

# Gamlingay Parish Council

## Annual Report May 2020 – April 2021



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GAMLINGAY PARISH COUNCIL – CHAIRMANS REPORT 2020/2021  
(Given at Annual Parish Meeting 22.6.2021)

Good evening. My name is Colin Smith and this report was due in April since when I have completed my maximum allowed term as Chair and I must welcome our new Chair Harriet Gould to the post. Having therefore written this report I have been asked to still present it.

Due to Covid restrictions and the need to conduct meetings via Zoom last year's Annual Parish Meeting could not take place so some of what I have to say may encroach on the previous year as well.

Despite the need for a large number of remote meetings we have managed to meet twice monthly for Planning, Full Council and Finance & General-Purpose Meetings as well as fulfil our commitments meeting other parties, consultation events and Neighbourhood Planning Events.

The new path from the rear of the Eco Hub to GVC is getting well used and improvements to the Skate Park and comprehensive replacements and improvements to the Stocks Lane play area have been well received. I must at this stage offer thanks to Councillor Jayne Wright for all her hard work and guidance in these areas and also her commitments to Millbrook Meadows. Regrettable Jayne has very recently resigned from Council after 13 years and she will be sorely missed.

Other resignations from Council during 2019 to 2021 included Mark Brown, Tony Goss, Steve Hemmings, Sarah Jones and Julie Newman and they were replaced by Harriet Gould, Larry New, Bob Petch and Jolin Darcy.

We currently have two vacancies to fill and a full list of the current Parish Councillors and their profiles are available on our Web Site with a facial recognition system called photographs

We are pleased to report the continuing support of both our District Councillor Bridget Smith and our recently re-elected County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley who are an asset connecting us to higher authorities and who endeavor to keep us fully informed on local politics and legislation.

During 2019/2020 savings on our Public Works Loan commitments and a change in employer pension contributions enabled us to set a precept (our budget) with a minimal increase of only £2.09 per household per annum and continued savings I am pleased to say have allowed us to set the 2020/2021 precept with no increase at all per household.

Since completion of the paving improvements scheme on Church Street we have supported the re-surfacing of the car parking at the rear of The Cross to provide additional day time parking for shoppers and have now negotiated with Merton College to utilize almost £65,000 of their S.106 contribution to building a footpath along Potton Road as far as the Farm Shop. Final support from County Council to top up the final £15,000 needed for is, I

am assured, imminent. There is a longer-term plan with Sustran to provide a safe pedestrian/ cycle route through to Potton.

Christmas Lights continue to be problematic due to draconian measures being placed upon us by Cambridgeshire County Council but we (Leanne) will continue the fight to keep these going and I must again give thanks to the Church Street Traders for their active participation and to Peter Middlecott for again providing and erecting the superb Christmas Trees free of charge.

Twice yearly we welcome local Village Groups and Organisations to apply for grants and have supported projects this year to the sum of £1,188 including the following

CAMSar (Search and Rescue) -	£200
W.I. -	£570
Bobby Scheme -	£ 50
MAGPAS -	£100
British Legion -	£ 68
SERV (Voluntary transport support) -	£150
Gamlingay Community Safety Group	£ 50

Included in these is the Village Charity Forward Gamlingay who, despite the recent shut down measures, can now continue running the Youth Café and Youth Club, which are extremely well supported and engage in many ways with the youth of the Village and I would like to thank their totally committed team for all their hard work and enthusiasm. They also run events for those experiencing isolation in our community with art projects – a super example of which can be seen with the sculpted Church Street scene hanging in the main hall of the Eco Hub. Now, since lock down, such a very important area of their work.

Our Neighbourhood Plan is progressing well with a lot of hard work from Samantha Martin, Rachel Lee, Kirstin Rayner, Sarah Groom and the wider Neighbourhood Planning steering group and the Village Design Guide has been adopted by South Cambs District Council

A group of residents have been involved with the Citizens Design Bureau to produce the document which identifies the main characteristics of our settlement and is essential for the ongoing future development and will directly influence planning decisions affecting our Village.

Since the SCDC Local Plan Housing requirement was adopted our Planning Committee are seeing more sensible and appropriate decisions being made but we do however still have earlier decisions still coming to build including West Road and we live in deep suspicion as to why the Lupin Field is being levelled regularly. The next Local Plan – call for sites work is likely to identify more development sites in the area for the next Plan period in Autumn 2021.

Green End re-development is progressing now and S.106 contributions for additional resources have been agreed on the basis of 90 houses. As a direct result of Public Meetings and further negotiations with Morris Homes we have secured a generous concession from them that all homes will incorporate inbuilt Photovoltaic Roof Tiling to reduce electricity usage. Regrettably though there will still be 90+ Gas Boilers heating the houses in the good old-fashioned way as we cannot insist upon sustainable heat sources in larger applications until 2025.

Our speed watch team ably led by Simon Walder have been very active since they were able to move around again with some satisfying reports hopefully showing the new mobile units are working – a recent exception though did display a motorist doing 94 m.p.h. along the 50-m.p.h. limited Drove Road!

A second sign purchased at the same time was requested by and was to be operated by School Volunteers but licensing has so far proved to be a problem for them and we hope to resolve this issue soon. Simon is always welcoming to new volunteers who will receive full police training and may help us to increase activity in this area.

In frustration at both Local and County Council employees lack of recognition or understanding of the local value of a fully constituted Parish Council with c. 4000 residents and employing two highly qualified and experienced Clerks on a full time share basis and a proven track record of success (just look at the multi award winning ecologically efficient building we are in right now) and a Council with Quality Award Level recognition, we have been meeting with County Councils Think Community Directors and, now we can resume those meetings, hope to gain a higher level of responsibility commensurate with our proven abilities.

