

Little Hadham Annual Parish Assembly

Tuesday 25th April 2017 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

Policing in Little Hadham: Inspector Chris Hunt, Sergeant Wallace and PC Nicky Hunt

Little Hadham Primary School: Mrs Liz Stockley – Head Teacher

Little Hadham Millennium Wood: Mr James Fallan

Little Hadham Millennium Wood activities: Report from Mr Jonathan Forgham

Little Hadham Charities: Dr Colin Brookbanks

Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Will Wright

East Herts Council: Cllr Geoff Williamson

Being a Parish Councillor: Cllr Gavin Tooke

Review of the year – Cllr Liz Lloyd-Williamson, Chair, Parish Council

8:50: Close

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 2nd May 2017 at 8pm in the Village Hall.

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 121st meeting of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday 25th April 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present: Cllr Mrs E. Lloyd-Williams

Cllr Mr T. Hoodless

Cllr Mr G. Pearson

Cllr Mr G. Tooke

Cllr Mrs M. Wilkinson

Cllr Mr W. Wright

Mr B. Evans -Clerk and 72 members of the public

Elizabeth Lloyd-Williams, Chair of the Parish Council welcomed everyone to the Parish Assembly and then introduced the following presentations:

Policing in Little Hadham – Inspector Chris Hunt and PCSO Steve Blanks

Inspector Hunt illustrated his talk with slides which covered the following topics:

- Little Hadham Lights: The police have issued many people with fines and tickets for not obeying the traffic lights and will continue to do so if this is required by the parish community. Many of those fined are local residents. As there have not been any accidents reported at the lights, the junction cannot be regarded as an accident hot spot and the local Highways Department will not do anything about the problem.
- Driving on farmers' fields: There may be a number of reasons why crops are being damaged by people driving over the fields. Poaching could be involved or there might be an element of intimidation or just fun for four wheel drivers. The police do not really know but have identified a number of vehicles and are working on the matter with colleagues in Essex.
- Theft from vans: Tools often valued at tens of thousands of pounds are not always removed from vans overnight as a security measure. This results in thieves sometimes using keys or removing the side panels of the vehicles to enter the vans and steal the contents. Some vans have separate alarms inside and this has been successful in deterring theft. However, as there is often no way to identify the tools' owners, they may well be returned to the criminals.
- Illegal encampments: These often occur at Bank Holiday times. Police conduct exercises in ousting these encampments and a recent incident was efficiently resolved within three days with people moving on elsewhere.
- Mobile phone use: It is now illegal to use a mobile phone while driving. Prior to the law, plain clothes policemen were employed to inform police located further down the road, of motorists using mobile phones. When this was put into operation on a road into Hertford more than thirty motorists were stopped within a few minutes and given a warning. A similar number were stopped when this was repeated. People find it very difficult to break the habit of using their mobile phones while driving.

- Neighbour disputes: The police team spend a lot of time dealing with neighbour disputes. One such dispute in Bishops Stortford has been ongoing since 1992. One of the biggest issues is shared driveways. An example of this was where a neighbour's car was parked 2 mm over the boundary line and a complaint was made.
- Growth of Bishop's Stortford: This will bring new issues and the police will need to play a part as the town expands.
- Fly-tipping: This is a very big problem. One of the ways in which perpetrators are being identified is by the installation of cameras which can be powered by the sun. The police are working with a Kent company, who have previously produced a camera to be used in the Middle East by the army, at a cost of £5,000. It is hoped that a cheaper version can be manufactured which will then be placed in trees close to fly-tipping areas in order to catch offenders.
- Fear of crime: Many people are afraid of crime because the news they hear is very much London based, rather different from what is happening in East Herts. The police try to listen to people's problems by having barn meetings where local residents can voice their concerns. There are also efforts to liaise with the police across the county border in Essex, especially over burglaries.
- Other Operations: Operation Agrarian Stop – up to 400 vehicles are checked for safety and drugs per day. This has included a school bus where the steering wheel came off in the officer's hand.
- Operation Stomp: Elderly and vulnerable people are helped to guard against scams by using simple measures, such as placing boots and high viz jackets in hallways to give the impression that the occupant is not living alone. This operation is now being introduced throughout Hertfordshire and was commended in the HMIP report.

