

Bayford Parish Council

Chairman's Report. 21st March 2023

- Uniquely we had to postpone a meeting because the temperature was too high.
- The grass has been cut, now by Glendale Grounds
- Litter picking has been carried out by Paul Curzon. During this coming year EHDC have announced that they will no longer pay us to engage a litter picker. We have decided that we will continue to pay Paul at the same rate for this year. We will have to review this each year in January. The PC organised a Litter Pick and has acquired some sets of pickers and hi vis vests.
- A celebration was held for the Queen's Jubilee. This was unanimously declared a success. The PC contributed towards the cost of the band and planted a tree, with a plaque on the green. This joyous occasion seem a long time ago now, especially in view of subsequent events.
- Traffic Calming
We continue to pursue measures proposed in our feasibility study to improve road safety and address speeding in the village.
We are unfortunately bound by the Road Safety Fund and Herts Highways time scales which are both operating under limited resources
We have maintained regular contact with The Road Safety Fund Grants Officer and County Councillor Ken Crofton, both responsible for helping us progress with possible improvements and the link to engaging with Highways.
We currently await an on-site meeting to discuss improving safety of the Rose Triangle (due March 23) All work on roads needs to be Highways compliant and as such we are dependent upon their schedule and their work-up costs before any decisions can be made.
The Road Safety Fund has apologised for the lack of progress but was due to meet with Senior HCC staff in the coming weeks (Feb 23).
The PC opted to continue funding the Speed Indicator Device in the form of an annual warranty to cover maintenance. In the absence of any other speed reducing measures it serves as a useful visual reminder to those entering the 30mph zone on Ashdene Road.
- PC employ Les Swain to maintain the Church Cottages footpath and the Rose Triangle .
- In connection with the above, a number of site visits were made to assess the state of the Rose Triangle. The edges have been eroded by traffic. We decided it required proper curbs and possible bollards We determined that this work would have to be carried out by Herts Highways. We are still awaiting a site visit by Herts Highways, to discuss the options and the method of financing the project.
- Planning. Planning applications have also been subject to long delays at EHDC this year. Notable is the Archery range opposite Bayford Hall Farm, which is still 'Awaiting decision', having been submitted in March 2022. The application for a house on the 'old playground' was submitted in June 2022 and decided in March 2023. Gavin Nelson of Bonnel Homes, whose company has applied to build the house on the 'Old playground', has attended a number of meeting keeping us up to date with events. We are pleased that this has finally been given approval by EHDC.

- Further maintenance work had been carried out in the Parish, for example, the removal of ivy from the trees on the verge along Ashdene Road and work was carried out on the ponds within the village.
- We inspected to telephone box in Ashdene Road, which is the property of BPC, with a view to refurbishing it. It looks rather sad at the moment. It has a slight lean backwards and the door does not close. The door has some rot and will need some remedial work. The box will then need painting.
- The Baker Arms. Over the past year or two, following the lifting of COVID restrictions, the pub has increased its importance in the Village, as place where parishioners, and others, meet either informally or as part of a society. It also was at the centre of the Jubilee celebrations. Following the news that the landlords, Martin and Beverley Jackson have only been offered only a one year lease in October 2022, we became concerned that the pub might be sold for development by McMullens. We had previously considered applying to have the pub registered as an Asset of Community Value. This was not pursued at the time, due to some opposition by McMullens. However, we now have to reconsider the application. After discussion with Martin at a Council meeting and with Ken Crofton, we are currently awaiting the outcome of the 2023 lease negotiations. The pub is dependent on the B&B business for its continued viability.
- Linda Haysey has announced after 18 years as district councillor she will not be standing next May. Linda was thanked for her support and help over the years and we wish a relaxing time in the future.
- I would like to thank all Councillors for their time and effort over the last year. Also our clerk, Maggie, whose role is vital to the smooth running of this Council. Also the many Parishioners would have turned out to take part in various projects. And finally Linda Haysey our EHDC representative and Ken Crofton, our HCC representative. We are indebted to David Sitwell for auditing our accounts.

Michael Wainwright