



Report of the
Denham Parish Council
Annual Meeting

Held on
16th May 2018

Denham Parish Council – Annual Committee Reports 2018

On behalf of the Denham Parish Council Annual Meeting

by their Chairman, Cllr. Marilyn Heath

Firstly a 'big thank you' to our guest speakers for enlightening us about their roles in the community. I'm quite sure we all learnt something from them. I trust the following committee reports will also be of interest to you and throw some light on the workings of your Parish Council. Furthermore, I'd like to thank all the councillors and the office team for their hard work and support throughout the year.

There are many challenges facing us this year, with HS2 increasing traffic demands on local roads and with Government directives to find land to build houses and offices, forcing ever more pressure on our Green Belt.

Amongst many other things, we will be focusing on our Neighbourhood Planning proposals and our Good Neighbour Scheme, both of which require involvement by residents. So, we would like to hear from you – because you really can help us to make a difference.

All of us on the Parish Council work together to represent all the residents in Denham, so you can approach any of us to discuss issues you may have about the area. When decisions are made, we like to consider how it affects the whole parish. However, Denham is split into three wards which we felt should have been amalgamated into one when the District Councillors were. To correct this, in March this year we sent a proposal to South Bucks District Council requesting Denham was made into one ward. We hope to receive a response from them soon.

We are also eager to hear the decision on whether we will have a one or two Unitary council, there is a report about that later, and we hope it will be for a single Unitary so that we can take on more devolved services. One or two parishes are trialling pot hole filling and if that works out we may be able to take it on under devolved services.

Annual Report on behalf of the Planning Committee 2018

by their Chairman, Cllr. Sylvia Jefferys

Whilst the Parish Council is consulted by the District and County Councils on planning matters, this is in an advisory capacity only. With the benefit of local knowledge, the Parish Council endeavours to give practical local views to the County & District Councils and hopes these are taken into consideration when making their decisions. The committee is always keen to hear resident's views on developments occurring near them and encourage you to copy us in on any communication you have with the County & District Council, so that we are aware of your views and can consider them when passing our comments.

The DeLuxe Studios site in Broadwater Park, North Orbital Road, is now fully underway with some residents already moved in. It has planning permission for the redevelopment of 70 new houses, 105 apartments and the conversion of the film laboratory building into 49 new apartments, with the retention of the existing cinema for resident's use. Some properties are available under an affordable housing scheme, so if you would like to know more about this we would encourage you to contact the site office for more information.

As many residents will be aware Denham Parish Council and residents are moving forward with a Neighbourhood Plan. The purpose of this plan is to help shape the future of developments required in the area. Once a Neighbourhood Plan is in force, it carries real legal weight and developers are obliged to consider proposals for schemes in the area against our Neighbourhood Plan, so it is very much in your interest to get involved. A series of meetings are taking place to cover the 5 following geographical areas of Denham: -

- * Tatting End, Bakers Wood & Broken Gate Lane
- * Denham Green
- * Higher Denham
- * New Denham, Willowbank & Kings Island

* Denham Village, including the A40

in which residents are encouraged to come along and discuss their suggestions and ideas for future planning in the area. Please contact the Parish Council office for details of meetings in your area.

Annual Report on behalf of the Communities & Events Committee 2018
by their Chairman, Cllr. Sharon Williams

We have held a number of events in the past year including;

A Social evening for all our helpers/volunteers which was held in the Higher Denham Social Club, compliments of their committee.

Tea dances with Bingo where New Denham Community Association kindly let us use their hall. We have so far held three of these and everybody who has attended has always gone home happy. We lay on tea and sandwiches and pretty small cakes.

The 'Beating of the bounds' which took in the north-east boundary of the parish and was a very enjoyable walk.

We took a stall at the Denham Village Fayre selling teas& coffees and talking about our Good Neighbour Scheme to encourage volunteers to join us.

We held three 'Jazz' events on Denham Village green

Our first Armed Forces Day was held at St Mary's Church

We ran our third Denham Green Christmas Fayre and

Organised Christmas Carols with both schools, Brownies and both church choirs on Denham Village Green around the Christmas Tree which was again kindly donated and erected by the Buckinghamshire Golf Club and decorated by the village residents.

Our website has now been updated so please take a look.

