

# Abbots Langley Parish Council



## Annual Report 2017-2018

Presented at the Annual Parish Meeting held on  
1st March 2018 at Tanners Wood Hall,  
School Mead, Abbots Langley.

[www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk](http://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk)

# Abbots Langley Parish Council

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## 1. Parish Council Chairman's Report Councillor Liz Burns - Chairman of the Parish Council

It has been an honour to serve as Chairman of Abbots Langley Parish Council for 2017-2018 and I have enjoyed attending many interesting events and although at times this has been challenging, to ensure I spend enough time on official duties, I have received overwhelmingly positive feedback at almost every event. (The complete list of engagements is available in previous Parish Council Minutes.) A particular interest has been visiting our NHS Doctors Surgeries and meeting with their Carers Champions and after visiting several for in depth tours and meetings, I am extremely proud of the provision, skills and commitment the staff have. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the passion they show and the importance of the work caring and supporting the elderly in our community, a very important job in our ever changing society. I have also enjoyed being involved in our Veterans Champion role and visiting County Hall with regard to this several times. If anyone is aware of any Veterans living near them, please put them in touch with me so we can ensure they are getting all the support to which they are entitled.

There are many important projects under way in the Parish. Our Neighbourhood Plan, currently led by Peter Warman and his committee of residents and councillors, is forging ahead; this involves a lot of work and a big thank you to Peter Warman for chairing this group.

I have also really enjoyed meeting the various charities and community groups who have invited me along to see their valuable work (and those I have invited myself along to!). I was also delighted to have supported the Abbots Langley Tough Ten, a sad event in some ways this year to be without Graham Taylor. Well done to all who organise this event and those who take part in any way on the day.

Thank you to all who have applied for and received the various levels of grants that the Parish Council award annually, it is good to see some new applicants this year.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all Abbots Langley Parish Council staff for their hard work and commitment all year round as well as the equally important behind the scenes work. I would also like to thank our dedicated volunteers in the community who give up their time to make the Parish a better place to live via our various clubs, societies and community groups, as well as our dedicated and hardworking Police Officers and staff based in the village. Finally, I would also like to wish all my fellow Councillors and the 2018-19 Chairman my best wishes of support in a truly unique and interesting role.

## 2a. Planning & Highways Committee Report Councillor David Major - Chairman of the Planning and Highways Committee

Very little has changed over the last 12 months, if anything pressure has continued to increase on land for housing development.

Among other bodies the Parish Council remain statutory consultees to planning applications submitted to Three Rivers District Council within the parish boundary, for comments and recommendations based on planning regulations, local knowledge and public reaction. Members have been successful in trying to protect the parish from the pressure of urban sprawl and unacceptable infill development; nevertheless, there have been some disappointments, generally due to planning law or a successful appeal decision made by a government appointed inspector, which has included the removal of protected greenbelt land from the register, but fortunately this threat is minimal at present. Nevertheless, I do feel Abbots Langley has retained its community and village atmosphere despite enormous pressure for further development and also successive Government's "Presumption in favour of Development".

Temporary relaxation of the need for full planning permission for a single storey rear extension to a property and allowing it as permitted development, has not reduced the committee's workload. There seem to be more than ever two storey side and rear extension applications, also a trend to remove conservatories to allow a more permanent expansion to a property and the ongoing conversions of garages into habitable accommodation, bizarrely including houses on the new local estates. On the other hand, this has been no reason for our assiduous members to disregard the much larger and contentious development sites proposed in the district, these include the recent trend to allow large commercial office blocks to be converted into residential apartments by way of "Permitted Development".

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I know that members of this committee are very conscious of the strong public feeling regarding protection and enhancement of this parish. They will continue to relay matters such as the poor condition of the road surface, worn-out road markings, inappropriate housing and commercial development as well as any general neglect of the area, to the respective authorities including this council's own officers and workforce. Hopefully the much overstretched infrastructure will continue to cope with the ever increasing pressures.

### 2b. Leisure Committee Report

#### Councillor John Wyatt - Chairman of the Leisure Committee

All of the allotments are being well used but again we have a close to zero waiting list, except for those at Manor House. So if you fancy an allotment now is the time to put your name down but keep in mind that working an allotment successfully takes a lot of time and effort. Contact the Parish Council offices on 01923 265139.

John Kersey, with the help of allotment holders from Primrose Hill, are keeping an eye on the community orchard, a couple of trees have been replaced but on the whole things are looking good.

