

# Your Newsletter

## For residents of Braysdown, Carlingcott, Peasedown St John and Woodborough

Published by Peasedown St John Parish Council

Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St. John, BA2 8SN ~ 01761 433686 ~ clerk@peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk

## Public Consultation on Local Plan

The public are being asked to comment on B&NES Council's Local Plan, which will establish a strategy and framework for how places in Bath and North East Somerset will change and grow over the next 15-20 years. It sets out planning policies that will shape any development that requires planning permission. The plan identifies the need for new homes and jobs, and the services and infrastructure to support them, and guides where this development should happen and what form it will take.



Plans being considered by B&NES Council for Peasedown St John include: the addition of up to 200 homes, expansion of Bath Business Park; generation of renewable energy from a solar PV farm to the south of the village, a new mobility hub on the A367 to allow for on going public transport travel into Bath, and highway improvements to existing junctions. Please be aware that any of these plans will require the full planning permission process before proceeding.

There will be a public consultation over a six-week period, ending 25th March and B&NES Council are encouraging all residents and stakeholders to comment on the options presented. This a major opportunity to have your say and help influence future change. To view/comment on the plans, please type the following address into your browser:

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/local-plan-options/peasedown-site-options>

## Grant Applications



The Parish Council has been successful in obtaining a grant from "Trees for Climate" in association with The Forest of Avon Trust, which it will be using to plant 100 metres of mixed hedgerow at Ashgrove Cemetery. As well as helping to mitigate climate change, the hedgerow will enhance the landscape and improve biodiversity.

We have also been successful in applying for a grant from "The Active Way" towards the cost of our Parish Map and Signage project, which aims to install heritage information boards around the village together with a map of walking routes.

We are applying for a further grant from West of England Combined Authority, with the aim of installing solar panels and insulation at Beacon Hall. If you would like further information about any of these projects, please get in touch with us on the email address or phone number above.

Also, if you run an organisation that might benefit from one of our Parish Council community grants and would like further information, please check our website or contact the Parish Clerk.

## How is your money spent?

Peasedown St John Parish Council provides, manages and maintains a number of facilities and services in the village, including:

- Public open spaces (the Village Green, the Carlingcott Tump and Ecewiche Green)
- Beacon Field and Beacon Field play areas
- Ashgrove Cemetery
- The Recreation Field, including the football changing rooms, canteen, toilet and play areas
- BMX track and skate park
- Braysdown Lane Allotments
- Beacon Hall
- Street lighting (126 lights are owned and funded by the Parish Council)
- Maintenance of footpaths
- The Council Office
- Parish newsletters
- Maintenance of roundabouts and flower beds
- Floral displays in hanging baskets and planters
- Festive lights and decorations
- Funding for the School Crossing Patrol
- Parish Council website and Facebook page
- Winter support for all residents - supplying and refilling grit bins
- Litter picking around the village
- Staff and Councillor training
- Community grant scheme
- Civic events

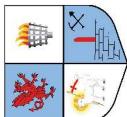


## Council Staff

The Parish Council employs a mixture of full-time and part-time staff:  
Staff work closely with the Councillors to deliver:

- Day to day running of all the Parish Council facilities and services (see above list)
- Attending all Council meetings to provide administrative support and to ensure that all legislation and policies are complied with
- Up-dating financial records and preparation of financial reports
- Providing the first point of contact for enquiries from residents of the village
- Maintaining and filing all parish administrative records
- Beacon Hall bookings, invoicing, caretaking and cleaning
- Implementation of projects agreed by the Parish Council
- Co-ordinating with contractors to assist with delivering the Council's objectives

Councillors:  
Our 17 Parish Councillors all work for free, in a variety of capacities, supporting the council staff.



## PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

The Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN  
Tel: 01761 433686 E-mail: clerk@peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk

## Statement of Proposed Financial Activities 2024-25



**T**he Parish Council of Peasedown St John was formed in 1955 and represents the interests of the communities of Peasedown St John, Braysdown, Carlingcott & Woodborough. The current Council consists of seventeen Parish Councillors who are local residents and give their time voluntarily.

