

## Chair's Report 2022/23

Bayston Hill Parish Council have had a very busy year with many projects completed or ongoing.

One of the first projects was to improve facilities for our youngest residents at Longmeadow Playground. Parish councillors made a visit to assess the play equipment and draw up a list of improvements to the area. This work was completed and the Parish Council are now considering the next wave of improvements, starting with plans to refurbish the toilet block followed by further improvements and additions to the children's play equipment.

In June we celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on the Glebelands, where families and friends from Bayston Hill gathered to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II seventy-year reign. Hundreds of residents enjoyed the day and the Glebelands was a 'sea' of multi-coloured picnic blankets and chairs. The Parish Council gave out cakes to residents and a fabulous day was had by all.

As part of the Jubilee celebrations the Parish Council presented every pupil at Oakmeadow School a commemorative mug with which to remember the event.

It was with great sadness on September 8<sup>th</sup> 2022 we learnt of the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Grateful thanks to Julie (BHPC Clerk) for organising Bayston Hill Parish Council. As Julie was familiar with the protocol, arrangements were made swiftly and Book of Condolences was placed next to the official portrait of Her Majesty in the Memorial Hall so that all residents were able to add their condolences the next day.

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2022 I attended the Proclamation of the new Sovereign, His Majesty, King Charles III in the Quarry where the High Sheriff read the Proclamation. Many thanks to all parish councillors who attended at such short notice.

On Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October The Big Green Week 2022 held its first event at Oakmeadow School. It was a great success and even the weather was on our side. We received very positive comments from residents who attended and stall holders too. The Mayor of Shrewsbury, Elisabeth Roberts, was our guest for the afternoon and engaged 'hands on' with the stall holders even making a bug home with her daughter. The Mayor, who was once a Bayston Hill resident herself, was very complimentary and thoroughly enjoyed her visit whilst endorsing the Eco event and all it stands for.

I would like to thank The Big Green Week Committee for all their hard work over the past year and for organising successful events during the week. Special thanks to the Chair, Kay Turner, for leading all the hard work that she and her committee do. Also, thanks to all councillors who gave up their time.

I had the pleasure of visiting Bayston Hill Library to take part in The Big Green Week Storytime session. The children were delightful and listened to stories about Hedgehogs and other British Wildlife, followed by a craft session where they created their own hedgehogs using autumn leaves.

Preparations are now well underway for The Big Green Week 2023, which this year will be held in June.

Also in October, I attended the Extra Shrewsbury Full Council meeting at St Chads to hear the proposals for the Health and Wellbeing Hub.

After hearing from the doctors whose practices are involved, including The Beeches Medical Practice, Bayston Hill, the public had the opportunity to comment and ask questions. The main concern raised by many was how would patients get to the site wherever it might be. Shropshire Council addressed the meeting and confirmed that they would not be able to provide free transport to the Hub from the different areas concerned. Many concerned patients expressed the view that an improved Doctors' Surgery in their own local area, within walking distance is their preferred outcome.

Another concern was that the Hub would not only be used for the surgeries that would close but would service all surgeries and 72 000 patients in Shrewsbury. No definite site was identified although the site at Meole was mentioned several times.

In the autumn, the Apple Pressing event was held for the second year running. It was a great success and the Big Green Week Committee are already thinking about ways to extend this in 2023, all ideas welcome.

Bayston Hill Parish Councillors attended a Strategic Planning meeting led by Kim Bedford. The meeting was well attended and proved very helpful in identifying the priorities for future projects in the coming year and beyond. The next Strategic Planning meeting will take place soon, and Bayston Hill Parish Council will be looking forward and prioritising new projects for the coming year – watch this space...

The autumn also saw the siting of new benches and bike rack on the parade, the money for this was provided by the "Welcome Back Fund" which was European Funding to revitalise High Streets after Covid.

On Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November I attended a Remembrance Service at the Memorial Hall. We were joined by residents and pupils from Oakmeadow School who read their own Remembrance Day poems.

The end of November saw the Christmas Tree arrive to mark the start of the Christmas festivities including 'Carols on the Parade' and 'Jingleation'. The Council made a donation of £500 towards the replacement of lights, which on the night made Parr's Pool a truly magical setting.

In December I attended the Bowdler Trust meeting as a Trustee and Representative of Bayston Hill Parish Council. This is a charitable trust that awards grants to children and young adults in the Shrewsbury area who are in need of support with their educational studies.

In January we had presentations from the companies who tendered for the replacement Astro turf. Our grateful thanks go to Peter, our deputy clerk, for organising this. The Astro turf is due to be replaced this spring and will be a very welcome improvement to our sporting facilities.

Thanks also go to Mark Underwood, Chair, and the Carbon Neutral Working Party for all their hard work helping the Parish Council to reach their Net Zero target by 2030. The Council are in the process of changing all of the street lights that are the responsibility of BHPC to LED, as this will help with our carbon neutral agenda and the new thermal camera is now available for Bayston Hill residents to borrow free of charge from the parish office.

In March I met with Shropshire Council at the BHPC Sensory Garden to discuss the new Wildflower Meadow to be planted this spring and also extending the wildflowers by the A49 on the approach the village.

We are now looking forward to The Coronation of King Charles III in May, where yet again the residents of Bayston Hill can come together and celebrate this historic event on the Glebelands. Bayston Hill Parish Council will be handing out more 'free' cakes to mark this event and a Coronation Bench will be presented to Oakmeadow School for all the children to use.

Many thanks to all our staff; Julie, Peter, Rachel, Sally, Roger and Ian for all their hard work during the year and to all Bayston Hill Parish Councillors who give their own time to help make Bayston Hill the wonderful place it is.

Caroline Clode – Chair

April 2023