

BIERTON PARISH COUNCIL – CHAIR’S REPORT 2023/2024

Another very busy year for us this year. We had some changes in our councillors with Carole King and Bob Dewis resigning and the death of Alan Webber in December. Alan had lived in the village all his life and been a Parish Councillor for some 30 years. His local and historical knowledge of the village will be sorely missed. We have, however, welcomed Sarah Feeney, Andrew Brierley and Hayley Smith to the council, albeit only for a year, as we are all up for re-election next May 2025.

The Neighbourhood Plan has experienced some significant delays with Kingsbrook withdrawing from the Plan. This meant we had to go through each section editing out any reference to Kingsbrook and we had to run Regulation 14 again. This was done in February and we are now busy considering the comments made and making changes where we think appropriate. It is hoped to complete this section very quickly so we can progress to Regulation 16 and the Referendum later in the year.

Zipp Scooters have been introduced to the village on three sites, and can now link up with those on Kingsbrook.

Four new noticeboards have been purchased, courtesy of Gib Lane Solar Fund.

We have dealt with numerous domestic planning applications throughout the year, most of which have had no objections from us. We now have the big one from Barratts for 115 houses and a cricket/multi games pitch off Gib Lane which is part of the Kingsbrook development but actually lies within our parish. The majority of residents are objecting to it, with over 200 objections lodged with the Planners. We await the outcome in trepidation. More recently we have been presented with another possible development off the Aylesbury Road which has again caused some upset in the village, quite rightly. Permission has been given for redundant agricultural buildings at Cavan Farm, Cane End Lane, to be converted to commercial units. We did not object to this as the units are already there.

Our long-awaited traffic calming has now been agreed between Buckinghamshire Council and Barratts and is expected at the end of the summer. We continue to push for the Southern ELR to be provided to

link the Woodlands roundabout with Mike Griffin Way in Kingsbrook and eventually the A418 in Berton. This should greatly reduce the amount of traffic through the village.

We continue to have good relationships with Bucks Highways and liaise with our Local Area Technician and the Streetworks Technician who do their best for us with various roadworks, etc.

We continue to have quarterly meetings with Barratts and Kingsbrook to ensure that things that are relevant to us are dealt with accordingly.

Another long-awaited project was the completion of our Playground refurbishment at the Recreation Ground. This was made possible with grants from the Mike & Claire Griffin Trust, Wendover & Villages Community Board and Gib Lane Solar Fund with a considerable sum from Parish Council funds. An Opening Ceremony was held earlier this month.

Our current project is to renovate the Jubilee Hall. Contractors have been appointed and the work will be carried out in the summer months. This is being funded again by the Mike & Claire Griffin Trust, Wendover & Villages Community Board and our Parish Council funds which were handed over when we took over the hall from the WI in 2016.

In July we lost our Pre-School which closed due to lack of funding. We do however have another one coming in September, once all their credentials are checked.

We continue to work with Berton Combined School on their Travel Plan, looking for ways to reduce parent parking around the school area.

Andrew Brierley is working towards the provision of a Community Library at the Jubilee Hall and a grant is being applied for from Wendover & Villages Community Board.

The Social Hub continues to flourish and is enjoyed by all, with regular attendances of up to 30 people each week. It is pleasing to see so many people who live on their own coming along and socialising, as well as couples. Special thanks here to Steve Knowles and his team of helpers.

The Events Group have continued to provide us with what have now become annual events in the village – Brains of Berton Quiz, Halloween

event, Annual Bierton Run and Santa's Float, all of which are well supported and enjoyed by our residents. They also organised a very successful Coronation Event last May. Thanks to Lorna, Steve, Mark and their team.

It is now time for me to thank you all for your involvement and support once again throughout the year; in particular, my Vice Chair, Lorna Fisher, who is always there with advice and information when needed. Last, but by no means least, my thanks to our hardworking, loyal clerk, Wendy, who keeps us on track and gets the jobs done on time – with her never-ending To Do List!