



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

Held on Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 8.00pm at
The Main Hall Sherfield on Loddon Village Hall

There were people 30 in attendance.

1. **Introduction and Welcome and Annual Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council A brief report from the Parish Council year 2023/2024.**

Introduction and Welcome report.

Welcome to this year's Annual Parish meeting. Firstly, I would like to thank the outgoing people Di Cayzer and Keith Bennett for their contribution to the Parish Council over the last period and wish them well for the future. I would also like to commiserate with Nick Robinson for not being re-elected to the Borough Council but thank him for the sterling work he did on that council.

I would like to congratulate Keith Oborn on his election as Borough Councillor for Bramley/Sherfield ward. I would also like to welcome Bikram Bannerjee, Ian Deeprose and Alan Seabrooke as newly elected Parish Councillors for Sherfield on-Loddon and trust they will find it a rewarding position.

This past year has been challenging one in many ways not least because we have had to comment on the New Local Plan to ensure our Parish is not overrun by decisions imposed on us by the Borough. Our comments on the Plan were submitted in the required timeframe and they are being considered along with all the other comments supplied. Once this has been agreed we may need to look at our Neighbourhood Plan and make some adjustments to it, but it will not need a complete rewrite.

One ongoing situation we have is regarding the Cricket Club storage unit and because we got it wrong based on advice we were given; we have had to retrospectively apply for Defra permission for it. Consequently, this has identified the need to consider Defra Approval for other projects on the Green. A new Tree survey was commissioned and we have the results which have identified a number of trees that will need attention in the coming months and years.

However, we have had installed new Playground equipment which has proved to be a big success. We also entered and won the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Best Village competition and came second in the Best Green Spaces element. The Judges comments regarding the Allotments was "the best-looking allotments they had seen", which is a tribute to all the allotment holders' efforts. So, thanks go to all sectors of the Village whose efforts make this such a good place to live. This does however, mean we get to host the competition award ceremony this year which is on Thursday 26 September.

On the downside we have had significant problems with Thames water and sewage overflows this last winter and while we have been in constant communication with them it is not clear if the problems have been resolved. The long periods of rain over the winter resulted in large areas of the Green becoming waterlogged for a very considerable period which has precluded some ongoing maintenance being carried out, but now the weather is improving the tasks should become viable again. Fly tipping continues to be a problem around the village and vandalism has also raised its



head with road signs being ripped up and stolen on the slip road into the village off the A33.

We have continued to provide grants to support local groups and events and as result of new housing within the Parish we have been provided with additional CIL funds which is to be used on Infrastructure improvements as we identify appropriate projects.

2. Apologies

RECEIVED from

Parish Councillor Ian Deepprose

Borough Councillor Tony Durrant

Graham Hill – Sherfield on Loddon Cricket Club

Paul Monger – Loddon Sports Football Club

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2023

APPROVED. A resident had previously advised the Clerk that he raised at the last meeting the need for a deputy footpath warden to cover for Cllr. Effiong's absence and requested that footpaths be made a fixture on the agenda of Parish Council meetings, as they are in Hartley Wespall.

4. To receive reports

County Councillor Rhydian Vaughan

RECEIVED his verbal report.

Borough Councillor Chris Tomblin

Good evening.

2023–2024, having kindly been re-elected by residents, I have had the great privilege to sit on the cabinet in the new coalition administration. We have an independent and liberal share which removed the conservative administration, which has been in control for the last 13 years. The results this year further strengthen our position with 16 members in the Independent Forum.

I thought I would share my busy year with you from not only a local position but from the work across the whole borough.

My Portfolio covers: –

- The Climate emergency and carbon net zero for council and borough
- The Biodiversity, habitat and ecological emergency
- Rewilding and nature recovery
- New open space and parks strategy
- Reuse and recycling
- Clean air
- Sustainable travel



My work in Sherfield

I worked as a team with your 3 ward Councillors. Councillors Tony Durrant and Nick Robinson. This year we are sorry to see Nick not re-elected and thank him for all his work over the last 10 years or so. Going forward we are joined by Cllr Keith Oborn who was duly elected earlier this month. Welcome Keith!

