

Cookham Parish Council
working together for current and future residents

The Council is a first tier local authority that seeks to engage with residents, protect our environment wildlife and heritage, and supports a thriving village life through the delivery of services and community projects.

(Core principle of Cookham Parish Council, August 2014)

Front Cover – Cookham Dean War Memorial 24th December 2014

In November 2014 Cookham took part in the Remembrance and National Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War.

The light area of stone on the base is a test patch, made in preparation for the refurbishment of the War Memorial. The work is due to begin in May 2015.



CHAIRMAN'S FORWARD

I am delighted to introduce our first ever Annual Report. It summarises a busy year of delivering our core services such as allotments, burials at the Long Lane cemetery, managing the Alfred Major Recreation Ground, clearing footpaths and maintaining street lights as well as managing Odney Common, letting Cemetery Cottage and community projects on flooding, nature conservation and planning refurbishment of the Cookham Dean War Memorial. I think it will help Councillors and residents reflect on what their Council has achieved so that we can keep improving. Do let me know what you think of it so that the Council can develop future formats.

As a joint sponsor of the Village Design Statement, the Council is pleased to see it increasingly being applied to planning decisions, and intends to continue working with the Cookham Society, Borough Council and others to realize its guidance and recommendations.

During the year I have been meeting community groups with Cllr Janet Palmer to spread the word about the work of the Parish Council, and listen to new ideas. We are grateful to the Cookham Society, Media Hub, St John the Baptist's Parochial Church Council, Holy Trinity Parochial Church Council for welcoming us to their meetings and sharing some of their thoughts.

Another new initiative this year has been a monthly news page in the Parish Magazine. I am grateful to the Churches for giving us space in their publication and pleased by how popular it seems to be.

I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their service to Cookham during this year. We are grateful to our Clerk, Anne Osborne for all her hard work. We were all very sorry to see our Assistant Clerk Margaret Soper move on in September. Margaret resigned to move to North Wales and we wish her well. I extend a warm welcome to Jill Gavin who replaced Margaret in September and has already impressed us with her ability to take on the wide range of issues the Council deals with.

All the Council's fifteen seats are up for election on 7th May 2015. The Council has been advertising the elections to try and attract enough candidates for there to be elections in all three wards – Cookham Rise (9 seats), West ward (4 seats for Cookham Dean) and Cookham vilage (2 seats). The deadline for nominations is 9th April 2015. Almost all residents are eligible to stand for election to the Council, and I can recommend it as a rewarding way to serve your community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Fiona Hewer', written over a light blue rectangular background.

Cllr Fiona Hewer
Chairman, Cookham Parish Council
fehewer@mac.com 01628 524038

March 2015

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning Committee

The Parish Council has commented on 152 planning applications, including tree works, this year. We are becoming more familiar with applying the VDS to our deliberations, as are the planning authority at the Borough Council.

The Council has considered whether to initiate a Neighbourhood Plan, but decided that although it would be an important document for Cookham at some stage, it could not undertake the work until the Local Plan for the whole Borough was known.

It also considered whether to take on responsibility for minor planning decisions itself but agreed, due to the forthcoming elections, that a decision should be made during the new Council year.

Councillors and other local decision-makers enjoyed an excellent presentation from Brian Clews on Cookham's wildlife which has helped us become more aware of how to take account of biodiversity in our decisions about planning applications and other issues.



Adoptive Acts Committee

Responsibility for Cookham Parish Cemetery, both War Memorials, the Tarrystone Seat and Street Lighting lies with the Adoptive Acts Committee.



The Cemetery and Chapel offer a well regarded facility with 20 Burials and Ashes Interments taking place over the past 12 months.

The south side of the Chapel has benefitted from some renovation and re-decoration of the woodwork with plans for work on the other sides due later in 2015.

There are 85 street lights owned by the Parish Council with maintenance and repairs subcontracted to SSE. The Committee also liaises with RBWM to control and improve the lighting not under the control of the Council.

In May work is due to commence on Cookham Dean War Memorial, representing one of the most important and exciting projects undertaken by the Council in recent years. The refurbishment will restore and preserve this iconic piece of Cookham's history for future generations.