We are still organising a Denham Good Neighbour Scheme where volunteers go and visit our more elderly community and those in need, even if just for a chat, change a lightbulb, give them a lift somewhere, etc.

Besides arranging for the War Memorial to be professionally cleaned later this year, we are looking at adding 33 names of people who died in WWI to a plaque, which would be located near to the present War Memorial.

Our Parish Map and Street Guide is also being updated to take into account the new areas that have been developed - Kings Island, Landmark House and the Denham Film Studios

We are also asking residents in Denham Green for their views about the future of the Denham Green Christmas Fayre. We are proposing this is held on Sunday 25 November 12 - 4pm this year as it was so bitterly cold in the evening last year. However, we also need volunteers to help us run this otherwise it won't happen this year. A notice has gone out on the Denham Facebook page about this.

This year's events now being organised are;

Another social afternoon with tea/bingo/dancing

Four jazz afternoons on the village green 20/5; 17/6; 15/7; 19/8; 16/9

Armed Forces Day at St Mary's 30/6

WWI Centenary at Denham Village Infants School 23/9 where they will also be celebrating 140 years

We are also looking at lighting our Beacon on the Alderbourne Field on the evening of Remembrance Sunday

Annual Report on behalf of the Finance Committee 2018
by their Chairman, Cllr. Amarjeet Hans

I'd like to give you a short run down on the major decisions proposed by the Finance Committee this past year: -

A detailed review of our budget requirements was taken for the next three years with attention paid to 'ear marking reserves' for items that regularly need funding. For instance, equipment in our play areas will probably need renewing after they've been in-situ 20 to 25 years, so in order that we don't have a large cost in one year we save a little each year towards the renewal bill by 'ear marking' that money in our reserves. This practice can make our reserves look high but it is monies accounted for.

We have stringent controls in place and our internal auditors will be in later this month, followed by external auditors some weeks later.

Due to the reduced monies flowing from the government into the County & District Councils, the Parish Council has had to address more queries, complaints and requests coming in from residents. We have also been continually under pressure to respond to a large number of consultations and the increased workloads being handled by our committees has put extra pressure on our office staff.

As you will appreciate the role of the Councillors that sit on Denham Parish Council is voluntary, we have worked very hard, and indeed continue to do so, to provide the range of services that we as Parish Council are required to do. These services have formulated our budgets for next year.

Whilst working on the budgets we are looking to the future and aiming to cover several objectives, such as:

To accrue an amount each year towards the cost of equipment as it needs replacing; such as; play-ground apparatus which will need renewing over the next few years.

To continue to host events that can bring the community together

To cover some of the shortfall in County & District services

To refurbish premises in Denham Green that we hope to take over to act as a hub for the community. This can provide an area that can be used by our volunteers to run our Good Neighbor Scheme and hopefully set up a Men in Sheds type initiative to allow us to help with support for elderly residents

We have set up the Denham Community Charity in order to source more funding

As you can see there is an awful lot to achieve and we have set ourselves some high targets to meet. We are determined to do our utmost on behalf of the community and look forward to pushing ahead with our projects.

Your help would be appreciated so if you have some spare time please get in touch as it can be very rewarding to help others. Denham Parish welcomes volunteers to help us achieve our objectives.

I would also like to point out that Denham Parish continues to have one of the lowest precepts in South Bucks, and although the percentage increase is high for 2018/19, the increased costs, per week for a tax band D household is only 56p per week. I think you will agree that the relative amounts involved are very small relative to the wide range of work that is carried out by the Parish.

Annual Report on behalf of the Services Committee 2018
by their Chairman Cllr. Marilyn Heath

As you can imagine, this committee works very closely with our tfb area technician, Wayne, and we have

him to thank for many improvements that have taken place over the past year.

However, there are still some serious issues that we are continuing to push to get resolved, such as resurfacing the Pyghtle footpath and repairing broken gullies in Denham Green and Old Mill Road which continually flood causing problems for pedestrians. There is also a problem with flooding in the A412 bus stop caused by the kerb being lower than the road. Our understanding is that all these items fall under 'Major Works' and await scheduling.

