the rest of the school was at full capacity.

Mrs Lloyd-Williams said that all the information about the June meeting would be on the website and there would be an opportunity to vote online.

Review of the Year – Cllr Liz Lloyd-Williams, Chair to the Little Hadham Parish Council

Mrs Lloyd-Williams opened her report by thanking the following people for their valuable help in the parish:

The Parish Magazine deliverers

The Parish Councillors who are all volunteers and give up a huge amount of time

The invaluable support given to the councillors by the Parish Clerk, Bev Evans

The Parish Hall team both past and present, without whom Parish council meetings could not take place

Neighbourhood Plan team for all their hard work

The new litter pickers Jake and Cole who have done a good job since starting

Those who volunteer time to litter pick, support the Drive Safe Scheme and do maintenance jobs. Particular thanks go to Wendy Woodgate, Mike Smith, Chris and Gill Bhatt and Max Audley for their help with planters, grass cutting, painting and events.

Tony and Sam Hoodless for catering for the Parish Assembly

Barbara Evans for writing the minutes for the meeting

Anyone who would like to become more involved in the Parish will always be welcome as a volunteer and tasks such as reporting potholes and other traffic problems via the East Herts website are also important contributions.

District Plan update

There are many important things that continue to need to be discussed, for example the state of the roads, maintenance issues around the Parish, and footpaths. As well as these ongoing issues there is also a change in patterns. Since becoming a councillor Mrs Lloyd-Williams had noticed that the number of planning applications had fluctuated and had generally been for house alterations or single dwellings. However, over the past year there had been four applications for clusters of houses, and a prospective application for a much larger development in the Bury Green area.

In January Mrs Lloyd-Williams attended a Development Management Committee meeting at County Hall to speak about the proposed 18-house Albury Road development. During this meeting Kevin Steptoe, Head of Planning and Building Control for East Herts, announced changes to the planning advice the council members of that committee should follow.

He stated that over the last year or so, Planning Committee members needed to give significant weight to the supply of housing in their deliberations (due to the lack of sufficient land supply) and that members must apply the test that “Permission *should* be granted unless the adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits”. He stated that this test is no longer required as a 6.2-year housing land supply has now been identified as part of the district plan (although this is yet to be adopted).

This means that where previously positive weight needed to be placed on developments owing to the absence of a sufficient land supply, this is no longer true. He did stress that this does not mean that residential development should be resisted, and there is still a need for sustainable development.

Over the past couple of years planners have been under enormous pressure to approve new developments, even if not ideal. That pressure has now eased, allowing planners the opportunity to scrutinize applications and reach more limited approvals.

While nationally there is a housing shortage and more homes are needed to meet a growing housing demand, Little Hadham’s village and its hamlets have been given either category 2 or 3 status. This means that “no specific housing target has been identified for these settlements” and that only “limited infill development identified in adopted Neighbourhood Plans will be permitted”. This is very good news for Little Hadham and it is hoped that planners will use the new guidelines and advice when viewing planning applications locally.

Mrs Lloyd-Williams said that the importance of a Neighbourhood Plan cannot be underestimated. Once the District Plan is adopted, the Neighbourhood Plan (again if adopted), will form an important part of planning decisions for the parish in coming years. The Neighbourhood Plan will look to safeguard Little Hadham against inappropriate development.

A major decision in the future is whether the Neighbourhood Plan does this by allocating sites on which it would like to see development. As has been stated in Cllr Wright's report in regard to the potential development at Bury Green, the Neighbourhood Plan Group could endorse this site for development or put forward other sites.

It was stressed that it was really important that as many of the community as possible attend and engage in that decision, which will have lasting effects for the Parish. The Neighbourhood Plan event on the 9th of June, is a chance to say what local people think should or shouldn't be in the plan before it is finalised.

Once the plan is finalised and ratified by the Parish Council and East Herts District Council, the Neighbourhood Plan will go to a parish wide referendum. The final plan will then sit alongside the District Plan and be part of the planning guidance that Parish Councillors and Planning Officers use to evaluate planning applications within the parish.

The Budget

Mrs Lloyd-Williams spoke of the challenges posed by the reduction in the budget after a period of relative buoyancy. The uncertainty around the "New Home Bonus" made it imperative that the Council looked at reducing expenditure in order to remain in the black. The extra capital has over the past few years, allowed it to do things that might not otherwise have been carried out. For example, the installation of the Defibrillator outside the Village Hall (part funded by the Council); a bench at the allotment; help to start the Neighbourhood Plan project; supporting local projects such as the Millennium Woods.

Over the past year Councillors have shown how effective grant money can be at achieving goals. For example, Christmas and Easter events for the elderly, the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the new website were all grant funded, and the 'Tesco's Bags of help scheme' brought in money to help fix the playground gates.

