

# WEEDON PARISH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

### Best Kept Village in 2018

Weren't we all delighted last year to see Weedon WIN, for the second time in 3 years, the 2018 Bucks Best Kept Village contest for villages of under 500 residents?

Weedon is a small village of 173 homes with a rich built heritage, set in a designated Area of Attractive Landscape.

Over half the homes are in one of the two Conservation Areas and 21 are Listed Buildings.

Weedon Parish Council is proud to serve this unique community. There are seven elected members, who are supported by the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer—the only (part-time) employee of the Council.

The responsibilities of the Parish Council can be summed up as caring for the village environment and representing the interests of the parish within the larger

local government context. Parish councillors not only attend meetings, but also take on the management and



delivery of different projects on an unpaid basis.

The Council is also grateful to the many villagers who carry out particular voluntary jobs, as well as to those who make generous monetary donations.

One of the ways EVERYONE shows their commitment to the village is in the tremendous response to our

2019 Certificate of Merit in the Tindall Cup for 2018 winners

annual entry into the Best Kept Village contest.

It's not just the lovely environment that makes Weedon so special. The multitude of community activities is quite remarkable for the relatively small number of people.

We still have a vibrant pub and restaurant, thanks to the villager owners and award-winning publicans John and Carol Slee. Our village hall is thriving, thanks to the work of its charity trustees, and Weedon Village Association puts on a different community event just about every month.

Weedon is a great place to live. Let's all strive to keep it that way.



Report for year ended  
March 2019

Issued July 2019

### Parish Council Responsibilities

#### DIRECT

- Park and Play Area
- Pond and Surrounds
- War Memorial • Parish Pump
- Chapel Graveyard
- Streetlights (24)
- Salt, Waste and Dog Bins
- Street Seats and Benches
- Noticeboards (4) • Website
- MVAS Speed Signs • Defibrillator
- New Road Trees

#### AS AGENT FOR BUCKS CC

- Grass Verges (inside 30mph), and flower plantings
- Village Green Triangle
- Cleaning of Streets and Roadsigns
- Monitoring Public Footpaths, Roads and Pavements to keep clear

#### AS CONSULTEE TO AVDC

- On planning applications
- On Local Development Plans

### Parish Council Plans for 2019/20

#### REPLACEMENT AND ADDITIONAL LITTER BINS

- ◇ New covered wood-effect bins at the Park and the Pond, plus black bins at the crossroads and upper New Road, and green bins at both bus stops on the A413.

#### HERITAGE-STYLE FINGERPOST SIGN AT THE VILLAGE GREEN TRIANGLE

- ◇ We're pressing Bucks CC to install the agreed signpost soon.

#### SPEED MONITORING AND FEASIBILITY STUDY

- ◇ Following approval from Thames Valley Police, we'll carry out volunteer-led unannounced speed camera operations at various times and locations.
- ◇ Feasibility study of speed control measures in other villages to assess options.

#### RECREATION SPACE LAND REVIEW

- ◇ Investigate options for a flat piece of land for more recreation space.

## Our village pond, pump and green

The **pond** and its margins are owned by the PC, and a contractor regularly cuts the grass, trims plants and clears weeds.

Steve and Jayne Richards ensure that the ducks have daily access to the food paid for by the Parish Council, and they funded a new duck food bin to keep the food dry and secure.

The PC is also grateful to other volunteers who put the icing on the cake when it comes to the look of the village.

The barrel on the **Village Green Triangle** outside the pub was renewed last year, and Clare Macdonald makes a lovely show of planting it up.

The **High Street Pump Trough** always looks neat and pretty, courtesy of Christine and Nic Nicolay.

Margaret Askew is responsible for the beautiful seasonal displays in the **Old Schoolroom Flower Tubs**, helped by other members of the hall committee.



## Our hedgerows, verges and trees

### Hedgerow Havens

In 2018/19, the PC was approached by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust – BBOWT – to participate in their “Hedgerow Havens” project. This is a three-county-wide initiative to restore hedgerows and create miniature wildflower meadows on road verges to provide a vital resource for native wildlife and increase biodiversity.