You may recall that we applied to the Secretary of State for some funding from HS2, in order that we could make the footpath from Denham Station to the junction of Village Road safer for people to walk along after BCC took out the street lights. Well, we have finally got the go-ahead to install our lighting along there and hope to have it in situ before the dark evenings are back with us.

On advice from the Police we are looking to install a barrier along the Pyghtle to hinder motorcycle and moped riders.

We are also looking for an appropriate place to site our outside gym equipment and are meeting with Chiltern Rail to discuss an area along the Pyghtle near the station which might be appropriate. Meanwhile we are replacing the children's play equipment on our Alderbourne site.

We are still applying pressure to get the fly tipped field at the beginning of Old Rectory Lane cleared and some progress is being made.

At the Denham Allotments, we had the use of Community Payback Workers for many weeks to help tidy up abandoned plots. They were a great help and made a considerable difference. Since then we have established an Allotment Users Association and look forward to seeing how that progresses.

Meanwhile we are still hoping that we will have use of the old scout hut in Denham Green which we want to establish as the home for our Good Neighbour Scheme. There is quite a lot to do to make the premises habitable again as it hasn't been used for the last four years. However, with the help of our County Cllr. Roger Reed, we have managed to secure some Local Area Funding towards the refurbishment and hope we can draw on some local help to assist us.

We would also appreciate one or two residents stepping forward to help us organise litter picking days as we have now acquired 'litter picking' tools and look forward to establishing regular teams of volunteers to help keep the area clear of unsightly rubbish. Unfortunately, we cannot do the verges on the 'A roads' for safety reasons but we will continue to push the District council to do it.

Information on the New Model for Local Government in Buckinghamshire *On behalf of the Parish Council by Vice Chairman, Cllr. Julia Walsh*

We as residents are facing the biggest change in local government in Buckinghamshire for over 40 years. In 1974 legislation led to the structure of County and District councils and with the exception in 1997 of Milton Keynes district becoming a unitary council taking responsibility for all its services, the structure has remained in place ever since with a county council and four districts for the rest of Bucks. The four districts are Aylesbury Vale in the north of the county and High Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks forming the cluster in the south.

Why Change?

A number of factors are creating an impetus for changes to the organisation of local government both locally and nationally. These include:

Substantial and continuing reductions in central government grant funding for local government bodies as part of the Government's fiscal consolidation strategy to deal with the budget deficit that emerged in the wake of the 2008 banking crisis. This has led to the long term financial sustainability of two tier local government arrangements being questioned in the search for more efficient and economical ways of providing local public services;

Increasing demand for local government services arising from demographic changes, in particular a growing and ageing population profile in many local government areas;

The political and legislative impetus to devolve power from central to local government in England;

In 2014 the need for change was recognised by the business forum “ Bucks Business First” who commissioned work which led to making a case for a unitary model and Aylesbury Vale District Council also commissioned work which led to a case for a two unitary model to replace the five councils at county and district level. Bucks County Council then in 2016 invited all the councils to work on the best model for local government, the districts were not in favour and developed their own model whilst Bucks County developed its own.

The result has led to two different models being forwarded recently to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for a decision: a single unitary model for the whole county and a two unitary model covering north and south Bucks.

In March this year the Secretary of State has announced he is “minded to” accept a single unitary council covering the whole of Bucks. His statement mentioned a credible geography and a great deal of local support. There is a period of consultation until 25th May 2018 and the business case for each model can be found on the county and districts websites.

To summarise the case for each

Single Unitary Model

A new council with one point of contact for all council services

A saving of £18m per year more than a two-unitary model

A network of 18 or 19 hubs across Bucks bringing services closer to residents

Two Unitary Model

Two new local councils each having a single point of contact, north and south

Better opportunities focusing on the two different economic activities north and south (the north looks to Milton Keynes and the Oxford- Cambridge corridor; the south to Thames Valley and London)

More effective and the ability to deliver better value with £3m savings per year

Decision expected Autumn 2018 with Implementation 2020.

Denham Parish Council has voted in favour of a Single Unitary and the savings it will bring the County.

On behalf of the Denham Parish Council Annual Meeting

closure by their Chairman, Cllr. Marilyn Heath

A big thank you to all those who attended on the night. I think we all gained something from the evening and the excellent speakers sharing their roles with us and hope that you will all carry on supporting us.