We have put money aside to build a toilet block at the Manor House grounds. This has been one of the most requested improvements to that area. I'm pleased it's going to happen.

The parking restrictions at Manor House and Primrose Hill car parks have been in force for well over a year now. We tweaked the hours in the summer to give 3 hours unrestricted parking, as we thought it would suit people better. We haven't had any more or less complaints than before.

The new play areas at the Manor House grounds and Bedmond seem to be holding up to wear and tear and certainly get a lot of use.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Community Centre. They are running a monthly competition on their Facebook page to raise awareness of the Community Centre and the different groups that use the centre. Once again they are organising the Prince and Princess of the carnival for Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June. The winners will sit in a carriage pulled by a pair of horses and take part in the procession. For more information about the Community Centre please contact Richard Kennell - email: [richard.kennell2@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.kennell2@btinternet.com).

The Watford Lions will again organise the carnival in June and the fireworks in November but could always do with some extra help. If you would like to find out more about the Lions please contact Frank Rouse, email: [frankrouse@yahoo.com](mailto:frankrouse@yahoo.com). All monies raised by the Lions go to local charities.

The Abbots Langley Tough Ten put on their race again through the village. All ages and abilities ran on various length courses and again all monies raised goes to local charities. The Tough Ten are always looking for more safety stewards to police the runners, if you are able to help please contact the organisers: <http://tough10.co.uk/>

AIMs (Abbots Improvement Group) are still out there in all weathers looking after various parts of the Parish notably Kitters Green, Millennium Gardens the area around the police station, the Community Centre and the planting around the entrance signs to the village. If you are interested in finding out more about their work or lending a hand please contact: Laila Namdarkhan on 01923 269388.

This Committee still rely heavily on local representatives to report on the allotments, halls and sports clubs in the parish, we would like to thank them and the recently outgoing reps.

This Committee has the biggest monetary turnover of the committees so takes up a lot of the time of Tim Perkins our Clerk to the Council, David Abbott our Facilities Manager and Mark Ellis our Works Manager. The ground staff that keep the parish owned and managed grounds up to scratch and the office staff that keep the rest of us on our toes, my thanks to them all.

### 2c. Finance & Administration Committee Report

#### Councillor Brenda Kersey - Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee

I am pleased to report that once again the Parish Council's finances are in good shape, confirmed by both internal and external auditors. Our financial procedures are sound, we are compliant with legislation, we have good budgetary control and maintain suitable reserves.

In previous years I have explained in some detail what the officers and the Committee deal with, so this year I am picking out three particular matters of interest that have arisen during the year.

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First, we have the wonderful new play areas in Abbots Langley and Bedmond. These were financed jointly by the Parish Council and Three Rivers District Council. They were long in the planning, and we set money aside in a special reserve to contribute £135,000 to this cost of the Manor House and Bedmond play areas. As we “saved” this money over a number of years it did not impact too heavily on residents when the schemes finally took off. The feedback from our residents has been overwhelmingly positive - people love, use and are really proud of, the installations.

Secondly, I will next turn to a matter which residents regard less favourably - i.e. the amount of new housing development our Parish has seen. There are two small upsides to this. The first is that we receive a higher amount of revenue because of the larger number of homes. The other is that large scale developers have to pay a levy (the Community Infrastructure Levy) to the District Council, some of which is passed on to the Parish. We currently have £101,918 to spend. The money has to be used to provide infrastructure to benefit the community and the Council must report back on precisely how it has been spent. The Council is not free, for example, to use it to subsidise its day-to-day operations. I have already mentioned the increased use of the Manor House play area, and many residents have suggested that there is a need for toilet facilities there. This is the sort of project the CIL money may be used for.

Thirdly, we have to keep abreast of changes in the law and one change that will hit many organisations large and small in 2018 is the General Data Protection Regulation. You might think a Parish Council would not have much to do in order to comply with the requirements but that is no so. Staff and councillors have been receiving training and we are looking for the most cost effective way of implementing the regulations. Setting up is expensive. We have had to budget £10,000 for this year and next but in future years the cost will reduce.

The majority of our income comes from the amount (“the precept”) we collect from our residents via Three Rivers District Council. We are pleased that at a time of inflation and relaxation of pay constraints we have kept our increase very small. A family in a Band D property will be asked for an additional £1.58 for the year, 3p per week.

My thanks go to our officers, particularly the Clerk to the Council and the Finance Officer, who keep us on track, and to the members of the Committee who give so much of their time.

