

Chelveston-cum-Caldecott News

Parish Council Annual Report 2024

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 13th May 2024.

This Assembly meeting completes my 4th year in the role of Chair, and as you will see this year the Council has been fairly busy.

Back in May 23 a detachment from the 305th Air Mobility Wing, USAF, presented a Guidon (unit colour) to the parish at a service at St Johns. The Council funds the use and cleaning of the Village Hall as a changing area for the servicemen during their visits.

June brought a letter from King Charles III thanking the parish for our book of condolences for the late Queen Elizabeth. For the first time in the Council's history, we removed a Councillor through non-attendance. Hopefully this unfortunate event will not be repeated.

August saw the passing of Derek Lawson MBE, who had been a long serving member of the former District and County Councils. He helped get our village gateways installed, and our first vehicle activated sign. As a mark of respect the parish flag was flown at half-mast on the day of his funeral.

In September the Events team ran their annual Fun Dog Show in the paddock at the rear of the Village Hall, with new signage and a portable PA system.

In October the Environment team held their Autumn litter pick, whilst 12 teams took part in a quiz night with a fish & chip supper, organised by the Events team.

The new allotments have been going for 14 years now, and some of the sheds are nearly life expired, so the Council is replacing them over the next two years. Thanks to a grant from the Foulger Trust, the first 4 have been replaced at no cost to the parish.

November saw the formal act of Remembrance in the churchyard, and I laid a wreath on behalf of the Council and residents.

In December the Events team raised the canopy of the Cherry tree on the junction at the Green, and decorated it for Christmas with pre-loved baubles from the St John's Christmas Fair.

The New Year celebrations were followed by storm Henk, bringing some trees down and flooding in the parish. As a "lessons learned" we asked Northants Highways if they could fit depth gauge marker posts to the two fords, to reduce the risk of motorists being stranded. Five months on and we are still waiting. Highways agree it's a good idea, it's just they have no experience of how to fit them.

A damaged "30" sign in Water Lane also caused Highways some problems – they replaced the sign quickly, but it took another 3 months of chasing for them to retrieve the old one from the brook.

Likewise, we approached Highways for information on the public consultation support required for a 20 mph limit in the centre of Chelveston to aid safe crossing – and we are still waiting.

February saw the repair of the illuminated bollard at Hillside – another simple task that took the landowner 15 months to complete, and only by the Council getting the NNC Health Protection Team and the local HSE division involved in enforcement action.

In March the Council was awarded over £6,700 from the NNC Household Support Fund to cover the replacement of the remaining 12 allotment sheds, again at no cost to the parish.

In April the Environment team held their Spring litter pick, and purchased three environmental books (by a Northants conservationist) to share. These will be used to help trigger practical action in the parish.

Finally, in May, the Road Safety Community Fund approved a grant of £2,801. This will see two of our Speed Indicator Devices converted to solar power and the third to mains, so that they can work every day without relying on volunteers to change the heavy battery packs.

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 a special edition covering the Annual Report.

Cllr Andrew Seaman
Chair of the Parish Council.

80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings.

- The official D-Day 80 years flag will be flown from 9am on Thursday 6th June for one week.
- The Events team will decorate the Cherry tree on the junction at the Green for the anniversary.
- There will be an information board at the back of St Johns telling the story of 2819 (Light Anti-Aircraft) Sqn, RAF Regiment, from being formed at RAF Chelveston to victory in Germany via landing at Juno beach in Normandy.

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Finance for the year ending 31st March 2024 (draft and unaudited figures).

Starting with the headline figures –

Balance brought forward	£ 10,048.71
Receipts in year	£ 26,022.59
Expenditure in year	£ -23,956.05
Balance carried forward	£ 12,115.25

The Receipts were made up of -

Precept	£ 12,000.00	
Grants to the Council	£ 10,234.83	NNC (x2), Windfarm Trust (x2), and Foulger Trust.
Allotment receipts	£ 705.00	Rents, shed bonds, and Association funds contribution.
Bank interest	£ 217.98	
Donation to the Council	£ 26.00	£1 donated by the Chair to pay the Clerk.
VAT (recovered)	£ 2,838.78	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 240 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 £12,000 / (222*52) = £1.04 a week for 2023-24.

[For 2024-25, the Precept has increased to £12,300, but the number of houses paying the equivalent full rate has dropped to 218, so for a typical Band D property the figures are now £12,300 / (218*52) = £1.09 a week].

The Expenditure was -

Grass cutting/ground works	£ 7,770.00	
Allotment costs	£ 5,652.21	Lease, shed bond refunds, 16 new sheds
Defibrillators	£ 1,601.77	For Chelston Rise
E-Government	£ 1,162.72	ISP, software services such as accounting, mapping
Stationery/Printing	£ 593.91	
QPJ & QGC costs	£ 579.00	Queen's Green Canopy tree in the churchyard.
Subscriptions	£ 499.01	
Annual audit	£ 466.00	
St Lighting (Power)	£ 452.72	
Insurance	£ 393.22	
Training	£ 390.00	
Events Team	£ 364.34	
New equipment	£ 301.60	Planter for outside the <i>Star & Garter</i>
Gen Admin	£ 228.24	
Environment Team	£ 187.85	
KCIII coronation event	£ 160.68	
Winter grit bin refills	£ 128.52	
Memorial maintenance	£ 8.49	
Clerk's salary	£ 1.00	Donated by the Chair.
VAT (recoverable)	£ 3,014.77	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 2024

Chair: Andrew Seaman, *Rosemoor*, Raunds Road
Vice: Jenny Harwood, 7 Britten Close
Andy Cuthbert, 38 The Crescent, Chelston Rise
Clinton Hill, 52 The Crescent, Chelston Rise

Carol Parsons, 5 Pokas Cottages
Martyn Rixson, 2 High Street
Peter Smith, 2 Bidwell Lane, Caldecott
Clerk: Mark Hunter, *Ashbury*, Caldecott