Inspector Hunt concluded with an appeal for the community to work together to combat crime.

A year in the Life of Little Hadham primary School- Mrs Liz Stockley assisted by two pupils, Grace and Harry

Mrs Stockley gave a résumé of the main activities at the school.

- A visit of the Steel Pans Workshop to the school which involved pupil participation.
- A street tea party held on the school field to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday on April 21st 2016. It was very much enjoyed by the children and the weather was good.
- A residential trip to Mersea for Years 3 and 4.
- Sports Day- everyone is involved for one and half hours with the emphasis on teamwork.
- Little Hadham Art Exhibition was held in June 2016 in school and parents were invited to view the exhibits.
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory- a professional theatre company came to the school and the children were encouraged to participate in the performance.
- Stomp Workshop led by a visiting performer with pupils taking an active part.
- An Audience with children's author Jacqueline Wilson for years 5 and 6 in Hertford.

- A Victorian Fantasy- Willow Class dressed in period costume experienced life in a Victorian classroom as well as Punch and Judy and other puppets of the age.
- Watford Mosque Visit- Little Hadham School has a link with a Watford school and exchanges visits once or twice a year. This gives the children a chance to experience a different kind of school and on this occasion the pupils visited a mosque located next door to the Watford school.
- Hoola Hooping Workshop.
- Remembrance Assembly and a service at the village War Memorial.
- A visit from a local theatre company for a performance of The Snow Queen.
- Christmas Nativities for The Early years and Key Stage 1.
- Christmas Lunch.
- The Viking Invasion-an opportunity to dress up and take part in various activities organised by an outside visitor.
- February 2017- a trip to the O2 Arena to sing with seven thousand other children.
- End of Term Efforts Awards Assembly.

Little Hadham Millennium Wood Activities - Mr Jonathan Forgham including news about the Wood as Mr James Fallan was unable to attend the Assembly.

It was two and a half years ago that Mr Forgham took on the job of looking after the Millennium Wood and with some suggestions from the Middlesex Wild life trust came up with a management plan. Initially the wood needed to be opened up. Two thousand trees had been planted and this was known to be too many. Some trees grow too quickly and ash dieback is likely to be a problem. So far 150 of the weaker trees have been cut down and over the next five years a further four hundred will be felled. By opening up the Wood, grasses and wild flowers will be encouraged to grow and this in turn will bring in insects. Log piles and brush wood have also been introduced. The wood is in good heart with blossoms coming out at this time of year and the establishment of bee homes.

A fire pit has been constructed, a log has been brought in for sitting and congregating: the building of dens has been introduced and a tree has been lopped for climbing. All have been put to good use by Little Hadham School. Signage has also been put in and new paths have been made across the Wood.

Activities which have taken place include a very successful Easter Egg Hunt, a family Bar-b-que and a Bio Blitz Day where about forty children came to collect insects and other natural objects. Moth Nights are held three times per year and there have been butterfly recording sessions. The Brownies have also visited the Wood and set up bird boxes to encourage blue tits, great tits and hopefully black caps and chiffchaffs.

It is hoped to get more people involved in the Wood in the future, particularly to work on areas which have not been touched yet and are very overgrown.

