

# Cookham Parish Council

## Annual Report 2021-22





## Foreword



2021, a year of more!

More Covid.

More challenges regarding the Borough Local plan.

More than 280 homes agreed to be built in Cookham.

More traffic complaints.

More progress on the Alfred Major Playpark renovation.

More progress on the Cookham Neighbourhood Plan.

The Borough Local Plan dominates the near future, at present this means for Cookham:

The reduction of our green belt, with approval of two sites for house building.

An expansion of the urban area of Cookham by 280 homes, approximately 10%.

No supporting Cookham infrastructure upgrades:

No schools.

No sewer upgrades.

No road improvements.

No extra public transport.

No pavement improvements on safety black spots.

Increasing traffic village parking issues, increasing pollution and more congestion. This makes Cookham a less easy location for residents to access local shops and businesses.

New planning proposals have already asked to be released from the affordable the homes commitment, to be released from self-build requirements.

This plan is bad for Cookham.

The Cookham Neighbourhood Plan still seeks to channel Cookham's efforts towards improving our village and moderating more radical requests, but this seems an uphill battle as developers rush to cash in on high property prices and RBWM's Borough Local Plan. Efforts continue, and I urge residents to come and get involved. We need your help.

The Alfred Major Recreation Ground renovation continues to advance. This year funds have been secured to update the play equipment which is approaching the end of its life span. The cost of this equipment never fails to surprise, however we have awarded the tender to Sutcliffe Play Equipment who design and manufacture in Britain. In addition, funds have also now accrued to update and replace the CCTV cameras, sadly a necessary requirement due to the rising number of incidents and costs caused by anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

Looking forward to 2022, we hope Cookham will be able to celebrate a fabulous Platinum Jubilee. Celebrations are expected in both the Dean and Village, all benefiting from Parish Council donations to help support local business, help celebrate the reign of our Queen, and hopefully to help residents enjoy and to release a little of the tension that global events over the past 2 years have created.

Finally, it remains only to thank those who help the Parish Council deliver its responsibilities.

Thank you to the Parish Office staff for their continuing support and knowledge sharing.

Thank you to the volunteer Councillors who generously give their free time to contribute towards the needs of our community.

Thank you to the Parish sponsored Keep Cookham Tidy volunteers.

Thank you Cookham for your help and support.

**Cllr Mark Howard, Chairman, Cookham Parish Council**



Cllr Mark Howard  
Chairman  
West Ward (Cookham Dean)



Cllr Mandy Brar  
Vice Chairman  
Cookham Rise Ward



Cllr Mike Barnes  
Cookham Rise Ward



Cllr Eileen Bune  
Cookham Rise Ward



Cllr Martin Coker  
Cookham Rise Ward



Cllr Christine Doyle  
Cookham Rise Ward



Cllr Lesley Austin  
Cookham Rise Ward



Cllr Tracy Suleiman  
Cookham Rise Ward



Cllr Carol Aisladie  
Cookham Rise Ward



Cllr Helen Philip  
Cookham Rise Ward



Cllr Bill Perry  
West Ward  
(Cookham Dean)



Cllr Peter Roe  
West Ward  
(Cookham Dean)



Cllr Iain Herd  
West Ward  
(Cookham Dean)



Cllr Jane Perry  
Cookham Ward



Cllr Ian Wernham  
Cookham Ward

## Committee Reports

### Finance Committee

The members are: Cllrs P. Roe (Chair), L. Austin, M. Brar, M. Coker, M. Howard, I Herd, B. Perry, J. Perry.

The Finance Committee is responsible for the setting of budgets and it also oversees the finances and governance of the Parish Council including:

- Completing the annual budget taking full account of the needs and requests of the General Purposes, Planning, Flood and Staffing Committees;
- Recommending a precept for approval by the full Parish Council to be collected from residents through RBWM;
- Overseeing the completion of the annual return and audit;
- Periodically reviewing the Parish Council's policies on such diverse matters as data protection, complaints and financial controls.