It is planned that Cookham Village War Memorial will be cleaned in time for Cookham Festival.

Flood Committee

The Flood Committee has welcomed the Parish Flood Coordinator Carol Long, Flood Warden Paul Wilmott, and representatives of the Odney Club, Chartered Institute of Marketing and Cookham Society to attend its meetings. Following the floods last year, which saw Cookham village cut off by road for 14 days, the group has published a lessons learned leaflet and arranged meetings with Thames Water to address the failure of Lightlands Lane pumping station. This and other flood information are publicised on CookhamFloodWarnings.blogspot.co.uk.



The Committee has arranged for a Flood Hub to be opened in the Chartered Institute of Marketing when we next have flooding problems; it will provide information to residents and RBWM, and co-ordinate local responses.



Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee



The Footpaths Committee oversees a wide range of responsibilities including the maintenance and clearance of all footpaths (not pavements), the Alfred Major Recreation Ground, Stonehouse Common and the general upkeep of Odney Common.

In addition, it covers the administration of the three allotment sites with regard to letting, collection of rent and general maintenance.

Once again the Parish Council will be co-ordinating the three villages entries into the Thames and Chiltern In Bloom competition. The preparation and management of this will be carried out by members of the Footpaths Committee ably assisted by residents and RBWM.



Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Committee considers all matters concerning the finances of the Council including the annual internal and external audits, staff salaries, insurances, office equipment, and the management of Cemetery Cottage.

All employment issues are dealt with by the Committee prior to referral to the Full Council when necessary.

In consultation with the other standing committees, the Finance Committee prepares annual Budget and Precept figures for recommendation to the Council.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

War memorial



The Council have been successful in securing a substantial grant from the War Memorials Trust to facilitate the restoration of Cookham Dean War Memorial. Generous donations from local sources, including RBWM, have also been gratefully received.

The work will commence in May after the Cookham Festival and is expected to take approx 2 months.

A specialist architect has been appointed to manage the project with the Council remaining in overall control.

Following professional expert advice, the aim of the work will be to conserve the shaft and cross and prevent the existing erosion from worsening.

General repairs, including re-pointing and cleaning will be carried out on all parts of the Memorial and surrounding area.

The correction and addition of commemorative names will also be researched.



Flood warning web pages

The Council has championed live flood information pages for all the riverside parishes of the Borough. The pages present live flood warnings, weather forecast, flood risk forecasts and river levels by clicking through from Cookham Lock on the map at http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/sdop_flooding-info_map.htm

Location: Map of river monitoring stations

Map of river monitoring stations

Check flood warnings and river levels

Current flood warnings and river levels - Check if you're at risk of flooding now and in the next few days:

- current flood warning information - updated every 15 minutes
- 3-day flood forecast
- current flood risk
- current river levels

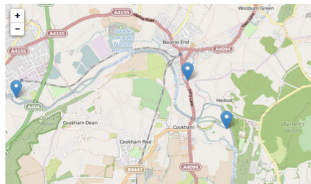
Get information about long-term flood risk to your property.

Contact Floodline for information about flooding.

Floodline
Telephone: 0345 988 1188
Telephone: 0845 988 1188
24-hour service
Find out about call charges

Related Links

- Map Of Monitoring Stations
- Flooding Information
- Shiplake Lock
- Marsh Lock
- Marlow Lock
- Hurley Lock
- Bourne End
- Cookham Lock
- Boulton Lock
- Taplow
- Raymill Road
- Maldenhead
- Marsh Lane
- Bray Lock
- The Bighams
- Binfield
- Piccadilly Lane
- Black Potts
- Manor Farm Weir
- Chalvey Ditch A355 Siphon
- Chalvey Ditch Siphon
- Slough Road Weir
- Romney Lock
- The Myrke
- Windsor Park
- Spatfields
- Old Windsor Lock



