

## Watermead Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 15 February 2024 at 7.30pm

Held at the Village Hall, Watermead

Attendees: Cllr Severn (Chair), Cllr M Singleton, Cllr A Bond, Cllr D Forder  
BC Cllr Diana Blamires, Noreen Shardlow (Clerk), Michelle Jackson (Assistant Clerk)  
plus 1 member of the public – Graham Severn

**23.78 Apologies**

Cllr A Schwab, Cllr M Morgan, Cllr I Schwab

**23.79 Declarations of Interest**

To declare any personal or prejudicial interests regarding the agenda – Cllr A Bond on any items relating to Trees, Planning, the Community Board or Buckinghamshire Council.

**23.80 To Receive Police Report re Protection of Persons & Property**

No report received.

**23.81 Open Forum for Parishioners at 7.40pm – 8.10pm followed by the Council Meeting**

At the previous meeting Cllr Blamires had reported cuts in the budget - reduced opening hours at household recycling centres and less money being spent on the weed spraying chemical. This was now not the case as the government would be giving a sum of money to local authorities. However parking charges would still be increased.

Cllr Blamires reported on the initiative organised with Buckingham Lodge care home where drop in sessions would be held to encourage socialisation. A flyer to be put together which Cllr Severn would post on All About Watermead Facebook page and Cllr Singleton would include in the next issue of the Village View. Cllr Severn to put Cllr Blamires in touch with Wendy Philamore Social Subscriber at Berkhamsted.

Cllr Singleton to provide details on “meals for one”.

The MVAS sign had been repaired and reinstalled. Thanks were given to Cllr Bond and Cllr Blamires.

Cllr Blamires/  
Cllr Severn

Cllr Singleton

The Chairman thanked the visitors for their attendance.

### Council Meeting

**23.82 To agree the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 18 January 2024**

The Minutes were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

**23.83 Planning Matters**

**To update on any Planning Applications submitted –**

**Aylesbury Vale Crematorium 24/00494/VRV - Variation of Condition 5 (hours) relating to application 14/01575/APP**

This variation arrived just after the agenda was published and responses for this application are due by the 12<sup>th</sup> March. In the event an extension is not agreed the PC discussed the application. It was unanimously agreed that the PC had no objections to this variation. This application will be placed on our March 2024 agenda.

**Former Football Stadium**

The recommendation is that the application be deferred and delegated to the Director of Planning and Environment for APPROVAL subject to the satisfactory completion of a S106 agreement to secure the matters set out in the report, subject to the receipt of no new material representations, and the conditions as proposed and any other considered appropriate by Officers, or if these are not achieved for the application to be refused.

**23.84 Neighbourhood Plan**

Following discussion with Sally Chapman our retained Neighbourhood Plan consultant, we now understand that the 'final plan' must be formally signed off and minuted by the Parish Council prior to holding the final phase of Open Day consultations. Clerk/Peter Dean & NP Team

The required documents are now sent to Sally for review and included the following:

- Amended Draft Neighbourhood Plan
- Consultation Statement and accompanying appendices including all evidence, surveys, results and engagement spreadsheet.
- Policy Maps (Allocation & Green Spaces)

The Neighbourhood Planning Team met with Sally via Zoom and Sally explained fully the process for the Green Spaces Assessment. Following this meeting the Green Spaces needs to be amended and Peter Dean has very kindly agreed to address this on Thursday morning (15<sup>th</sup> February 2024). Once Sally confirms we have all of this in place we will provide Buckinghamshire Council the opportunity to complete the 'screening' process to ensure that we are fully prepared prior to Regulation 14 confirmation. Noreen Shardlow/Peter Dean to meet on Monday. A vote of thanks was given to Noreen and Peter.

Throughout February/March we can start making preparations for the layout of the website, prepare advertising material (a grant application has been submitted and successful) and prepare the letters of consultation for all stakeholders as per schedule Sue has been working on.

## 23.85 Finance & Administration

### 1. The accounts to the end of January 2024 were agreed.

The payment schedule for February 2024 was agreed.