The Chair added that the challenge isn't limited to local projects. The effect of reducing budgets countywide, has seen cuts such as the Mobile library, reduction in the bus service and decreasing maintenance. She emphasised the necessity to keep the County Councillor Graham McAndrew and the Ward Councillor Geoff Williamson up to date with the needs of the Parish, so that they can also assist. At the same time, the Council needs to be realistic about what can be delivered, although as she said "if you don't ask, you don't get!"

Anti-Social Behaviour

Mrs Lloyd-Williams reported that, unfortunately, a significant percentage of money was again this year spent on avoidable repairs. The playgrounds and village furniture have continued to be targeted by vandalism. This has been linked with quite unpleasant anti-social behaviour, which came to a head earlier in the year. There was a very heated Council Meeting when parishioners' issues were discussed. The chair was however pleased to say that on the whole the situation seemed to have improved since then. The Council continues to be in contact with the police. The newly designated PCSO, Leon De Bruyn, attended a Parish Council meeting to try to reassure the community that the police are engaged in

solving this issue. It is hoped to see him out and about around the Parish. Sergeant Wallace updates the Parish Council on the continuing police involvement. He also reported that residents are often reluctant to report crimes in rural areas, and although 27 crimes were reported over the past months there may well have been more.

Overall the advice remains that if members of the community do see anything concerning, to get in touch with the police either on 999, or 101 less urgent.

The Bypass

Another key issue for the village is the bypass. Although there is no real new information at present Mrs Lloyd-Williams gave a brief overview of the current situation. Planning permission for the scheme was granted in January 2017, subject to conditions.

Since then, the project team has made submissions to the planning authority and progress is being made in relation to the release of the planning conditions (particularly those needed before the start of works). A number of the conditions has now been approved. Other planning conditions will be addressed when the contractor is appointed.

In August 2017 Herts County Council (HCC) published the Orders required to build the bypass, and to allow alterations to surrounding roads and public rights of way. This coincided with the publication of a Compulsory Purchase Order for land required for the flood alleviation scheme.

Following the statutory objection period, HCC and the Environmental Agency (EA) have been notified by Department for Transport (DfT) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) of their intention to hold a public inquiry with regard to the Orders. The date for the Inquiry has been set for mid-July 2018.

HCC and Environmental Agency continue to work with objectors to overcome their concerns. They hope to appoint a contractor in late 2018.

The construction of the scheme is expected to start in early 2019 and complete in 2020. Subject to landowner agreement, some early works are planned to take place towards the end of 2018, which may include environmental mitigation and utility diversion works.

The Parish Council is in contact with the team and has continued to relay concerns where appropriate (for example pedestrian and cyclist access into Stortford). Arguably the most important stage for us will come after the completion of the bypass when it will be possible to engage with the village enhancement phase particularly looking at how traffic will be allowed to use the existing A120 through the parish

Drive Safe Scheme

The Chair then touched upon how regularly in Council Meetings concerned residents raise the matter of how fast cars are driving through the villages. The bypass should offer some relief from these problems, but in the meantime until it is in operation the authorities feel that improvements cannot be made.

The Parish Council has set up a working group to consider options and this group decided to set up a "Drive Safe Scheme", where local volunteers monitor traffic speeds. In order to do this, two lead volunteers were required and at least 10 other volunteers to help monitor traffic.

Mrs Lloyd- Williams thanked Chloe Burroughs and Justine Hiluk the two main leads, and to everyone else who had offered to help. The main leads have now been DBS (Disclosing and Barring Service) checked and have completed the additional paperwork needed ahead of training. It is hoped that by the end of the summer traffic monitors in high-visibility jackets, should be seen around the Parish.

The chair also met the lead police officer connected with the Rye Street Drive Safe Scheme. He said that while painfully slow to set up, he believed that the scheme is a massively productive tool for highlighting problems in particular areas. This can result in getting traffic alleviation measures where needed.

Stansted Airport

The Chair then turned to the topic of Stansted Airport which is currently looking to increase the number of flights. She thought it important to recognise the possible effect that this could have on the Parish. In addition to this, the airport is currently trialling a new tracking guidance system. This means planes leaving and entering the airport are able to follow a very specific route, rather than using a wider corridor. This affects the Parish directly; the route currently being trialled is the Buzzard route over Little Hadham.

There could be benefits for some with this new system, while others are left with a bigger noise problem. This could be another area to utilise the help of an interested volunteer who could attend external meetings to discuss these issues, and report back to the Council. Also, Stop Stansted Expansion have an easy to use website for reporting concerns about low flying or noisy aircraft. They can analyse this data for use in their campaign. The airport responds directly to all complaints.

Flooding

The C15 immediately outside the Village hall continues to be blocked by floods caused by water run-off. This restricts access to the village and to the Village Hall - (this had occurred 17 times since Boxing Day, 2017 even though Highways *have* cleared the drains). East Herts District Council has been consulting with land owners into the possibility of having a holding pond installed to prevent the road flooding. They are also asking all residents to clear their sections of the ditch that runs from the highway to the river Ash.

