



UPWOOD AND THE RAVELEYS PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022 EDITION



Farewell to our Clerk, Carol Bilverstone

From Robin Howe

*Deputy Chairman, Upwood and the Raveleys
Parish Council*

In the middle of October we were very sad to receive a letter of resignation from Carol Bilverstone, the clerk to the parish council for the last 10 years.

Carol joined us from the Ministry of Defence in Alconbury in March 2013 and inherited a parish council still recovering from a period of poor administration and lax controls that allowed a serious fraud to be carried out by a previous clerk. Supported by the chairman, Carol set about establishing a new governance regime and a rigorous financial system designed to create a stable and transparent platform. Historical records were unearthed and organised, information for residents and stakeholders was made accessible and timely and good order was finally imposed.

Enough progress was made that by 2018 the council successfully applied for and were awarded the Quality Gold award which recognises the achievements of only the very best councils in England. There are 9,000 parish councils in England, only 63 of which have the Quality Gold award and of those there are only 3 in Cambridgeshire, which underscores the huge contribution Carol continues to make.

Carol often says that living in the village is both a blessing and a curse. Her daily walks with her beloved Snowy allow her to meet so many residents and to learn about the issues which are concerning them. The downside is that it makes it a 24/7 job.

This was severely tested during the period when Carol's husband Andrew was so ill prior to his death at the end of last year. Despite caring for Andrew her standard of work for the parish council never fell and despite the unspeakable difficulties there were at home, Carol managed to keep the parish council business going without missing a beat.

Carol plans to make maximum use of her newfound freedom; travelling more; she has a great sense of adventure and love of the outdoors, developing her hobbies and above all, enjoying more downtime unburdened by parish issues.

She will be almost impossible to replace and the Quality Gold award may be difficult to retain, but fortunately Carol will stay on until the end of March next year and this will make for an easier transition.

Remarkable loyalty, civic responsibility and endurance sums Carol up.

We will miss her!

Planning: Residents of Farm Close and UPA and USTT parents need your help!

Huntingdon District Council (HDC) Planning Department are supporting an application from social housing association bpha to build 28 affordable homes on the open space behind Farm Close and directly next to the Upwood Primary Academy (UPA) and Upwood Small to Tall (USTT).

When the pre-application was submitted last year an unprecedented level of opposition was expressed by Farm Close residents to the proposed development. The parish council formally objected as well. Concerns included the risk of increased flooding, increased traffic congestion and loss of the green space currently used by local children.

In response, the new submission does include details of flood mitigation measures on the northern border with the airfield land and along Huntingdon Road. There is a narrow strip of land between the existing and new houses which has been earmarked for a play area, but this will have restricted use because of its location and small size.

The major unresolved problem is its proximity to the school, and the increased traffic congestion which will arise at peak times.



Wildflower Planting

Last November it was agreed to trial a number of wildflower beds in selected locations in the village.

The aim was threefold:

- Test their reception from residents and to produce a more appealing environment for visitors
- Provide an area of pollen-rich flowers for pollinators, such as bees and butterflies
- Road safety – research has shown that attractive floral displays have a calming effect on passing motorists who may then reduce their speed

With the last point particularly in mind, five sites were selected along the busy Huntingdon Road.

Councillor Edwards prepared the sites for sowing. Expert advice on the best type of seed was obtained from other Councils and from a member of our allotment association who gave particular attention to the capacity of the flowers to attract pollinators. A seed mixture containing 24 varieties

of annual and perennial flowers was selected and sown in the early Spring; we were fortunate the seed purchase could be partly funded by a generous parishioner.

The extreme heat of the summer did not give the seeds the best chance to shine, but comments have shown they've been well received.

Furthermore, one of our parishioners, Paul Charman volunteers for the UK Pollinating Monitoring Scheme and asked to conduct insect counts on our wildflowers. A 50x50cm square of wildflowers are monitored for 10 mins. Any insect that lands on a flower is counted. Sadly, due to illness, Paul was only able to do a small set of survey in July; however, the results were encouraging:

Total counted	116
Bumblebees	11
Honey bees	94
Wasps	2
Hoverflies	2
Small insects	3
Ladybirds	4

This is only a small snapshot survey and total numbers of insects in the four beds will be substantially higher. Any further comments would be gratefully received.

<http://www.upwood.org>

With this being the last printed newsletter, the parish council felt that a working party should be set up to create a long-term plan that effectively delivers parish council communication, as well as other key parish news, information and events.

An initial meeting was held in November, where three members of the parish council, Councillor Chatfield, Councillor Mashford and Councillor Awit met with the Steve Howes (website developer and admin) and Doug McLeod (website admin and newsletter Chairman), supported by the parish clerk, Carol Bilverstone.

What was clear from the meeting was the huge amount of time, effort and

passion parishioners have put into developing the website and its content.

However, how we assimilate news and information has changed in recent years. While the current parish website has a lot of great content, the look and feel needs modernising. Further, how information is uploaded needs to be reviewed to ensure it's still used as a central hub of news and information for the parish, and to try and fill the void left by the printed newsletter.