I have been busy with: –

The Local Plan

Build out of Redlands – last phase is in place

Land east of Basingstoke is at preplanning / promotor consultation stages,

The plan includes Sherfield Hill farm but no other Sherfield sites or home requirement are included. Over 5000 responses from reg. 18 consultation are currently being worked through and reviews of policies with incorporation of the feedback is underway.

The Standard Method must still be used to calculate housing numbers but we developed a phased approach with 700 homes / year for first 5 years then the 850 figure.

This year DEFRA have allowed a 4-year land supply now (4.2 years for us) for local plans at REG 18 stage. This means by us getting on with completing the local plan we can now benefit from protection against opportunistic applications and use our existing local plan policies on new applications or those that go to appeal.

Planning applications throughout the ward are a daily watching game with the continuation of speculative developers targeting our parishes and those that are granted then become a case of monitoring the build out and the effects on Sherfield's daily life. I been involved with several enforcement issues which thankfully have been resolved but would unfortunately not have been should we just have stood back.

Battery Farms have been in vogue this year with a total of 5 (including the solar farm) located around the Frith in Bramley. I am challenging the process as inadequate fire prevention and pollution controls are being offered. Then there is the choice of isolated places which will see large construction and delivery vehicles thrust upon our totally inadequate roads.

Sewage issues / Thames. I continue to work with the PC and take part in regular meetings with Thames to keep the pressure on delivery of solutions for the sewage flooding and capacity of the village.

Councillor Grants

Ward councillors gave a combined total of £4,000 across the ward.

We all supported the Village Hall in its successful grant application for solar panels.

Village fete

Once again, I had the pleasure of coordinating the Classic car display at our annual fete with the team and look forward to this year's fete in June.

So, this all keeps me busy in addition to the work of the council for our borough as a whole.

I'll take you through a whistle stop tour of those activities.



Climate Change

2025 Council targets

We are projecting that we will have reduced our operational footprint by 80% (from 3500 tonnes to 700) by the end of 2025. Our carbon sequestration figures we estimated have been reduced by government recalculation methods as we all understand the science better which along with the delays in replacing the energy greedy council run aquadrome (responsible for 900 tonnes) sees us project this potential shortfall but the end goal of net 0 delayed for the 4 years build out program. However, we are looking at many other options to make further reductions to reach our declared goal.

2030 targets.

We, as all members of the council have pledged to get the whole borough to net zero by 2030. We need the help of each and every one of our borough residents if we are to achieve this target.

Electric Taxis.

A scheme to provide grants to encourage local Hackney cab drivers to switch to electric "London cabs" has been approved which will reduce carbon and air pollution HVO waste trucks rollout in April.

This work includes the adoption of HVO fuel for refuse vehicles which reduces by 1200 tonnes. We are also taking part in electric waste truck trials for around town journeys.

Green Team

We have launched the Green Team who will help residents understand how they can contribute to carbon neutrality through better home energy use and also help biodiversity gains by what they can do in their gardens to assist. The team will make appointments to visit homes and make recommendations all as a free service.

Provide Photovoltaic panels

To our council owned community centres (approx. 14 would be possible out of 21 due to roof construction etc. – surveys are in progress)

Electric car charger points

We have rolled out installations to some 11 council owned sites this last year with another 5 sites this year. For on- street installations we are working partnership with HCC. Non-appearance of Government grants has delayed this rollout but with funding from the council's climate budget we should see phase 1 with 5 installations in Popley, Brighton Hill and Brookvale – planned for June installation.

This is not enough as whilst there is a steady reduction as houses are built better, industry has relocated and we are seeing a more decarbonized electricity supply we have to reduce at a faster rate as we could be nearly 900,000 tonnes off-target by 2030 and that is assuming that every new home built is zero carbon.

