**ELSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**

**INTRODUCTION**

This report describes the main items of business carried out by Elstead Parish Council during the financial year 2024/25. It is available on the Council website (www.elsteadvillage.co.uk).

**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

The members of the Parish Council are Mr James Collis, Mr Leif Davidsen, Mr Andy Goundry, Mr Andy Hampshire, Mrs Joan Holroyd, Ms Jane Jacobs, Mr Martyn Lass, Mr Richard Muir and Mr Patrick Murphy.

At its May 2024 meeting, the Council re-elected Mr Murphy as its chairman and Ms Jacobs as its vice-chairman. Ms Jacobs was re-elected as chairman of the Planning Sub-Committee. The Council is again grateful for the regular attendance at its meetings of Councillor David Harmer (Surrey County Council) and Councillor Gemma Long (Waverley Borough Council).

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW**

In 2024/2025 the Parish Council received £110,842 of which £77,187.87 was from the precept. The PC spent £125,454 versus its budget of £99,560. NB this figure includes monies spent on Bonfire Hill which were finaced by the benefactor but which were paid for by the PC and then reclaimed back from the Bonfire Hill account.

The main items of expenditure for the year 24/25 were:

- Grass cutting £9,339. *The warm, wet weather in the summer into the Autumn of 2024 meant that grass cutting was required more frequently and for longer.*

- Woolfords Lane cemetery £1,065. *Remedial work to building and general tidying up.*

- Recreational maintenance £9,055. *The PC is responsible for The Croft, Jubilee (Thursley Road Rec) and Burford Lodge playgrounds. We conduct quarterly formal inspections and had a number of things to repair including; the spire net (Jubilee), the installation of a new composite edging around the climbing frame and a replacement picnic table after the previous table was vandalised (Burford Lodge), removal of graffiti and the treatment of rust and repainting of the railings (The Croft).*

- Neighbourhood plan £1,486. *The NHP went to final consultation and this figure represented final design amends to the plan and promotional materials.*

- Bonfire Hill £20,159. *The PC has organised all the remedial work on Bonfire Hill which has been funded by the benefactor who purchased the land. This figure of expenditure is negated by payments back into the current account from the separate Bonfire Hill account.*

-General grounds maintenance £9,044. *This figure includes labour and materials to make good areas that needed repair. Figure also includes a donation of 2 x £1,500 to Elstead Sharks who have obtained FA funding towards pitch improvement works.*

- Defibrillator £918. *This includes annual servicing and replacement pads and batteries.*

- Trees £4,231. *This figure includes minimal trees works as well as the cost of the formal bi-annual tree survey.*

**Other expenditure:**

- Cricket net planning application £4,442.

- Security £7,400. Unplanned expenditure and will be funded from the PC’s ear marked reserves.

- Donation £1,000 to The Rural Life Centre.

The precept for 2024/25, at £77,187.87 was +6.7% higher than in 2023/24. The Council continues to have to take over financial commitments from both the County Council (e.g. occasional verge/tree cutting and clearing rights of way) and the Borough Council, as a result of shortfalls in both authorities’ budgets and the elimination of the compensatory grant which the Borough Council had previously paid to the parish to help cover the cost of its providing its own recreational and leisure facilities.

**2024/5 MAIN OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE:**

The Council determined that its objectives for 2024/25 should be:

1. To create an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which would nominate projects for CIL expenditure.

*CIL expenditure was linked to point 2.*

1. To create a commercial plan for Sunray Farm

*A plan was established which would see the creation of a parish office along with an office hub. It then became clear that the medical centre were interested exploring Sunray farm as a possible new location for the surgery. The PC has held a number of meetings with WBC who are exploring whether this is something that WBC cane drive through.*

1. To agree cemetery improvements

*Some Improvements have been implemented. Further works have been agreed which will see more rustic style fencing to the front semi circle pull-in and a membrane put in the drive way to discourage weeds. Some works including marking out future expansion of rows have been started.*

1. To plan for the upgrade of the FP crossing Bonfire Hill

*A number of contractors have been consulted. The preferred option was to divert the path way from the existing path and use the existing path as a natural gulley. The footpath has been widened by taking a small section from the “sledging” field. Objective met.*

1. To investigate and consult on 20 mph, installation of a pedestrian crossing to replace the zebra crossing, installation of a VAS.

*A number of meetings have been held with Surrey CC Highways and a funding bid has been submitted to WBC. The PC has just learnt that the bid has been successful. Work will start on fine tuning the plans prior to public consultation hopefully at some point during 25/26.*

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**OTHER AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

**DEFIBRILLATORS**

Elstead Parish Council continues to provide guardianship of the three defibrillators situated in the village. Guardianship involves regular checks, annual service, replacement of batteries and pads as required. Defibrillators are situated

* The Pavilion Recreation Ground,
* Elstead Village Hall
* Burford Lodge Recreation Ground.

All three defibrillators are placed on the outside walls of the buildings with a sign above each cabinet for easy access for the public.

