

Keyworth Parish Council

CHAIR'S REPORT 2022/23 Plans/Priorities for 2023/24

Foreword by Cllr Tamsin Armour, Chair of Keyworth Parish Council

As we continue to live with a world post-COVID-19 other issues have hit the headlines and impacted on people's lives. The cost-of-living crisis, the war in Ukraine, the Platinum Jubilee and then subsequent death of the Queen have been in the headlines and have been foci of Parish Council activities and discussions and we strive to support those in need and celebrate and commemorate respectively.

Support for those in need, via foodbanks, warm spaces, and other activities continues. Demand has been high, unsurprisingly, given increases in the cost of living. I have met with Positive Futures and heard some wonderful examples of the work they are doing. I am really keen to see young people from Keyworth benefit from the support and opportunities they offer. English lessons for the Ukrainian residents of Keyworth have been supported by the Parish Council, providing space, refreshments, and some funding for equipment. The Keyworth Community Garden goes from strength to strength and provides a safe space to support mental health and wellbeing, as well as providing volunteering opportunities and a brilliant community asset. These initiatives and programmes would not be possible without the dedication of the organisers, often volunteers, and once again I would like to take this opportunity to say a massive 'Thank you' on behalf of myself and the Parish Council, to all those who have given their time and energy to continue to help others. You are amazing and Keyworth is a safer and better place to live thanks to your wonderful teamwork. This year saw a return of our regular PC Reception, where we were able to say thank you in person to many of these wonderful members of our community.

This year saw several events both of celebration and remembrance. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations started with the lighting of a beacon on the Rectory Field, followed by a range of events in the Village Hall and the ExChanging Rooms/Abundance Garden, a community picnic and family entertainment. The Tour of Britain came to Keyworth again, celebrated by decorations around the Church, in shops and houses, many adorned with bike illustrations created by children from the three primary schools, banners and the wonderful award-winning land art, created by Wild Things Keyworth, Keyworth Abundance and artist Liz Waddell. Later in the year members of the village joined together to pay their respects to the Queen, with a service to reflect on her life and mourn her passing. A week later saw the official opening of the extended Skatepark with some excellent skateboarding skills and some attempts by Parish Councillors that we might do best to forget! Finally, the annual Remembrance Sunday Service by the Memorial Gates took place with a full complement of Beavers, Scouts, and Guides, remembering those who gave their lives in the two world wars – some of whose names now identify roads in the new housing developments in the village.

Council Members

- The current members of council are: Tamsin Armour (Chair), Tony Wells (Vice-Chair). Tom Atack, Geoff Baker, Mary Butler, David Clarke, Kevin Fitzgerald, Tony Grice, Samantha Kaye, Chris Kemp, Kevin Lowe, Richard Lumb, Kath Oakley, Shelley Millband, Chris Takel. Following the resignation of Matthew Tuttey, in June 2021, Richard Lumb was co-opted to council in September 2022.

Council Staff

- The Council currently employs six part-time members of staff including the Clerk to the Council Michelle Law Emma Goodman, who has recently taken over from Emma Tillyard, as the Responsible Finance Officer. The council also employs Helen Bradshaw as the Clerical Officer, Steve Mottishaw as the Facilities Manager, Sam Daft as the Cleaner and Alan Wilkins as the Handyman. The total basic hours worked by these staff equates to the hours worked by three full time staff.

Keyworth Parish Council

Council Facilities

- The Council owns, or is responsible for:
 - The Village Hall complex – including the Village Hall, Centenary Lounge and Feignies Room
 - Rectory field and the Peace Garden
 - Keyworth Activity Park
 - Rectory field Pavilion and former Changing Rooms (occupied by Keyworth Table Tennis Club and Keyvolution/Abundance respectively)
 - Memorial Gates
 - Wysall Lane Burial Ground
 - Nottingham Road Play Area (leased from the Equals Trust and Nottinghamshire County Council)
 - Platt Lane Skatepark (leased from UK Research & Innovation)
 - Keyworth Meadow (managed by the Nature Reserve Management Group)
 - Keyworth Bowls Club – clubhouse and green (managed by the club)
 - Keyworth Tennis Club – clubhouse and courts (managed by the club)
 - Platt Lane recreational field (⅓ interest and managed by the Platt Lane Management Committee)

Village Hall Complex

- The Village Hall is being hired on regular basis by both new and old customers; the levels of hire have now reached those of pre-pandemic levels.
- The bar area of the Feignies room is still hosting the local Food bank.
- For the 2023/24 financial year, the Council's Finance committee agreed to increase in the hire fees for the Village Hall complex 20%, this has placed them on par with other venues of a similar size in the area.

Nottingham Road Play Area, Rectory Field, Wysall Lane Burial Ground, Activity Park, Skate Park

- All of the play areas continue to be proactively checked and maintained by the Parish Council's Facilities Manager with repairs carried out as needed.
- This year the Skate Park project has been completed, funding was obtained from various sources and a new design Skatepark was built. An official opening of the Skatepark was organised in September 2022, and it was well attended by the local community and the funding organisations. The new Skatepark is currently being well used and seems to be appealing to many members of the local community as well as those from further afield.
- The Council's Finance committee agreed to increase the burial ground fees by 3%, even with the increase, the fees are still some of the lowest in the area.

Memorial Gates

- The paving and area in front of the memorial gates has had its annual clear and tidy up before the Remembrance Day Service, so that the area was clean and tidy for the annual Remembrance Day service.
- The Peace Garden near the memorial gates is maintained on a regular basis by a local company Branch & Bloom.

