

Annual Report and Accounts for Pitstone Parish Council Year Ending 31-3-2025

Performance

	To 31-3-2024	To 31-3-2025	Variance to previous year
Total Receipts	£224,729	£277,532	+23%
Total Payments	£197,749	£228,678	+16%
Balances Carried Forward	£200,115	£248,970	

The precept (collected via your Council Tax) for 2024/25 was £119.28 for the year for an average Band D property, which equates to £2.29 per week per home.

The parish council is financially secure with no loans or debts. The majority of our capital projects progress with a high level of external grant funding, thus the rise and fall in receipts corresponds with the rise and fall in capital projects being undertaken.

Our accounts are subject to three layers of audit each year. The first is carried out by council members. The second is conducted by an 'internal auditor' appointed by the Parish Council – IAC Ltd. The Parish council and the internal auditor's findings are then submitted to an 'external auditor' appointed to us, in our case PKF Littlejohn. Members of the public can view all audit reports on our website. This report provides a more descriptive narrative, rather than purely financial.

There were three large receipts during the financial year:

- Bellway Homes paid the Parish Council a one-off Section 106 payment of £32,640 to transfer the Tun Furlong play space to our ongoing care and ownership. These funds can only be utilised for this purpose and will be called down over the upcoming years as necessary.
- Croudace paid a fee of £30,600 to transfer 17 street light columns within the Williamson Way development to our ongoing care and ownership. A further fee of £3,600 for an additional 2 columns is due this financial year. These funds can only be utilised for this purpose and will be called down over the upcoming years as necessary.
- Safran Electrical and Power sponsored the installation of the bus shelter outside their premises on Westfield Road, passing £6,240 of funding to the Parish Council. The other 2 shelters were funded by the parish council utilising funds accrued over a number of years for this purpose. The Parish Council will meet all ongoing liabilities for care and maintenance of all 3 shelters.



We also saw an uplift in income from the hire of the pavilion facilities and Pitstone Parish Post advertising income. The previous year had seen a receipt of £23,510 in S106 funds released by Buckinghamshire Council towards the double lane cricket practice nets and a grant of £2,500 from the Community Board towards the information panels at the Local Wildlife Site. The underlying difference between the 2 financial years is approximately £1,600/5%.

Other purchases during the year included 3 extra silent soldiers and some sporting and musical equipment for the youth café, both of which are being funded by grants from the Community Board but the associated grant payment won't be received until 2025/26.



We worked with Colbree and Little Rothschild Surgery to provide 2 additional public access defibrillators, both of which were 50% funded by London Hearts on behalf of the central government scheme.



Three benches were installed on the Recreation Ground – 2 were replacements for old stock and 1 was a new memorial bench which was part funded by the Mitra family. This is part of an ongoing project to upgrade the seating at this location and further replacements will follow over a number of years. A white lining machine was purchased to enable the pitch markings at the pavilion and recreation ground, some IT equipment was upgraded, a new dog bin installed in Crispin Field, 2 litter bins replaced on the recreation ground and 4 additional tables purchased for the pavilion function room.

Our thanks also go to the P&I Junior Football Club for the donation of new portable junior goals for the pavilion site, that they obtained via grant funding.

The Parish Council runs a grant scheme to support local community and charitable groups that provide services that benefit Pitstone residents. During the year funding was provided to 1st Ivinghoe and Pitstone Scouts, Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity and Toy Hub.

The normal council operations continue, and these receive no external grants, so are funded via the precept (or partially offset via income generated from hire of our facilities or advertising in our magazine). This includes maintaining streetlights, Christmas illuminations, litter picking, emptying dog & litter bins, maintaining play equipment and open spaces, producing Pitstone Parish Post, running the Volunteer of the Year Scheme, running the youth café and community car schemes, operating our two mVAS units, running the allotment site, maintaining parish assets, and maintaining the pavilion and football pitches.

Devolved Services

The parish council undertakes some right of way maintenance, grass verge cutting and siding out on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council (BC) under powers they have devolved to us for these purposes. They pay a contribution of £3,988 towards the delivery of these services, which cost the parish £8,085 to deliver. However, it does mean that our grass can be cut more frequently (Bucks would now only provide 3 grass cuts in towns and villages over the course of the year), works can be carried out more efficiently, and we have more control over delivery of these services. Buckinghamshire Council has now offered us a further 4-year devolved service contract to continue delivering these services on their behalf.

Ongoing Projects by Other Bodies/Tiers of Government

- Hertfordshire County Council continues to work with the Canal & River Trust and Buckinghamshire Council to deliver improvements to the Marshcroft Lane/canal cycle route towards Tring station. All roadside options tested failed the required safety audits so a direct straight-line cycle/pedestrian route along Northfield Road was deemed unviable.
- Buckinghamshire Council continues to work with developers (Taylor Wimpey, Croudace, Nicholas King Homes and Bellway) to fulfil their highway and leisure obligations including the issues surrounding the multi-use games area.
- The Chiltern's Beechwoods in Ashridge were designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) as they are of European importance. This gives rise to mitigation measures that must be put in place to protect them from over-use. Local Planning Authorities are working to establish what these mitigation measures may look like, and as Bucks Council do not yet have approved mitigation in place, this means that no planning applications for new residential dwellings have been granted. Once the situation has been resolved it is anticipated that a number of applications that are currently on hold will then be determined by the Planning Authority.

If anyone has any specific queries they would like to ask about the receipts or payments during the financial year, please email parishclerk@pitstone.co.uk and we'll be happy to provide more detailed information.