

# **LITTLE MARLOW PARISH COUNCIL**



## **ANNUAL REPORT & CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016**



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#### **AND CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT**

##### **Geoffrey Moss Memorial Bowl Rose Bowl Presentation**

Geoffrey Moss was a former County Councillor and Chairman of the Parish Council from 1975-1980. He gave this rose bowl to the Parish Council and asked them to present it annually to any resident of Little Marlow who in the opinion of the Parish Council had given outstanding service to the community. Nominations are made by Councillors and the person with the most votes is awarded the bowl. It gives me great pleasure to present the Geoffrey Moss Memorial Rose Bowl this year to Dallas Banfield in recognition of the many years of service he has given to this Parish.

Dallas served on the Parish Council for 28 years, 23 of them as Chairman. Leading the Council for such a long period of time and ensuring that the Council met its responsibilities to its parishioners at all times and that it was a good steward of all the assets entrusted to it is an outstanding piece of service in itself. As Chairman of the Parish Council, he represented the Parish Council and, of course, the parishioners of Little Marlow at countless meetings of outside bodies, and always made sure that he protected the interests of Little Marlow parishioners. The respect with which Dallas was held is reflected in the fact that he was elected Chair of the Wycombe District Association of Local Councils. He also represented the Parish Council at many ceremonial events, thus enhancing Little Marlow's profile. But Dallas is also a hands-on man and over the years he must have saved the Council and by extension the parishioners a lot of money by taking on many of the jobs which needed doing around the Parish such as scrubbing and oiling the floor of this hall, painting the pavilion, fitting the kitchen here having first been to collect all the cabinets from IKEA, deep cleaning the pavilion and Abbotsbrook several times and taking part in the annual working parties at the cemetery.

Dallas' service to the Community is not limited to his work as a Parish Councillor. He has also served the community through being a warden of St John the Baptist Church for many years. Although he is no longer a warden, he continues to serve the community through his support of church activities.

This is just a very brief resume of the outstanding service Dallas has given to the community. I am sure that you will agree that he is a very deserving recipient of the memorial rose bowl.



*Dallas represented with the Rose Bowl by Chairman Valerie Brownridge*

### **Annual Report given by Chairman of Little Marlow Parish Council – Mrs Valerie Brownridge**

It gives me great pleasure to present my first Chairman's report.

During the year, your Council has had 9 full Council meetings and the various Council sub-committees have met on a number of occasions. Your Councillors have represented the Council on numerous outside bodies including the Wycombe District Association of Local Councils, Chepping Wycombe Local Area Forum, Rural Forum, Future of our Village group, the Marlow Society, the Marlow Community Forum, the River Thames Alliance, the Abbey Barn South Liaison Group, the Thames Water Liaison Group, the Spade Oak Liaison committee and the Little Marlow Lakes Community Partnership and has participated in the Little Marlow School Working Party. My thanks to all of the Councillors who give up their time to attend these meetings. The Clerk and a number of Councillors have also attended various training courses and Local Plan consultations.

We have produced two newsletters, both of which have been bumper editions. We hope you enjoyed reading them. We have re-organised our website and put a lot more information onto it in our aim to be as transparent and informative as possible. May I also remind you that we now have a twitter feed.

Our big achievement this year has been gaining Quality Award Status in the new Local Council Award Scheme. We are immensely proud of this and of the fact that we were one of the first Parish Councils in Bucks to do so. We are also delighted that our Clerk, Emma Marsden, passed her Certificate in Local Council Administration which was no mean achievement.

Turning now to our main areas of activity during the year:

### **Abbotsbrook Hall**

We have had a few boiler problems this year. I would like to apologise to all users who have had to put up with a chilly hall. The good news is that a new boiler has been installed so you will no longer have to put on three jumpers when you come to an event or activity at the hall. I hope that you were all impressed with the car park as you arrived this evening. We have levelled the car park, repaired the pot-holes and

created a new soak-away. The outside of the hall has been cleaned and we have new lights and a projector screen.