The flood alleviation scheme being offered alongside the A120 bypass will be a welcome step to combat some flooding issues faced by the Ash and the Ford but will not solve this specific issue.

Conclusion

Mrs Lloyd-Williams ended her review by encouraging people to become involved in the challenging decisions facing the Parish in the next year.

The Parish Assembly Meeting closed at 9.05pm

Little Hadham Parish Council

Parish Clerk's Report – 2017/18

The precept for 2017/18 was £13,290 – an increase of £247 on 2016/17. The Council has received £3,348 as its share of the government New Homes Bonus. This grant has kept the Council's finances relatively buoyant for several years. However, this year the Bonus is expected to fall to about £1,000 and may not be paid at all in future years. The Council has to make difficult decisions about cutting expenditure to ensure it lives within its precept. A detailed breakdown of the accounts is shown over the page and the Council's books will be available for inspection later this year.

At the close of business on 5th April 2018, the end of our financial year, the Parish Council had £26,009.49 in its Bank Account and petty cash. This sum includes £4,213 committed to the Neighbourhood Plan and £844.92 committed to the website. The surplus will allow the Council to make a number of outstanding repairs and improvements around the parish. The Council has agreed in principle to make a donation of £5,000 towards buying the Millennium Wood for the community should the campaign to raise funds prove successful.

The Council now has its own website, WWW.LittleHadham-PC.gov.uk, on which Council minutes, agendas and audit documents [when available later this month] are available together with information about parish organisations, parish history and much more.

Our former litter picker, Mr Ben Petch, has left us for a place at university. The Council thanks him for his hard, conscientious work and wishes him well for the future. His place as litter picker has been taken by twins Jake and Cole who have agreed to share the task – I'm sure you will want to greet Jake and Cole when you see them at work around the parish. East Herts Council funds our litter picker – £1,437.28 pa. Despite Jake and Cole's hard work, it is not possible for them to clear every part of the parish on a regular basis. I would like to see parishioners taking care of the areas around their homes by clearing some of the litter left by the thoughtless and uncaring. The Council would very much like to thank those who already voluntarily clear litter.

Our handyman is Mr Joel Hammond who maintains the areas around the war memorial, the village pump and the allotments as well as emptying the litter bins and carrying out a number of small maintenance jobs round the parish including cutting back the willow trees near the river at The Ford.

The Council's thanks go to Wendy Woodgate for volunteering to stock and maintain the planters in the parish and Mike Smith who has carried out a number of tasks at The Ford. Thanks, as usual, are due to the residents of 'Marshalls', opposite the War Memorial, who voluntarily supply the flowers at the War Memorial.

Mr Bev Evans – Parish Clerk

Continued

Financial position for the year 2017 to 2018

Credit		Notes
B/F from 2016/17	£18,861.45	
Precept	£13,290.00	This is collected from residents as part of the Council Tax.
Rent	£409.19	Rent from Westland Green and wayleaves for power cables
New Homes Bonus	£3,348.00	EHC has shared the government's bonus for building new homes with the parish.
Grants	£4,020.68	Grant for the Community Easter Lunch, a grant from the Transparency Fund for running the website and a Countryside Management Grant.
VAT refund	£725.44	The Council is able to reclaim VAT.
Litter picker	£1,437.28	EHC pays the litter picker's salary.
Total credit	£42,092.04	
Debit		
Salaries	£6,726.03	To the Clerk, Litter Picker and Handyman.
Mileage	£36.90	The Clerk tries to walk or cycle for most parish business trips.
Playgrounds	£2,589.62	Grass and hedge cutting and some significant repairs.
Telephone	£150.00	
Post	£10.92	
Copying	£85.98	Mainly using the copier at the school
Office supplies	£75.00	Mainly paper and office software.
P/News	£250.00	
Donations	£1,180.00	To the village school, Village Hall, graveyard upkeep, the Brownies, Mothers and Toddlers, and Royal British Legion.
Subscriptions	£760.02	Mainly to HATPC for legal and other help and advice.
Repair and maintenance	£1,432.89	Repairs to War Memorial and bus shelters and tree pollarding.
Rent	£276.41	Mainly Village Hall hire.
Chair	£100.00	For phone, post and travel expenses
Insurance	£660.22	To cover the play equipment as well as general Council risks
Audit	£240.00	The government appoints an external auditor
Banking	£54.00	
Neighbourhood Plan	£287.00	The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group hopes to have the draft Plan ready later this year.
Website	£58.80	Paid for by a grant from the Transparency Fund.
Footpaths	£1,000	Kissing gates to replace styles using a Countryside Management grant.
Training	£40.00	Councillors attend training courses.
Misc	£68.76	Mainly refreshments for public meetings such as the Assembly.
Total debit	£16,082.55	
Surplus to carry forward to 2018/19	£26,009.49	