Other plans include:

- Establish full access once the new buyer has completed
- Seek grants for more expensive plans e.g. Pond liner, picnic furniture, specific tools
- Continue clearance, coppicing and general health care
- Plant more wildflower seeds
- Add to the nest boxes for other species

- Cut grass areas in rotation to encourage particular species.
- Continue recording.
- Organise an Open Day

Mr Forgham then went on to say that until the future of the Wood is secure, only a small amount of money has been spent. He reported that Mr Fallan had received pledges in the region of £20,000 but was looking for a sum in the region of £40,000 for 3.75 acres at £10,000 per acre. Martin Roat and shareholders still appear to be favourable to a community buyout. They appreciate that probably the asking price of somewhere in the region of £37,500+ will not be realised.

There is a possibility that someone buying the land on which the Wood is sited might use it for private purposes only and that there must be a push to raise further funds.

If the community do buy the wood there are a number of issues to be considered:

- Trustees will need to be established
- Insurance issues need to be addressed
- Continuation of Management Plan activated
- Look at making a small income per year to cover expenses

Natural history records for Little Hadham Parish

- 108 bird species
- 328 macro moths
- 338 micro moths (3 previously declared extinct)
- Total: 666 moth species (inc. 3 new for Herts)
- 15 Dragonfly and damselfly species
- 124 flowering plant species
- 26 butterfly species
- 20 mammal species
- 132 other insects (flies/bees/wasps/beetles etc.)
- 27 fungi species

Mr Forgham concluded by thanking the following for their support:

- Martin Roat and Romehold for “unreserved consent” to look after Millennium Wood.
- Little Hadham Parish Council for the donation to Friends of Millennium Wood account.
- All those who help with work parties.
- Ennis Rogers and Steve Stigwood for financial donations to the Easter Egg hunt.
- Landowners (David Harvey, Michael Harvey, David Mardell, Steve Stigwood, Andrew Camp, Paul Dixon) for access to private land to run moth traps and check for birds and insects.
- Wendy Woodgate for organising superb Easter Egg Hunts.
- Everyone kind enough to send me records and requests.
- Jan Finn for putting up with my late delivery of articles for the Parish Magazine.

- All residents tolerant of my late-night car movements and bright lights collecting moth traps.
- Wendy Woodgate for putting up with my dawn starts and 3 in the morning finishes as well as tolerating moths and insects in the kitchen fridge.
- Everyone who supports all the events.

Little Hadham Charities-Dr Colin Brookbanks

For forty years Dr Brookbanks has acted as an advisor to this three-hundred-year-old charity. He is now a trustee along with Richard Beckett and Eileen Booth.

The Charity's managed funds bring in a certain amount of money each year. At Christmas, a one-off payment of £50.00 is distributed to less well-off elderly parishioners although this time a couple of younger people received some money.

Originally Dr Brookbanks was involved because as a GP he had some local knowledge about needy elderly residents. Having been retired for eight or nine years, he is now not in such a good position to know about these people and he and the other trustees would welcome any recommendations for payments.

The charity's fund is invested in shares but their management was abandoned by the London company, because they were not big enough. Hopefully a new company has been found and will take over the management in the near future. Funds are worth about £88,000.

Neighbourhood Plan - Cllr Will Wright

In his introduction Cllr Wright explained that that the Neighbourhood Plan was a development of the Government's Localism agenda enabling the community to have a say in local planning. He went on to add that we would have to accept that there would have to be an appropriate amount of housing built in the area.

There were plans to have a website shortly and this would be linked to the Parish Council.

The Steering Committee had conducted a survey of the households in the parish asking what people liked and disliked about Little Hadham. This covered such things as housing, transport, the by-pass and traffic, open spaces, the environment and utilities. A workshop looked at the responses and was able put together a picture of parishioners' interests.

The committee is presently working on recording the appearance of the parish including its physical features, history and housing, the latter not markedly changed in the past century. It is also looking to see what the housing needs are. The Neighbourhood Plan will allocate places where development can take place.

It is intended to have more workshops, questionnaires and consultations and when the Plan is drawn up a parish referendum will decide the final outcome.

