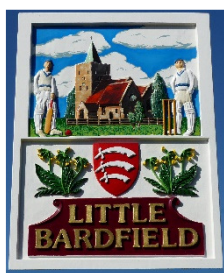


# Little Bardfield Parish Council



A Davies  
The Hydes  
CM6 3QB  
01799 586 216 07774 452 302  
[davies@farmline.com](mailto:davies@farmline.com)

[www.littlebardfieldparish.org.uk](http://www.littlebardfieldparish.org.uk)

To: **All Residents of Little Bardfield Parish**

**Subject: Parish Council Report 2021-2022**

This is the activity report from your Parish Council for the period April 2021 – March 2022. I hope that you will find it to be of interest and to share it with all members of your family.

We circulate information via three Notice Boards, your Parish Website and local area Email Contact Groups.

If you are not already included in an Email Contact Group, then please email your request for inclusion to your area Parish Councillor:

Little Bardfield:	Cllr. Andrew Davies	<a href="mailto:davies@farmline.com">davies@farmline.com</a>
	Cllr. Jan Warren	<a href="mailto:fallowcorner2@gmail.com">fallowcorner2@gmail.com</a>
Hawkspur Green:	Cllr. Terry Cutmore	<a href="mailto:tcutmore@btinternet.com">tcutmore@btinternet.com</a>
Oxen End:	Cllr. Colin Simpson	<a href="mailto:colinormondsimpson@gmail.com">colinormondsimpson@gmail.com</a>
	Cllr. Juliet O'Brien	<a href="mailto:Juliet.loftus@lice.co.uk">Juliet.loftus@lice.co.uk</a>

Please visit your Parish Website [www.littlebardfieldparish.org.uk](http://www.littlebardfieldparish.org.uk) for information on:

- News & Events Calendar, Notices, and Information
- Agendas & Minutes of Parish Council Meetings
- Highways, County, and District Councillor's Reports
- Financial reports
- The early history of your Parish.

With kind regards

Councillor Andrew Davies  
Chairman  
Little Bardfield Parish Council  
31 March 2022

## **Little Bardfield Parish Council – 2021-2022 Report**

This report summarises the activities of your Parish Council for the 12 months from April 2021 to March 2022.

### **Purpose**

Little Bardfield Parish Council represents the interests of its residents, mainly to Uttlesford District Council and Essex County Council. It also endeavours to preserve the rural nature of our area. The Councillors act jointly and individually, as required, to achieve these objectives.

### **Composition of the Parish Council**

Little Bardfield Parish comprises three separate areas: Little Bardfield village (LB), Hawkspur Green (HG) to the north and Oxen End (OE) to the south, all within Uttlesford District Council (UDC) and Essex County Council (ECC). Ideally each of the three areas needs representation.

Uttlesford District Council assigns five positions as Councillors to form the volunteer (unpaid) Little Bardfield Parish Council (LBPC). Formal elections are held every four years.

During the year we were pleased to co-opt Jan Warren from Little Bardfield Village and Juliet O'Brien from Oxen End to complete our assigned complement of five Parish Councillors.

### **Current Parish Council Membership (LBPC)**

Cllr Andrew Davies (Chairman) (LB). Cllr Terry Cutmore (Vice Chairman) (HG), Cllr Colin Simpson (OE), Cllr Jan Warren (LB) and Cllr. Juliet O'Brien (OE)

### **Supported by:**

Parish Clerk: Ms Liz Williamson.

Uttlesford District Council, (UDC) Cllr George Smith

Essex County Council, (ECC) Cllr Martin Foley.

Essex Association of Local Councils.

There is frequent contact between Parish, District and County Councillors.

### **Parish Council Meetings**

The Agendas and Minutes of meetings are published on the three Notice Boards and on the Parish website: [www.littlebardfieldparish.org.uk](http://www.littlebardfieldparish.org.uk)

Council Meetings are normally held four times per year. Additional meetings are held, as required, to review Planning Applications. Due to Covid restrictions, two meetings were held online via the Zoom facility and two in the Cricket Pavilion.

### **This year's Meetings were held:**

2021	May 4	Parish Council & Annual Parish Meeting
	September 28	Parish Council
	December 1	Parish Council
2022	February 16	Parish Council

### **Email Contact Groups**

Information is regularly shared by your Parish Councillor including reports from the County, District, Highways including road closures, Police, and Parish Council Meeting Agendas and Minutes. Other information as provided by residents.

