



## 2015-16 Annual Report and Accounts for Pitstone Parish Council

### Financial position

	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 Budget	2015-16 Actual	Variance to last year	Variance to budget
Income	£112,730	£277,721	£112,972	+0.2%	-59%
Expenditure	£117,497	£359,542	£132,611	+13%	-63%

The variance to budget reflects the delay of the play space / skate park project into a subsequent financial year. At the close of the year the council holds £143,117. £70,174 is reserved for specific purposes or with restricted spending ability (like maintenance payments from Taylor Wimpey) leaving £72,944 of retained reserve. The council is financially independent with no loans, lease payments or debts.

### Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan (NDP)



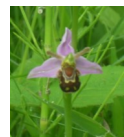
Thank you to all those who contributed to the NDP steering group, engaged with the consultation process and came to vote. 97% of those voting, voted in favour of AVDC using the plan to help determine planning applications, which was great news. Our Plan has since been “made” by AVDC which means that it now has

formal effect. Expenditure of £12,514 was incurred during the production of the plan, with £4,772 of this being funded by two grants from Locality and the remaining £7,742 funded by the parish council.

### Taking on devolved services from Bucks County Council

During the year, the parish council expanded the services it undertakes on behalf of Bucks County Council to including the cutting of the grass verges within the 30 mph limits and other minor duties such as sign repairs, in addition to our original works on right-of-way maintenance. BCC paid an initial amount of £4,062 (dropping to £3,423 in subsequent years) and costs were incurred of £2,267 (63% on grass cutting, 31% on right of way maintenance, 6% on other matters). Works did not require the whole of the budget due to the timing to the introduction of the scheme and the fact that no significant works such as siding out had been required. The remaining funds will be carried forward for use in 2016/17.

Only 3 comments were submitted to the parish council relating to the work carried out and these have been resolved. It has been agreed to trial a reduction in the cutting of the footpath from the Windmill field to Vicarage Road to once per year to reduce mud “churn” later in the season.



Whilst the verges within Castlemead remain the responsibility of Taylor Wimpey, they have agreed to leave 3 sections uncut until July to enhance the care of the lovely bee orchids currently growing wild there.

## [Renewed hope for play space, skate park and ball court](#)

If you will recall, last year we advised that the Charity Commission wouldn't permit the redevelopment of the play space and skate park until planning permission had been granted for the new village centre that will surround the recreation ground.

We are pleased to report that the land owners have marketed their land on the open market and selected a preferred developer who is now working on their planning application submission, which it is intended will be submitted in conjunction with the parish council. We hope that this will proceed as quickly as possible so that work can commence on the procurement of the leisure facilities.



In the meantime, the parish council has renewed its application for planning permission for the new play space so that we are ready to book the contractors as soon as the land becomes available.

## [Redevelopment of the pavilion site](#)

A scoping exercise has commenced to redevelop the site on the opposite side of Marsworth Road to both enhance the facilities for football and increase the range of sports and recreation you will be able to enjoy there. For example, we are in discussions with a neighbouring land owner to see if land can be acquired to add a joint floodlit tennis and netball court (as this was one of the main requests arising from the Sports and Leisure Survey) whilst the pavilion building itself will be expanded to enable a range of indoor activities.



As with all projects that require grant funding, planning permission and land acquisition the works will not be instantaneous, but we will be progressing as rapidly as possible and will keep residents up-to-date.

Both of the above will obviously have a significant impact on expenditure.

## [Other sport and leisure improvements](#)

- Two new gates have been installed at the Recreation Ground play ground. These will be re-utilised in the new play space once it is installed.
- The rolling log has been replaced in the Hever Close playground.
- The triple balance beam has been replaced in the Windsor Road playground.
- Unfortunately, on the recreation ground, one toddler swing and several bins had to be replaced and the back had to be removed from the youth shelter following vandalism.
- A new bench was installed at the end of Glebe Close.