East Herts Council- Cllr Geoff Williamson, Little Hadham Ward member of East Herts Council

Cllr Williamson spoke briefly about the District Plan which forms a framework around which the local authority can work. It operates in five year cycles. Housing is one of its main priorities. By 2033 16,400 are to be provided in East Herts primarily in the towns. The Ash, Little Hadham and The Ford have been classified as category 2 villages which will mean limited infill of a small number of houses. The rest of the parish is category 3 meaning very limited infill. The local area will however become busier.

Being a Parish Councillor – Cllr Gavin Tooke

Mr Tooke has been on the council for two years and outlined some of the work taken on by councillors. A defibrillator was installed just outside the entrance to the Village Hall and a training session was held to prepare people for its use.

A bid was made to Tesco's for money for new gates for the playgrounds. A senior citizens' Christmas party was organised. Volunteers were asked for to help edit the Council's website and the council has contact with the police over any relevant parish matter.

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

This time last year when I spoke to you, the Parish Council had seen a lot of change, with new Councillors joining and existing councillors taking on new responsibilities. This year in comparison has been relatively stable allowing the Council to settle into working well together as a team. Councillors are now allocated to Areas of Responsibility, rather than the parishes' hamlets, which gives us all a Parish wide perspective.

It was with sadness that we said goodbye to Councillor Chris Bhatt last year. Chris was a valued member of the team whom I feel will be particularly remembered for the Christmas dinners he organised for older members of our community. We are pleased that Chris has agreed to continue to support the Council as a Task Holder (more about task holders later).

Chris, as you've heard, leaves a vacancy for us to fill. It's always a great opportunity to bring enthusiastic new team members onto the Council, bringing new energy and ideas. Please do feel free to come and talk to me, or any of the Councillors, if you think that it is something you might be interested in.

As we reflect on the past year and look forward into 2017 - 2018 it is important that we consider the challenges we face and how we can tackle these.

The biggest challenge appears to be the reduction in the budget following a period of relative buoyancy while we were receiving extra income under the heading of the "New Home Bonus". This extra capital has over the last few years, allowed us to do things that we might not otherwise have been able to achieve. For example, the installation of the Defibrillator outside the village hall (part funded by us), place a bench at the allotment, and kick starting the Neighbourhood plan project.

While we look to minimize spending now, in order to ensure we do not find ourselves short in the near future, we can also look proactively at maximising income. Over the past year, Councillors have shown how effective grant money can be at achieving goals. For

example, both Christmas dinner events hosted by Cllr Bhatt were funded using community project grant monies; Cllr Will Wright secured Grant money in order to deliver the Neighbourhood plan project; our Clerk, Bev Evans, secured funding for the development and hosting of our new website (now live so please do visit it). Councillor Tony Hoodless has secured funding from Grants and the 'Tesco's Bags of help scheme' that will see parish furniture (gates and styles on footpaths and playgrounds) maintained.

Of course, this budget challenge isn't limited to us, it also extends outwards and we have seen the effect of reducing budgets countywide, with cuts such as the Mobile library, reduction in the bus service and decreasing maintenance. We need to keep whoever is elected as our county councillor up to date with the needs of the Parish, so that he or she can add these to the rolling programmes. While we need to be realistic about what can be delivered, if we don't ask we don't get.

Unfortunately, a significant percentage of money this year has gone towards avoidable repairs. Our playgrounds and village furniture have been targeted by vandalism. We're in contact with the police on this, but it does continue to be an issue. We ask that if members of the community do see anything untoward around the parish, to please get in touch with the police either on 999 if a crime or significant antisocial behaviour is taking place, or 101 if the perpetrators have already left. Our allocated PCSO, Steve Blanks, is here tonight and you will hopefully see him out and about around the Parish (so please do say hello).

In contrast, the allotments are having a quiet year. And I believe I'm correct in saying currently have a vacant plot. As we move into spring it's lovely to see the allotments looking so well used and productive. The bench installed there is a nice quiet place for anyone to sit and reflect if you've not visited.

