

Ampfield Parish Council

Newsletter
Spring 2025



Ampfield Parish Annual Assembly
*Monday, 19 May 2025
7:30pm at Ampfield Village Hall
All parishioners are warmly invited to attend*

Financial Report

The primary source of income for Ampfield Parish Council is the parish precept, collected by Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) through your Council Tax. The precept that we have set for 2025-26 is £46,854 which is an increase of 4.64% on the 2024-25 figure of £44,768. However, because of an increase in the number of households in the parish, we estimate that it will result in an increase of 2.16% per Band D property.

Our budgeted spending for 2025-26 is £68,793. This is to be spent on administration, maintenance and running costs for our various assets such as Chapel Wood, the Burial Ground, Recreation Ground, Morleys Green and allotments. As well as the precept, we have

income from grants, burial ground fees, Ampfield and North Baddesley Cricket Club (for their use of the Recreation Ground) and the allotments.

Our accounts undergo audit by an internal auditor and a government-appointed external auditor.

The audit for the year 2024-25 is not yet completed. The audit of the accounts for 2023-24 found that there were no matters of concern. You can view the auditor's report 'Notice Conclusion of Audit 2023-24' on the Ampfield Parish Council website under: Parish Council > Statutory Information > Governance & Audit. These reports are posted on all noticeboards and on our website as the audit progresses.

Vacancy - Parish Clerk

Ampfield is a small, friendly, parish located in Test Valley between Romsey and Winchester. There are 9 councillors, a population of 1,850 and a precept of £46,800. The Council maintains a recreation ground and playground, a burial ground, 16 allotments and a small expanse of woodland.

The Clerk's role is essentially one of managing the business of the Parish Council and is wide ranging.

Applicants will demonstrate excellent administrative, financial

and communication skills, and have good IT skills (Office365, Word and Excel). Own transport is essential.

Salary £28,163-£30,060 pro rata for 15 hours per week. Plus Working from Home Allowance of £150pa.

Applications deadline is 18 May 2025. Start date to be agreed.

For more details (application form, job description and person specification) contact the Chairman of the Council, Bryan Nanson (bryan@ampfield.org.uk).

Village Resilience Update

Parish Councils are encouraged and assisted by Test Valley Borough Council to prepare a parish resilience plan to be invoked if faced by an adverse event which impacts upon the parish - we don't know what that might be.

Clearly, the resources available to the Parish Council are not extensive. But we have identified the Village Hall, Ampfield Pavilion at the Recreation Ground and St. Mark's Room (see right) as facilities that can be made available to parishioners.

The Parish Council contacts who can be contacted if such an "adverse" event occurs are set out on the council website.



Ampfield Messenger

The Ampfield Messenger, the Parish Magazine of St. Mark's, has been available online since Covid. It is emailed directly to readers or is available to download from both Parish Council and ACNB church websites. It has many contributors from the surrounding area.

As well as publicising events and facilities, the Messenger includes a wide range of regular articles about local history, the Friends of Chapel Wood, quizzes, gardening, recipes and the work of the Ampfield Art Class. Occasional features include poetry, reviews,

short stories, obituaries, profiles of local people in 'Castaway of the Month' and reports of local events. New ideas and contributors are always welcome.

If you would like to receive a notification when the magazine is published, please mail philb@acnb-church.org.uk. We will use your email address only to notify you of publication of the latest Ampfield Messenger and will handle your data according to our privacy policy (<https://www.acnb-church.org/main/privacypolicy/>).

Recreation Ground & Cricket Club

We are pleased to see the continuing success of Ampfield and North Baddesley Cricket Club (ANBCC) in providing weekly All-Stars training events for boys and girls. They now have 6 teams in the local colts' leagues with players from 8 to 13 years old.

Adult men's teams have increased to 3 and a women's team has been established for the first time.

ANBCC have installed new nets and artificial wickets at the ground, an impressive training facility.