Biodiversity

Delivery of a draft Biodiversity strategy – March 2024

In 2021, this council declared an ecological emergency which is important to the future wellbeing of our borough. We must ensure that biodiversity is protected and enhanced and that its decline is reversed. A key element is the production of this Biodiversity Strategy that sets out our vision, priorities and actions. This will be published in June.



We aim to provide the necessary leadership in helping arrest the decline of biodiversity and start the long hard climb toward recovery within the borough. The strategy sets out a number of objectives and priorities that will help us move forward with purpose and make a difference responding to requirements of the Environment Act 2021.

BNG – Biodiversity Net gain

This is a statutory piece of work to encompass DEFRA's requirement for all development to deliver at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain over what was on the development site prior to its construction. A clear document and councillor training program will take place. We look to seek greater percentage by toughening policies in the local plan. The river Loddon is desperate to see improvement as it has been classified as one of the worst quality rivers in the UK!

Funding for river Loddon pollution surveys.

So, I have funded the study of the sources of pollution of our river Loddon using citizen science led by Southeast Rivers Trust.

Community groups – engagement –we work with Greener Basingstoke and Natural Basingstoke (including 18 or so affiliated community groups – the BDBC team coordinate their activities using our Ranger Team.

New open space and parks strategy

Land to east of Basingstoke development plan – Eastrop Park to Basing linking all of the areas into easy access green corridors whilst enhancing biodiversity. Currently applying for National Lottery Funding. This starts with an overhaul of Eastrop Park.

Waste Recycling

The government department DEFRA has developed a simpler recycling strategy. This was on national news last week. This basically means we should be able to recycle as now but add plastic pots, tubs and trays. Food waste will be required to be collected by March 2026.

HCC are the waste disposal authority with BDBC responsible for collection. – HCC are going to have to invest in a new material sorting facility to separate all these recyclables as the existing old facility does not have the technology or space. Until it is clear which route is chosen and HCC build the facility, we do not know when this can be implemented.

However, it has been demonstrated across other authorities that recycling rates are much higher (BDBC is in the high 20 % range with others around the 40% figure) and rates should increase with such a system. With food waste collected separately then the contents of the residual bin are much reduced thus greater percentage of waste tonnage is recycled.

Sustainable travel

Work with HCC – awaiting results of consultation (July?) re potential cutbacks in bus subsidies.

And finally going forwards we have adopted our council plan



Council Plan

Enlarge the community care team to promote High Quality frontline services by 28 full time posts.

The **Make A Difference** team who will target borough council sites identified in need of tidying up/care.

Extra staff in our housing department to meet the increased challenges cause by the cost-of-living crisis.

Working with social housing partners on Winklebury regeneration (Buckskin and South Ham to follow) to revitalise homes and those communities

Deliver and develop out Manydown to the "Manydown standard".

Focus on the continued and future success of Basing View along with our aspirations to introduce a university to Basingstoke and the links to a revitalised town centre.

Sports and leisure

Leisure Park refurbishment

- Great Wolfe Resort bringing a £600K investment as a holiday resort hotel
- A new Aquadrome that is better and more energy efficient.

Working with Basingstoke Football

Working on the future of Ice skating within the borough

A place where people can have pride in their communities and the borough

A borough where we protect, restore and enhance our natural environment

A council that delivers high-quality services for our residents

Thank you

Chris Tomblin

Borough Councillor Robinson

RECEIVED– his verbal report

Sherfield Cricket Club

To start with the Cricket Club would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued support.

Last year was a very difficult year for the club emotionally and financially at the start of the year we lost our good friend, teammate and treasurer Chris Swift. We all came to terms with the loss in our own ways but came together as a Club with the very successful Memorial Cricket Day where we raised over £3.5k for St Michaels Hospice who looked after Chris in his final days. The club would like to thank the Parish Council for their financial grant and assistance which helped cover some of the costs and logistics of holding the day and therefore boosted the amount raised for the Hospice. Financially the club are still in a healthy position but had a difficult year financially due to a number of games lost to the poor weather and the rising cost of inflation. The club ending its financial year with a loss of just over £1000 although the club have put in place a number of initiatives to ensure this coming year will see a much stronger financial outcome.



