

WEEDON PC ANNUAL REPORT 14/15

Weedon Parish Council

Looking forward while respecting the past

Whatever you think of the results of the national and district elections, we can be very proud as a village that ALL 7 of our Parish Council seats have been filled by councillors who were properly and formally nominated. Therefore our Parish Council for the next 4 years will consist of elected (not co-opted) members.

Six Parish Councillors were carrying on from last year. We are joined by Steve Gradley, replacing Kirsty Ashurst, who masterminded the new Weedon website and the defibrillator installation, but did not stand again due to work commitments.

So we have a good foundation



of experienced councillors who have shown their commitment to the village.

Our parish clerk, Ruth Millard, has been in the post since January 2013, and she provides the solid administrative background so necessary for today's parish councils.

We're ready to work again as a team who look forward,

while respecting the past, so expect us to strive to improve our community while being cautious about inappropriate new building, which could harm the environment.

We promise to take care of this very special village for everyone who lives here now and to protect it as best we can for the future.

Report for year ended
March 2015

Issued June 2015

What's inside ...

- Our regular activities in 2014/15
- Our major projects for 2014/15
- The money we spent in 2014/15
- Contact details for Parish Clerk, Parish, AVDC and Bucks Councillors, and key Weedon organisations
- Our plans for 2015/16

Plans for 2015/16

MVAS SPEED CONTROL

- ◇ Finish installation
- ◇ Set up rotation schedule between locations
- ◇ Collect data
- ◇ Review further actions

FOOTPATH GATES

- ◇ Replace more stiles with kissing gates
- ◇ Upgrade remaining stiles for better accessibility

NEW DUCK HOUSE and POND MARGIN REPAIRS

With the generous help of pond neighbour Steve Richards, we are going to:-

- ◇ Replace the duck house
- ◇ Add a floating pontoon for the Aylesbury ducks
- ◇ Replace some bank supports
- ◇ Put new timber posts into the grassy area

STREET LIGHT L.E.D.s

To save energy, we are exploring the possibility of replacing the current SON bulbs in our streetlights with LEDs.

Parish Councillors

Joanna Rose

Justin Sellers

Tom Jameson-Evans

Wendy Kett

Nigel Winnett

Mark Talbott

Steve Gradley



Looking after the present

Green spaces

The Park is owned by the Parish Council. We arrange for a local contractor to do grass and hedge cutting, path weed control, lawn improvement treatment and emptying of the litter bin. ROSPA inspect the play equipment every year. We've been delighted at the much increased use of this community green space since the new play equipment was installed in September 2013.

Around **the pond**, we pay for duck food so that the Aylesbury and wild ducks stay with us, and we also keep grass and pond margin plants tidy.

Christine and Nic Nicolay continue to

plant and maintain the **High Street Pump** on a voluntary basis, while Clare Macdonald does the same for the **Village Green Triangle** outside the pub.

We monitor the young **New Road trees** planted in 2007 to keep them flourishing.

More **spring-flowering bulbs** are being planted on the park slopes, New Road and by the village gates.

We pay for litter and dog waste collections from the village bins.

We mow and clear the New Rd to Lilies **footpath**, and liaise with landowners and Bucks CC over access to other footpaths.



Weedon children playing on the large tower at the Park after school

(picture used with parents' permission)

The built environment

We pay for electricity to power the **street lights** (which the PC owns) and arrange bulb replacement and repairs.

We contribute to the upkeep of the **graveyards** in Hardwick and Weedon. We have now taken on a 99-year lease of the Weedon graveyard (*see opposite*).

We keep the Weedon website and **notice boards** up to date. We've just replaced boards at East End and the Park, and Stephen Sidebotham has refurbished the Lower High Street board that he made.

We keep in close touch with Bucks CC Highways in order to prioritise care of Weedon's **roads**, pavements and verges. Our roads are in better condition than those of many other villages.

We look after the Weedon **War Memorial**, which this year needed major restoration works (*see opposite*).

We take care of **seats and benches** around the village and in the park. The iron bench outside the Schoolroom has just had a fresh coat of paint.

We achieved our best-ever score of 93 out of 100 in last year's Best Kept Village contest, and were Runners-Up again.

Our heritage and surroundings

The Parish Council is consulted on every **planning** application in Weedon – there were 15 building and 6 tree works applications last year. We held several public meetings, wrote detailed comment letters and spoke at one AVDC Development Control committee.