Payment Schedule		Feb-24		Payment Method (if Chq provide Number)			Comments
Company	Invoice No	Allocation	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount		
Mobile Mini	7003152525	R&M	£58.60	£11.72	£70.32	BACS	
Ian Whittome	Feb-24	Grass	£50.00	£0.00	£50.00	BACS	
CLC Grounds Maintenance	3312-3314	Grass, R&M & Litter	£1,425.00	£0.00	£1,425.00	BACS	Grass, R&M & Litter
Michelle Jackson	Feb-24	Assistant Clerk	£302.47	£0.00	£302.47	BACS	
Noreen Shardlow	Feb-24	Clerk & Office	£2,019.59	£0.00	£2,019.59	BACS	
HMRC	Feb-24	PAYE & NI	£686.14	£0.00	£686.14	BACS	
G. M. Hall & Co	Feb-24	Payroll	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00	BACS	
Village Hall Management	Feb-24	Hall Management	£600.00	£0.00	£600.00	BACS	
British Gas Business	600026660	Village Hall Gas Supply	£73.62	£3.68	£77.30	DD	
E.ON Next Electricity	A-CA102F38	The Gatehouse	£39.23	£0.00	£39.23	BACS	
Buckinghamshire Council Bins	2205064639	Village Hall & Land	£98.90	£0.00	£98.90	DD	
Dave Lucas	Feb-24	Litter Land R & M VH & Allot	£205.00	£0.00	£205.00	BACS	Awaiting invoice. £175 repair noticeboard and £30 adhoc for tree branch.
EON Electricity Village Hall	A-4A9A806C	Village Hall Electric Jun-	£227.59	£0.00	£227.59	BACS	
RTM Landscapes	4486	Pollard Works	£850.00	£170.00	£1,020.00	BACS	
British Telecom	SM50260908	Village Hall Phone, WIFI and Office Phone Line	£315.31	£63.06	£378.37	BACS	
SLCC Subscription	MEM247603-01	Membership Annual Fees	£238.00	£0.00	£238.00	BACS	
			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
<b>Routine Payments Total</b>			<b>£7,209.45</b>	<b>£248.46</b>	<b>£7,457.91</b>		
<b>Non Routine Payment</b>							
			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	BACS	
			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	BACS	
			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	BACS	
<b>Non Routine Payments Total</b>			<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>		
<b>Total</b>			<b>£7,209.45</b>	<b>£248.46</b>	<b>£7,457.91</b>		
Approval for Electronic Payments - To be signed by two Cllr. Signatories at meeting of the Parish Council		Cllr Signature:	Date Approved:				
		Cllr Signature:	Date Approved:				

### 3. Gus Orchard was unanimously appointed Internal Auditor for year-end 2023-2024.

### 4. Insurance Renewal (April 2024) – to be reviewed when received.

## 5. Community Ownership Fund L Bone Land – Grant Funding

Levelling up is about a big, ambitious shift in investment and powers to reverse persistent geographic inequalities and unleash opportunity in overlooked, undervalued places right across the United Kingdom.

But, as set out in our Levelling Up White Paper, it is also about safeguarding the small, but much-loved local assets on which we cannot put a price.

Ranging from sporting and cultural institutions to community centres, pubs and high street shops, these assets are the golden thread in our social fabric and shared heritage; enhancing pride, belonging and quality of life.

When they find themselves in peril, we have often seen communities rallying around against the odds to save them.

It's right that we do more to re-stack the odds in their favour.

This is precisely what the £150 million Community Ownership Fund aims to do; to ensure that local people across the UK can support and continue benefiting from treasured local institutions whose future may be in doubt.

Whether it's the pub on the high street that's facing closure, a village shop or a local sports team that might lose its ground, the Fund offers a great opportunity for local groups to take them over and to run them as businesses – by the community, for the community.

We are making good progress on this important work; with almost £50 million announced for 195 projects so far which will benefit community centres, heritage buildings, pubs, and sporting facilities across the whole of the United Kingdom. This is just the start. With 2 more years for more bids and investment to be released, I look forward to seeing many more small but mighty local assets levelling up the places we love and secured for future generations.

As with most grant applications an expression of interest was registered we have been invited to apply. Application in progress.