In line with the Committee's policy and as adopted by the Full Council, a balanced budget was prepared for the year with only a small deficit within the bounds of possible accuracy. The precept was increased by 3%, again in line with the policy for small incremental increases.

The precept raised for the year was £127.6k which represents £43.10 for a Band D property. Total income for the year is budgeted as £171.3k against expenditure of £179.8k. Current year-to-date figures predict the Council should come in within budget for the year.

Looking forward to next year the Council has set a 5% increase in the precept so that a Band D property pays £45.07. This reflects the increased inflation in the economy ahead.

**Cllr Peter Roe**  
Chairman, Finance Committee

### Flood and Major Incident Committee

The members of this Committee are: Cllr M. Coker (Chairman), Cllrs C. Aisladie, M. Brar, M. Howard, J. Perry, H. Philip, T. Suleiman and D. Scarff (Cookham society member) and P. Willmott (FloodWarden)

The Flood and Major Incident Committee has responsibility for co-ordinating the actions of the Council in times of flooding and other major incidents to ensure we are well prepared in cases of emergencies.

The committee meetings are also attended by a representative of the Cookham Society and the Flood Warden. Our Flood Warden looks after the warning boards in the village.

### **The Causeway is opened according to the following protocol.**

The village of Cookham can become isolated during periods of severe flooding. The Cookham Causeway Access Operation puts in place an operation to maintain access to the village using Cookham Causeway, which runs parallel to The Pound for approximately 350m, between The Pound and the High Street.



The Causeway is an old structure and is no longer in daily use. The Causeway, as the highest road surface, can be utilised to maintain access to the village for vehicles and pedestrians when all 3 access roads into the Village are impassable due to flooding (The Pound - B4447, Ferry Lane - A4094 to Bourne End and Sutton Road - A4094 to Maidenhead)

## A big thank you

To all our committee members who man phones, patrol and monitor any flood, issue information where needed and answer queries on social media. Also, thanks go to Elizabeth House and Pinder Hall for being on standby, to Cookham SOS for liaising and helping us, and all social media sites that allow us to post our information. Also thank you to all who phone in offering help in times of flooding. If I have forgotten anyone, my apologies, all help is appreciated.



Our Cookham flood warning blog is <http://cookhamfloodwarnings.blogspot.co.uk>

It is full of useful advice and we would advise all villagers who are online to bookmark this page.

The Committee are always on the lookout for volunteers who would like to be co-opted onto the committee or help in other ways during an incident.

**Cllr Martin Coker**  
Chairman, Flood and Major Incident Committee

## General Purposes Committee

The Committee members are; Cllrs J Perry (Chairman), C. Aisladie, M. Barnes, M. Brar, E. Bune, M. Coker, C. Doyle, I. Herd, M. Howard, B. Perry and I Wernham.

Firstly, I would like to thank the members of my committee for all their support and hard work during the past year.

It has been a busy year for the General Purposes Committee. When I first joined this Committee, I asked what it did and was told well, it covers everything that is not covered by any other Committees!

Our remit covers the three sets of Allotments in Cookham: Sutton Road, Alfred Major Recreation Ground & Alleyns Lane; we also deal with Public Footpaths and other Public Open Spaces (including up to now Odney Common, which we believed we were bound to maintain for the John Lewis Partnership but which may not be so), Stonehouse Common, and the Harris Woodbridge Nature reserve (which is looked after by Wild Cookham on our behalf). The upkeep of the Cemetery and Chapel as well as maintaining Cemetery Lodge are also our tasks, as is maintenance of the two War Memorials in the Parish, in Cookham Village and Cookham Dean, as well as the Tarrystone at the junction of Sutton Road, Ferry Lane and Odney Lane. We are hoping to renovate the seat at the Tarrystone in the coming year; we have not had any response from the family of the young man whose life it commemorates, who had previously indicated a wish to be involved, so we will proceed with the work.