One of the biggest issues on our agenda continues to be the Bypass

Since putting the Bypass back on the agenda as a standing item, I have been in regular contact with the bypass team to discuss progress and continue to highlight local needs. As Herts County Council is currently preparing for elections no officers were able to attend today. David Burt, Project manager for the scheme, has sent this update.

In December 2016, the Development Control Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the planning application for the A120 Bypass (Little Hadham) and Flood Alleviation Scheme. As the eastern end of the scheme is located partially within the Green Belt it had to be referred to the Government, who then had three weeks in which they could 'call in' the application for further scrutiny. In January confirmation was received that the Government did not want to call in the application, and a formal planning decision notice was issued, officially granting permission for the scheme.

Moving forward, the project team are currently working through the 45 planning conditions attached to the planning permission. These conditions cover a variety of subjects. Many require the scheme to be built in line with the details provided as part of the original application; while others ask for detailed information to be submitted relating to specific parts of the design, or specifics relating to proposed mitigation measures. Where conditions relate to the final design of the scheme, they will be discharged over the next year. Where conditions relate to construction practices they will be discharged by the construction contractor, once they are appointed.

Hertfordshire County Council and the Environment Agency continue to have productive discussions with affected landowners, with a view to acquiring the land needed for the

scheme by agreement. However, they will also publish draft Compulsory Purchase Orders in May 2017.

They hope to launch the tender to find a construction contractor in the summer and expect to appoint in early in 2018. The construction of the scheme is expected to start in 2018 and complete in 2020. Some enabling works are planned to take place throughout 2017, including early environmental mitigation and utility diversion works. Further details will be provided as the programme is finalised.

Little Hadham Parish Council has asked the project team a number of questions recently. Three of these have been addressed below

What is the proposed timescales for the Lloyd Taylor Drain works as the early completion of this would safeguard against local flooding?

These works will form part of the main construction contract. The exact phasing of this element of the works will be determined once a contractor has been appointed, which is currently anticipated to happen in early 2018. It is worth noting that once the new Lloyd Taylor Drain channel has been constructed it will not become operational until all of the Flood Alleviation Scheme works have been completed and commissioned. Therefore, it is unlikely to be used as a watercourse until the end of the contract.

When can the exact nature of Village Centre Enhancements be discussed including traffic calming:

Once the bypass has opened we will be undertaking a series of monitoring activities to understand the effects of the scheme. This information will be one of the factors that we use to determine the scope of any Post Bypass Works (including any Village Centre Enhancements) and therefore it is unlikely that we will be looking to consult on any improvements until after the main scheme is completed.

Will there be sufficient access for pedestrians and cyclists from the parish to access Bishop's Stortford?

We are aware that there is a desire to improve facilities for cyclists between the proposed Hadham Park Roundabout at the eastern end of the bypass scheme and the existing A120 (Tesco) roundabout and are actively considering what can be included in the main construction contract. We hope to be in a position to provide further information on this within the next couple of months.

Looking beyond the bypass, while the ongoing nature of maintaining rural roads is a key topic of the council, the biggest concern that the community has regarding highways continues to be the way traffic drives through the parish. Namely too fast, particularly when rat running to avoid the a120 lights. As we heard we hope that the bypass will offer traffic measures to reduce this problem, but not until after the new road is finished in 2020.

In the meantime, a working group is exploring what other courses of action could be effective. For example, the possibility of live speed signs, and the setting up a "drive safe scheme", where local volunteers monitor traffic speeds. This would of course depend on enough interest and volunteers. If this is something you think you would like to get involved in, please get in touch with us.

With regard to the potholes, do keep reporting them online or by telephone. Only recently someone told me how surprised they were that two days after they reported a particularly nasty pot hole on the A120, it was repaired. The assumption that someone else has reported a problem is common, but not always true.

