



ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

CHAIRMANS REPORT



This report is to bring you up-to-date with what has been happening at Aldenhams Parish Council (APC) over the last 12 months. Last year we were unable to hold an annual parish meeting due to the Covid pandemic. Fortunately, this year we are getting back to a more normal way of life and are delighted that we can welcome you once again at the Radlett Centre.

Although nearly all of our Council business has been carried out online over the last year, a lot has been going on. One major event was the passing of the Radlett Neighbourhood Plan (RNP), which was approved at referendum in May 2021. The plan involved a huge amount of work by members of the Steering Group and working parties, all of whom gave their time generously over the last 4 years to ensure that a cohesive plan was adopted to help preserve the verdant and special nature of Radlett.

One important benefit of adopting the RNP is that the Parish is now awarded 25% of any community infrastructure levy (CIL) paid by developers, which can be used for capital projects within the Radlett Plan area. All other areas of the Parish receive 15% of CIL funding. If you wish to apply to APC for CIL funding for a capital project, please get in touch with the APC office who can advise you on how to proceed.

Over the last year, CIL funding has been spent on

- New community garden at Aldenhams Memorial Hall
- Replacement drainage pump at Radlett Bowls Club
- New entrance door, accessibility slope to Scout Hut and associated works – 1st Radlett Scout Group
- Architect fees for drawing up plans for proposed café facility at Phillimore Rec

In addition, there are also general Grants available up to the value of £18,712 for local societies and organisations, should they need financial support.

Another plan which we have encountered this year was the publishing of the draft Hertsmere Local Plan which set out Hertsmere Borough Council's (HBC) blueprint for development over the next 15 years. Regrettably, in order to meet government housing requirements, HBC earmarked large areas of green belt in order to meet the housing target. The significant loss of green belt was robustly opposed by a record number of residents with the result that the current local plan has been put on hold. APC continues to lobby Oliver Dowden MP, to press for the housing requirement to be reduced so that it will not be necessary to use swathes of green belt.

This year APC in conjunction with 'Inspire All' were once again able to run the children's summer activities in August, which proved very popular. The activities were held at Phillimore Recreation Ground where plans are underway to build a café, following feedback from users that they would like somewhere more permanent

than a coffee kiosk. We are delighted to announce that Phillimore Recreation Ground has been awarded Green Flag status. We would like to place on record our thanks to the Open Spaces Team, in particular, David Jenkins, who pushed this initiative forward.

Another activity popular with younger residents is the Winter Fair and Christmas lights switch-on. This year we ran a competition for younger children to design a logo to promote the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The prize, which was won by Ioannis from Fairfield School was to switch on the Christmas lights. We are thrilled with the winning design and you will see it on all of our literature in connection with the Platinum Jubilee.

Many of you may be unaware why the first hour of parking in Newberries car park is free. For many years APC has paid HBC a sum to offset the cost of the first hour's parking to encourage residents to use the shops on the High Street. This payment has been the same for many years but recently Hertsmere requested a significant increase. The Parish Council has negotiated a gradual increase as we do believe that residents would wish this first free hour to continue.

One significant event last year was the successful opposition of the application to build an approximately 130 hectare solar farm south of Radlett Village. In order to oppose the application, the parish council employed a consultant and along with local opposition were successful in persuading the Hertsmere Borough Councillors who sit on the planning committee to oppose the application. It is of note that the planning officer supported the application.

The coming year is likely to be an exciting one for us all. We are looking forward to celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June, with a beacon lighting and street party. To mark this auspicious occasion, the parish council has been given 130 hazel whips to be planted in Salters Field as part of the Queen's Green Canopy scheme. They will join an oak sapling that was planted in January, to mark 80 years since the formation of the Association of Jewish Refugees. The planting of the oak tree was attended by representatives of all faiths in the village along with the sponsor, who is a resident of Aldenham. It is encouraging to think that in years to come an area of grassland will become a copse with all the benefits that trees bring to the environment.

There have been a number of changes to the way the council functions over the last year. We have disbanded the Open Spaces Committee and the Community Development Committee, and set up designated working parties in their place. We are still legally required to have full council meetings, a planning committee and a finance and general purposes committee. We have set up a separate body to look after the maintenance of King George V playing fields, and working parties to address, among other things, improvements to Phillimore Recreation Ground, an Allotment Holders working party and an Access for All working party. In addition we have a very active working party to prepare for the celebrations for the Platinum Jubilee. If you would like to join one of them, we would love to hear from you!

This year has been a difficult one for staff, and for many months the office staff have worked from home. However, the Open Spaces team has continued to work throughout the pandemic, and we are very grateful to them.

Over the last 12 months, Wendy McClean, who was the officer for the Open Spaces team, retired. APC were delighted to welcome a new member of staff, Sarah Heighton as an Officer in January. I'm sure all the councillors will join us in thanking Peter Evans, our Council Manager and Monika Duong, his deputy, for all their continued hard work. They have worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth running of the office in another difficult year.

Lastly, at the time of writing this report in April, the situation in Ukraine continues to worsen and our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have lost loved ones in this terrible war.

Councillor Jackie Lefton and Councillor Estelle Samuelson

Co-chairs, Aldenham Parish Council

Insert photos of Estelle
Samuelson & Jackie Lefton