## **Finance**

Our finances operate in two separate accounts with Lloyds Bank.

A Treasurers Account which is funded from the “Precept” local tax and is part of the Council Tax.

A Community Account which is funded by donations, mainly from Lightsource, the operators of the Hawkspur Green Solar Farm.

### 1. **Treasurers Account:**

This is used to carry out the routine responsibilities of the Parish Council.

Essex County Council make an annual grant to the Parish Council to arrange for verge cutting to be carried out throughout the Parish.

The Budget for 2022-2023 was agreed at the February 2022 meeting.

### 2. **Precept:** This term describes the amount of money the Parish Council needs to carry out its business. There are 122 properties in the Parish with varying levels of occupation, tax band and the occupier’s personal circumstances. These factors are used by UDC to calculate each individual property’s Council Tax. The Parish Precept is the total for all the individual properties. It is collected in the Annual Council Tax Bill by Uttlesford District Council and remitted to the Parish Council in two instalments.

As the Treasurer’s account is currently adequately financed, the Parish Council decided not to increase the Parish Precept of £3000 for the Financial Year 2022/2023.

There are 57 Parishes within Uttlesford District. In descending order from the highest Parish Precept to the lowest, Little Bardfield ranks at number 49.

### 3. **Community Fund:** This is currently funded by an annual compensatory “benefit payment” to the Parish by the operators of the Hawkspur Green Solar Farm. Although arising from the activity in Hawkspur Green, the Fund is made available for distribution throughout the whole Parish. The status of the account is published in the Minutes of Parish Council Meetings.

This year Community Fund grants were made for:

- Installing a Defibrillator
- Uttlesford Food Bank
- Almshouses
- Stop Stansted Expansion
- Essex Air Ambulance
- Thaxted Charity Minibus
- Hundred Parishes

No claims were received from individual residents.

## **Defibrillators**

We currently have two defibrillators. One at the entrance to the Little Bardfield cricket field, next to Rose Cottage, and the other near the entrance to the Hawkspur Green bridle way, on the outside of Mill House’s barn,

Another defibrillator will be purchased for Oxen End once a suitable location has been identified.

## **Uttlesford District Council (UDC)**

Little Bardfield Parish is now part of “The Sampfords Ward” for electoral and representation purposes.

We are strongly supported by our UDC Councillor, George Smith.

His periodic reports are published on the website.

### **Planning Applications 2021-2022 (all areas)**

UDC are legally obliged to inform and invite comments from the Parish Council on all Planning Applications submitted regarding any property or land within the Parish.

The decision to approve or refuse a Planning Application is made by UDC's Planning Department and not by your Parish Council which has no appeal against any such decision. Applicant Appeals against refusals by UDC are decided by a Government Inspector.

Whilst we diligently study all Planning Applications and submit timely constructive comments, UDC Planning Department frequently appear to take little notice of our input when decisions are made.

We are generally disillusioned with the strange and often contradictory decisions that UDC Planning Officers sometimes make and the ineffectiveness of their Enforcement Officers.

UDC tend not to challenge retrospective Planning Applications or non-compliance of certain conditions appended to an approved Planning Application, probably as a cost saving policy.

This "policy" can lead to deliberate avoidance of submitting a Planning Application before work is carried out. It undermines the concept of Planning Applications and further frustrates the efforts of the Parish Council to preserve the traditional character of the Parish for the benefit of the majority.

The UDC Planning Department has recently received a "Designation Notice" from Central Government which effectively means that they have been placed in "special measures" for larger developments.

This means that such larger developments can now be approved by a higher authority than UDC, possibly to the detriment of the District.

Planning Applications, prefixed UTT/, reviewed by the Parish Council during this period were:

21/1728	OE	Coft Hall	Conditions of previous PA. Approved.
21/1730	HG	Little Sampford Road	Overhead electricity supply. Approved.
21/1971	OE	Ambrose Cottage	Annexe to main building. Approved.
21/1985	LB	Furthermore Distribution	5 storage containers. Approved.
21/2373	OE	Frenches Farm	Floodlights. Approved.
21/2585	HG	1 Gambers Cottages	Extension. Approved.
21/2798	LB	Three Chimneys	Replacement boiler. Approved.
21/3127	LB	Land east of Gridiron Villas	Four new houses. Refused.
21/3145	LB	Eagle House	Extension. Approved.
21/3539	LB	Old Rectory	Heat pumps & piping. Withdrawn.
21/3540	LB	Old Rectory	Heat pumps & piping. Withdrawn.
21/3609	OE	Ambrose Cottage	Replacement garage. Approved.
21/3742	OE	Old Cottage	Cart Lodge conversion. Withdrawn.
21/3769	LB	Pauls Farm	Commercial units. Objections. Withdrawn
22/0603	OE	Old Cottage	Conversion of cart lodge. Awaiting decision.
22/0611	LB	White House	Conversion of a garage. Awaiting decision.

An earlier Planning Application was refused by UDC. The Applicant appealed against the refusal. A Government Inspector dismissed the Appeal. 3 months later, UDC then approved it!!

The waste processing operation by Pauls Farm next to the River Pant, which has involved Essex County Council, the Environment Agency, Uttlesford District Council, and the Health & Safety Executive has taken a lot of Parish council time. A local qualified resident has been most helpful in dealing with these authorities. Despite this, the situation has yet to be resolved.

The expansion of the original small riding school at Frenches Farm into a large Equestrian centre, with a projected touring caravan site to the detriment of the narrow lane and properties of the other residents in Oxen End has occupied much time of your Parish Council. It has not been helped by the apparent approval by Uttlesford District Council of some areas which lie within Braintree District.

## **Essex County Council (ECC)**

We are strongly supported by ECC Cllr Martin Foley.

Martin was our District Councillor for many years until Little Bardfield Parish was re-aligned by UDC from "The Thaxted Ward" to "The Sampfords Ward".

Martin's reports are published on the website as are the periodic Essex Highways Reports.

### **Potholes and road defects Issues reported:**

1. **Potholes:** Fortunately, there have been few in this period. Two large potholes and one drain surround were reported and repaired.
2. **Oxen End Lane:** Since the large scale development of Frenches farm into an equestrian centre, the increase in heavy traffic has ruined this lane. ECC Highways are aware, and we await their attention to the problem.
3. **Blocked drains and flooding:** There are three in Hawkspur Green which continually flood in wet weather.

**By Hill Hall** – Highways Engineers visited the location when it was flooded and initially declined to act. Our appeal to the Head of Highways, Cllr Lee Scott, has resulted in the drain being put on the regular jetting schedule and the possibility of the drain being re-located to a lower

**By Small Farm** - To date, Highways have taken no action.

**By the end of the Hawkspur Green bridleway** - Since the installation of the Solar Farm on higher ground excess run-off water flows downhill to overwhelm the under lane culvert, causing flooding to the property opposite. There has been significant email conversation on this problem and now awaiting a Highways Engineer to attend and advise on a possible solution.

4. **Abandoned Road Signs:** Highways were asked to arrange collection of abandoned road closed signs near to Wainsford Farm. An Inspector visited the scene and declared it not a high priority and departed leaving the signs behind!

### **Broadband (all areas)**

GigaClear broadband has been successfully installed in most areas and taken up by many residents.

The available speeds are multiples of the BT line speed at an equivalent price to the previous BT service.

### **Rural Crime (all areas)** Crime Stoppers 0800 555 111

Hare coursing infrequently taking place.

### **Parish Website** [www.littlebardfieldparish.org.uk](http://www.littlebardfieldparish.org.uk)

This is your Parish website to share and see information. The website main menu options are:

Home

Overview

Parish Council/Uttlesford DC/Essex CC - Parish Council meeting dates are published here.

Finance

History - the history of the Parish is reviewed from 1046.

News & Events Calendar & Notices and Information:

Organisations – this includes the Parish Emergency Response Plan.

Commercial - mainly refers to services available in Great Bardfield and Thaxted.

Items for publication can be being notified to the Parish Clerk at [littlebardfieldparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:littlebardfieldparishclerk@gmail.com)

Another busy year for a group of unpaid Volunteers!!

Report compiled by Cllr Terry Cutmore and authorised by Little Bardfield Parish Council, March 2022.