In order to provide better access to the recreation ground and playground, new paving has been laid thanks to a grant from the Borough Council.

The Ampfield Pavilion at the Recreation Ground is available for hire and is a great location for events such as children's birthday parties and is adjacent to the playing field and playground. Parishioners enjoy reduced hire rates.



Allotments

The parish council manages 16 modestly sized allotments at Morleys Green, which are exclusively for the use of Ampfield Parishioners, at a cost of £60pa.

We do have vacant plots and applications are invited from parishioners.

Contact clerk@ampfield.org.uk for details.



Ampfield Village Hall & Village Market

The Village Hall is the main community hub of the village providing a variety of activities throughout the week including yoga, pilates, bridge, Brownies and a weekly art class.

The Trustees of the Hall, who are all volunteers, work hard to maintain the hall to a very high standard and provide special events. The Hi-Fi system has just been updated and provides great quality sound for all occasions.

The highlight of each month is the very popular Market which is now in its 25th successful year. Volunteers generously give their help and support and all the proceeds go directly to the hall providing up to £3,000 annually for it's upkeep.

More importantly, the Market provides the perfect meeting place for everyone to get together on a regular basis. Sales tables can be hired and we regularly sell fruit, vegetables, bread, cakes and a wide variety of crafts, plants, jewellery, books etc. There are many great gift ideas for all the

family and everything is locally sourced. The refreshment table is always laden with delicious seasonal cakes freshly baked by the team. Coffee and tea are served all morning.

You can easily access the village hall website via ampfieldvillagehall.org.uk. Here you can make enquiries about booking the hall - the perfect venue for a special occasion - find out more about hall activities and take part in a virtual tour.

We are always looking to welcome new members to the Committee – if you are interested, please get in touch with the hall secretary via julie@ampfield.org.uk.



Burial Ground

Over the past 12 months, the Ampfield Burial Ground has seen a considerable amount of activity. The planted cruciform, the centrepiece of the burial ground, which had been destroyed by a major attack of box blight in 2023, has been totally rebuilt and replanted. Ampfield Parish Council is extremely grateful to its contractor, suppliers and to its volunteers for the very hard work they have undertaken. The area is once again looking splendid in the spring sunshine.

Meanwhile, the extension to the burial ground, which was announced last year, is also now nearly complete. The recent dry weather has allowed our contractor to get back on site, complete the process of levelling and preparing the ground for overseeding. Ultimately, as this grows some of the seats will have to be moved to reflect the changes, but this is a small price to pay when compared with the increase in capacity and usable space that has become available.

On a more positive note, we have spent some time this past year keeping the boundary fences in good repair. Many of the old, rotted posts along the south-eastern boundary have been replaced and the broken wire strands repaired. Once all the outstanding work has been

completed, the burial ground will be in good shape to serve our community for many years to come.



The Telephone Box Project

For many years the telephone box was located next to the A3090. Due to its deteriorating state, it was moved to a new home outside the Village Hall just before Christmas 2023.

The Men's Shed in Romsey refurbished the door to a very high standard. A Councillor Community grant provided the funding for the purchase of the spare parts for the project. The work then began to restore the remainder of the box to a similar high standard.

All 48 windows were taken out and the laborious task of removing all the dirt and old sealing tape was carried out voluntarily by members of the Parish Council. The original acetate windows had to be very carefully



cleaned to prevent any damage.

In October 2024 the work began to restore the metal frame of the box which had suffered many years of neglect. The old paint had to be tested for lead, then the rusty layers of paint were completely removed using a gas blow torch - a very challenging process undertaken by Mike Hansford. A pink primer and a red top coat were then applied.

Now the work has begun to reassemble the box. New sealing tape has been applied to the edges of each of the 48 windows and then each pane can be refitted. The work continues!



Defibrillators in Ampfield

As reported last year, a fourth defibrillator has kindly been gifted to the Parish Council by Inspired Villages. It is located on the left of the main entrance from Baddesley Road to Ampfield Meadows, the new care village. A sum of money has also been provided for the future maintenance of this defibrillator.