Cllr Severn to assist with the application to the Community Ownership Fund.

Clerk/Cllr  
Severn

### 23.86 Reports, Requests and Recommendations Received

#### 1 To update on Land Registry Matters

Cllr Severn would follow up on this.

Cllr Severn

#### 2 To update on Land & Routine Land Work Actioned - Storm Damage Trees

RTM Landscapes carried out the pollard work to the tree on Crown Estate land in front of Sandpiper. The resident who reported these works made contact about the agreed works, to thank the Parish Council for their splendid effort to make this happen and to commend the company on their efficiency and professionalism.

We need to determine how we address the very large tree at the north end of the large lake. Prices are as follows:

Bond Consulting £750 plus VAT

RTM £850 plus VAT

Patrick Kernan £2000 plus VAT

It was agreed to action this once precept funds had been received in the Spring.

#### Actioned – Spine Road Noticeboard

#### Small Lake Walkway Bridge – Update received from Maydencroft

Please find attached quote for full survey of the bridge and repairs, I have also put in a side note of the amount you would need to allow for IF the survey required the bridge to be lifted to facilitate repairs, but I'm am quietly confident we can carry these out without the crane lift but just wanted to make you aware that this could happen so you are forearmed.

We use an external independent bridge structural engineer company to access bridges and they will also advise on what repairs need to be undertaken and this is all included in the survey price on Item 1.0.

If you can authorise the Survey I can get this scheduled in and this will then allow me to give you a more accurate quote for the repairs once we know exactly what we need to change. As I've said before I always run an open book and will share what elements are and are not required so you always have control on what you are paying for.

Noreen Shardlow CILCA, Parish Clerk  
Watermead Parish Council  
The Village Hall  
Lakeside Watermead  
Aylesbury Buckinghamshire  
HP19 0FX

QUOTATION REF	MW11059MC
CLIENT	Watermead Parish Council
AUTHOR	Mike Comlay
OFFICE	Windsor
ACTIVITY	Bandstand Bridge Repair

18<sup>th</sup> January 2024

REF	DESCRIPTION	QTY	UNIT	RATE (£)	PRICE (£)
1.0	Carry out a full bridge survey to ascertain damage, rot and more permanent repair solution.	1	Item	-	880
1.1	Temporary Compound, Welfare and Cordon off Area, Create Temporary Footpath around working area. Install track mats for crane access to site.	1	Item	-	650
1.2	Remove damaged section of bridge & temporary access timbers.	1	Item	-	150
1.3	Prepare area and bridge for lift	1	Item	150	-
1.4	NOTE: If the bridge requires lifting (worst case scenario) these are the costs for using a spider Crane to lift whilst undertaking abutment and structural timber repairs.	1	Item	3,850	-
1.5	Carry out Repairs to Abutments and bridge rotted timbers, replace with RCP equivalents for longevity. Concrete resin fill repair to path edge	1	Item	-	1,350
SUBTOTAL					£3,030
VAT @ 20%					£606
TOTAL					£3,636



**Terms and Conditions –**

The quotation is valid for 1 month from the quotation date. After this period, our rates may change to cover market fluctuations and increased fuel costs.  
Payment is due within 30 days of invoice date.  
Mobilisation charge of 30% followed by balance on payment on completion.  
Payment to be made monthly in arrears as mutually agreed.  
For access to our quality, environmental and health & safety documentation, click on the **SIGN IN** link above and use the password 'builtolast' to access the Customer Portal.  
Further terms and conditions are detailed in 'Terms and Conditions of Business'.

Michael Comley from Maydencroft inspected the bridge Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Ideally if the water levels were lower, he would have a better understanding of what has happened. He has taken a series of images away with him but he may

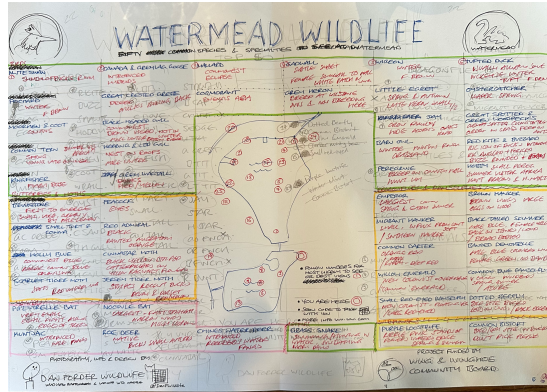
make contact to advise he needs a return visit once the water levels are lower. It was agreed to proceed with the bridge survey by Maydencroft.