### **2d. Staffing Committee Report** **Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst - Chairman of the Staffing Committee**

The Staffing Committee meets four times a year, with additional meetings if required. The committee considers matters related to the employment of the Parish Council's staff. Significant parts of the committee's meetings are confidential, as they relate to individual members of staff.

The committee continues to work with the Clerk and our advisors on employment related matters, monitoring changes to legislation and the impact these may have on our staff.

### **2e. Review Panel Report** **Councillor Robin Powell - Chairman of the Review Panel**

This committee's principal role is to review complaints against the services provided by the Parish Council, which have not been resolved through discussion with officers of the Parish Council.

Complaints are reviewed in line with the Parish Council's published complaints policy.

The committee did not meet during the year as no such complaints were received.

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**Councillors**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Email</b>
Councillor Sara Bedford 100 Kindersley Way Abbots Langley WD5 0DQ 01923 270469	Leavesden	<a href="mailto:cldr_sara.bedford@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_sara.bedford@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor Jean Bowman 9 Bell Close Bedmond WD5 0QU 01923 270190	Abbots Langley and Bedmond	No email
Councillor Liz Burns 51 Sheriff Way Leavesden WD25 7QS 01923 661533	Leavesden	<a href="mailto:cldr_liz.burns@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_liz.burns@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor Lyn Ferguson Railway Arms Cottage Railway Terrace Kings Langley WD4 8JB 07590 577085	Primrose Hill	<a href="mailto:cldr_lyn.ferguson@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_lyn.ferguson@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor Brenda Kersey 30 Abbots Road Abbots Langley WD5 0AZ 01923 266954	Abbots Langley and Bedmond	<a href="mailto:cldr_brenda.kersey@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_brenda.kersey@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor Mrs Jane Lay The Gleanings 31 Marlin Square Abbots Langley WD5 0EG 01923 447281	Abbots Langley and Bedmond	<a href="mailto:cldr_jane.lay@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_jane.lay@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor David Major 10 St Lawrence Close Abbots Langley WD5 0AU 01923 265570	Abbots Langley and Bedmond	<a href="mailto:cldr_david.major@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_david.major@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor Stephen Giles- Medhurst 25 Tudor Manor Gardens Garston WD25 9TQ 01923 893661	Leavesden	<a href="mailto:sgm@cix.co.uk">sgm@cix.co.uk</a>

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Councillor	Ward	Email
Councillor Alex Michaels 77 Toms Lane Kings Langley WD4 8NJ 07931 554698	Primrose Hill	<a href="mailto:cldr_alex.michaels@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_alex.michaels@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor Robin Powell 8 Lapwing Way Abbots Langley WD5 0GG 01923 336770	Leavesden	<a href="mailto:cldr_robin.powell@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_robin.powell@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor Hitesh Tailor 42 Westland Close Leavesden WD25 7GH 07949 030222	Leavesden	<a href="mailto:cldr_hitesh.tailor@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_hitesh.tailor@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor Owen Roe 31 Lauderdale Road Hunton Bridge Kings Langley WD4 8QA 01923 262257	Abbots Langley West	<a href="#">No email</a>
Councillor Alison Ward 64 Trowley Rise Abbots Langley WD5 0LW 01923 267337	Abbots Langley West	<a href="mailto:cldr_alison.ward@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_alison.ward@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor John Wyatt 122 Tibbs Hill Road Abbots Langley WD5 0LL 07762 135451	Abbots Langley and Bedmond	<a href="mailto:cldr_john.wyatt@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">cldr_john.wyatt@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Vacant	Hunton Bridge and Langleybury	

The Parish Council is made up of fifteen members, fourteen of whom were elected at the ordinary elections held in May and June 2015.

A vacancy in the Hunton Bridge and Langleybury ward, caused by the death of a serving member, is pending being filled by co-option.

Councillor contact details are correct as at February 2018.

Please refer to the Parish Council website [www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk](http://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk) for any updates.

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**Senior Staff**

Name	Position	Email
Tim Perkins	Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer (Chief Officer of the Council)	<a href="mailto:tim.perkins@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">tim.perkins@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
David Abbott	Facilities Manager	<a href="mailto:david.abbott@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">david.abbott@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Mark Ellis	Works Manager	<a href="mailto:mark.ellis@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">mark.ellis@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Gail Kiely	Finance Officer	<a href="mailto:gail.kiely@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">gail.kiely@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>
Janet Pearce	Planning & Administration Officer	<a href="mailto:janet.pearce@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk">janet.pearce@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk</a>

**Parish Council Offices**

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