The Parish Council's main role is to ensure that the delivery of services to meet local needs is maintained and that the quality of life in the community and the environment of the Parish are improved. To operate effectively, the Parish Council requires an annual income and the majority of this is obtained through a levy on each household - this levy is known as the "Precept" and forms a small percentage of the Council Tax that each household pays.

The Parish Council ensures that its finances are well managed, by scrutinising the accounts at every meeting of the Finance & Amenities Committee and quarterly at Full Council meetings (all of which are open to the public). Detailed spending plans for the coming year must be provided

## What has been achieved in 2023/24?

Some major achievements for 2023/24 have been:

- Coronation Celebration Event
- Planting of King's Oak at the Recreation Ground
- Continued maintenance of our open green spaces
- Allotments BBQ
- Remembrance events
- Repairs and resurfacing of play equipment areas at Beacon Field
- Appointment of a new Grounds and Maintenance Manager
- Refurbishment of the Carlingcott phone box (due March 2024)
- Replacement community picnic table on The Tump in Carlingcott
- Christmas Tea Party for older residents
- Replacement IT equipment for office staff

## What is different this year?

Following the departure of our long-serving Caretaker at the end of 2022, we were pleased to welcome our new Grounds & Maintenance Manager at the beginning of 2024. The Grounds & Maintenance Manager and outside services team will continue with the management of our existing facilities, as well as land previously managed by the housing developer (Persimmon), due to be transferred to the Parish Council during Spring 2024. The creation of this new position will mean that we will be able to carry out the vast majority of amenities works “in house” rather than using contractors. We will also be reviewing our office roles in the coming year and due to increasing work volumes a new part-time role, to undertake the Council’s finances, is planned to be appointed later in the year.

Councillors want to invest more in the future of the village, not only to catch up with inflationary pressures (inflation rose as high as 11% in late 2022 and has been 5.2% on average since 2019) but also to keep our assets properly maintained. The precept has been frozen for 4 years and we haven’t passed on any inflationary rises. Last year, we were able to avoid an increase in our precept, but we set the expectation that as our income was very close to our total expenditure, it was likely our precept would need to increase for 2024/25.

In fact, the planned expenditure for 2024/25 is more than the planned income, and so we have had to increase the precept. This is not a decision we have taken lightly, and many hours have been spent scrutinising the figures. We have managed to cut back on some areas, but not sufficiently for those cost savings to cover the shortfall. We also wish to continue to make improvements to the village facilities and services for residents. As a consequence, we have raised the precept to £337,995 which equates to an annual increase for a Band D property from £116.74 to £156.63, a monthly increase of £3.32. We believe this is still good value for money, considering all the services we provide.



## Forthcoming Projects and Ear-marked Reserves

In addition to its normal activities and routine expenditure, the Parish Council also needs to raise finance for the long-term development and enhancement of the facilities in the village. This is done by allocating funds from the precept, which can be used during the same year, or built up over a number of years (Ear-marked Reserves). Although several larger projects have been actioned over the last year, some are still in progress.

Some of the projects to be completed over the coming year are:

- Mature tree planting at Beacon Field to provide shade
  - Extension of the accessible allotment plots and improvements to the security of the site
  - Beacon Hall - install audio-visual equipment for streaming meetings and events
  - Persimmon Homes land transfer
  - Asset signage and historical information signage project
  - Ashgrove Cemetery pathways
- Further suggested projects that councillors will review to determine their viability, include (but are not limited to):
- Wildlife pond at Eeewiche Green
  - Solar panels and insulation at Beacon Hall
  - Further improvements at Ashgrove Cemetery including working towards Green Flag status
  - Establishment of a strategy for the Parish Council
  - Planning for future maintenance of our infrastructure and open spaces
  - Upgrade of our website