### Small Lake Survey

The small lake survey will be taking place Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024.

### Bird Information Boards

The application is in progress for the new Wildlife boards, presented at the October 2023 Parish Council Meeting.



Existing Benches Ground Works D. Lucas Walkway Brackets and Walkway Caps.

### 3 Large Lake Walkway Project including results and feedback from Poll Phase 2 – The Dip

The Walkway Poll results have been sent via separate email. The document sent also includes the comments/feedback we have received.

It was agreed to make an application to build the path back up to its original level.

I insert below a copy of all the recent communications received (previously sent), between the EA and the PC.

I have been passed your enquiry about installing a bridge in Watermead, Aylesbury. I am not sure if you have seen the following page: [Exempt flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/exempt-flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits) – if you are able to meet the criteria set out for exemption 5 ‘footbridge over a main river not more than 8m wide from bank to bank’ the process will be fairly simple as it is free and just needs registration to get permission. I can confirm the site is not within 500m of any of the designated areas listed as part of the exemption. Our fisheries and biodiversity team are satisfied that a site visit is not required due to the location and the proposal being considered suitable in principle.

If the exemption is not feasible for what you require, you will need a bespoke permit. More information can be found here: [Flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits). It would be helpful to know what criteria is missed so this can be the focus of the application.

Once you have determined how you wish to proceed, please let me know and I am happy to help with the next steps.

Kind regards,  
**Katie Bradford**  
Flood and Coastal Risk Management Advisor (Berkshire and Buckinghamshire)

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Dear Katie,

Apologies for my delay in replying to you but I just wanted to seek clarification on a couple of matters with our local specialist before responding to you.

First of all I would like to reconfirm that the works that we are looking to do does not cross the River Thames but is a path that runs alongside it. As mentioned in previous emails to West Thames Consents when the River Thames levels rise they flow into the lake here at Watermead. Over the years the route the water flows is wearing away our natural paths. We have also discussed this problem with our local specialist and also mentioned to our Local Fisheries Officer when he was here on another matter.

As the water has caused damage to our footway, Exemption 28 (FRA 28) has been mentioned, can you advise if this is something that we can consider. We would like to rebuild the pathway back up to its original height (as shown in the hand drawing).

I attach for your benefit some drawings of area and also some potential designs we have received from our engaged specialist. Can I ask if permitted would a boardwalk be allowed or would we have to consider the pipe and natural path option.

Please, if you require any further information or have a problems with the below attachments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Noreen

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Good afternoon,

Apologies, I misread your initial email. I have run the screening report for FRA 28 and you can apply for the exemption based on the location. Looking at the criteria for the exemption there are not any specifications regarding the design, but the limits on height increase may impact what you can do. However, as there is a label of 100mm on your drawing this may have been considered.

If you feel that you meet the five points, then you can apply for the exemption and you will be informed in 10 days in the exemption has been registered.

I hope that helps but please let me know if you would like more information.

Kind regards,

**Katie Bradford**

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Advisor (Berkshire and Buckinghamshire)

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Dear Katie,

Please no need to apologise and I have one quick final question for you.

Can you please confirm that we are able to restore the path to its former height using this exemption or does the 100mm apply to the level it is now which has significantly lowered due to all the overflow from the River Thames.

Kind regards,

Noreen

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As the criteria isn't prescriptive it is difficult to be certain as the decision is made by another team, but I would assume the 100mm is based on the existing height. You could apply for the exemption based on the original height to see if it is accepted and if it isn't then you can apply for a bespoke permit. If you apply for a bespoke permit, the application should be fairly simple as the works would be very similar to the exemption.