We do depend on support from across the parish to keep on top of tasks. It goes without saying that we are grateful to everyone who helps in whatever way they can. For example, picking up litter, reporting road problems, and our village gardeners (both mystery and named). I've put a sheet on all your tables tonight for you to leave your names if you would like to get more involved.

If you don't want to apply to be a Councillor you can also get involved by joining a working group looking at something that particularly interests you (for example solving the parishes traffic issue), or become a Task Holder in one of the areas of responsibility (for example, Jonathan Forgham is still very involved in reporting on maintenance needed on footpaths in the Parish).

An excellent example of parishioner input is the current broadband scheme. I'm sure that many individuals, and businesses, not to mention the school, are waiting excitedly for superfast broadband – promised to arrive in most of Little Hadham by the end of the year. Rural Broadband speeds are high on the political agenda and it is expected that rural residents should receive high speeds. However, Westland Green looked to be excluded from the local programme. Resident Geoffrey Pratt proactively contacted Connected Counties (in control of the broadband programme), Ward Councillors and EHDC officers to address this issue. After persisting with the matter Geoffrey has been promised that Westland Green can now expect to receive super-fast broadband.

As you have already heard the Neighbourhood Plan Group have been busy. It's fantastic to see such a dedicated team working on this project. The importance of a neighbourhood plan cannot be underestimated. Once the District Plan is accepted, our Neighbourhood Plan (if accepted), will form an important part of planning decisions for the parish in coming years. While the District Plan now lists all of Little Hadham as category 2 and 3 villages (meaning no housing target will be imposed) the need for more housing across Hertfordshire cannot be underestimated. Our Neighbourhood Plan will look to safeguard Little Hadham against inappropriate development.

The Neighbourhood Plan team sent out surveys across the Parish asking for information on what people value within the Parish, and what changes they would like to see. The results will allow them to move forward with developing their plan, but also identify areas of concern outside their scope.

The Parish Council will continue to work with the Neighbourhood Plan team to put these issues identified high on our agenda. Unsurprisingly it is the idyllic rural nature of Little Hadham that people seem to most value about living here.

We've heard that the 'Save Millennium Wood' campaign is now having a final push to secure the Wood. The Parish Council strongly support this campaign. We've heard how the woods are becoming a focus of events across the seasons, both for families and wildlife enthusiasts. They are well worth a visit with areas for birding, bug hunting, and picnicking. It also hosts one of the Parish's geocaches.

Another of the ways that people appreciate the rural nature of our Parish is when walking its many footpaths. Thank you to everyone who gets in touch to let us know if there are any problems on these. Mostly the footpaths in Little Hadham are well kept and problems

quickly addressed with the help of Nicholas Maddex (our Countryside Access Officer). If you do find any problem please again get in touch.

As the Parish Council move forward into 2017 it is clear that there are changes outside Parish boundaries that can and will impact us. For example, the continued expansion of Stansted Airport, and the Stortford North Development now underway. The Parish Council will need to ensure we continue to look outwards when managing interests within the Parish.

I'm very pleased this year to have nothing to report regarding flooding. In 2016 the new drainage system was installed better allowing for surges. Cllr Pearson reminds us that while this is a huge step forward, so called freak weather events are becoming more and more common, with numerous incidents over the past year of storm events and high rain fall narrowly passing by the parish. The flood alleviation scheme being offered alongside the A120 bypass will be a welcome step to combat this problem.

One last plea for volunteers before I let you all go home. Our new website is in need of an editor. This isn't someone who knows about web design or coding. It's simply someone from the parish who can help us keep information on the website live and up to date. Hopefully you've all visited the new site now, showing third on a Google search (www.littlehadham-pc.gov.uk). The site helps us meet our legal requirements to have all our minutes and documents published, but perhaps more importantly can act as a virtual noticeboard signposting people to events and services across the parish. Please get in touch with Bev, our clerk, if you think you could be our editor.