### **Pavilion and Recreation Ground**

We have had a few boiler problems at the Pavilion too. More apologies to users! We think that these are now resolved but if not we will replace the boiler here too. We have made a number of improvements to the playground. At the other end of the recreation ground, the Bourne End Junior Sports Club installed some new goal posts. As well as sprucing up some of the equipment, we have installed two new springers, a new wobble board and with the help of a donation from the Amenities Committee have installed a new picnic table. The outside walls of the pavilion have also been cleaned and it is now looking much smarter. The Parish Office has been redecorated and re-organised, hopefully making it easier for parishioners to visit the Clerk.

### **Burial Ground**

We are a couple of steps further on with our project to improve access to the burial ground for officials and funeral corteges by creating a bell-mouth onto Sheepridge Lane. Since the last meeting we have received planning permission to widen the entrance which meant that we could go ahead and remove some of the hedgerow to the North of the entrance in order to improve the sight line for vehicles exiting onto Sheepridge Lane. The next stage will be to create the bell-mouth. We held our usual working party at the Cemetery in November. It was such a windy day that we were unable to have our usual bonfire but in spite of the high winds we managed to do quite a bit of leaf and ivy clearing. Many thanks to all those who came along to help.

### **Street Lighting**

We are continuing our policy of replacing defective street lights with LED lighting which is more efficient and cost effective to run. We are in the process of replacing two lights in Winchbottom Lane and a replacement lantern has also been ordered for Coldmoorholm Lane. I would just like to remind you that lights belonging to the Parish Council have a label showing our phone number. If you see one not working please tell the Clerk.

### **Roads and road safety**

We have made quite a lot of progress on the road safety front this year. Since the last APM, Zeebright beacons have been installed on the zebra crossing on the A4155 at Well End, a Vehicle Activated Sign will be installed on Sheepridge Lane on 6 June thanks in large part to the efforts of our County and District Councillor, David Watson, and our Clerk, Emma, the Green Path connecting Chepping Wycombe Parish to Little Marlow Parish has been extended onto Heath End Road using funding from the Local Area Forum and we have been allocated CIL funding to develop the C100 Green Path starting from the Rebellion Brewery and finishing at Pump Lane North.

### **Allotments**

Rubbish which had accumulated on the allotments has been cleared away into a skip hired by the Council. We are planning to improve the numbering of the plots over the summer and to increase the allotment fees from 2017/18.

## **General**

Bucks County Council devolved a number of services to the Parish Council in April 2015 including grass cutting in 30mph areas around the parish, slip clearance, some hedge-cutting, street sign cleaning and removal of unauthorised signs and fly-posting. The budget allocated for this work was much less than BCC had spent on these services in the past and we knew that we would have a shortfall in funding, but our experience of this first year is that we have managed to provide a better service to our parishioners than we would have received had we not gone down the devolved services route.

In order to obtain the Quality Award, we were required to draw up an Action Plan setting out the Parish Council's objectives for the coming year. The Council actually found this quite a useful exercise as it made us think more strategically about what we were trying to achieve as a Council. I am pleased to say that we met most of our objectives. You will find copies of last year's Action Plan and our Action Plan for next year on our website. I have a few copies here.

We were also obliged to ensure that we had a whole raft of policies in place ranging from Health and Safety to Equal Opportunities to Community Engagement. We already had quite a few of the required policies in place. We took the opportunity to update these and to put any missing ones in place. This is all designed to make us a better Council.

The Council commissioned a tree survey of all the trees on Council owned Land in order to improve the management of the trees for which we are responsible.

Little Marlow Village was runner up in the Gurney Cup in the Best Kept Village Competition. We have entered the 2016 competition and judging takes place in June and July. The Parish Council hope to have a stand at the Little Marlow Village Fete again on August Bank holiday Monday. We hope you will come and see us there.