## [Re-designing our footpaths and highways](#)



The parish council has been working with Ivinghoe Parish Council, Bucks County Council and the Local Area Forum to re-examine the highway and footpath network along our main roads to increase access and safety for cyclists and pedestrians, reducing vehicle speeds and limiting through traffic. We invested £8,550 to employ a specialist consultant, Ben Hamilton-

Baillie, to look at our unique problems and design solutions for our expanding community. We hope you took the time to attend the presentation on 10 May and hear Ben speak in person. If you missed this event, you can find the report on our website and still submit your comments.

Some of the more major proposals include redesigning the Westfield Road and Handpost Corner junctions to re-route through traffic along the B488 (Upper Icknield Way), and redesigning the Marsworth Road layout to improve pedestrian/cycle access and re-design the parking provision. The report also includes suggestions to tackle the congestion issues outside Brookmead School. We would love to hear your views before progressing the projects any further. This is a long term project and will require significant investments to fulfil.

When looking at connecting our community to other villages, work continues towards the implementation of a footpath between Pitstone and Marsworth. The joint parishes are waiting for a final feasibility and cost report from Bucks County Council to enable a grant application for New Homes Bonus funding in July. It is anticipated that the project will cost over £200k. Hertfordshire County Council also continue to work towards the installation of a joint foot and cycle path to Tring station and resolution of the associated land issues.



## [Over £9,000 of financial support given to our local community](#)

During the year, the parish council provided financial assistance to a number of local bodies so that they can continue to enhance the lives of residents. This included:

- £3,544 to enable the expansion of cricket facilities on the Recreation Ground
- £1,500 to the Friends of St Marys to enable the installation of a water supply at the church in Pitstone
- £3,631 to the Recreation Ground Charity towards ground-keeping and tree maintenance
- £194 to the Recreation Ground Charity and Parish Charity to enable hedge cutting and path work at their sites
- £150 to the Royal British Legion in lieu of a fresh wreath

Please contact the parish clerk if you think your community group would benefit from a grant. We are also delighted to be working with the Party in the Park Committee to support the stage for this wonderful local event.

## [We need you to help](#)

We would like to thank all our employees and volunteers who ensure that the village is kept clean and tidy, the pavilion runs smoothly, that the youth café can open its doors each week and those that immersed themselves in the NDP.

Whilst there are lots of community groups trying to provide excellent facilities and services there is a definite volunteer shortage in the parish at present. Current opportunities including helping at the youth café (6.30-8pm on Wednesdays during term time), joining the Pitstone Memorial Hall



Charity committee, helping take residents to health care appointments with the Pitstone Community Car Scheme or helping to run the Community Cinema. Or perhaps you'd rather assist at the museum open days or help show people round the windmill? Maybe you have fond memories of your childhood and would be willing to help the Scouts? You can find information about current vacancies on our website or by getting in touch with the parish clerk. Often our volunteers get just as much out of their experiences as the groups they are helping, so please do sign up.

The parish council also runs an annual Volunteer of the Year competition. Our 2016 winner will be revealed at the annual assembly and this section will be updated before the report is printed in PPP and published on the web site.

## [Other parish matters](#)

- The new Royal Mail letter box was finally installed in Windsor Road
- Transport for Bucks installed a bus box outside the Haldi to improve safety and carried out a number of highway repairs and resurfacing throughout the village
- Bucks County Council finally replaced the light fittings on the Marsworth Road roundabout
- The village maps have now been updated

## [New parish council members](#)

You will recall that local parish council elections were held in May, with 12 candidates standing for a potential of 10 seats. We were pleased to welcome Councillors Weber, Starling, Crutchfield and Groom onto the parish council for what has been a busy year.

## [Keep up-to-date](#)

Pitstone Parish Post (PPP) is only published 3 or 4 times per annum and a lot can happen in the interim. So to keep up-to-date throughout the year, please:

- 'Like' the Pitstone Parish Council and/or Pitstone Youth pages on Facebook for immediate updates to your home page
- Follow us on Twitter @pitstone\_pc
- Regularly check [www.pitstone.co.uk](http://www.pitstone.co.uk) and watch the notice-boards.