



Winter Newsletter clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL
 First Floor, Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12 6ES • 01225 705700



Clerk Teresa Strange & Chair John Glover

GRANTS

The parish council provide grant funding for a variety of organisations based in the parish, as well as from the wider community that benefit the residents of Melksham Without. The deadline for applications is 31st January, with the grants awarded annually at the Annual Parish meeting, this year at Melksham Rugby Club on the 15th April at 7pm. The meeting is always interesting as we hear from such a wide range of groups providing activities, support and venues in the parish and the council are always amazed at the sheer volume of volunteers giving up their time to help others locally.

APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID

are invited from organisations that directly benefit residents of the parish

Forms available from the Clerk,
 First Floor, Melksham Community Campus,
 Market Place, Melksham, Wilts, SN12 6ES.
 01225 705700
 email admin@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk
 or download from
www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS
Wednesday 31st January 2024

NEW COUNCILLORS

Welcoming Nathan Keates to the council

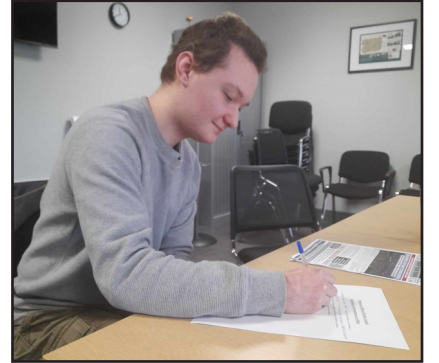
A warm welcome to the new Bowerhill Ward councillor Nathan Keates.

Nathan was elected following a non-contested election and signed his declaration of office just before the Christmas break so he is ready to hit the ground running in the New Year.

At the time of writing we are waiting to see if there has been a

call for an election in the Beanacre, Shaw, Whitley and Blackmore Ward or not, so do look out for details in the next issue of the Melksham News, to see if the parish council are seeking residents to put themselves forward for election, or co-option.

Pictured: Nathan signs his declaration of office.



COUNCIL MEETINGS

Parish council meetings are held in public, and the aim is always to be as transparent as possible.

A recording of the meeting is shared on YouTube the following day, and then removed once the minutes for that meeting have been approved and uploaded to the website. The parish council meetings are held on a Monday evening at their offices on the first floor of the Melksham Community Campus from 7pm. Please check the agendas for more details, these are posted on local noticeboards and are on the website. You can also pop into the office to talk to officers about issues you wish to raise, or if you are seeking information. It's always manned Monday to Thursday 10am -12 and 2 - 4pm but you will often find officers there outside those times.

NEXT MEETINGS

- Finance Committee Monday 8th January
- Planning Committee Monday 15th January
- Highways Committee Monday 15th January
- Planning Committee Monday 5th February
- Asset Management Committee Monday 5th or 12th February
- Full Council Monday 19th February
- Planning Committee Monday 26th February

PLANS FOR 2024

The parish council had a busy 2023, with lots of work producing a draft Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) with the steering group and town council, as well as responding to numerous planning applications, attending appeal hearings, strategic planning meetings, pre-application meetings with developers and responding to the draft Local Plan produced by Wiltshire Council – it's a lot of detailed work, but important as these Plans set out where development will be in the next 15 years, and the infrastructure to support it.

Work is now underway to review all the comments received from the recent surveys and finalise the Neighbourhood Plan ready for further consultation, examination and Referendum.

As well as planning issues, the other hot topic regularly raised by residents is road safety, and the council's Highways Committee look at lots of requests for improvements that they can jointly fund with the local highway authority, Wiltshire Council. Projects for 2024 include waiting restrictions (double yellow lines) in Bowerhill, a village gateway and road markings on the A350 in Beanacre to slow the traffic, speed reducing measures in Shaw and Whitley, and a weight limit signage refresh in Beanacre. A dedicated Road Safety group are working to provide a consistent approach to streamline requests to the parish council and reduce speeding where possible in hot spots in the parish. In addition, there are Speed Indicator Devices to be deployed in areas of proven speeding as well as the volunteer Community Speed

Watch teams. If you would like to be trained by the police and operate the speed gun then please get in touch.

The council jointly fund with the town council a dedicated part time worker at Age UK to specifically work with residents in the town and parish and are pleased to see that the project has been making a real difference to lives of local residents, this work continues in early 2024 with a review to see if it should be funded for future years.

The Community Emergency Volunteers in Shaw and Whitley were chosen to pilot a new scheme for Wiltshire to help prepare communities in civil emergencies such as flood events, power outage and heavy snow. There are plans to replicate this more widely, so if you live in the parish and would like to take part in an exercise to see how your community could respond in such an event, please get in touch; we would like to run an exercise in each of the village halls later this year.

The parish council maintain a large number of assets in the parish, and are still planning on installing a new bus shelter in Falcon Way once land ownership issues are addressed and are replacing the older wooden bus shelter in Beanacre. There are also new bus shelters to be installed on Semington Road by the developers of the nearby new housing developments. A pilot scheme to introduce Real Time Information to bus shelters is in place, with the first site in Mitchell Drive being surveyed. The football pitches at Bowerhill sports field remain popular and the council are looking into ways to improve the drainage on the pitches, they have just completed works in

the pump room so the showers are all working well and have installed a drinking water refill station. Following a survey of local residents to see what else they would like to do on the sports field, the parish council are now planning to install some outdoor gym and calisthenics equipment. Having leased the Wiltshire Council owned play areas in the parish for some years, the parish council are now taking ownership of them, these are at Berryfield and Kestrel Court, Bowerhill. In addition, the new play area in Bowood View is now owned by the parish council, with the one at Pathfinder Place being legally transferred too. The parish council will then own, as well as maintain, all the play areas in the parish, with weekly inspections, regular maintenance and planned improvements. The other project this year is the new car park and improved entrance to Shurnhold Fields, another joint project with the town council.

The first business of the new year is to set the Budget for the 2024/25 financial year commencing in April, and that's the first meeting of the council on Monday 8th January when all the running costs and projects are examined by the Finance Committee before they recommend to the Full Council what they think the Precept should be. For the current year, this is £245,000 and equates to a £84.71 contribution per average household which is collected via your Council Tax. You can let the council know what your thoughts are on their plans for the new year, and the finance needed to fund them, by sending in your views or attending the meetings in person.

WHO IS MY COUNCILLOR?

BERRYFIELD WARD



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BEANACRE, SHAW, WHITLEY AND BLACKMORE WARD



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VACANCY

BOWERHILL WARD



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