The PC was inspired to go ahead with BBOWT, and the first steps were taken in 2018/19. Management will be ongoing way into the future and we are already seeing signs of its success.

- WEEDON HEDGEROW HAVENS**
- Create three **wildflower verges**.
    1. Middle stretch of Aston Abbots Road from Field House to no. 81
    2. Lower High Street from no. 64 to the village gate
    3. Top of Aston Abbots Road from no. 95 one side and the garages on the other, to the village gates
  - Re-plant and lay the **rear hedge of the graveyard** with native species.
  - Plant **fruit trees** in the Park.



**Volunteer working party planting and laying hedge to the rear of the graveyard**

### Other hedges, verges and trees

The PC has continued its “devolved services” contract with Bucks CC for the highways. This includes **grass verge cutting** within the 30mph signs, minor highways maintenance works such as sign cleaning, pavement weed-killing and street sweeping.

Hedges and trees overhanging roads, pavements or verges are the landowner’s

responsibility, and the PC acts as agent for BCC to get these trimmed back.

Last year all the grass verges were close-cut, following the previous Bucks regime.

This year, three stretches of verge have been designated as Wildflower Verges as part of *Hedgerow Havens*. The new management started in March. The chosen verges back on to fields, rather

than houses. This allows a contrast between the “wilder” areas and the neat, cut grass of the verges edging pavements in front of homes.

The PC continues to look after the **trees along New Road**, funded by villagers in 2007, and the **flowering bulbs**, so that we can enjoy their Spring displays. With the new wildflower verges, we can look forward to Summer flowers, too.

## Our community contact systems

The Weedon **website** is hosted by a local company, paid for and maintained by the Parish Council. All village community organisations have free access to their

site areas to update them. Important village information is **emailed** to all those on a confidential list, and the PC issues its annual report free to every household.

The PC helps keep **noticeboards** up to date, and last year we were very grateful to Simon Gibbs for refurbishing the noticeboard outside Providence Place.

## Our streets and building conservation areas

The PC looks after seats and benches around the village. A smart new very sturdy wood-effect seat was installed at the corner of Aston Abbots Road and East End, to replace the bench which had rotted away. It's in a sunny but sheltered spot, with good visibility so that users can see the bus coming, while waiting in relative comfort for the weekly service.

The 24 **street lights** are maintained by the PC, and it pays for the electricity to power them from dusk to dawn.

The PC also provides **litter bins** and **dog**

**waste bins**, which are emptied weekly by AVDC under contract. A new dog bin was installed on the track opposite Lilies.

A green **grit/salt bin** has been put on the Aston Abbots Road verge opposite Chestnuts Farm, about half-way up the hill, replacing the old salt heap.

Speeding is still an issue we want to solve in the village. The two **Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs** acquired 3 years ago continue to be moved around their six approved sites in the village on a 6-8 weekly cycle by a voluntary team led by

Mark Talbott. They do have an effect, but villagers want more.

In 2018/19, parish councillors attended training sessions to gain accreditation for Community Speed Watch in 2019/20 using a Sentinel speed camera.



New East End Corner bench

## Our park and play area

The Park is owned and managed by the Parish Council, whose local contractors do grass and hedge cutting, path weed control and lawn improvement treatment. As part of Hedgerow Havens, we were

given four fruit trees to plant along the front fence of the Park. They should provide a lovely blossom display in future, and provide food for birds and other wildlife.

An annual safety inspection of the play equipment is carried out by ROSPA and we are also grateful to volunteers John and Frances Smith, who regularly check and clean all the items.

## Our public footpaths

Weedon's public footpaths are user-friendly for all ages and most abilities, as the majority of the stiles have been replaced by gates, with the co-operation of farmers and landowners.

The PC—with residents' help—monitors the condition of public footpaths to ensure that they meet minimum

standards, as landowners must by law keep footpaths across their land clear.

Certain footpaths are the responsibility of the Parish Council. So the PC, as in the past, continued to maintain **Footpath 12** (New Road to Lilies), keeping it free of nettles, brambles and encroaching branches from adjoining hedges.



Footpath 12 New Road to Lilies

## Our war memorial and graveyard



Silent Soldier and new trees near the War Memorial

The Parish Council manages the Chapel graveyard and the grounds of the War Memorial under a 99-year lease (until 2114) with the Methodists.