I would like to end by saying thank you to a few people: first of all we are all really grateful to the Bourne End Junior Sports Club and Little Marlow Cricket Club for looking after the recreation ground and particularly to Richard Tedham for his hard work in keeping the ground in such excellent condition. I would like to thank Christine Samuels, the caretaker of Abbotsbrook Hall, Jane Vincent who is our allotments warden, Greg Taylor the contractor who amongst other duties looks after the burial ground and Peter Lovell the cleaner. We are fortunate to have two active Residents' Associations and I would like to thank the two Chairmen, Jason Downes and Richard Boas, for their support and co-operation. I am also grateful to County and District Councillors David Johncock, David Watson and John Savage for taking such a keen interest in the affairs of our parish, for the support they have given us this year on a number of issues and for attending our Parish Council meetings. Finally, I would like to thank the Parish Councillors for their commitment and hard work throughout the year, much of it done behind the scenes and, of course, our wonderful Clerk, Emma Marsden, who provides enormous support to all Councillors, but particularly to me. She keeps us all on track and makes sure that the Parish Council does what it should be doing which is providing the best possible service it can to all its parishioners.

## Parish Accounts.

### ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
Abbotsbrook Hall	£12,016	£7,929
Allotments	£470	£1,088
Burial Ground	£17,485	£15,399
Pavilion / Recreation Grd	£5,648	£11,462
Street Lighting	£0	£3,843
Precept	£40,650	£0
Devolved Services	£4837	£2931
Grants	£8,075	£87
Administration	£725	£41,058
Precept	£42,065	£0
<b>Full Council to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016</b>	<b>£91,320</b>	<b>£83,796</b>

### Little Marlow Parish Council Bank Accounts – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016

<b>Current Account</b>	<b>£9,569.44</b>
<b>Precept Account</b>	<b>£345.55</b>
<b>Petty Cash</b>	<b>£39,446.59</b>
<b>Reserves Account</b>	<b>£5,583.75</b>

### Planning Report

This was presented by Cllr Fitchew as Chairman of the Planning Committee. A fairly busy year one or two contentious and time consuming applications which I'll come onto in a moment. This year the Council considered 24 applications for tree works in the conservation areas and three other applications for change of use, signage etc. Councillors made 12 site visits and consulted neighbours where possible. Councillors have attended liaison groups to inform the District Council on local feelings and I must thank the extra work many of your Councillors do in attending these meetings and without their assistance the PC would be less informed.

The Solar Farm application caused concern in the field in to the south A4155 at Little Marlow. The Planning application was turned down due to the following reasons:

- 1) Substantial harm to the green belt
- 2) Conflicts with the allocations of the site as a Country Park
- 3) Unacceptable impact on the Chilterns Area of outstanding natural beauty.

Westhorpe House – possible development a girls school has been muted but no further interest, possibly due to lack of amenity space. Now a application for a referral Veterinary Hospital. This has generated considerable objections from local residents concerned about noise nuisance.

The Black Lion in Well End has changed hands and there is concern that it may be lost and developed as houses. Local residents have formed a Committee to get the Black Lion registered as a Community Asset Value.

### **Other Reports**

The Chairman introduced Mike Mahoney from Wycombe Phoenix Harriers who kindly agreed to present at the Councils APM.

Mike Mahoney from Wycombe Phoenix Harriers (WPH)

WPH is a community based club who moved from Handy Cross to Little Marlow when the new Athletics Track facility was built there. They are very mindful of the problems experienced last year in regards to parking and excessive noise. They are pleased to be working with Little Marlow Parish Council to generate good community relations. Their membership consists of approximately 250 - from juniors to seniors.

The club runs an annual cross country competition for local schools in the Autumn at Hughenden Park. The Athletes compete in local leagues and national leagues throughout the summer. All coaches are affiliated to England Athletics and are all DBS checked and first aid trained.

WPH has a reputation of providing first class officials for athletics meetings and are regularly called upon by other clubs. They run training nights on Tuesday and Thursday 7-8.30pm and Sunday mornings. WPH run three events during the year and are very keen to make sure there are no problems regarding parking etc. They are open to ideas and wish to become part of the community.