As for the cricket season the Saturday team completed their season 12th in their league out of 18 teams. The midweek team fared better finishing 3rd in their league. The real highlight was the Sherfield indoor cricket team who won the Serious Cricket Indoor League having won 11 of their 12 games finishing a whopping 34 points ahead of the Basingstoke team who finished 2nd and Old Basing 3rd.

We are all hoping for a let up in the constant rain we have had at the start of the year which has put us very behind in getting the pitch ready for the start of the season in early May but one thing that cricketers have to be is optimistic and we will see some drier weather soon.

Chairman – Sherfield on Loddon Cricket Club

Loddon Sports Football Club

Another successful season for Loddon Sports Junior FC, we have increased membership numbers, especially in our younger age groups and we are offering football to local boys and girls aged between 6 and 16 years old. The weather has impacted our season this time and, after October, we haven't been able to pay any of our small-sided matches on the village green due to it being in a constant state of "squelchiness" and the big pitch hasn't been used as much as it has been in recent years, again, due to the exceptionally wet weather.

We have still managed to maintain the grass lengths on the pitches despite this and we'd like to thank the Parish Council again for its support of the club and for allowing us to use the facility.

Chairman – Loddon Sports Football Club

John Darker– Neighbourhood Plan Lead

RECEIVED his verbal report.

John Attwood– Village Green Volunteers

Thank you to all those who volunteer in all capacities in the Village. Their tireless work contributed to Village of the Year 2023 win.

Sherfield on Loddon Allotment Association

The allotment committee members stay as last year and number seven. The AGM was again held in February. At the meeting it was voted to change the name of the association by dropping 'management' from the title.

Four events were held in the year, one more than last. The 'Best Allotment' competition was reintroduced in July. There were three categories: best allotment, best raised bed, and best produce selection. April saw the Committee host a 'Start the Season' event for plot holders to gather and socialise; In June we had a stand at the village fete; in July we held the 'Allotment Open Day' and October 'Pumpkin Day'. All were well attended. During the year a need for more raised bed was identified. Eight more were agreed by the Parish Council. The eight were installed last Thursday by the Village Green Volunteers. Finishing touches to groundwork will take place in the next month and they will then be available to new tenants.

At present there are 60 plot holders. Two plots are vacant; waiting to be cleared by the VGA, before they can be offered to new tenants. The waiting list for plots stands at, three in Parish, 16 out of Parish.



There are eight raised beds holders with no vacant beds. The waiting list numbers six. Financially we are in a good position. Our fund-raising activities have been successful. This has allowed us to purchase Public Liability Insurance, (this enables us to hold public events), new gazebos, host social events, fuel for grass cutting equipment and maintenance of the equipment.

Application has been made to 'The 4 Lanes Trust' for financial support. I met with the chair of the trust on the allotments where it was indicated we had a good case.

Finally, a word thanks. The committee wishes to thank the Village Green Volunteers for their assistance in maintaining the allotments and our thanks also go to the Parish Council for their support during year.

Sherfield Allotment Association Chair

Sherfield on Loddon Village Hall

A bit of history... (for those who may be new to the village or to these meetings)

The present Victorian main building, originally Six cottages known as Pleasant Row, was donated in 1869 (155 years ago) by Revd A.G. Barker *'for the good of the people of Sherfield-on-Loddon'*. In 1909, in his memory, his family converted the central four cottages into a parish hall. The fifth cottage is now home to a resident caretaker and the sixth is let.

During 1977, in the face of pending costly restoration work, the hall was passed over to the Charity Commission to enable it to qualify for various grants. With those grants and aafter considerable fund-raising efforts by the village, the building was extended in 1983 to add toilet facilities and a meeting room.

A smaller hall, The Liddell Hall, was built adjacent to this in 1991.