This is designated as a "local authority graveyard", and accepts burials, ashes interments and memorials for Weedon residents or those with strong links to the village, regardless of religious affiliation.

The PC's contractors cut the grass, strim round the graves, trim hedges, clear leaves and control weeds. In addition, John Elliott volunteered to check the graveyard regularly—clearing strimmed

grass and dead flowers, tidying around graves, neatening the edges of ground tablets and cleaning headstones.

Two new feature trees were planted in place of the large cypress which had been crowding the war memorial and the beautiful copper beech. One tree was given by the Chapel in memory of Laurie Gower, and the other by the Parish Council to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the First World War.

A donation to the Royal British Legion purchased a Silent Soldier silhouette to commemorate that centenary too.

## Planning consultation and local liaison

The PC liaises with the other tiers of local government: **AVDC** and **Bucks County Council**. Last year we were regularly pressing Transport for Bucks to repair serious potholes and blocked drains, and to put in the new signs they had agreed.

The Parish Council is consulted on every **planning application** for building in

Weedon. It can respond to AVDC (the planning authority) with No Objection, Support, or Objection, and a public planning meeting is held for each application to decide the PC response.

In 2018/19 the PC considered 20 building applications and was very pleased with the quality and appropriateness of almost

all of them. The one application that we objected to was refused by AVDC.

The PC maintains direct contact with **Thames Valley Police**, whose Neighbourhood Team regularly attends PC meetings to exchange information on crime and crime prevention. Villagers operate **Neighbourhood Watch** on an informal basis.

## Financial control and administration

The parish precept for 2019/20 was agreed in January at the same level per household as for the last 7 years. Services are being maintained or improved.

The precept covers routine expenditure and the PC has reserves to draw on for

capital projects. The devolved services from Bucks CC are funded mainly by a contracted grant sum.

We applied successfully for a Transparency Grant, to help with the cost of updating the website, particularly with

statutory documentation, including complying with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The PC's annual statutory accounting statements are on the website. Audited accounts are available from the Clerk.



### Weedon Parish Council

#### Ruth Millard, Parish Clerk

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Buckingham  
MK18 7HP

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### Weedon Parish Councillors

<b>Joanna Rose</b> <i>Chairman</i>	<b>641622</b>	<b>Justin Sellers</b> <i>Vice Chairman</i>	<b>640524</b>
<b>Steve Gradley</b>	<b>641637</b>	<b>Tom Jameson-Evans</b>	<b>640845</b>
<b>Wendy Kett</b>	<b>640366</b>	<b>Sarah Gibbs</b>	<b>07545 350035</b>
<b>Nigel Winnett</b>	<b>640125</b>		

### Other Weedon Contacts

<b>Weedon Village Association</b>	<b>Catherine Rodnight</b>	<b>641071</b>
<b>Old Schoolroom</b>	<b>Shirley Bush</b>	<b>641382</b>
<b>Tuesday Club</b>	<b>Judy Nagele</b>	<b>641278</b>
<b>Methodist Chapel</b>	<b>Ralph Followell</b>	<b>641998</b>
<b>Chapel Graveyard</b>	<b>Wendy Kett</b>	<b>640366</b>
<b>Weedon Charities</b>	<b>Wendy Kett</b>	<b>640366</b>
<b>Golf Society</b>	<b>Colin Rose</b>	<b>641622</b>
<b>Parish Magazine Editor</b>	<b>Ralph Followell</b>	<b>641998</b>
<b>The Five Elms</b>	<b>John and Carol Slee</b>	<b>641439</b>

[weedonbucks.org.uk](http://weedonbucks.org.uk)

### Parish Council Meetings

- 3rd Wednesday of odd-numbered months
- Planning meetings as the need arises
- Agendas posted on main noticeboard and website with 3 working days' notice
- Open Forum at every meeting

### Aylesbury Vale District Councillor

**Ashley Bond (Watermead ward)** **641552**

### Buckinghamshire County Councillor

**Netta Glover (Wing ward)** **688357**

Email [joanna@cjrose.net](mailto:joanna@cjrose.net) if you would like to be added to our village email list