

Gamlingay Parish Council

Annual Report May 2022 – April 2023



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GAMLINGAY PARISH COUNCIL – CHAIRMANS REPORT 2022/2023
(Given at Annual Parish Meeting 25.4.2023)

Samantha Martin

Good evening and welcome to Gamlingay's Annual Parish Meeting. I'm Samantha Martin, chair of Gamlingay Parish Council. Tonight's meeting is a chance to hear from the Parish Council, as well as the District and County Council, on what we've been doing over the past year. It's also a chance for you all to ask any questions you may have. Apologies from Cllr Bridget Smith and Cllr S Kindersley. We'll also hear updates from 2 local groups:

1. John Way from the Gamlingay Allotment Gardeners Association on **Gamlingay allotments** at Green End and Long Lane
2. Brian Culverhouse, Chair of Gamlingay United Football Club on plans and proposals for **football pitch improvements**.

And 2 presentations on areas of work/facilities directly impacting our village:

3. An update on current and future **preschool early years provision** in Gamlingay by Cambridgeshire County Council officers Alan Fitz (Place Planning team), Jo German Education (Capital team)
4. An outline on **Gigaclear's proposals and plans to roll out broadband** services in Gamlingay by Roisin McGettigan (Community Engagement Manager) and Dominic Hones.

There will be a brief Q and A to follow each presentation and one at the end too.

2022-23 was another busy year for Gamlingay Parish Council, in which a number of initiatives and projects came to fruition.

Our Full Council meets monthly, with various sub-committees meeting in between, such as Finance & General Purposes and Planning. This year we also had our first 'Inter-Parish Town meetings' with neighbouring councils in Pottton and Everton to discuss shared issues and opportunities affecting our areas. We also have regular attendance from Bridget and Sebastian at full council meetings and we're grateful for their continued support in navigating and dealing with District and County matters impacting Gamlingay.

In addition to our usual responsibilities such as grass cutting, maintenance of cemeteries, play & recreation areas and community buildings, we also make a proportion of our annual budget available for grants to local community groups. In 2022-23 this came to £10,477.50 and included

continued support for the Youth Café and Youth Club run by Forward Gamlingay, which attracts large numbers of young people from the village and surrounding areas. We also made awards to local groups such as the WI, Gardening club, Gamlingay Leisure, the Football Club, Gamlingay Schools Out, the Village Primary and other organisations such as Magpas, British Legion and the Wildlife Trust.

We also continue to work closely with Gamlingay Community Centre who run the Eco Hub, which has recently been re-awarded Hallmark accreditation level 1.

A significant achievement during last year was the culmination of seven years' work on our Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted by South Cambridgeshire District Council on the 24 November 2022, following residents voting in support of it at the Referendum on 10 November.

The ten policies in the plan aim to ensure future development respects and maintains the character and landscape setting of the parish. They also aim to encourage more walking, cycling and horse-riding, with developer contributions requested to support enhanced footway/cycleway networks identified in our Cycle and Footway Improvement Plan. An employment policy supports existing businesses and ensures retention of local jobs, and there are policies to protect and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity of the parish.

I'd like to thank the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group who have worked tirelessly on the plan, and in particular to Rachel Lee, Sarah Groom, Chris Barker, Gerry Burne and Kirstin Rayner, whose collective knowledge and expertise have been invaluable throughout its creation.

It is already having a positive impact in determining planning applications and appeals in the Parish. The planning inspector dismissed an appeal for 5 self-build units in the village at the end of December and his decision specifically referred to the Neighbourhood Plan and that the application was in conflict with our policies to protect the character, appearance and setting of Gamlingay.

Footpaths was a theme for last year – we created a new one on Mill Hill and lobbied for keeping one in Green End.

The first, on Mill Hill, was funded using Section 106 funds from the Station Road housing estate aimed at 'improvements in community transport'. The second, is a rerouting of the existing path known as Footpath 10 through the new Downing Gardens development and connects Green Acres with the centre of the village. Thanks to successful community lobbying we managed to persuade Morris Homes to sort an alternative route that met the needs of residents in and around the development. This site is already over half full and we look forward to welcoming new residents in the coming year.

Christmas lights were a success again and a huge thanks to Brogan for putting the lights up, Peter Middlicott at All Growth for supporting 3 free trees and the small volunteer group for sorting all of

the arrangements. If you'd like to get involved for this year, please let us know and we're hoping to try and replace the lamppost motifs with solar powered trees hung from brackets on houses later this year.

The Parish Council continues to be supportive of green initiatives in the village. Grow Gamlingay completed the planting of the Tiny Forest in Lower Field last winter, with many thanks to Emma and Mark Leaf Grimshaw for securing the funding for this project and to all of the volunteers involved in the planting of the 600 mini trees!

The Climate Action Group was set up in 2022 to identify how to promote reductions in carbon use, increase biodiversity and engage the local community on how to do this. Led by Councillor Keith Warburton and supported by the Parish Council, the group has helped to raise awareness via the Gazette and has arranged a number of activities relating to climate change and the environment, including the Big Green Week. Thanks to all the volunteers who have supported this initiative, including representatives from St Mary's church, the Baptist Church and Grow Gamlingay.

We all continue to maintain and develop Millbridge Brook Meadows as a facility for all of the community. We're currently looking for extra volunteers who might be interested in shaping the future of the meadows. If you'd like to help out, please let us know (speak to John Evans here this evening).

We agreed our budget for 2023-24 at our January meeting, within which the precept requirement is £220,650. Per Band D household this represents a small increase of 2% on the Parish Council element of your Council Tax (£2.76 per annum per household).

Our most recent audited accounts for 21-22 and the draft end of year accounts for 22-23 are also available to view this evening.

Our Council is made up of 15 Parish Councillors and supported by two Clerks; you can find all our details on the website. During the course of the last year, we have had a number of changes with 6 councillors leaving and 3 councillors joining. We still have space for more people to join and would encourage you to consider whether you'd be interested in joining us. It's not a big time commitment and it's a positive way of giving back to the community. We're keen to ensure the council fully represents everyone living in the Parish. Please do come along to a meeting to hear what it's all about!

I'd like to end by saying thank you to all of the team supporting the Council – to our groundsperson Keith, Library Manager Kate, Cleaner Karen, our brilliant and extremely knowledgeable Clerks Kirstin & Leanne, without whom we wouldn't be able to do our roles, and lastly, to the team of councillors who have supported and welcomed me as Chair this year. Thank you.

And thank you all for listening.

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

Since the start of the Council year in May 2022 the following meetings have been held:

- 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
- 51 street lights

Staff

All part time - 2 clerks (job share), grounds man, cleaner for the Old Methodist Chapel and library manager.

Plans for 2023-24

See the action plan on our website <https://gamlingay-pc.gov.uk/document-category/action-plans/>

Allotments

<https://gamlingayallotments.co.uk/>

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-pc.gov.uk

Gamlingay Allotment Gardeners Association (GAGA) is responsible for the running of the allotments. They can be contacted on 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

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

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7 vacancies

Unaudited accounts for Year from 01/04/2022 to 31/03/2023 and audited accounts are all available on our website - <https://gamlingay-pc.gov.uk/financial-information>

The precept for 2022-23 was £ 207,477 and for 2023-24 it is £220,650