I'd like to say thank you to all the Councillors for their hard work over the year. Without them volunteering their time none of this would get done. Thank you also to Bev Evans, who does an excellent job clerking for us. Thank you also to you all for coming tonight and continuing to support us.

Don't forget our next Parish Council Meeting is this coming Tuesday, may 2nd, 2017, at 8pm.

Safe Journey home.

Addition:

This is a good opportunity to remind the community that we have a Defibrillator located outside at the entrance to the Village Hall, which can be accessed in the event of an emergency by calling 999. The defibrillator itself can be used without training, and gives automated instructions on exactly how to use it and what to do. Being aware of it and willing to use it can save lives.

The meeting closed at 9:00 p.m.

Little Hadham Parish Council

Parish Clerk's Report – 2016/17

The precept for 2016/17 has increased to £13,043. The Council has received £5,650 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 will reduce to £1,000 and will not be paid 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 2017, the end of our financial year, the Parish Council had £18,861.45 in its Bank Account and petty cash. This sum includes £2,213.51 committed to the Neighbourhood Plan, £903.72 committed to the website and £768 for a safety survey of trees for which the Council is responsible. 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. The Council is looking for a volunteer editor to be concerned with the content of the site – he/she need have no knowledge of the technicalities of editing the website.

Our litter picker is Mr Ben Petch – I'm sure you will want to greet Ben when you see him at work around the parish. East Herts Council funds our litter picker – £1,389.44 pa. Despite Ben's hard work, it is not possible for him 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.

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.

The Council's thanks go to Anne Beer and Vivienne Perry for volunteering to stock and maintain the planters in the parish. 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 2016 to 2017

Credit		Notes
B/F from 2015/16	£12,873.42	
Precept	£13,043.00	This is collected from residents as part of the Council Tax.
Rent	£401.93	Rent from Westland Green and wayleaves for power cables
Interest	£5.76	The bank no longer pays interest.
New Homes Bonus	£5,650.00	EHC has shared the government's bonus for building new homes within the parish.
Grant	£1,065.32	Grant for the Community Christmas Party and a grant from the Transparency Fund for setting up a new website.
Neighbourhood Plan	£7,000.00	A grant to fund the creation of the Plan.
VAT refund	£1,103.28	The Council is able to reclaim VAT.
Litter picker	£1,389.44	EHC pays the litter picker's salary.
Total credit	£42,532.15	
Debit		
Salaries	£7,173.76	To the Clerk, Litter Picker and Handyman.
Mileage	£20.70	The Clerk tries to walk or cycle for most parish business trips.
Playgrounds	£3,214.24	Grass and hedge cutting and some significant repairs.
Telephone	£150.00	
Post	£9.90	
Copying	£61.43	Mainly using the copier at the school
Office supplies	£9.54	Mainly paper and printer ink
P/News	£25.00	
Donations	£1,180.00	To the village school, Village Hall, graveyard upkeep, the Brownies, Mothers and Toddlers, and Royal British Legion.
Subscriptions	£717.18	Mainly to HATPC for legal and other help and advice.
Repair and maintenance	£1,624	Repairs to War Memorial and bus shelters and tree pollarding.
Rent	£228.77	Mainly Village Hall hire.
Chair	£100.00	For phone, post and travel expenses
Insurance	£632.83	To cover the play equipment as well as general Council risks
Bury & Westland Greens	£595.00	A contribution to the cost of cutting the grass at Bury Green
Audit	£120.00	The government appoints an external auditor
Banking	£54.00	
Allotments	£20.00	
Neighbourhood Plan	£6,786.49	The Council has agreed to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan.
Christmas Dinner	£567.41	Largely paid for by a grant from EHC.
Website	£261.60	Paid for by a grant from the Transparency Fund.
Misc	£118.85	Mainly refreshments for public meetings such as the Assembly.
Total debit	£23,670.70	
Surplus to carry forward to 2017/18		£18,861.45