Support for Local Organisations

- **The Council continued in 2022/23 to provide financial assistance to:**
 - Platt Lane Joint Management Committee (the Council has a one-third financial interest in the facilities at Platt Lane)

Keyworth Parish Council

- Keyworth & District Community Concern
- Keyworth Conservation Area Advisory Group
- Keyworth PCC (re maintenance and repair of church clock)

Donations were also made to:

- Keyworth Community Projects
- RHR Cadet Corps of Drums
- The Keyworth Quiz
- Keyworth English Language Support for Ukrainians
- The Friday Warm Room
- The Keyworth Twining Association

The Council makes its premises available at concessionary rates, and in many cases free of charge, for various community events and services such as:

The Food Bank, Keyworth Advice Centre, Thursday coffee morning; Conservation Group; Keyworth Show; Fun on the Field; Christmas Charity Fair; Remembrance Sunday; Christmas Fair & Christmas Dinner, the Bereavement Support Group and the Keyworth and District Community Concern.

Parish Council Events/Seasonal Activities

- During the past twelve months, the Council has organised and/or sponsored the following events and activities:
 - Summer Hanging Baskets to decorate the village.
 - Christmas trees to decorate shops and businesses, as well as lights on the trees in the church yard.
 - A village litter pick.
 - The lighting of the beacon for the Queen's Jubilee.
 - A gathering and a moments silence for the passing of the Queen.
 - A place for people to sign a book of remembrance for the queen.
 - Cllr Armour represented the Parish Council at the Remembrance Sunday Event held on the Rectory Field at the Memorial Gates along with representatives from Rushcliffe Borough Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Churches in Keyworth and the Royal British Legion. Memorial wreaths were laid at the gates.

Publicity/Information

- The Council website (www.keyworthparishcouncil.org) is updated regularly.
- We also keep residents informed through news items and the Keyworth Diary (in the Keyworth News), distribution of which, to all households in Keyworth, is financed by the Council.
- A new Keyworth Guide was published this year, to mark the Queen's Jubilee.

Finance

- At the time of writing, the Council's accounts for 2022/23 have not yet been finalised. The figures to hand suggest that the Parish Council is on budget for the financial year 2022/23. Expenditure was made on a general maintenance of the buildings and facilities including. Expenditure was also made on the events in the village including the Queens Platinum Jubilee, the Keyworth Guide, and the Tour of Britain.
- Income from hire of the village hall complex facilities has increased to beyond those that were recorded to pre COVID-19 levels.

Keyworth Parish Council

- The Council reviewed its reserves policy as usual in January. On the face of it, the level of the Council's uncommitted reserves (reserves not set aside to fund specific commitments or long-term development plans) might seem high, but it should be borne in mind that the Council owns, and is responsible for maintaining, fixed assets valued at around £1.8 million, and it follows that it needs to set aside substantial funds for emergency/contingency purposes, the pandemic being a current, although non-tangible, example. Uncommitted reserves will be used in 2020/21 and potentially 2020/22 to cushion the financial effects of the pandemic so as to keep increases to the precept modest.
- As for 2023/24, the Council has set its precept at a level resulting in the Parish Council portion of the council tax not increasing for any properties in the village.

Planning

- The council has held 12 planning meetings, reviewing a total of 77 planning applications in the period and has worked with the community and with Rushcliffe Borough Council to ensure the new housing developments on Platt Lane, north of Bunny Lane, and Nicker Hill are appropriate to the area. The Parish Council are also trying to work closely with Rushcliffe Borough Council to represent the views of the Village regarding the development of land at the South of Bunny Lane site.

Other Items

- New community bleed kits have been installed alongside the community defibrillators . One of the bleed kits was donated to the Parish Council by the Daniel Baird Foundation, the remaining three bleed kits were purchased by the Parish Council.
- The Council have worked with Severn Trent Water and Trent Barton Buses to limit the disruption that has been inevitable as substantial works have been carried out on the water mains pipe that enters the village from Plumtree.

Plans and Priorities for 2023/24

In my view, the Parish Council's most important priorities in **2023/24** will be:

- To continue to look to the future and support and grow the positive sense of community that COVID-19 fostered. In particular to consult residents on our long-term plan for Future Keyworth, helping groups, societies, our Schools and Facilities to form a cohesive set of activities and opportunities, with something for everyone. In addition, to capitalise on any opportunities to secure funding for such projects via sources that are linked to the devolution deal and other targeted funding opportunities. I am keen to see all Councillors have the opportunity to get involved and really make a difference.
- To continue to support those in need across Keyworth. Recent years have been challenging for many, with COVID-19, the war in Ukraine and the dramatic increases in the cost of living meaning many have suffered and many continue to struggle. This will include continuing to ensure food and other essentials are available, finding ways to support those in financial hardship, and ensuring mental health guidance and support are accessible to all those who may need it.
- To continue to work with sports leaders, schools, clubs and other local groups, including Positive Futures, to create an inclusive and accessible activity and wellbeing framework, linking Parish Council facilities with developments at Platt Lane, and other venues, providing sports, exercise and recreational opportunities for all.
- To work with residents and local groups to continue to enhance our environment, including planting more trees and hedgerows, finding ways to enhance and protect the wildlife, be it hedgehogs, birds, bees, butterflies, or my favourite, ladybirds, in and around the village.

Keyworth Parish Council

- To investigate the possibility of extending neighbouring footpaths, enhancing the village centre(s), working with developers and using CIL funds to improve our environment whilst supporting businesses to succeed.

Tamsin Armour

Chair

21 April 2023