### Tree Survey

In 2001 we arranged for a comprehensive tree survey of all the trees in our parks and other open spaces, as well as those along our public footpaths, carried out by R.Watts & Sons. The trees were tagged at the same time for ease of identification in the future (the tags do not injure the trees in any way.) This year they will be carrying out work needed on the Category B trees, i.e. work that was not deemed urgent.

### The Alfred Major Recreation Ground

As those of you with children will already know through the recent consultation we did with the Primary and Nursery schools and of course the parents, we are working towards replacing the playground facilities. There were

interesting differences between the children's comments and their parents' on some of the equipment! All the equipment in the playground and the fitness trail is regularly inspected by Hags, their recommendations are always followed to ensure public safety. In conjunction with Wild Cookham there is an exciting project for wild flowers in Alfred Major. The first bed will be near the fence behind the houses on High Road that back onto the park between the playground and the allotments. It will be D shaped and about 25 sq m with the back of the D parallel to the fence to protect the flowers as they grow. The aim is to attract pollinators which will assist the allotment holders with their crops. Please do not pick the flowers!

If it is a success 2 further plots will be made: 1 behind Cookham Rise Primary School which will be 5m wide and the idea is to involve the children at the school to help with the planting and maintaining the plot. The 3<sup>rd</sup> plot will be in the SE border of the park well away from the playing fields. It will be next to the path and 4m wide.

#### Stonehouse Common

Stonehouse Common is somewhat off the beaten track in Cookham Dean and is one of our smaller open spaces which leads down to the River Thames. It had become rather overgrown and last year we set out a maintenance schedule of works. It is now much tidier and has a new fence and gate.

#### Allotments

All the allotment sites are pretty much fully occupied. There is a Community Allotment in the Alfred Major Allotments which is very popular with people who do not want or cannot manage an allotment on their own.

#### Harris Woodbridge Nature Reserve

This is managed for us by Wild Cookham and we give them a donation of £200 per annum to assist their work there. It is very beautiful in the Spring when hundreds of Native bluebells are in bloom. There is a variety of wildlife which thrives in this secluded setting.

#### Dog Waste & Litter Bins

There are 23 bins in the Parish which are emptied every week and if required twice a week in the summer. Please remember to put your poop bags in a bin. It is unsightly and smelly when you hang them from trees or bushes!

**Cllr Jane Perry**  
Chairman, General Purposes Committee

## Planning Committee

The Committee members for 2021/2 are: Cllrs B. Perry (Chairman), C. Aisladie, L. Austin, M. Barnes, E. Bune, I. Herd, J. Perry, P. Roe and I. Wernham. Mr Dick Scarff of the Cookham Society was also re-co-opted in accordance with Standing Order 4.b as a non-voting member.

The Council is not as such a statutory consultee, but (like all other Parish Councils) is a routine consultee in respect of applications affecting the Parish made to the Local Planning Authority, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead ("RBWM"). RBWM says that comments and objections we submit to it are given particular profile in their decisions to permit or refuse applications.

During the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic, RBWM consolidated its two regional planning Panels into one, and reduced the ability to 'call-in' applications to that panel. We, with others, made representations to RBWM requesting re-instatement of the 'two panel' system. RBWM did re-instate the old two Panel system late in 2021.

As a specific consultee, this Parish has been entitled under RBWM's procedures to make verbal representations lasting 2 minutes in respect of any applications which are 'called in' to be determined by the Panel. We also requested that the time allotted to Parish Councils to speak at Panel meetings should be increased from 2 minutes to the same 3 minutes allocated to the public. RBWM has made that change.

Fortunately, Cllr Gerry Clark, one of our Borough Councillors, now sits on 'our' Panel. Cllr Mandy Brar, who is both a Parish Councillor and a Borough Councillor, continues to be most helpful in liaising with the Committee about applications it would like her to call in.

The Planning Committee has met 12 times during the Council year from April 2021 to March 2022. We reviewed 213 planning applications, 49 applications to undertake works on protected trees, and been consulted on 0 Tree Preservation Orders; we pro-actively sought 3 sets of such orders in connection with BLP sites designated for housing, but in each case RBWM refused to make them.