## Where does the money come from?

	Budget 2023/24	Budget 2024/25
<b>Income</b>		
Precept*	£ 251,452	£ 337,995
Interest	100	1,500
Donations	1,000	1,000
Environment	605	615
Allotments (rents)	1,269	1,296
Cemetery (burial & memorial fees)	5,830	5,830
Beacon Hall (hire fees)	18,000	18,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 278,256</b>	<b>£ 366,236</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Staff Costs**	£ 145,857	£ 173,917
General admin	24,600	26,270
Community Grants/Village Events	10,593	12,100
Newsletters/Website	3,000	3,500
Amenities	10,200	12,900
Parish Council Vehicle	6,559	6,979
Lighting	6,500	5,500
Environment	7,000	7,500
Cemetery	7,450	7,850
Recreation Ground	13,500	14,610
Beacon Hall & Field	26,440	25,110
Infrequent Operational Expenditure	15,000	15,000
Contracted Amenities Works**	1,500	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 278,199</b>	<b>£ 311,236</b>
Income less expenditure ***	57	55,000

\*For explanation of the precept, see front page.  
\*\*New Grounds & Maintenance Manager appointed so there is no longer a requirement for a Contracted Amenities Works budget.  
\*\*\*This balance is used for projects and Ear-Marked Reserves. For a full explanation see left.  
For further details of the Parish Council's plans and activities and actual spend against budget reports, please refer to its website and look out for the regular newsletters.



## Contingency Reserves

In addition to the above listed figures the Parish Council is obliged to maintain funds in reserve for emergency/contingency purposes. The Parish Council's contingency reserves have been increased to £85,000 to maintain levels in line with the Auditor's recommendations of the amount of money required to operate the Council, in the event of an emergency situation, for a period of three months. This level will continue to be monitored.

# Thoughts from the Chair



As we look forward to some warmer weather with spring just around the corner, we are very pleased to welcome our Grounds & Maintenance Manager, Jamie Moore, who started working for us in early January. You may well see him around the village in the Parish Council truck during the coming months.

As mentioned in the article on the front page of this newsletter, we have been asked to consider long-term plans for our village for the next 15-20 years. I would encourage residents to give their views on the proposals on B&NES Council's website, on the following link:  
<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/local-plan-options/peasedown-site-options>

Lastly, we have plans to mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day on 6th June 2024, and will be lighting the beacon at Beacon Hall. Please mark the date in your diaries and we will circulate further details of the event in due course. Best wishes, Jonathan.

## In Memoriam: John Whittock (1936-2023)



We are sad to report the death of Michael John Whittock on the 30th of December 2023. For over 18 years, John served as the Parish Clerk for Peasedown St John and contributed significantly as a Parish Councillor on both Peasedown St John Parish Council and Radstock Town Council.

In 2012, John was given the title of Honorary Alderman by B&NES Council, in recognition of his distinguished service and enduring impact on the communities he served.

John commenced his professional journey as an apprentice at Purnell Printworks in Paulton, but then answered the call for National Service in 1955, eventually serving in Malaya. Throughout his life, John's commitment to fostering international relations was evident, and he played a pivotal role as a founder member of the Norton-Radstock Twinning Scheme.



## ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

For all residents of  
Peasedown St John,  
Braysdown, Carlingcott & Woodborough

**BEACON HALL**  
**26 MARCH 2024**  
**7.00 PM**

**Find out what's been going on  
in your village!**

The Parish Meeting is an opportunity for the electorate of the village to raise any queries or matters of concern relating to their local community.

Please raise your concerns or questions **before 22nd March 2024** by contacting the clerk on 01761 433686 or by e-mailing [clerk@peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk).

Due to time constraints, questions not submitted in advance may not be answered at the meeting, but will receive a written response as soon as possible after the meeting.

### Please note:

**Due to the delivery method we are now using for our newsletter it is far more cost effective for us to include some properties just outside our Parish boundary which happen to be in the same postcode area. If you have received a copy of the newsletter but don't live in Peasedown St John, we hope you will not mind reading it or recycling it - thank you.**



We will be lighting the beacon at Beacon Hall, **on Thursday 6th June 2024 at 9.15pm**, to mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day.

Beacons will be lit across the country and beyond in recognition of those that sacrificed so much during the landing on the five Beaches in Normandy, as well as the many thousands that supported them in the air, on land and at sea.

Please **KEEP THE DATE** - further details will be circulated shortly.