Anti-dog fouling campaign



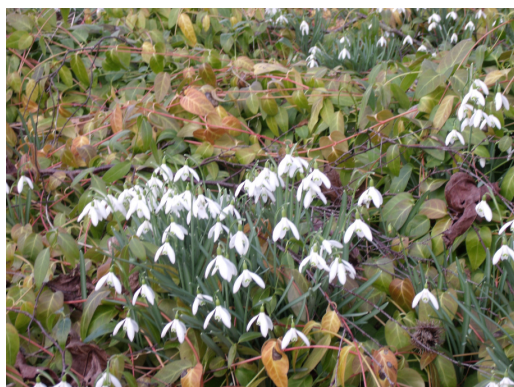
Picture by Baylis Media Ltd

The Council are keen to raise awareness of this on-going problem caused by a minority of dog owners.

Councillors have worked with the Community Warden who can issue Fixed Penalty Notices to offenders.

An Awareness Exercise was held on the Alfred Major Recreation last year which generated useful publicity and it will be repeated later this year.

Harris-Woodbridge Wildlife Reserve



Much development has taken place at the Wildlife Reserve over the past year.

The area has been cleared of excess growth to allow assessment of what plants and trees were growing naturally and encourage them to flourish.



Twelve new trees have been planted and bird, bat and owl boxes installed. An exciting recent addition has been the creation of a natural pond which will eventually be edged with decking.



Winding footpaths will allow disabled access through the Reserve and the Council hope it will eventually become a popular destination for schools and wildlife enthusiasts.

Thames and Chiltern in Bloom



After last year's hiatus, the Council have been busy working on our entries for the 2015 competition.



Councillors have liaised with local groups and schools to ensure that when judging takes place in early July, we can demonstrate the Community's involvement in enhancing the environment and sustainability of Cookham.



The Community Allotment on the Alfred Major site is a great example as it encompasses evidence of the three themes the judges will assess i.e. horticultural achievement, community participation and environmental responsibility.

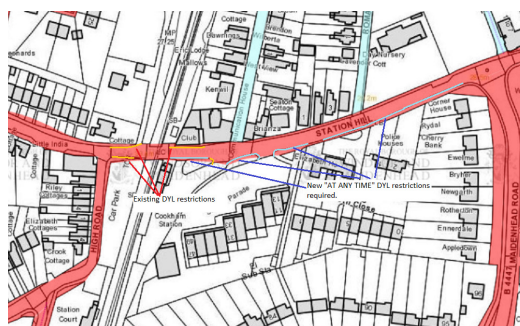


Station Hill Road Safety

The Council has long been concerned about this issue and is pleased to report that measures are underway to improve pedestrian and vehicle safety at Station Hill.

The first phase, to be implemented shortly, will include the installation of parking restrictions and bollards on the verge opposite Country Stores.

The next phase, which will require consultation with Network Rail, is currently being discussed.



THE PARISH COUNCIL AND ITS STAFF

Councillors

Cookham Rise Ward

Cllr Mike Barnes (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Mandy Brar
Cllr Pat Brockwell
Cllr Martin Coker
Cllr Shez Courtenay-Smith
Cllr Derek Fry
Cllr Fiona Hewer (Chairman)
Cllr Janet Palmer
Cllr Mike Wellman

West Ward (Cookham Dean)

Cllr Gordon Harris
Cllr Mary-Lou Kellaway
Cllr Beryl McNeaney
Cllr Pat Woodbridge

Cookham Village Ward

Cllr John Stretton
Cllr Jean Stretton

Representaion on Local Bodies

Councillors are appointed annually to sit on local groups and panels. The appointments for 2014/15 were as follows

Berks/District Assoc of Local Councils	Cllrs M. Brar, P. Brockwell
Pinder Hall Management Committee	Cllr M. Barnes
Cookham Youth Project	Cllr F. Hewer
Patient Participation Group	Cllr M-L Kellaway
Marsh Meadow Management Committee	Cllrs M. Brar, D. Fry, J. Palmer
Marlow and Maidenhead Passanger Assoc	Cllr M. Coker
Neighbourhood Action Group	Cllrs M. Brar, F. Hewer, M-L Kellaway
Parish Flood Liaison Group	Cllr F. Hewer
Twinning Committee	Cllrs M. Brar, M-L Kellaway, J. Palmer
High Street Traders Working Group	Cllrs M. Barnes, M. Brar, M-L Kellaway
Cookham Welfare Trust	Cllrs M. Brar, P. Brockwell
Samuel Lewis Pension Fund	Cllrs M. Brar, P. Brockwell

