



CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

It gives me great pleasure to present the Parish Council Chairman's report. This Annual Report covers the work of Longborough Parish Council for the period commencing 1st April 2022 through to the May 2023 when local elections were held in the parish.

The Team

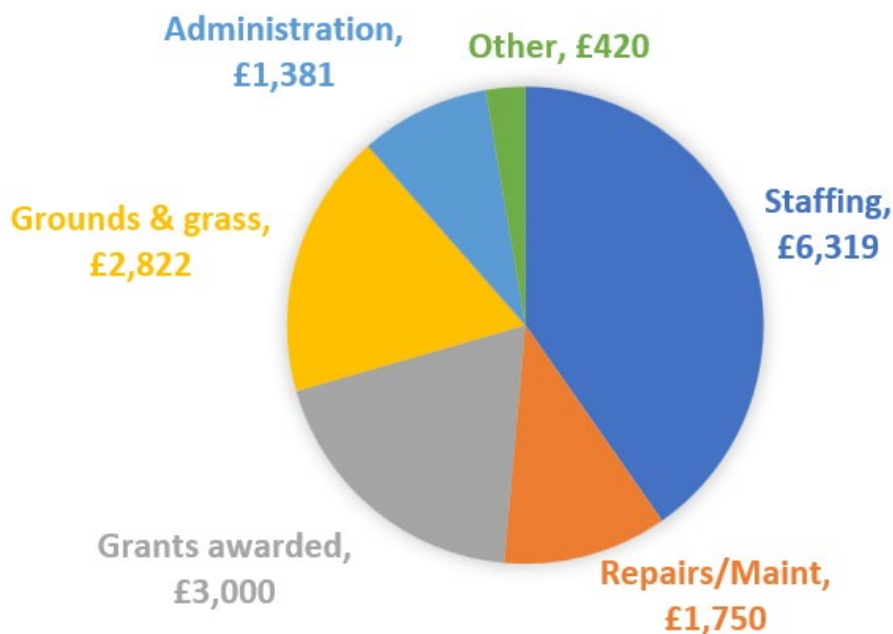
I would like to thank my fellow councillors for the work they carry out to make sure your council runs smoothly and well. They don't just turn up every other month for a Parish Council meeting but undertake a lot of background work attending district and county meetings, studying planning applications and carrying out various tasks around the parish including clearing footpaths, cleaning/painting road signs and furniture and general upkeep.

My thanks also go to Jennifer Walsh, our Parish Clerk, for continuing to run the Council's affairs with great professionalism, care and diligence. Jenny has been especially helpful and supportive to me, as Chairman, for which I am extremely grateful.

Three councillors decided not to stand in the local elections on May 4th – Cllrs Janet Marley, Roy Wheeler and Joe McDonagh. I would like to thank them all for their hard work and dedication during their time in office. These vacancies have been filled and we recently welcomed Cllrs Mel Huttunen, Fran Regan and Becky Eddolls onto the Parish Council.

Finance

The precept (the parish council's share of council tax) for 2022/2023 was set at £16,150, an increase of 1.7%. This small increase was achieved by subsidising the Council's budget with £1,000 from its reserves, helping minimise the Parish element of Council Tax for residents. The Parish Council's expenditure, by category, for 2022/2023 was:



Some key elements of expenditure during 2022/2023 were:

- Queens Jubilee - £1,240 for the complete refurbishment of the Queen Elizabeth Jubilee memorial bench at the Ashwell (a lasting memorial for the village) and a donation towards the Jubilee celebrations events.
- £3,000 gifted to local organisations which included £1,000 to Longborough School, an investment to benefit the future generations in our community.
- £517 on essential repairs to the dry-stone wall at the Ashwell after damage caused by an unknown driver.

Platinum Jubilee Event – 2/3/4 June 2022

This was one of the most successful events that the Parish Council, along with all our local organisations, have recently organised and run.

On the evening of 2nd June approximately over 250 people attended the free "Barn Dance & Hot Super" evening followed by the Lighting of the Beacon at Manor Farm. The event was financed and hosted and by Katharine Lyod and all the team at Sezincote. It was a wonderful evening and the perfect way for Longborough and Sezincote to launch its Jubilee celebrations.

There were numerous other activities for residents along with their families and friends to take part in including cake decorating, a "Design a Mug" competition for the school children and a games and picnic afternoon at the cricket club.

Once again, the Parish Council would like to thank all the volunteers who helped in the planning and running of the weekend's events, helping to make our Platinum Jubilee Celebrations a great success.

Planning

A wide range of planning applications have been considered during the last twelve months that including conversions of buildings, property extensions, new developments and tree works. The Parish Council is a consultee on all applications that fall within the Parish boundaries. It also monitors all on-going applications to ensure wherever possible that residents views are taken into consideration.

During 2022/2023 the Parish Council has been significantly involved in:

- An application by McKenzie Miller homes to demolish the property at Upper Town house and replace with 6 new properties. The Parish Council organised a drop in session for residents to raise any concerns or comments with the developer. This application is still, after two years, undecided.
- Liaising with the Waterstyles resident representatives on matters concerning open spaces and landscaping issues with the developers leading to improvements at that location.

Highways

During 2022/2023 the Parish Council invested a great deal of time and effort into improving the level of response it gets from Gloucestershire County Council highways department. This has helped us achieve a number of improvements, including:

- More resurfacing carried out and potholes repaired that in previous years – although it seems a never ending activity!
- A new safety barrier installed at the school gates at no cost to the Parish.
- The installation of improved kerbing at the Ashwell and at the War Memorial (again at no cost to the Parish) which as well as being aesthetically pleasing, also limits the amount of vehicles parking on our lovely green areas.

Communications

Effective communications within the parish is important and during 2022/2023 the Parish Council continued to grow its new web site, (www.longborough-pc.gov.uk) encouraging residents to sign up for alerts when new items are posted on it. Relevant news and updates from our district and county council organisations are regularly posted there as are upcoming roadworks that may cause disruption in our local area.

We will continue to grow and develop that channel, in conjunction with other channels currently available in the Parish. We do, of course, continue to use the 2 noticeboards in the village for further distributing key information.

General Matters

The Parish Council receives many complaints regarding speeding, litter, dog fouling and parking on grass verges and open spaces. Many of these can be reported by residents via the Cotswold District Council website (www.cotswold.gov.uk/report-it) or the Gloucestershire County Council highways reporting system (www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/roads/your-highways-report-it).

The Parish Council continued to support the Speedwatch Group which at present has 6 volunteers who go out every 2 to 3 weeks to three locations checking vehicle speeds with a speed gun and reporting the information back to the relevant authorities. Requests have been made to the relevant authorities for more traffic calming tools such as mobile cameras and warning signs and we currently await the outcome of those requests.

The Parish Council has provided many litter bins and dog waste bins throughout the parish which are emptied on a regular basis. A couple of annual litter picking events are now back in the calendar.

As can be seen from the financial summary above, one of the most expensive costs the Parish Council incurs is maintaining the grassed areas and verges throughout the parish. The Parish Council would ask residents and visitors alike to refrain from parking on the grass verges around the parish and if possible maintain the verges around their own homes, thereby helping make the parish a more attractive and safer place to live.

Finally, I would like to say it has been an honour to have served as Chairman of Longborough Parish Council during the past year. I believe that our efforts have a continued, positive input to the Parish and I look forward to the coming year.

Cllr Tim Howse
Chairman – Longborough Parish Council