



THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF ELECTORS

HUNTERCOMBE HALL, BURNHAM PARK

7.00pm on MONDAY 14th APRIL 2014

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2013/14



Introduction

Welcome to the Annual Meeting of Electors of Burnham Parish Council. The object of this meeting is to allow the residents of Burnham to ask questions of the Parish Council about the work it has been doing over the last year. It is also an opportunity for the Parish Council to report back on the work it has achieved over the last year.

As the year has progressed the Council has identified a number of opportunities, and has acted on these to increase our role in the community, to develop access to more events and improve our financial position.

Parish Councillors

Parish Councillors are all volunteers on the Parish Council and are bound by legislation for their rules and regulations (the Local Government Act 1972 and the Localism Act 2011). Councillors are elected to their Parish every four years and the next Council elections will be in May 2015. Parish Councillors also agree to represent the whole parish not just their own ward and are accountable to the whole electorate.

The Councillors at Burnham have put in many hours over and above the scheduled meetings they attended. They supported working groups, assisted and organised events, represented the Parish at other outside bodies as well as liaised with the electorate and their work behind the scenes has been enormous. Councillor Ian Hill resigned in March 2014.

Burnham Park

This venue has undergone a complete overhaul this year, starting in July 2013 with the arrival of the chef David Paskowski and the Bar Manager Nick Carr. In September 2013 the Operations Manager Louise Reid arrived and so completed the downstairs team for all the events at Burnham Park. Since then, the regular bookings for the four rooms (Dropmore, Huntercombe and Meeting Rooms 1 & 2) have increased from 20% of capacity in September '13 to 50% in March '14. The number of weddings, private parties and conferences has also increased beyond all our expectations.

In 2014 Burnham Park started to offer monthly Band Nights, which have proved very popular amongst the local band followers. These have been advertised regularly on noticeboards, in the Burnham Park website, via e-mails and in the 'Round & About' magazine.

Events

Both the quality and the number of events offered at Burnham Park and its Hall have now increased exponentially.

- May : Donkey Derby in Burnham Park
- July : Burnham Carnival in Burnham Park
- July : 'Community Forum' meeting
- October : 'Movies & Musicals'
- November: Twinning visit from St Dennis de l'Hotel
- November : 'Peter Pan' pantomime
- December : Christmas Gift and Craft Market
- December : Christmas Fayre and Lighting Up the Village
- January : second 'Community Forum'
- January : band 'Dacoda'
- February : band 'Money on the Drum'
- March : band 'People's Front of Judea'

Outside Services

We are very proud of the excellent condition of all our grounds, not only Burnham Park and the George Pitcher Memorial football grounds but also the Trim Trail and the nature park at the Cherry Orchard. The playgrounds at St Peter's and the Stomping Ground are well-maintained and the playground at Hag Hill Lane is currently being prepared for a long-overdue refurbishment later this summer.

Burnham scored 86 out of a maximum of 100 in the 'Best Kept Village Competition 2013' and was awarded a Certificate of Merit. The report commented on the well-kept condition of all the Parish facilities.

Planning

During the past year the members of the Planning Committee considered more than 200 applications. The Committee made recommendations to South Bucks District Council and has a high record of having its decisions upheld. These meetings, as for all our meetings, are open to members of the public and any written comments received on Planning applications are always taken into account when the Parish Council makes its recommendation to the District Council. Planning applications are available for residents to inspect at the Parish offices during office hours but the considerations are expected to move slowly away from paper documentation towards an on-line process.

The Bishop Centre redevelopment

The re-development of the Bishop Centre will have a huge impact on the future of the village, even though for the whole of this year it has been a flattened building site behind high hoarding boards. The central supermarket will be a Tesco supermarket with eleven other smaller outlets.

The developer, Land Securities, as part of the S.106 planning consent, has donated four significant funds for the benefit the community of Burnham. All of these funds are being administered by the Parish Council.

1. A High Street Fund to improve Burnham High Street.
2. A Community Assistance Fund for Burnham organisations that help children.
3. A Playground Fund for the refurbishment of the Hag Hill playground.
4. A Highways Fund for traffic calming improvements in Hag Hill Lane.

As part of the contract, funds 1 & 2 were received as soon as the building work started and funds 3 & 4 will be received before the shops are fully occupied.

Finance

The Parish Council funds the services it delivers to the Parish of Burnham through the precept, which is raised only from the residents of Burnham. It also receives income from the activities of Burnham Park and the rental of Council premises. The income from investments is no longer significant and no income is received from local business through the business rate or from central government.

In April 2013, the precept had to be increased for the first time in six years, to £522k. The Council had to deal with a variety of issues, including the running costs of the Burnham Park which were much higher than anticipated when the building was commissioned 9 years ago. The increased cost to residents in '13/'14 was in the region of £1 per month, depending upon the Council Tax Band into which your property falls.

In April 2014, the precept will not be increased for '14/'15. Both the income & the expenditure continue to be monitored both routinely and rigorously.

Twinning

Our twinning partner is Saint Denis de l'Hotel, which is a town in an area overlooking the Loire valley and is part of the Canton of Chateauneuf-sur-Loire. It is an ancient village of winemakers and sailors located 1 ½ hours from Paris and 20mins from Orleans.

In November 2013, both the Mayor of St Denis and the President of the St Denis Twinning Association with 25 other members of the Twinning association travelled to Burnham to enjoy our village and joined our Memorial Day services.

The Twinning Association continues to use the videoconferencing equipment donated by Polycom and meets 'virtually' in Burnham Park Hall with the residents of St Denis.

Parish Council Offices

During 2013, the Parish Clerk was Mrs Jacqui Mansford whilst the RFO was on long-term sick-leave. A new Parish Clerk/RFO Haydn Selwyn-Jones joined in August 2013 and the Assistant Clerk is now Mrs Jacqui Mansford. The Finance Officer is Joy Cockburn-Williams and the Administration Support Officer is Jackie Willis.

The Parish Council office can be contacted by telephone on 01628 661 381, email clerk@burnhamparish.gov.uk or via the two web sites www.burnhamparish.gov.uk and www.burnhampark.co.uk

Penny Plant	Chairman of Burnham Parish Council
Alan Samson	Vice Chairman of Burnham Parish Council
Perry Davies	Chairman of Burnham Park Management Committee
Jean Horwood	Chairman of Land Securities Committee
Hilary Evans	Chairman of Planning Committee
William Plant	Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee
Judith Foster	Chairman of Recreation and Amenities Committee
Haydn Selwyn-Jones	Parish Clerk