Parish Council staff

Anne Osborne, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Margaret Soper, Assistant Clerk (to September 2014)
Jill Gavin, Assistant Clerk (from October 2014)

COUNCIL FINANCE

Precept

As part of local government, Town and Parish Councils have and use the power to tax residents in the local community to raise money to cover their running costs and community projects.

The amount of tax, known as the Precept, can vary widely depending on the size of the Council, the population of the community and the services it provides.

In November each year the Parish Council produces a Budget for the next financial year detailing estimated income and expenditure and therefore the amount of tax that will be required. This information is submitted to the principal authority, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, who then collect it on behalf of the Parish Council as part of residents' overall Council tax charge.

Role of the Responsible Financial Officer

All Parish Councils must have a Responsible Financial Officer, as defined in Law. The RFO is an employee of the Council and is responsible for the Council's finances, accounts and budgets but only in an operational capacity. The power to make all decisions relating to financial matters belongs to the Council.

In Cookham, as in many other Councils, the role of the RFO is combined with that of the Parish Clerk.

The figures opposite show the income and expenditure for the year 2014-2015 so far compared with the Budget and also actual figures from 2013-2014. The Budget agreed by the Council in November for 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 is also shown.

Financial Summary

	Actuals 2014- 2015 April - Feb £	Budget 2014-2015 April - Mar £	Budget 2015-2016 April- Mar £	Actuals 2013- 2014 April-Mar £
EXPENDITURE				
GENERAL				
Staff Remuneration	33,133	37,800	38,515	36,193
Administration	16,728	23,815	24,515	21,861
Office Maintenance	3,407	2,750	3,200	2,721
Cemetery Cottage	<u>2,048</u>	<u>3,650</u>	<u>3,450</u>	<u>13,934</u>
Total	55,316	68,015	69,680	74,709
FOOTPATHS				
Alfred Major Maintenance and Equipment	8,727	8,750	11,750	13,177
Alfred Major Litter & Dog Waste	5,647	5,400	4,000	4,131
Footpaths Maintenance	5,495	5,400	5,850	4,657
Thames & Chiltern in Bloom Comp	2,840	5,000	4,500	3,866
Harris Woodbridge Wildlife Reserve		500	500	
Allotments Maintenance	<u>6,891</u>	<u>5,500</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>6,463</u>
Total	29,600	30,550	32,600	32,294
ADOPTIVE ACTS				
Chapel	1,906	550	2,700	103
Cemetery	14,125	15,900	15,650	19,217
Street Lighting	1,328	8,500	6,900	5,313
War Memorial	<u>5,031</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>44</u>
Total	22,390	25,450	25,750	24,677
Total Expenditure	<u>107,306</u>	<u>124,015</u>	<u>128,030</u>	<u>131,680</u>
INCOME				
Precept	87,543	87,543	88,418	87,862
RBWM Tax Equalisation Grant	4,457	4,457	4,125	4,138
Bank Interest	116	125	125	125
Rent from Cemetery Cottage	13,750	15,000	15,000	13,750
RBWM Grant for Footpaths	1,355	1,355	1,355	1,355
Hanging Basket Sales	714	675	675	674
S106 Funds/VDS Cont/Misc				7,756
Allotment Rents/Deposits	3,185	3,800	3,800	3,205
Land Rentals	704	1,040	1,040	1,020
Burials	9,425	10,000	10,000	8,980
Grants for War Memorials	2,000			138
Total Income	<u>123,249</u>	<u>123,995</u>	<u>124,538</u>	<u>129,003</u>



Cookham Parish Council
24th March 2015

Clerk to the Council, Council Office, High Road, Cookham SL6 9JF
CookhamParishCouncil@outlook.com
www.cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk
01628 522003