The other defibrillators are situated around the parish:

- at the entrance to the Village Hall,
- at the Pavilion, and
- outside the Potters Heron Hotel.

They are all regularly checked and maintained by the Parish Council and are a very important emergency resource for the community.



The Friends of Chapel Wood

The Friends of Chapel Wood have enjoyed a good 2025. The new footpath to the west of St. Mark's has bedded in well and it is particularly pleasing to see the return of the foxglove colony following all the construction work. As hoped, this past winter has seen the start of planting in the area. We have added snowdrops, bluebells, wild daffodils and wood anemones – of these, the snow drops are already starting to flower.

Over the spring, we will add wild roses, hazels, hawthorns and blackthorn. With luck, we may be able to hold competitions in the making of sloe gin in the autumn. The over-riding theme behind our planting is to create an area that will appeal to all the human senses; the plant selected must offer more than one season of interest, whilst also appealing to pollinating insects and enhancing woodland plant diversity.

Whilst this is exciting, we have been careful not to overlook the routine maintenance of the wood. On a regular basis, we have walked the footpaths, keeping them clear and not overgrown. We have continued to clear unwanted rhododendron, with a good bonfire when



conditions allow. We have tried to maintain the burial ground, but that has been so wet, much of the work has been prohibitive.

If you fancy the idea of joining some like-minded neighbours for a few hours once a month, just turn up in the St. Mark's car park at 09:45 on the second Saturday of every month. The Friends are a good bunch. Tools are provided. It is a good way to have a bit of fun and help our community at the same time!



County Councillor: Alan Dowden

Dear Ampfield Residents,

I was first elected to the County Council in a By-Election on the 2nd January 1992 and have served the Baddesley Division for 33 years. I have now though, decided not to stand for another election.

Local Government is undergoing significant change through the devolution proposals. This will entail Hampshire having combined unitary authorities; an elected Mayor; and in due course the dissolving of the County & District and Borough Councils. However, parish & town councils will remain.

It may be a few years before this is finalised. Until the changes are completed, I will continue to serve the Baddesley Division with the interest of my constituents as my focus.

A huge increase in those requiring Adult Social Care and Children's Special Educational Needs have created overwhelming pressure on the financial position of the County Council. Presently, 75% of the whole Revenue budget goes to try to cover these services. The Chief Financial Officer at the County Council has reported that without any further government funding the remaining reserves are insufficient to sign off a balanced budget for the year 2026/27 and

that will result in the County Council sending a Section 114 notice to Central Government.

Until Central Government addresses the Social Care issue to protect our vulnerable adults and children, any new Combined Authority will have the same difficulties. I have always argued that until you finance Social Care adequately, the NHS will never properly recover.

The Council Tax for 2025/26 will be £1,609.83 for a Band D, an increase of just under 5% and 2% of this will be allocated to Social Care. The administration at the County Council sought a 15% rise but this was rejected by Central Government.

Regarding County Councillors Community Grants, I was pleased to be able to grant £1,000 towards the cost of repairing the roof of St Marks Church after the despicable theft of the lead from the church's roof. Wessex Cancer Trust also gained a large grant.

County Councillor Alan Dowden
alan.dowden@hants.gov.uk

Borough Councillor: Sally Yalden

As your borough councillor, I reflect on another busy year that has flown by since my last contribution to the annual newsletter:

First and foremost, I want to express my gratitude to your parish councillors for their dedication and hard work. Many readers may not realise the significant effort that goes on both in and out of parish council meetings, ensuring that Ampfield is well represented. I remain committed to providing regular updates on Test Valley Borough Council matters to keep our parish councillors and community informed.

Throughout the year, I have engaged in a considerable amount of casework in both Ampfield and Braishfield. This aspect of my role is particularly fulfilling, as I enjoy problem-solving and offering assistance wherever possible. Whether it's addressing incorrect Tree Protection Orders or navigating complex planning issues, the variety keeps my role as a borough councillor dynamic and rewarding.