Directly linked to those meetings we have managed to secure the First School Playing Field as a community recreation space and are currently negotiating a Lease direct to GPC for the benefit of our Village.

It is encouraging the planned re-routing of the A428 and the proposed EW Rail Oxford to Cambridge routes, both of which could affect life as it is in our Village are both seemingly taking the northern options, although not quite to the satisfaction of the CBBR proposals led by County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley, who I know will continue to fight for our cause wholeheartedly.

During Lock Down it has been especially encouraging to see the spirit of our Villagers in supporting those who need and deserve to be helped and the rise of food parcels, shopping collections, prescription deliveries etc and special thanks must go to Lucy Rands, Shelley Aitcheson and Jo Kitcher who led the first of those voluntary groups and to both our Church leaders, Hilary and Adrian for coming to the fore.

Now that working hours are coming back and many volunteers need to get back to their own jobs we are pleased to announce the setting up of Gamlingay Guardians led by head guardian Fay Boissieux and started with a grant application obtained by GPC to offer these services on a more permanent basis. For those who may benefit from this scheme Fay can be contacted direct or through our offices and we will be pleased to help.

Other duties and regular tasks carried out throughout the year have been listed before so I won't bother you with a full list suffice to than all those involved including our handyman Keith Woolcott, our Library manager Kate Laugharne, cleaner Karen Woods, Leanne and Kirstin our Parish Council Clerks, whose professionalism and expertise is so essential to what we do, and not least our team of Councillors with a wide range of skills and abilities – thank you all for your support and help throughout the year.

Colin Smith  
Gamlingay Parish Council

### **Welcome to the Annual Report on the activities of the parish council.**

#### **General information**

Except for August, the parish council meets on the second Tuesday throughout the year. The Finance and General Purposes committee meets on the fourth Tuesday each month. Both this meeting and the council meeting are preceded by a meeting of the Planning committee.

All meetings normally take place at the Eco Hub, Stocks Lane, Gamlingay. Agendas are posted on notice boards outside the Eco Hub, Stocks Lane, on Mill St and on our website [www.gamlingay-pc.gov.uk](http://www.gamlingay-pc.gov.uk)

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, there was no Annual Parish Meeting held in 2020. All other Council meetings were held virtually following Government regulations.

11 Full Council Meetings  
20 Planning Meetings  
8 Finance & G.P. Meetings

In August 2020, the Parish Council was very pleased to be granted the Quality Award from the National Association of Local Councils in recognition that it had achieved good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement. The award is valid for 4 years.

#### **Responsibilities**

- Recreation ground, Butts playground, Skatepark, BMX track, Millbridge brook Meadows and lower field, Merton Field (off Greenacres – known locally as the log, leased from Merton College), open space at Chapelfields and Northfield Close, the Pitt on Waresley Rd and Cinques Common (managed by the wildlife Trust on the PC's behalf)
- The Old Methodist Chapel at Green End
- Cemeteries (Stocks Lane and St Mary's field)
- Maintenance of closed churchyards (St Mary's and the Baptist Chapel)
- Gamlingay Eco Hub (leased to Gamlingay Community Centre Ltd)
- Grass cutting of the above areas and verges within the village
- 50 street lights

#### **Staff**

All part time - 2 clerks (job share), grounds man, cleaner, Head Guardian (Gamlingay Guardians mobile warden scheme) and library manager.

### Plans for 2021-22

Complete the Neighbourhood Plan.  
 Support Community Speed Watch, Gamlingay Community Safety, Grow Gamlingay and Neighbourhood Watch Groups  
 Pursue funding for cycle paths and additional footpaths in the village  
 Install a water refill station outside the Eco Hub  
 Support and grow the Gamlingay Guardians scheme  
 Continue to provide a library for Gamlingay  
 Lobby to protect green spaces such as the old First School field for community use  
 Investigate options for a new bowls club facility  
 Improve the website accessibility

### Allotments

The parish council provides 88 allotments for the parish.  
 The allotments are situated on the North side of Long Lane, adjacent to the track that leads up to the permissive path to Gamlingay Woods and 8 at Green End.  
 Gamlingay Allotment Gardeners Association (GAGA) is responsible for the running of the allotments. They can be contacted on [gamlingay.allotments@gmail.com](mailto:gamlingay.allotments@gmail.com)

### Contact Details

To contact your Parish Council, write to the Clerks at The Eco Hub, Stocks Lane, Gamlingay, SG19 3JR. Telephone us on 01767 650310 or email us at [clerk@gamlingay-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@gamlingay-pc.gov.uk)

To contact individual councillors, please use the following email addresses;

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2 vacancies

Profiles of councillors can be viewed on our website <https://gamlingay-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Profiles-Feb-2021.pdf>

## Draft accounts for Year from 01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021

7 April 2021 (2020-21)

### Gamlingay Parish Council ANNUAL RETURN - Section 2 : Statement of Accounts

#### Accounts for Year from 01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021

This is prepared based on information in "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils : a Practitioner's Guide"

Important note: These figures have been prepared on an INCOME and EXPENDITURE basis.

Box No.	Description	Last Year £	This Year £
1	Balances brought fwd	337204.10	215139.79
2	Annual precept	199202.00	202566.00
3	Total other receipts	18836.93	46547.13
4	Staff Costs	100984.06	93969.98
5	Loan interest/capital repayments	12808.22	12808.22
6	Total other payments	226310.96	119832.35
7	Balances carried forward	215139.79	237642.37
8	Total Cash and Short Term Investments	215441.44	236501.90
9	Total Fixed Assets and Long Term Investments	408229.57	425091.57
10	Total Borrowings	140220.08	134308.25