The Committee has basically continued the policies on 'standard' responses and comments developed in 2019/20.

While it has largely ceased to be necessary, not least because this Council's Clerk and Assistant Clerk have good relationships with the appropriate RBWM Officers which means we often get necessary short extensions of time, the Committee has continued when occasionally necessary the system developed in the early days of the pandemic whereby when RBWM requires comment on a timescale not fitting our meeting schedule. The Assistant Clerk circulates a note of relevant applications, email comments are circulated by 'reply to all' and a consensus is developed by me as Chairman, which is reported to RBWM. The decisions are then ratified at the next meeting of the Committee. This system has continued to work well.

The Committee has made no comment on a large majority of the applications it has reviewed. 13 applications to which the Committee had raised no objections or concerns were subsequently refused by RBWM.

Comments or concerns were raised on 38 applications, including requests for conditions to protect other properties/the local environment, and/or to restrict future developments or use, or to ensure adequate parking or access. Objections, with reasons, have been submitted to RBWM on 45 planning applications for various new homes, buildings, extensions and/or conversion of agricultural buildings. 18 of these have so far subsequently been approved by RBWM despite the Committee's representations.

The Committee has asked me to represent it at Panel whenever it considers an application to which we have objected. I have done this on each occasion that has happened save one, where I was out of the country. The Cookham Society usually parallels our objections.

In February 2022 we succeeded in persuading RBWM to reject a 15 metre high 5G telecommunications mast proposed for the corner of Mill Lane and Sutton Road close to housing, Holy Trinity School and the Cookham High Street Conservation Area.

We were also successful in preventing the felling of the iconic Magnolia in front of Moor Cottage in Cookham High Street.

Last year, the Committee sought refusal of 3 applications for Heavy Goods Vehicle Licences to operate at Lower Mount Farm. The Council's/Committee's locus standi in such matters arises not from its status as Parish Council but from the Council's ownership of affected land. In the case of Lower Mount Farm, the land affected is the Cemetery, Chapel and Cemetery Lodge. The Committee has objected to all the applications on the grounds of nuisance, especially noise nuisance but also traffic, to residents and users of the Chapel and Cemetery. At the time of last year's report, one such licence has been granted despite our objections but another was to be the subject of a formal hearing and the third was deferred to await the result of that hearing. To our knowledge, no further progress has been made with either of those applications over the last year.

As I reported last year, on 7 July 2020 the Council duly set up a specific Cookham Neighbourhood Plan Working Party, which now reports to Council separately from this Committee, though under my Chairmanship. That Working Party consisted of Cllrs Chris Doyle (Cookham Rise), Mark Howard (Cookham West), Martin Coker (Cookham Rise), Ian Wernham (Cookham) and me (Cookham West), together with Dr Shez Courtenay-Smith (Chairman of the former Village Design Statement Working Party) and with representatives of the Cookham Society (Mr Dick Scarff), WildCookham (Mr Lars Ahlgren) and Save Cookham (first Mr Tim Veale and since autumn 2021 Mr Nic Dawkes). In January 2022, Cllr Wernham retired from the Working Party; he was replaced by Cllr Jane Perry (Cookham).

The Working Party has met throughout the last year. As a result, we have undertaken two public consultations, including a public meeting to conclude the second since covid regulations by then permitted this. In addition, a consultative meeting has been held with a group of local landowners.

A first draft of the Design Guidance, including a second draft Site Masterplanning document directed to the sites designated in the originally emerging, but then formally adopted on 8 February 2002, Borough Local Plan, was produced in September 2021. Following various comments and meetings between AECOM (the design consultants) and the Working Party, a second draft was produced in

December 2021. In January 2022, the Working Party considered that largely satisfactory, but the Cookham Society has produced further comments on it, which require consideration.

A first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan itself was produced during December 2021. The Working Party considered this a positive document and has since been working with Troy (the planning consultants) to bring it to a state in which consultation can take place about it.