In collaboration with the Community Engagement Team at TVBC and parish council, we continued with the project work called 'Thriving Communities'. The goal is to unite local community groups to discuss what residents value most in Ampfield and identify any gaps that may exist. While we are still in the process of gathering insights in Ampfield, a similar session in Braishfield has led to a successful volunteer and group fair.

Navigating planning matters can be challenging. As I write this, uncertainty surrounds the scale and location of future housing developments in the Borough. Until the Council implements a new Local Plan and secures a 5-year housing supply, this ambiguity will persist. We are witnessing an increase in landowners and site promoters gathering evidence to support speculative development proposals. The parish council and I continue to monitor the situation.

As a borough councillor, I have the authority to 'call in' planning applications for further discussion at the Southern Area Planning Committee. I recently exercised this right and spoke in support of those objecting to a particular application in Ampfield, although the outcome was not in our favour. I will continue to push back on applications and developments which are contrary to the Village Design Statement.

Following changes to the Environmental Protection Act in 2022, food waste must be collected weekly from the latest of April 2026. (Neighbouring Eastleigh Borough Council have successfully collected food waste for well over a decade.)

From October 2025, food waste collection will be implemented here borough-wide, including communal bins for flats. TVBC has ordered 10 specialised collection vehicles, set to arrive by July 2025, with 8 operating rounds and 2 spares for maintenance. To support this, TVBC is expanding both depots, with work at Portway complete and Bourne House expected to finish by early summer 2025. Each household will receive a grey/silver kitchen caddy (5 litre capacity) and, except for communal bin users, a kerbside caddy (23 litres). TVBC is currently planning caddy distribution and developing a communications strategy to engage residents about the new system.

Since last December, Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and devolution have been central to discussions following the Government's plans outlined in the English Devolution White Paper: Hampshire County Council applied to join the 'fast-track' programme, resulting in the postponement of county elections scheduled for May 2025, and extending the terms of county councillors. The complexities of devolution create uncertainties, including the eventual abolition of Test Valley Borough Council, which I serve. A new, larger Strategic Authority will emerge. I have many concerns about this and not only about the cancellation of our right to participate in regular elections and hold those in public office to account.

I regularly share updates on the Ampfield Residents' Forum Facebook page. If you'd like to join the group, simply search for 'Ampfield Residents' Forum'. It's a useful group to find out what's happening, or to post local news yourself.

Thank you for taking the time to read this update. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns regarding TVBC matters.

Cllr Sally Yalden, Test Valley Borough Councillor for Ampfield and Braishfield

CllrSYalden@testvalley.gov.uk

Ampfield Parish Annual Assembly

Meeting for all Ampfield electors.

Join us at Ampfield Village Hall on Monday 19 May 2025, 7:30pm.

The agenda will be published online and on noticeboards nearer to the time.

Your Representatives

Parish Councillors:

- Cllr Bryan Nanson (Chair)
- Cllr Chris Ling (Vice Chair)
- Cllr Martin Hatley
- Cllr Julian Jones
- Cllr Jason Reeves
- Cllr Graham Roads
- Cllr Julie Trotter

The Parish Council Clerk position is currently vacant.

Borough Councillor:

Cllr Sally Yalden

CllrSYalden@testvalley.gov.uk

County Councillor:

Cllr Alan Dowden

alan.dowden@hants.gov.uk

Member of Parliament:

Caroline Nokes MP

caroline.nokes.mp@parliament.uk

More Information

For more information about the Parish Council, please visit the website at www.ampfield.org.uk.

If you are interested to know more about the role of a Parish Councillor, please contact the Chairman, Bryan Nanson, at bryan@ampfield.org.uk.

Parishioners may also be interested in the independent Facebook group called Ampfield Residents' Forum:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/881821122219056>