We're sure there is an enormous amount of expertise and hopefully willing in the parish to be part of this new project. If you have either of the above, please get in touch with Cllr Awit at david.awit@upwood.org.

Upwood and The Raveleys

Welcome to the Villages of Upwood and The Raveleys, Cambridgeshire

Latest Articles

- Parish Council - Historic Minutes Archive 1894 - 2007
- U3H Performing Arts Events
- Upwood Ukuleles
- Parish Council Minutes Archive 2008 - 2019
- Parish Council Minutes Archive 2020 -

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What's New, What's News?



Next meeting: Monday 05 December at 7.00pm in Upwood Village Hall. The agenda is published three clear working days in advance of the meeting at Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council and on each of the five noticeboards.

Contact: Carol Bilverstone, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer



Notice of vacancy in office of Parish Councillor (x2) on Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 87(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 that due to the resignation of Councillor (Beverly) Kishore and the death of Councillor (Michael) Lee, there are two vacancies on Upwood & the Raveleys Parish Council. Please apply to the parish clerk if you would like to be considered for co-option.

Date: 02/06/2022

Signed: Carol Bilverstone
Parish Clerk/RFO

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August 2022 Edition of the Newsletter is now available to download

December 2021 Parish Council Newsletter Supplement is now available to download



Find out all about 10 O'Clock Curfew - Upwood's own band, available for weddings, parties etc.



The Bentley Close Play Area Refurbishment – Project Update

At the end of October, the parish councillors were overwhelmed to hear that our application for CIL funding for the refurbishment of the play area in Bentley Close had been accepted. The application process required an incredible amount of work, which made it even more rewarding that we were awarded £55,679 from the CIL fund for new wooden play equipment, removal of the rubber wet-pour surface and new environmentally friendly flooring added, together with features to increase biodiversity including bug houses.

CIL is a planning charge placed on developers that allows local authorities to assist in the funding and delivery of infrastructure projects. Because Upwood has no large-scale housing developments we will never receive CIL money of our own in the near to medium term, so grants such as this from HDC are a rare windfall.

The only 'live' project we had this year that needed funding was the play area and we made the application with very little hope of success. We were astounded when we were accepted.

From HDC, Executive Councillor for Planning, Cllr Tom Sanderson, said: *"It is great to be able to support local projects with approved CIL funding from the District Council. CIL funding, from new [housing] developments, allows us to deliver infrastructure and community facilities across Huntingdonshire. Projects like these help make positive impacts for all of our residents."*

The Bentley Close play area was one of three play area projects awarded CIL funding, with projects in Great Gransden and Godmanchester also being successful. The use of CIL funds highlights the commitment of HDC to support the development of infrastructure that enables district-

wide and localised growth as well as improving the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs, and vital community facilities. It is heartening to see HDC supporting investment in young people.

We are excited to be moving forward with this project and hope to provide further updates soon. However, it is important to note that we know some parishioners, particularly those who live close to the play area do feel some animosity towards it. Play is rarely quiet when you're little, and the parish council have received complaints regarding the noise it generates, especially in the summer months.

As part of the refurbishment process, other locations in the village were investigated as a new home for the play area. However, there were none that met the required criteria.

The concerns of our parishioners are important to us. As a result, we are investigating sound attenuation strategies. Following the update, an acoustic survey will be commissioned to fully assess the noise impact in order to develop an appropriate strategy and ensure anything we do implement will be effective.

The Queen's Green Canopy

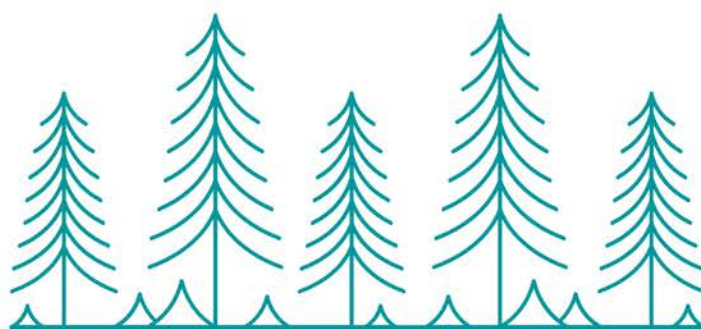
Following the wishes of the Patron of The Queen's Green Canopy, His Majesty The King, The Queen's Green

Canopy initiative will be extended to the end of March 2023 to give people the opportunity to plant trees in memoriam to honour Her Majesty.

The Queen's Green Canopy is an initiative that the parish council have long been discussing how we, as a parish, can be involved. It is an initiative that has become even more poignant following the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

The residents who raised money for two benches in the village approached the clerk to confirm that £108.52 of the donations from Upwood and the Raveleys History Group remains unspent. They would like the money to go towards a tree for The Queen's Green Canopy and suggested a Crataegus Crimson Cloud Hawthorn to be planted on the grass verge at the junction of Longholme Road and High Street, which would require permission to be sought from Cambridgeshire County Council.

Councillor Edwards agreed to look at the site to assess suitability vs a potential site in Charter's Spinney and report back.



We'd love you to come and join us!



Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

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Date: 03 October 2022

Signed: Carol Bilverstone
Parish Clerk/RFO

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