Thanks,

**Katie Bradford**

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Advisor (Berkshire and Buckinghamshire)  
**Environment Agency | Partnerships and Strategic Overview Team | Thames**  
Red Kite House, Howbery Park, Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford, OX10 8BD

Previous Updates

The Parish Council was unable to find a way to provide a bridge or walkway over the dip as the Environment Agency (EA) would not approve our plans due the construction being close to the River Thames. This, in turn, meant that we could not obtain grant funding (a condition of which is to have planning permission).

Having researched alternative means we enlisted the help of a specialist company who provide complete structures to cross over water. The company is Maydencroft. Their advice is that it can be done, but we need to apply to the EA for approval. To gain approval we need to pay an application fee providing technical drawings as well as other information. Total cost of this application is c£5,000. The process will take several months and Maydencroft's experience in other places has been that permission is frequently refused, despite best efforts to submit best design. If permission were to be refused, we would need to re-apply at the cost of another £5,000 since fresh designs would be required.

Throughout the process of attempting to solve this problem the Parish Council has been in touch with the EA to seek their advice and to request a site visit. To date we have been sent their guidance on activities and permits only. Maydencroft confirm that it is highly unlikely that the EA will attend site. The process is very similar to that of the Local Planning Authority who only become involved once an application is made. At the time of this report the EA have made contact, asking for the Grid References of the land. This has been sent and we are currently awaiting a response. The Local Fisheries Officer of the EA is attending a site visit at Watermead to meet with the Piscatorial's. I will be attending this meeting and will ask him to take a look at the area in question.

The PC discussed the recent communications received from the EA and Maydencroft and will discuss with Michael Comley of Maydencroft the possible exemptions and options.

**4 To Report on Allotments**

Daphne Reid is the new Chairman for the Allotment Society.

**5 To update on Village View**

Dan Forder was thanked for his wildlife contribution.

**6 To report on Village Hall**

Nothing to report.

**7 To update on Transport/Highways**

Cllr Bond & Cllr Blamires to chase the replacement MVAS now that the lamp post has been replaced.

Cllr Bond &  
Cllr Blamires

Communication received from Peter Dean, following the January 2024 Parish Council Meeting.

Dear Noreen

As you will recall, you kindly raised the issue of the disintegrating footpath outside our house in November 2020. The correspondence is attached. No corrective action was taken, and the path has continued to deteriorate badly.

I raised the on-going issue in the public session of the January 2024 Parish Council Meeting. Cllr Blamires advised that I should report the matter again using Fix My Street. This I did, and a few days later a council operative inspected the path. He spoke with me and said that whilst it was not serious enough to be a high priority item, nevertheless it would be added to the job list, and would work its way up that list over time.

This seemed fair. Shortly afterwards the Fix My Street report was updated, saying "The Highway Officer has carried out an inspection and has identified that there is no immediate safety issues requiring attention, the decision is that no action will be taken at this stage." That too might seem reasonable – except that the matter is now marked on Fix My Street as "Closed". No mention is made of anyone actually reviewing the matter in the future.

The report is here:

<https://www.fixmystreet.com/report/5464071>

I have been both reasonable and patient, having already waited well over three years for any corrective action. As you will also recall, my neighbour Mr Green at Number 2 had an identical issue, and he too had to wait many years and make multiple complaints before any action was taken. In case I am unable to attend the next Parish Meeting, would you please raise this matter on my behalf and ask what I have to do to get the path repaired within a reasonable timescale.

With thanks and kind regards

Peter

Cllr Blamires to follow up to ensure it is not a closed case. A list of streetlights needing to be fixed to be passed to Cllr Bond for him to pursue.

Cllr Blamires  
Cllr Bond

**8 Watermead Events Committee**

Larks by the Lake would take place on Sunday 26 May. The initial Committee was held and arrangements are now being made. Event Management Plan to follow in due course.

**9 Regatta event update received from Smiles Charity – Mick Dorr/Graeme Catten**

The event would take place on 13 July.

**23.87 Date of meetings**

21 March, 18 April, 16 May, 20 June, 18 July, 19 September, 17 October, 21 November, 19 December (budget meeting).

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.28pm and thanked people for their attendance.