

Chelveston-cum-Caldecott News

Parish Council Annual Report 2023

This is the formal Annual Report of the Council's activities, given by the Chair, Cllr Andrew Seaman, at the Annual Parish Assembly held in the Village Hall on Monday 22nd May 2023.

This meeting completes my third year in the role of Chair, and as you will see this year has been a fairly eventful one. So, what have we been up to?

Back in May last year we laid on a training course for residents wanting to know how to apply CPR and use the defibrillators that we are installing around the parish. We signed up 7 of the parish litter bins to the "Bin Twinning" scheme, to promote awareness of global waste management issues, and organised a village litter pick where residents could learn more about the scheme.

June started with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, where our Events team provided a treasure trail, combined picture painting and a tea party in the church. We also rolled out the second defibrillator, located outside the Star & Garter.

Following the success of the bin twinning and litter pick, we formed an Environment Team, again all volunteers, to raise environmental awareness. Their first event was in July with a nature discovery day, including bat detecting in the churchyard. The Council requalified for the "Quality" award again, an external assessment by our peers that we are performing to a high standard.

In September came the sad news of HM the Queen's passing. This was an event we (like all other councils and Government departments) had been preparing for, and we marked her life of service with due respect. The parish's Book of Condolences is now in the county archives.

In October, the resident's enthusiastic response to the bin twinning scheme led to the parish being recognised as the first "bin twin community" in the UK. The Environment team organised an activity day and litter pick for the formal presentation. Later that month the Events team organised the annual Halloween and pumpkin carving competition, and it's getting quite competitive!

November saw the formal act of Remembrance in the churchyard, and the Council signed up to the Civility and Respect pledge (now adopted by over 1,200 local councils) to commit to appropriate behaviours in public life.

The new grant funded microphone and mixer system installation was completed in January, so the attending public can hear what every Councillor says, not just those with a loud voice!

In February, our contractor sided out four footways, leading the local WhatsApp group to "praise the young lad's efforts". The Events team ran their first team quiz of 2023 (sold out) and we successfully applied for a member empowerment fund grant from NNC Cllr Harriet Pentland, allowing us to purchase more litter pick kits.

In April the Council agreed to fund one of the three replacement trees in the churchyard, which was dedicated to the Queen's Green Canopy (totalling 3 million trees in all). The Environment team ran a "Welcome Spring" event, that including feeding lambs (supplied by Lancaster Farm). Also in April, the Community Speed Watch volunteers, led by Cllr Clinton Hill, were out and about on the Raunds Road, whilst the Events team organised a Coronation Crafts event.

Lastly, in May, the Events team prepared bunting and vases of tulips donated by Bloms Bulbs for the Coronation weekend, culminating in a community picnic in the paddock at the rear of the Village Hall.

So a very active year and I thank all the volunteers and Councillors who helped make it all happen.

Throughout the year the Council issued the regular bimonthly newsletters free to each household, plus three special editions on the environment and one on preparing for possible power cuts over winter (thankfully they didn't happen).

Along with this newsletter is a copy of the updated Village Welcome booklet, which contains useful contact details. After all the current households have received one, we will issue further copies to new residents moving into the parish.

The Parish Council is partly financed through a local tax (called the Precept) on each household which is collected by the NNC. It was decided to raise the Precept slightly for 2022-23 to £12,000, which for a Band D property makes the cost around £54.05, or about £1.04 a week. Hopefully you feel this is money well spent.

Cllr Andrew Seaman,
Chair of the Parish Council

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Finance for the year ending 31st March 2023 (*draft and unaudited figures*).

Starting with the headline figures –

Balance brought forward	£ 9,958.49
Receipts in year	£ 29,619.38
Expenditure in year	<u>£-29,529.16</u>
Balance carried forward	£ 10,048.71

The receipts were made up of -

Precept	£ 11,700.00	
Grants to the Council	£ 5,990.06	NNC, Windfarm Trust, and Foulger Trust.
Sale of marquee	£ 757.00	
Allotment receipts	£ 620.00	Rents, shed bonds, and Association funds
Bank interest	£ 73.48	
Donation to the Council	£ 51.00	£1 donated by the Chair to pay the Clerk.
VAT (recovery)	£ 10,427.84	Claimed back from HMRC.

The Council calculates how much it needs in November for the next year and tells NNC the Precept amount in January. Then from April, it's collected from the residents as part of the Council Tax. There are around 239 houses in the parish, but some have discounts (e.g. single occupancy, etc.), so the full paying equivalent number is reduced to 222. This gave a typical Band D figure of £11,700 / (222*52) = £1.01 a week for 2022-23.

[For 2023-24, the Precept has been increased to £12,000, so for a typical Band D property the figures are now £12,000 / (222*52) = £1.04 a week].

The expenditure was -

Grass cutting/ground works	£ 9,691.82	
New equipment	£ 4,746.92	Flagpole, flags, sound system, litter pick kits
E-Government	£ 3,199.96	Includes services such as accounting
Memorials maintenance	£ 1,910.00	305 th BG - steam clean and repaint
Defibrillators	£ 1,316.87	Outside the <i>Star & Garter</i>
St Lighting (Power)	£ 615.65	
Subscriptions	£ 526.63	
Annual audit	£ 488.00	
Allotment costs	£ 385.12	Lease, shed bond refunds
Insurance	£ 371.56	
Environment Team	£ 344.09	
Stationery/Printing	£ 334.17	
QPJ costs	£ 301.67	
Training	£ 250.00	
Gen Admin	£ 235.74	
Events Team	£ 178.99	
NDP review	£ 119.90	
Clerk's salary	£ 1.00	Donated by the Chair.
VAT (recoverable)	£ 4,511.07	To be claimed back from HMRC.

The Council owns the 305th BG memorial site, and the allotment site is leased from a local farmer.

The Council as at May 2023.

Chair: Andrew Seaman, *Rosemoor*, Raunds Road.
Vice: Jennifer Harwood, 7 Britten Close.
Sarah Cinnamond, 44 The Crescent, Chelston Rise.
Andy Cuthbert, 38 The Crescent, Chelston Rise.

Clinton Hill, 52 The Crescent, Chelston Rise.
Carol Parsons, 5 Pokas Cottages.
Peter Smith, 2 Bidwell Lane, Caldecott
Clerk: Mark Hunter, *Ashbury*, Caldecott (626039).

E-mails to the Council on Clerk@chelveston-pc.gov.uk