The objectives of the charity are *"the provision and maintenance of a Village Hall for the use of the inhabitants of the Parish of Sherfield on Loddon and the surrounding area, for use for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation and leisure time occupation with the object of improving the condition of life for the said inhabitants.*

Trustees & Management Committee

Ivan Gosden (Chair)

Derek Tarrant (Treasurer)

Myself (Secretary)

Alan Ball

Bruce Batting

Eleanor Burt

Natalie Larner

We are delighted to welcome two new members of the Management Committee, Georgie Bleakley & Paul Nightingale.

At the heart of the village

The hall is used for major village occasions like Sherfield & District Flower and Produce Show (in its 58th year); Percy's Plant Sale; Refreshments, when the village gets together on Remembrance Sunday; Service and Street Party for the Jubilee and Coronation; family gatherings – children's parties, anniversaries, wedding receptions and wakes; annual Christmas Concert, Last night of the Proms, the Beer Festival, Barn Dance, Puppet Show and every other year, an evening with John Kirkpatrick. We also provide the venue for the quarterly Repair Café.



A list of the village events wouldn't be complete without mentioning the very successful monthly Village Market, organised by our Caretaker, Hazel Cook and supported by a band of volunteers. Talking of Volunteers, all of our events from the big ones such as the Fete & Beer Festival to the smaller ones like Barn Dance and Puppet show are all only possible through the support of our band of regular volunteers and it is to them, we owe a huge debt of thanks. (*Anyone interested in finding out more, see me afterwards*). I also want to thank all the people that attend these events and spend their money. Without you they wouldn't be the success they are. For completeness, on the 25th May this year we are running a Sausage & Cider Festival. If it's the success we hope it will be, then that could also become a regular fixture. Alongside these village events there are regular user groups. For the younger generation we have Glow Tots Sensory Play, Rainbows & Brownies, Beavers & Cubs, holiday fun Art classes plus, of course, Happy Faces Playgroup. The hall hosts Yoga classes, Gardening Club, Basing Clog Morris, The Arts Society, Bramley & Romans Floral Society, Loddon Quilters, Indoor Bowls, The Basingstoke Concert Band and, of course, the Parish Council. For the more mature generation there is Let's Move (seated exercise) and the long-running Seniors' Lunch Club.

Financials

There is currently circa £50,000 in our account. Treasurer Derek has been working closely with the Charities Commission to ensure our accounting is in line with their expected standards and timescales. This £50,000 includes the result of two recent grant applications. Normally, every penny we spend we have to generate, but we also keep our eyes open for suitable grant funding to help us with special projects. Led by Natalie Lerner & Treasurer Derek, a small group of trustees pulled together an application and thanks to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council, as the local administrators of the National 'Pride in Place' grant scheme, we were granted £15,000. Thanks, must also go to Enviromena (the local company with oversight of the recent electric cable installation through the village and disruptive roadworks!!) for their generous charitable donation of £8,000. Both of these amounts together will fund the installation of more solar panels and a battery storage system so we can reduce our carbon emissions while making a huge positive impact on our energy consumption – our biggest regular expenditure – with the savings allowing us to maintain hire rates for our users at realistic levels.

Maintenance Spend 2023/24

Over and above any special projects, we have to look after this wonderful building. Since this time last year, we have had some considerable spending on maintenance and repairs.

Full electric re-wire	£11,400
Roof Repairs	£13,200
Plumbing	£2,574
Fire Systems renewal	£1,450
General Repairs	<u>£2,400</u>
Total	<u>£31,024</u>

Environmental Footprint

Talking of carbon emissions, over the last year or so we have been making a conscious effort to reduce our Environmental Footprint. Seeing their promotional stall at one of



our Sunday markets, a trustee engaged with the Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council Green Team and arranged a formal meeting. The team did a thorough environmental assessment and have come up with a number of recommendations.

They were impressed that we were already considering additional solar panels to produce our own Green Energy. We are actively working on two other major areas: one being extra insulation (the roof windows have already been done) and secondly, changing the lighting to LED (the external lighting has already been done.)