The British Heart Foundation and South East Coast Ambulance Service are also aware of each of these sites. A figure of approximately 60.000 **Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrests** occur per year with fewer than 1 person in 10 surviving due to a delay in defibrillation as identified by the **Ambulance Services Association UK.**

Calling **999** immediately ensures professional help will get to the patient as soon as possible.

Early cardio pulmonary resuscitation and the effective use of Public Access Defibrillators increases the chances of survival.



Immediate action by members of the Public has saved many lives nationally and internationally. If you are interested in learning more about how you can save a life please contact the Parish Clerk elsteadpc.clerk@gmail.com

The PC would like to thank Cllr Holroyd for her dedication in ensuring that the defibrillators remain in good working order and for providing training sessions for residents.

**OUR ELSTEAD (OE)**

Our Elstead is a working party of the Parish Council comprising councillors and volunteers from the village.  The aim of Our Elstead is to improve the environment and attractiveness of Elstead village and its work is financed by Elstead Parish Council. This year Elstead Parish Council has spent over £3,300 on Our Elstead projects including the Christmas tree lights, planting initiatives and litter picking.

Our Elstead has continued to organise the Christmas Tree lighting event which this year raised £411 each for the benefit of Lollipops Mother and Toddler Group and Elstead Sharks (new goals fund raising initiative). As ever sincere thanks must go to the Sponsors, who between them provided the 24 ft Tree, refreshments and technical support, to Elstead Scouts and the three Choirs, all who contributed to make the Event so successful.

Our sincere thanks go to the Our Elstead volunteers for all their care and hard endeavours.

**ELSTEAD VILLAGE ROAD SAFETY (EVRS)**

EVRS is another working party of the Parish Council again comprising councillors and resident volunteers. A survey was carried out during the year to gauge residents views on the desirability of a 20mph speed limit in the village. Whilst opinions on this were equally divided, there was widespread feedback that speeding is a major concern.

Elstead Speedwatch activity has continued, with 370 vehicles recorded in 2024 exceeding the posted 30 mph limit by at least 20%. All have received initial warning letters from the Police, and reoffending rates are less than 2%, demonstrating the effectiveness of Speedwatch activity. The maximum speed recorded in the 30mph zone during the 2024 sessions was 49 mph, and typically, around 10 vehicles per hour are observed exceeding 35 mph.

The data produced by our Speedwatch sessions has informed a potential major village road safety proposal of traffic calming measures currently being developed by Surrey Highways. A funding bid for this has just been approved by Waverley, and the draft plan is now being finalised for consultation with the PC and residents. As well as addressing speeding, the proposal is aimed at addressing the parking issues around the village as well as improving some road junctions.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the EVRS volunteers for their commitment in running road safety sessions.

**BONFIRE HILL**

The purchase of Bonfire Hill by a village benefactor has now been completed, and the three fields cleared and fenced securely. Our benefactor, Tim Watkins, has gifted these fields to a Charity, The Bonfire Hill Trust, with the Trustee of the Charity being the Parish Council. In accordance with the terms of the Trust Deed, the detailed management of the land will be handled by the Bonfire Hill Committee, a team of volunteers nominated by the Parish Council, many of whom have been working extremely hard on the Hill in recent weeks and months.

The Committee will be publishing more detailed plans for the Hill in due course. As the Charity must cover its future maintenance etc. costs, some of the land will need to be rented out. However, the objective of the Trust is to preserve and improve Bonfire Hill as a benefit to residents, with, for example, no permanent building being permitted. Examples of improvements which have already taken place include; the widening of the previously heavily overgrown and muddy path leading from West Hill up to the top of Bonfire Hill and the widening of the previously very narrow footpath 63 from the top of the Hill.

The Parish Council and the Bonfire Hill Committee gratefully acknowledge the massive financial support which has been provided by Tim in purchasing the land and funding the necessary improvement work. Without his support, none of this would have been possible.

**FETE**

The Parish Council is delighted to support and underwrite the fete and councillors hope that residents will support the event on **5th July 2025.**

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**2025-2026**

The precept for 2025/26, at £87,398.29 will be +13% higher than in 2024/25. This is due to increased costs and planned projects.

**PARISH COUNCIL OBJECTIVES FOR 2025/6**

The Parish Council’s objectives for 2025/6 will be determined by the Council at its May 2025 meeting.

**PARISH COUNCIL CONTRACTOR**

The Council’s contractor, Richard Knight, continues to carry out minor maintenance and renovation works to its property in the village and to undertake other minor works of importance to parishioners and associated with the Our Elstead sub-committee. Without exception, Richard’s work continues to be carried out promptly, effectively and economically. The Parish Council is also grateful to have received support from Steve Szczpanski Longcross and OJR Services Ltd.

**PARISH CLERK**

The Parish Council is fortunate to have available to it the services of our ParishClerk, Juliet (Jules) Williams. I wish again to record our recognition of Jules’ efforts over the past year and her role in helping to deal with the increased challenges and workload.

P W Murphy, Chairman, Elstead Parish Council

April 2025