



## **Budget 2026/27**

<u>Cost Centre</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Administration	£21889.51
Community Open Spaces	£6408.80
Buildings	£15668.46
Repairs and maintenance	£7525.00
Grants	£27656.00
Staffing	£133007.91
Street Lighting	£22472.00
Tractors	£1500.00
Lythwood Sports facilities	£11900.00
Rents, rates, utilities	£2550.20
	£250577.88

**All information about the Council can be seen on our website**

**[www.baystonhillparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.baystonhillparishcouncil.org.uk)**

**The Parish Office can be contacted on 01743 874 651**

**Or email [clerk@baystonhillparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@baystonhillparishcouncil.org.uk)**

## **Bayston Hill Parish Council Chair's Annual Report 2025/26**

The last twelve months has been a very busy time for the Parish Council particularly on the planning front. The Redrow application for 114 houses to be built on land adjoining Lyth Hill road, which had been ongoing for two years, finally appeared before the Northern Planning Committee of Shropshire Council on the 19<sup>th</sup> August last year. Both myself and Cllr Trickett were able to voice the Parish Council's serious concerns regarding drainage, traffic, lack of school and medical capacity and in particular, the high density of 39 houses per hectare (HPH) of the proposal which was totally out of place compared to the rest of the village. The Committee took particular note of this last point with a lot of the members declaring this high HPH was only suitable for an urban setting and agreeing it was not in keeping with our rural village area. A proposal to reject the application was seconded but before a vote could proceed, a development officer from the council announced that, if the application was rejected, Redrow would proceed to appeal and that would cost Shropshire Council money that it could ill afford. The Committee were thereby persuaded to defer the application to give Redrow the chance to modify their proposal to correct the concerns raised.

The application came before the Planning Committee again on the 9<sup>th</sup> December. Redrow had made a token reduction of six dwellings – from 114 to 108. This they deemed to be significant! The proposal was decided, only by the chairman's casting vote, in favour of Redrow.

I have described all this in detail to try and illustrate the amount of work and time involved, particularly by the members of our Parish Council Planning Committee, in trying to get a fair deal for our village. We are well aware that we must accept some development within the parish boundary but, we agree with the vast majority of our residents that these should be in keeping with the area and accompanied by a commensurate increase in our infrastructure.

With Shropshire Council having no spare money for anything but mandatory essential services, despite the latest loan from central

government, getting any increase in infrastructure capacity is going to prove difficult. We are currently opposing another proposal for 220 dwellings which Bloor Homes want to build on the Reabrook flood plain. Although this is to the north of the A5, this area is within our parish boundary and threatens the independence of our village.

To further define these essential services mentioned above; these do not include the maintenance of roads and footways, hedge and verge maintenance and various other works which we normally take for granted. Last year Shropshire Council announced that they intended to devolve services to individual town and parish councils. Shrewsbury Town Council is currently piloting this devolution and has raised its precept by 96% to cover the cost. BHPC has managed to keep our increase in precept to 7% for the coming financial year. However, we are not sure what is coming down the line at us or when this will happen. We can expect that the precept will have to rise sometime in the future. I hope that with our existing relationship with Shrewsbury Town Council, a further sharing of responsibilities will enable any increase to be kept to a reasonable level.

Right, now we can move on the better happenings from the past year!

Previously we have held an annual Eco Event on the much missed Glebelands. With this no longer feasible, it was decided to hold a Community Day and VE Celebration on the Stanley Parker playing fields in conjunction with Bayston Hill Juniors FC. This incorporated various stalls, attractions and events which, despite the slightly unseasonal temperature, attracted a gratifyingly large turn-out of families. From the positive feedback from those who attended, we decided to make this an annual event. This year it will take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> May and we will endeavour to make it even bigger and better!

The annual Macmillan Coffee afternoon was held in the Memorial Hall on the 24<sup>th</sup> September which raised a total of £247.

Something new for the younger members of the community last October, was the Scarecrow Challenge. This brainchild of our clerk Julie, was to see who could produce the most impressive scarecrow within the village. This challenge was embraced wholeheartedly with a large number of entrants. For Julie and myself, it was an absolute pleasure to be able to judge these creations. All were very impressive and I was astonished by the amount of time and effort that had gone into making them. Deciding the prize winner was certainly a difficult task for both of us. Thank you to all that took part. This is something we will repeat this year if possible.

The annual Remembrance Service was held at the Memorial Hall on the 11<sup>th</sup> November and was well attended. This event was again supported by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Clare Crackett who laid a wreath on behalf of the King.

Just two weeks ago, I was honoured to be invited, along with the Lord Lieutenant and her Deputy, to the opening night of this year's pantomime, Sleeping Beauty. This was to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first performance of the same pantomime. The production was really well written and very professionally performed and I congratulate all involved.

All of our myriad of village groups have been very active the past year and I look forward, as always, to the speakers of some these groups at this Annual Parish Meeting.

I would like to thank our Parish Clerk Julie and her deputy Peter for all their hard work over the last twelve months. A lot of extra work has been coming their way to which they have responded without complaint. Unfortunately for us, we will be losing Peter at the end of this month as he has decided to forsake the parish office for the golf course. We wish him all the very best for his retirement.

After some difficult decisions, for many of the reasons outlined above, we have begun to restructure our staffing. To this end we are about to say goodbye to Roger and Martyn. Roger has been a dedicated member of the Parish Council team for 16 years and I would like to place my thanks from Cllrs past and present to him. Martyn, although only with us a year, also leaves with our heartfelt gratitude.

Thanks also to Ian, Sally and Rachel.

We learned last month that planning permission had at last been granted for the refurbishment and extension of the Pavilion. This means that work can begin later this year. When complete, the Pavilion will be a ground breaking example of our net zero aspirations.

Finally, I must say I am immensely proud of our Parish Councillors for coping with all the extra time spent dealing with all the curve balls coming our way. For the retired Councillors this has been easier than those who have full time jobs and families to also cope with. All of your Parish Councillors are unpaid volunteers who are willing to commit their own time for one reason - making our community a better place to live.

Cllr Rob Ruscoe.