During the year the Council continued its input into the revised draft Borough Local Plan ("BLP"). As requested by the Council, I drafted and Council approved the necessary written submissions to the Inspector in respect of Main Modifications ("MM"s) to the BLP proposed by RBWM. I then appeared on behalf of the Council at the relevant sessions of oral examination conducted by the Inspector in respect of them, to speak to our submissions. In doing so, I liaised with the Cookham Society (represented by Mr Tom Denniford, its then Chairman), WildCookham (represented by Mr Mike Copland, its Chairman) and Mr Paul Strzelecki who also appeared on certain topics. Cookham was undoubtedly one of the best represented Parishes.

As indicated above, on 26 January 2022, RBWM announced and published the Inspector's Report of that date approving the BLP as modified by the MMs. On 8 February 2022, RBWM adopted it.

We were unsuccessful in our attempts to have the two major green belt sites within Cookham (AL37, Lower Mount Farm ("LMF") adjoining Cannondown Road (200 homes envisaged), and AL38, Strande Lane, (20 homes envisaged)), and the designation of part of LMF adjoining Long Lane as a Protected Employment Site ("PES") removed from the BLP. We were, however, successful in having it made clear that the LMF PES remains in the green belt so green belt planning rules still apply to it, and in retaining the full extent, agreed by RBWM and the Inspector, of Poundfield as a Local Green Space.

An outline planning application has already been made in respect of Strande Lane by Shanly Group. We are engaging with them about it. Bellway Homes are already undertaking consultation about their envisaged

application in respect of LMF. We are actively involved in that too.

As reported last year, RBWM consulted on the Cookham High Street Conservation Area ("CHSCA") in 2016 and again in 2018. (The CHSCA currently extends east from the junction of The Pound with the Maidenhead Road as far as the Lulle Brook and south from the Thames to the junction of Sutton Road with Mill Lane – in effect including most of Cookham Village, Cookham Moor and The Pound.) In late 2019, the Cookham Society told us that RBWM had told it that the resultant CHSCA documentation was ready for presentation to/approval by Cabinet of RBWM. Nothing emerged.

Since uncertainty over the status and extent of the CHSCA affects planning decisions in a sensitive area as well as being generally undesirable, the Committee has continued to press RBWM over this, with little success. Though at the Borough Liaison Committee on 22.1.21 RBWM's then new Head of Planning, Mr Adrian Waite, apologised for this, and we received further apologies later, we saw little sign of the follow up he promised. We were told recently that there should be proposals in February 2022. There were not.

The same delay at RBWM affected the Committee's approach to RBWM over the Tree Preservation regime. This appears to be complicated by proposals in RBWM to change its Tree Preservation structure. At the same BLC meeting, Mr Waite made a similar commitment as that regarding the CHSCA. Despite a year's further time lapse, and a contact in principle from a different officer at RBWM, we have still not had a substantive response.

**Cllr Bill Perry**  
**Chairman, Planning Committee**

## Community Projects and Other Activity

### Keep Cookham Tidy (KCT) –

The last year has seen some firsts for Cookham Parish Council to become involved with.

1st By the end of the summer our Duke of Edinburgh BRONZE students completed their volunteering, all nine of them.

June 2021 – Litter Pick around Station and neighbouring roads – a lot of rubbish off our streets!



June

1st July 2021 – Station Car Park Telephone Box clean up thanks to GWR and BT it eventually happened.



July

Cookham's Alfred Major Park saw some summer weekend broken glass incidents, on the court and skate park as well as around the grass, a huge danger to dog's and the public. Residents raised the alarm on a few occasions and very quickly either Cllr Carol Aisladié or me or both of us with a few residents sorted it. Luckily this only happened for a few weekends but was very unwelcome.

1st Our local Beaver pack donned KCT hi vis and borrowed litter picks to get their community badges



1st On Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2021, Keep Cookham Tidy joined a new project THAMES21 [www.thames21.org.uk](http://www.thames21.org.uk) a plastic blitz operation during National Rivers Day.