For a couple of years, we've had an Electric Vehicle Charging Point on the front of the hall. Since its installation it has provided just under 2500 kWh of power to visitors to the hall and to those residents of Sherfield on Loddon with electric cars. Experts tell us that has saved some 1,350 Kilograms of CO₂. The EV Charger is purely a non-profit maker and provided as a service to the community.

The theme for the recent ACRE Village Halls Week on 18–24 March was “Going Green” and we were able to participate with our heads held high. More information can be seen in the display cabinet in the hall corridor.

Change to CIO

In line with Charity Commission recommendations, Sherfield Village Hall (Charity No. 272385), an Unincorporated Charitable Trust, became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (Charity No. 1178256) on 2nd April 2024. The Charity Commission favours the legal status of the CIO, as it is more like a Limited Company and, except in cases of negligence, reduces the personal liability borne by trustees.

It is hoped that this change will encourage younger people to become involved in the management of the Village Hall and take up trusteeships in due course. Early signs are encouraging.

To ensure that the transfer was done correctly within the minefield of charity law, we employed Hampshire County Council Legal Services, with whom Bruce Batting has been working closely over the last three years. We'd like to offer our sincere thanks for the excellent work carried out by Hampshire Legal Services. Without their involvement, the transaction would have taken even longer!

Business Plan & Policies

Our current Business Plan, reviewed annually and as necessary, covers the four-year period to 2026.

In line with Charity Commission standards, in support of grant applications and more so for our own management requirements, we also review and update our policies annually, for example Equal Opportunities, Environmental, Reserves, Data Protection, Health & Safety and Protection for Children & Vulnerable Adults. Our policy sub-committee is presently working on rewriting policies for Fundraising and Volunteering.

Publicity

You can find our policies and more about the hall from our website. There is also a Fete website and a Beer Festival website. We are regular posters on the various Sherfield on Loddon Facebook pages and can be regularly seen in print in the Loddon Valley Link and the Bramley and Sherfield Community Admag.

Finally, a few more thank you

Thank you to Wendy Gosden, our Hall Manager for looking after all the bookings and making sure we meet the needs of our users.

And to our Caretaker Hazel who keeps the hall Spick 'n' Span and is always on hand to assist our user groups and guests.



Thanks to our user groups who champion the hall with their regular bookings and support our grant applications and fundraising. We particularly need to say a big thank you to Basingstoke Concert Band and The Clive Fortune Big Band for playing for us at fundraising events.

Our chairman has particularly asked me to thank his fellow trustees for their hard work and commitment and to thank our local residents for making good use of this wonderful community building. It's here to be used and we do our best to keep it that way. That's about it. I can now take any questions

Secretary and Trustee of the Sherfield on Loddon Village Hall

Friends of the Village Green

A presentation was made by the *Friends of the Village Green* which highlighted significant changes to the Village Green since 2016, in terms of: their appearance, the resulting impact on heritage features of the Village Green, and the legal standing of these changes. It then discussed:

- i) the statutory obligations on the Parish Council, set out in *The Scheme of Regulation for Sherfield Green* (a legal agreement between the Owner of the Village Green, Basingstoke Council and DEFRA), which requires the Parish Council to apply for *Consent* from DEFRA for building and similar work, in particular the concrete store next to the cricket pavilion erected in 2019;
- ii) Since 2016, the Parish Council's repeated denial of this obligation, although previously the Parish Council had followed it closely, and its more recent torturous decision to apply for Consent for the store.
- iii) The challenges faced when endeavouring to encourage the Parish Council to recognise the need for legal Consent for the store. Finally, there were two Resolutions to the Parish Council: on Governance, and the Concrete Store. Both were well-supported by those attending the APM, and the chairman of the Parish Council committed to a discussion of these Resolutions at the June 2024 Parish Council Meeting.

Representative of the Friends of the Village Green.

5. Questions ahead of the meeting from Parishioners/Electorate

There were none received ahead of the meeting.

Concerns were raised from the floor with reference to the operation of Parish Council.

6. Chairman's closure of meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.55pm