Planning decisions can have such an important effect on people's lives that the parish council is determined to do everything it possibly can to influence the planning authority. This year we were

successful in helping to secure refusal or withdrawal of all but one of the applications we objected to.

We co-ordinated efforts in the **Best Kept Village** competition, achieving our best score ever of 93 points out of 100, becoming Runner-Up in our category for the second year running.

We maintain contact with Thames Valley Police, and forward their information on crimes and crime prevention to villagers.



The War Memorial gleaming in the June sunshine after its centenary restoration



Investing for the future

Footpath gates

In line with the 2011 Parish Plan, we have been working with Bucks CC and land-owners to replace stiles with gates wherever practical on the main Village Walk footpath routes.

Already 9 stiles have been replaced with gates, but we hope to achieve even more

in the future. The work so far has been entirely funded by Bucks CC.

We would like to thank the owners who supported this access improvement, including John, Chris and Sam Chapman, John Woodfield, Nigel and Ina Smith and Roy and Janet Fincher.



The entrance gate to Footpath 12—the New Road-Lilies path

Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs

Like footpath access, speed control was another action point from the Parish Plan which we have pursued.

We decided to purchase two Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS), which have been delivered and will be commissioned shortly by Bucks CC Highways.

They have agreed 6 locations in the village, which will be used in rotation. The Local Area Forum is giving us £1,850 towards the project.

Not only do the signs flash up if you're speeding, they also collect data, so we will learn if further measures are needed.

Public Access Defibrillator

The equipment is installed at the High Street crossroads, accessible 24-7 by anyone who needs it.

It is very easy to operate without any prior training, and it really can save lives. Don't hesitate to use it if the need arises!



The defibrillator below the new noticeboard at the Five Elms crossroads

War Memorial Restoration

The War Memorial, erected in 1922 by the PC from public subscriptions, was given a deep clean and repair for the World War I centenary.

Bucks CC and the War Memorials Trust gave us generous grant funding for over two-thirds of the cost.

Weedon Chapel Graveyard Lease

In order to protect the Weedon Chapel Graveyard and continue to have the funds to maintain it in excellent condition, the PC has taken on a 99-year lease from the Methodist Church Council at a peppercorn rent.

No major changes to administration are foreseen, but we will be making all documentation public very soon.

We would like to thank Sarah Gibbs for her sterling work on preparing and finalising the lease at no cost to the village.



The Chapel graveyard, now managed by the PC under a 99-year lease



Weedon Parish Council

Ruth Millard, Parish Clerk

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Buckingham
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Weedon Parish Councillors

Joanna Rose <i>Chairman</i>	641622	Justin Sellers <i>Vice Chairman</i>	640524
Steve Gradley	641637	Tom Jameson-Evans	640845
Wendy Kett	640366	Mark Talbott	641502
Nigel Winnett	640125		



weedonbucks.org.uk

Parish Council Meetings

- 3rd Wednesday of odd-numbered months
- Planning meetings as the need arises
- Agendas posted on main noticeboard and website with 3 working days' notice
- Minutes (draft) posted within 14 days of the meeting

Other Weedon Contacts

Weedon Village Association	Catherine Rodnight	641071
Old Schoolroom	Shirley Bush	641382
Tuesday Club	Judy Nagele	641278
Methodist Chapel	Ralph Followell	641998
Weedon Charities	Wendy Kett	640366
Golf Society	Glyn Thomas	641435
Parish Magazine Editor	Peggy Sidebotham	640098
The Five Elms	John and Carol Slee	641439

Aylesbury Vale District Councillor

Ashley Bond (Watermead ward) **641552**

Buckinghamshire County Councillor

Netta Glover (Wing ward) **688357**

Email joanna@cjrose.net if you would like to be added to our village list

Spending money carefully

The Weedon part of your 2015/16 Council Tax has stayed the same for the third year in a row, without any reduction in the services provided.

The parish precept for 2015/16 was agreed in December and held at the level of 2014/15 so that Weedon residents again saw NO INCREASE in the Weedon part of their 2015/16 Council Tax bills.

As in 2012/13 and 2013/14, we set our budget to cover only routine expenditure from the precept, and we will draw on some of our reserves for further capital projects, while maintaining a prudent positive contingency balance.

All the parish council's services are being maintained at previous levels.

We have worked hard, and also been fortunate, to gain significant grant funding for our capital projects.

We will continue to seek out grants so that the call on residents' hard-earned incomes through council tax can be kept as low as possible.

Our annual statutory returns of income and expenditure are on the website, and more detailed accounts showing budgets will be routinely published later this year.