We set up an area along the bank of The Thames at Marsh Meadow, pickers logged the rubbish they found, this rubbish could have ended up in the river. The data was logged centrally with Thames21 which ran from Cookham through to Teddington. [The Thames and Tributaries Plasticblitz!\(arccgis.com\)](http://The Thames and Tributaries Plasticblitz!(arccgis.com)) look up number 10 – we are there.



1st January signed up our first Duke of Edinburgh SILVER volunteer.

The number of litter pick events is lower than previous years, but those volunteers that turned up to the few we had worked hard and accomplished so much. Our most recent event had to be cancelled for safety reasons due to Storm Eunice.

1<sup>st</sup> This had already been delayed as Cookham was very lucky to have had Motor Vehicle students from BCA borrow our hi vis and litter picks and do some volunteering litter picking during January for which we are extremely grateful. This opportunity enabled them to feel valued and gave them a sense of achievement which they can now add to their CV's.



Watch out for more events as we go through 2022.

**Cllr Christine Doyle – Lead on Keep Cookham Tidy**

## The Parish Council and its Staff

### **Councillors (sub-committees)**

Cookham Village Ward:

Cllr Ian Wernham (PC) (GPC)  
Cllr Jane Perry (PC) (GPC Chair) (Fin) (FMIC) (EC)

Cookham Rise Ward:

Cllr Carol Aisladie (PC) (GPC) (FMIC) (SC)  
Cllr Lesley Austin (PC) (Fin)  
Cllr Mike Barnes (PC) (GPC) (SC)  
Cllr Mandy Brar, Vice Chair (all sub-committees)  
Cllr Eileen Bune (PC) (GPC)  
Cllr Martin Coker (GPC) (Fin) (FMIC Chair) (EC)  
Cllr Chris Doyle (GPC)  
Cllr Tracy Suleiman (FMIC)  
Cllr Helen Philip (FMIC)

Cookham Dean Ward:

Cllr Iain Herd (PC) (GPC) (Fin)  
Cllr Mark Howard, Chair, (all sub-committees)  
Cllr Bill Perry (PC Chair) (GPC) (Fin) (EC)  
Cllr Peter Roe (PC) (Fin Chair) (SC Chair) (EC)

Key for Parish Council sub-committees: (PC)-Planning Committee; (GPC)-General Purposes Committee; (Fin)-Finance Committee; (FLIC)-Flood and Major Incident Committee; (SC)-Staffing Committee, (EC)-Emergency Committee

Contact details for all Councillors can be found at [www.cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk).

### **Staff**

Jill Gavin, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer  
Jackie Smith, Assistant Clerk

Contact the Council at Council Office, High Road, Cookham SL6 9JF, telephone 01628 522003 (8.30am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday and also Tues 5-7pm) or email [office@cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:office@cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk).

### **Representatives on outside bodies**

Councillors are appointed annually to various local groups and panels. Appointments for 2020- 21 were:

Cookham Welfare Trust	Cllrs Brar, Herd
BALC/DALC Executive Committee	Cllrs Austin, Brar, Coker
Pinder Hall Management Committee	Cllr Barnes
Patient Participation Group	Cllr J. Perry
Marsh Meadow Management Committee	Cllrs Bune, Doyle
Marlow and Maidenhead Passenger Association	Cllrs Bune, Coker
Borough Flood Liaison Group	Cllrs Coker, J. Perry
Parishes Flood Liaison Group	Cllrs Coker, Suleiman
Maidenhead Waterways Liaison Group	Cllrs Coker, Howard
Twinning Committee	Cllrs Brar, J. Perry
National Trust Liaison Group	Cllrs Aisladie, Austin
RBMW Local Access Forum	Cllr Howard
Allotment Association	Cllrs Bune, Doyle
Friends of Battlemead Common Group	Cllrs Aisladie, J. Perry
Water Safety Groups	Cllrs J. Perry, H. Philip



Cookham Parish Council  
March 2022

[www.cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/cookhamparishcouncil/](https://www.facebook.com/cookhamparishcouncil/)

Clerk to the Council, Council Office, High Road, Cookham SL6 9JF  
01628 522003  
[office@cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:office@cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk)