



Abbotts Ann Parish Assembly
Held at the War Memorial Hall on Wednesday 30th May 2024 at 19:00.

Present:

Councillor Jordan (Chair), Councillor Howard (Vice Chair), Councillor Heather, Councillor Wallis, Councillor Mitchell, Borough Councillor Flood, County Councillor Drew, Amanda Owen (Clerk) & twenty six members of the public.

Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Borough Councillor Hasslemann.

Councillor Jordan welcomed everyone to the meeting and the minutes of the 2024 Parish Assembly were signed as a correct record of the meeting.

1. **Pre-meeting refreshments.**
2. **Introduction and welcome by the Parish Council Chair.**

Community facilities at Bulbery. As most of you know the redevelopment of the Bulbery site is dependent on the success of the AA CLT project for match funding reasons. That said we have as a Parish Council decided to fund, at risk, the initial planning work. We have the resources to progress as far as a full planning application and no further and at this moment in time that is what we intend to do. We are taking risk against our general reserve in the short term but we will be able to recoup the funds over a 2 or 3 year period and we will not fall below the recommended minimum level of funds available. Luke Rose is here this evening and is happy to update and take questions on the progress to date but I would ask you all to note one very important change in our approach – we see Bulbery as far more than just a sports field and our development plans are going to emphasise far wider community use.

We do not have any homegrown sports teams, and whilst we are happy for the facilities to be used by local teams from Andover, we will not prioritise meeting FA standards for changing rooms, spectator fencing, etc we will prioritise the wider utility of the site to benefit the widest cross section of our own community and the design and layout of the new pavilion will in part reflect this.

Replacing the Children's play area at Bulbery early and ahead of the main project. We took the decision as a Parish council to try and get some early wins as part of the Bulbery project and as you will hear later from Cllr Patricia Mitchel. In doing so we have reached back out to the community to establish whether there is support for this project and the results have been a resounding and extensive body of support with many signatures of support and only a few signatures expressing reservations.

Improving access to Bulbery. We plan to remove the current barrier and put a height restriction barrier over the main entrance and then fence off the car park to prevent vehicular access to the field, except through a locked gate to allow the grounds maintenance contractor on to the grassed area. This will significantly improve access for members of the community, especially those wanting to use the new play area once its finished later this year. Also looking ahead, we have some combined project work being scope with the WMH and we will be looking to put some new drainage in to improve the car park and also compliment a range of maintenance activities being planned by the WMH Cttee.

We still have 2 vacancies on the Parish council and would really welcome anyone who feels they could perhaps play a role as a Cllr going forward, so please, if you know of anyone who may be interested point them in my direction or the direction of any of my fellow Cllrs and the Clerk.

VE Day commemorative event Sat 10 May starting at 12:00

**LIVE MUSIC FROM 12.30
(VINTAGE & MODERN)
JAYNE DEER
UKE@HEART UKULELE BAND
ROSIE SPENCER**

**FISH & CHIPS £6 (1 TO 4 PM)
ORDERS IN ADVANCE 710339**

**VE DAY CELEBRATION - SAT
10 MAY. 12 PM AT THE EAGLE**

**JOIN
US**

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Finally, I would ask you all to note that the Parish Council remains in a very robust position with regards its governance and assurance of its financial management and it is because we are good in this area that we can take

calculated risks to support wider project delivery. What underpins this position is the work, support, guidance and advice we receive from the Parish Clerk, Amanda Owen and I would like to place on record our gratitude for such brilliant support. Thank you.

3. Reports by Portfolio Holders.

Sports and Recreation report for the Abbotts Ann Annual Parish Assembly 2025

Pavilion

The pavilion has been used for a weekly craft group, a weekly ukulele group, a monthly coffee morning and for various one-off functions and events.

Sports field

The football pitches were used by several teams during the summer and autumn of last year but then, as a result of heavy rain, became waterlogged and unplayable from the end of November until the beginning of April. Anton FC and Shooters FC who were regular users appear to have found alternative venues but the New Street Robins are keen to continue using our facilities. This month they have started twice-weekly training sessions and matches will restart next month. In exchange for using the pitches free of charge they have taken on the tasks of painting the white lines, doing some extra grass cutting and they will be doing some pitch maintenance in the summer. They have also offered to refurbish or replace the goal posts and nets later in the year.

The sports field has also been used by the Muddy Runners and the annual Hampshire Dog Rally.

Abbotts Ann Sports Field Group

The group, which was set up to advise the Parish Council on the management, maintenance, operation and improvement of the sports field and pavilion, has been disbanded due mainly to a lack of enthusiasm from a dwindling membership.

Friends of the Abbotts Ann Sports Field (FOTAAS)

This group, which was set up to raise funds for the new pavilion/clubhouse, has also been disbanded. The funds which were raised (mainly profits from the firework nights and the fete barbecues) will be handed over to the Parish Council in due course.

Cllr C J Wallis 30 April 2025

Environment Portfolio.

The areas of my responsibility are Footpaths, Sewage Issues, Road Drains, Roads, Information Kiosk and the Pillhill Brook.

Footpaths

Myself and two other volunteers Paul Stanton and Duncan Haigh look after a total of 16 footpaths around our village. Last year we trimmed most paths nine times between April to November totalling 192-man hours work.

During December to March, we inspect all paths and carry out general maintenance, cutting back fallen trees and branches.

Sewage.

I have a monthly meeting with the Pan Parish Pillhill Forum which involves representatives from other local parishes and Southern Water.

I am pleased to confirm owing to work carried by SW over the last two years sealing the joints on the main and lateral sewage pipes against ground water in the Monxton, Thruxton, Fyfield, Kimpton, Chilbon has reduced the requirements for Tankers during the last winter when we had very high ground water levels.

But we still do have major problems at Manor Farm chamber, Mill Lane and Popular Farm.

Manor Farm issues are caused by the valve system at Mill Lane when it gets blocked by ragging of solid waste (wet wipes) from parishes south of our village causing the waste to back up and spill out at Manor Farm. In the short-term SW are employing a company called Flow Management Systems to check the valve systems three times a day and adjust the valve if required, which has stopped any Manor Farm splitting over. In the long-term SW are designing a automated valve system to overcome the problem.

The other issue is at the Popular Farm recently Identified through CCT scanning of the main sewer pipe has a sage in the pipe which is causing a build of silt and restricting the flow, hence why you see tankers jet cleaning twice a week along Little Ann Road and A343 road. SW plan to correct the problem this summer.

Drains

I carried out a survey of all the road drains in our village mid last year, owing to flooding at the lower end of Duck Street and other areas after heavy rain, and found approximately 34 drains were blocked, I passed my finding to Hampshire Highways in a report and have chased them a number of times, and eventually three weeks ago I am pleased to confirm they came and cleaned all the drains in a our village (Hence the yellow spot on all the drains cleaned). I would point out Hampshire Highways should clean out drains every year, but owing to cut in budgets they will only clean every three years.

Roads

I have reported to Hampshire Highways several potholes in our roads around our village specially on Church Road and Little Ann Road, unfortunately no action to date, but will keep on chasing along with having the Calvert's dug out along Cattle Lane.

Telephone Information Kisok

All working okay with regularly updated on activities in the village.

Pillhill Brook

The village is a member of the Pillhill Brook Association who regularly monitor the condition of the brook which at present in good condition, and here tonight we have Janet Wright who is the Secretary of the association and who will give a more detailed talk on the association activities.

Q - A Parishioner asked a question with regards to the condition of the fence alongside Church path.

A - Councillor Jordan provided an update with regards to what efforts the Parish Council had undertaken to contact the landowner with regards to the repair / replacement of the fence. A fellow resident reiterated what Councillor Jordan has advised.

Councillor John Heather.

Wellbeing Portfolio

Good evening everyone,

My family and I have called Abbots Ann home for the past 8 years, and for the last year or so, I've had the privilege of being part of the Parish Council. I currently manage the Health and Wellbeing portfolio which I am hoping to build on over the coming months/years.

I'm particularly focused on creating pathways for younger generations to engage more deeply with our village, ensuring that Abbots Ann continues to thrive as a vibrant, strong community.

My first project was to design and to manage a much needed playground for Bulbery sports field. This project has been a year in the making – and I am pleased to share that we have finally received the green light to move ahead with grant funding. Parks and Recreational at the Council have been amazing and extremely supportive, not only for the playground but also our proposed plans for a multi use sports court, a running track and various pieces of outdoor gym equipment. All of this will be put in over the next few years. I am afraid it won't be immediate. However, the playground could be ready to go by then end of September... we hope!

The design of this safe playground caters to babies, toddlers, and older children, with a range of apparatus that encourages climbing, imaginative play, socialising, and learning. It's also fully accessible for those with disabilities. As we secure additional funding, we plan to expand the area with fun sensory aids and educational tools.

Beyond just a play area, we envision this space as a social hub, a place for families to gather, meet after school, to play and to encourage children to enjoy nature. We are in talks with Abbots Ann Primary School to hold a competition where each child can have the opportunity to think of a name for the playground, and we will celebrate its opening with a naming ceremony.

That brings me to another exciting project: The Sakura Cherry Tree Initiative. In a gesture of friendship between Japan and the UK, the Japanese Association has gifted 10,000 beautiful Sakura cherry trees to the UK. We have requested 10 trees, which will be planted at Bulbury Sports field in honour of the clubs and associations that make up the fabric of our community. Each tree will have a plaque dedicated to a group or cause, and we will hold planting ceremonies when they arrive in December 2026. I will put together a tender document over the coming months so if any club or organisation within the village would like a tree in their name, they can apply.

Now, onto fireworks. It's a real shame we didn't have an event last year. However, there is a new opening for a village firework committee and it's up to all of us to rally together and bring this tradition back. Typically, the event raises thousands of pounds and this fund could really benefit the village as a whole. If someone is willing to step up and lead the committee, I'd be happy to be a part of it, but I can't take the lead – I don't have time!! If you're interested, please come talk to me, and let's bring this wonderful event back to life!

Lastly, I'd like to mention that we have a couple of open spots on the Parish Council. Let me speak candidly here: the meeting is 2 hours a month, on the first Thursday of each month. I'm a busy mum myself, and I also juggle 2 or sometimes 3 jobs. Yet I still manage to dedicate an hour a week to council work because I for one, would like to keep this village as a highly sought after village, and to keep it strong and thriving. I ask that you consider lend us a hand and become a Parish councillor. It's not all planning applications, and footpaths, the discussions are a lot more interesting and we get to hear first hand what is going on at Test Valley Borough Council! The aim is to help strengthen our village and community which will enable our younger generation to appreciate the hard work that goes into keeping a village a village and we have something pretty wonderful to hand to them.

Thank you.

Councillor Patricia Mitchell

Amenities Portfolio Report – for 30 April 2025

Civil Burial Ground (BG)

The project to repair the BG fence from Church Path boundary with the Churchyard to the boundary with the Old Manor on Church Road is took place last Summer. It was funded using reserves earmarked for that purpose plus a grant from TVBC.

Maintenance of St Mary's Churchyard

The refurbishment of the internal Churchyard Footpaths has again been delayed because of a lack of interest from possible contractors and a complicated specification. Ray Lucas has assisted the Clerk with this project and it went out to tender action, but with no success. Funding requires the use of Earmarked reserves to ensure monies are available in year 25/26. The PCC has been informed of the likely shortage of funding and advised that they will need to apply for a grant as AAPC grants will not be available to benefit the Church.

Village Telephone Kiosk

John Heather continues to do a splendid job and will update us on this.

Amenities in the Parish for which other Organisations or Persons are Responsible

There have been no major problems with liaising with other amenities in the Parish.

AAPC Actions

Finally – Agenda Item 5 of the Parish Council's monthly meeting is usually “ **To receive updates already published and any further updates provided.**” As part of that I ask for updates on Actions agreed at previous meetings. It is perhaps worthy of noting that since July 2022, in addition to the clerk's routine activities, there have been 106 actions arising from our meetings, only 9 of which are still active.

Councillor Gordon Howard
Amenities Portfolio Lead

29 April 2025

4. Reports by Borough and County Councillors.

TVBC Councillors Report - Abbotts Ann Annual Parish Meeting –30/04/2025

Cllr Maureen Flood & Cllr Susanne Hasselmann

Our thanks and appreciation to our Abbotts Ann Parish Councillors and to the many groups and individuals in our community who give their time, effort and expertise contributing to village parish life.

Starting very locally in the Parish: The War Memorial Village Hall Trustees made a successful application to the Rural England Prosperity Fund for nearly £20,000 (£19,854.73) for Phase One of the programme to refurbish the Hall.

There is an application for £500 being processed by the TVBC panel towards any Village VE day celebrations.

In addition, I am aware of two applications for funding from TVBC's Community Asset Fund; a parish council application to help towards the Bulbery Field Childrens Playground and another by the War Memorial Hall Trustees to help with phase II of the refurbishment programme.

Fly-Tipping

Hampshire County Councillor David Drew has alluded in his report to the substantial reduction in fly tipping across the Borough. Figures published by government recently show that fly-tipping in Test Valley has decreased by 39.6% from 1457 to 880 incidents over the past year. TVBC has a zero-tolerance approach, successfully prosecuting and publicising 65 cases between 2022 and 2024

Food waste collections

Test Valley has agreed to bring in weekly food waste collections from Monday the 13th of October 2025. In June 2022, we agreed plans to introduce weekly food waste collections from 2024, as well as the introduction of '1,2,3 Weekly', a new waste and recycling collection system. This would have enabled residents to recycle more at the kerbside, including a wider variety of plastics including pots, tubs and trays, cartons, aluminium foil and glass bottles and jars. However, in October 2023, and then again in November 2024, the government made significant policy announcements, including consulting on 'Simpler Recycling'. The latest requirements from central government mean that, once again, we need to work with all our Hampshire partners, including the county council, to agree a waste collection and disposal system. In the meantime, though, the requirements of the Environment Act mean we need to bring in food waste collections before April 2026. Therefore, to avoid bank holidays, summer holidays - October is deemed to be the most appropriate time.

Our Town - Andover Centre Regeneration

Following TVBC's success in obtaining £18.3m from the previous government's Levelling Up Fund, planning applications for both the new theatre and the new riverside park along western avenue are in the final stages of being prepared. You can view the draft designs at: www.thinkandovertowncentre.co.uk. Planning permission has also been granted for the demolition of the former Tesco/Poundstretcher unit - which will commence very soon - making way for the new theatre.

Local Government Reorganisation

Last December the Government published their White Paper on Devolution; creating more directly elected Mayors and moving some powers with the money to enact them from central government to a new Mayoral Combined Authority. At the same time the government is requiring wholesale reorganisation of Local Government. A concern with getting rid of the two-tier system is that district and borough councils like Test Valley have previously been protected from the huge cost pressures that affect upper tier authorities. Currently, the rising cost of adult social care and children's services makes up around 85% of Hampshire County Council's budget. This has led to Hampshire having to make significant cuts to other services. Once unitarisation happens this will mean cost pressures and the risk of cuts on all local services.

The government has been clear that we do not have a choice but to accept these changes. I and my fellow councillors are trying to make the best of the situation for the benefit of local residents. That is ensuring that culture of place-based working, collaboration, agility and flexibility is at the heart of any new local authority - and recognising that bigger is not always better when it comes to delivering efficient and effective local services. TVBC recently took our interim submission of guiding principles (signed by all 15 Hampshire leaders) through full council and it was duly submitted to government.

Local Plan and Housing Numbers

The new government also confirmed that they have increased Test Valley's housing target by 78%. Rather than planning for 524 new homes a year, TVBC now needs to prepare a Local Plan that delivers 934 dwellings per annum. 15,878 new homes over the next 17 years. This despite solid delivery over the past decade or more.

This overnight increase without any transitional arrangements means that TVBC no longer has a 5-year housing land supply and are therefore at risk of speculative development. Indeed, we are already seeing that across the Borough. new homes must be built in the right place, planned in consultation with local people and crucially include high levels of local infrastructure.

There will be some difficult decisions to be made including many more sites to try and prevent even more new development coming forward from applications and appeals in an ad hoc way

LGA Peer Review

In late November, over the period of a week, senior cross-party councillors and a team of experienced local government officers from different parts of the country came to Test Valley to review our performance. The peers reviewed a range of information and evidence and spoke to over 100 people including council staff, members and external stakeholders. The final report is published here: [Corporate Peer Challenge | Test Valley Borough Council](#)

Overall, the report is excellent. Here is an extracts from the Executive Summary:

"Test Valley Borough Council is a high-performing council that delivers effectively for its residents, with a commendable community-first approach and a strong sense of pride throughout the organisation. Officers and members consistently speak of positive working relationships, mutual trust, and a clear understanding of roles, all of which enhance decision-making and contribute to a constructive organisational culture with a place-based ethos embedded throughout.

Test Valley's Budget

Finally, a word on the finances. Against a backdrop of severe financial pressure for local government, Test Valley is in a relatively good position with our modest council tax rise of 3.05% protecting front line services. That means an average bill of £168.91 for an entire year of Test Valley Borough Council services. £44 (20%) lower than the average charge for the rest of England. Not only to have your bin collected every week but to maintain the housing & homelessness, planning, licensing, countryside, parks & open spaces, environmental health, economic development and leisure services - as well as continuing with our ambitious plans to improve our town centres.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with you all over the coming year.

Hampshire CC & TVBC – Annual report by Cllr David Drew

I have a dual role, as your County Councillor as well as a Test Valley Borough Councillor. The two roles are different and distinctive.

Test Valley Borough Council is responsible for bin collection, planning, including strategic planning, housing, plus leisure facilities. The budget to do this is about £14m – although TVBC is responsible for billing on behalf of other authorities. I have a cabinet responsibility which is for Recycling and Environmental Services. Our new food waste collections will begin from 13th October this year.

I'm also delighted to be able to report on the continued success of Test Valley regarding catching and prosecuting fly-tippers. At most Parish Council meetings I am able to report that another miscreant who has been prosecuted and fined.

Turning to planning matters, we now have significant challenges with the new government's increased housing targets. These have gone from about 500 to 900 per year right across the Borough. While we are addressing these changes as quickly as possible, their speed means we are at risk of housing development in areas which aren't yet fully assessed. This is because of the housing land supply not being sufficient – it should be 5 years and is currently less than 3.

TVBC continues to support village shops and the Village Shop Association visits, discusses and presents to both community and commercial shops, including yours here in the village.

Turning to HCC, the County Council is responsible for schools, roads, social services, waste disposal and some planning matters. The budget is close to £3 billion. A major challenge at this time of year is the roads and in particular pot holes, which seem to appear faster than they can be filled. The County continues to go through a difficult process of having to make savings – never an easy task. Fortunately, it has been a very dry March so the highways teams have made reasonable progress.

Elections for the County were planned for this year but have been postponed. This is because devolution and a Mayoralty are coming for Hampshire in 2026. Powers, and money, will be devolved to Hampshire, overseen by a Mayor, or Shire Reeve, and a County Combined Authority. This will provide a single point of contact for Central Government. Ben Houchen – Tees Valley, Sadiq Khan – London, Andy Burnham – Manchester are some high profile examples. The next steps after this will be Local Government reorganisation with the creating of 2, 3 or 4 unitary Authorities, which will see all Councils, including TVBC and HCC, abolished.

In other news, I am now Chairman of the Test Valley Arts Foundation, and a trustee of Chapel Arts Studio in Andover. I'm the chair of governors at Norman Gate School in Andover which caters for children with mostly medium learning difficulties, and continue to serve as member of the Hampshire and IoW Fire and Rescue Service. Earlier this year I stood down as a trustee on the Air Ambulance, having completed a 9 year term.

Finally I would like to say thank you to all the parish councillors, in particular the parish chairs who all do a cracking job most efficiently and keep them running to time. I'm always available to answer queries, whether from residents or parish councillors.

Cllr David Drew – April 2025

5. Reports from Community Groups.

Beth Deacon on behalf of the Fete Committee.

Fete 2024 Report

Despite poor weather conditions, fete 2024 was a huge success not just financially raising a record profit but also for offering variety and fun for all ages and engaging our village organisations.

We started the fete planning on March 12th 2024 with all 10 community organisation reps, 8 independent village reps and 4 elected committee officers. In 2024 we were delighted to welcome the bellringers to the fete committee which already consisted of:

Handbells	WI	Church	Am Drams	Village Hall	Nursery
Fotas-	Friends of the Abbots Ann Sportsfield	Village Community Shop	Friends of Abbots Ann School		

Fete Sponsors were sought and last year we were supported by our main sponsor Kieron Beattie Landscaping Ltd from Monxton with Evans and Partridge Estate Agents playing their part as a secondary sponsor and offering superb fete advertising posts which were located around our village.

Following tradition, we organised a plant sale on May 20th to raise funds for the fete. This was well attended. Kieron Beattie Landscaping Ltd demonstrated their living plant walls and offered advice. We sold refreshments including bacon rolls, bacon supplied by the Eagle pub and ran a raffle and promoted some great craft and food stalls within the village hall. We raised approximately £1500.

Our village fete is always supported by wonderful committed local volunteers but in 2023 we were stretched to the limit. Last year we approached local organisations to try and gain more volunteers. We received the support of the Andover Police Cadets, Bluebird Care, Tesco and 2nd Andover Sea Scouts.

This additional group of fantastic volunteers was essential to the success of last year's fete and lessened the load for village volunteers. The 4 fete entrance gates have to be manned for 4 hours and although a rota is superbly coordinated by a church fete representative there is always additional support needed.

We created for the first time a new position on the committee of “volunteer coordinator” This role was executed brilliantly and meant that we maximised the external volunteers support and meant more Village volunteers could enjoy the fete, something we’re always striving to do.

It is pleasing that the Police Cadets, 2nd Andover Sea Scouts and Bluebird Care have all agreed to support the fete in 2025. Bluebird Care have already announced they will be the main sponsor for this year’s fete and we welcome Daniel Langridge, one of their Senior Managers to our meeting this evening.

I’m now going to cover what happened on the actual fete day Saturday September 7th 2024 and start with Entertainment.

On fete day we tried to provide a variety of entertainment for all ages.

For the first time we offered music in St Mary’s church which also housed the Flower Exhibition. There were 3 very different genres, our own fantastic handbells, a saxophone quartet and a violinist. The Church displays and entertainment was as always managed with expertise and professionalism by our fete church representatives.

Wonderful Music, Singing and Drama was offered in the Oak Tree Arena throughout the afternoon. including the Ukulele group uke@heart, Military Wives Choir, Andover Musical Theatre, Blue Apple Theatre Group and the Merry Go Round Story Teller. Our technical expert from the committee worked hard to set up a new position for the main P.A. system with thanks to local residents.

Last year we had 2 new MC’s from the Am Drams who, dressed up in Panto costume, kept us laughing with jokes and constant banter.

Due to rain mid-afternoon the Ukulele group couldn’t risk damaging their ukulele instruments so only managed one performance outside. However, as the Eagle Inn was nearby their second performance was successfully held in the Pub Tent.

We also offered lots of fun and games around the village hall. The Sea Scouts provided us with a coconut shy, model railway, paint graffiti and Face painting which was great for everyone.

Our superb committee volunteers ran a mixture of games including hook the Duck and the highly popular human fruit machine which gave a lot of enjoyment. Beautiful Country Dancing provided by the Primary School and Tug of War heats kept everyone warm. Even the Alpacas whose owner was ill were led through Duck Street mid-afternoon to say hello.

At the Eagle Inn the visiting Fire Engine was a great hit and the Fun Dog Show gave a lot of pleasure to everyone.

We had more requests for stalls than ever before and ended up with a waiting list. The stalls offered a variety of produce plus some charity stalls giving advice and information about their work. We appointed a Stall Coordinator role again and this position enabled the stallholders to have a point of contact which worked very well. Our committee also ran Duck Street Stalls. Amazing Cakes and Tombola - both extremely popular. The bric a brac stall was as ever incredible at pulling in the crowds for bargains. For the first time the Village Am Drams ran their own stall promoting their Christmas pantomime and other local performances

We offered a variety of food and drink. The WI did an awesome job selling refreshments including delicious home-made cakes. We had a generous donation of free flour from McDougall’s Flour Mill in Andover which we used for baking across the fete.

Due to their request, we based the WI in a more prominent position, at the front of the village hall and this was a resounding success. A tremendous effort by WI members working with the Fete Committee, Village Hall personnel and the Eagle tent team who pitched the marque.

Their takings despite the poor weather overtook all previous figures.

As usual the Eagle provided a wide selection of drinks including Pimms and real Ales. Fotas ran a mouthwatering BBQ with food kindly donated by the Eagle. Theirs was a tough job cooking in rain showers for 4 hours.

Our Community shop stayed open all Saturday afternoon providing ice creams and lots of groceries where surprisingly milk was the most popular drink. The Post Office stayed open all day offering a cash service for visitors. The shop volunteers also helped us enormously selling disco tickets, collecting bottles from donators for bottle stall, storing and distributing free flour and supporting raffle ticket selling- all vital.

The Parish Magazine Editor and our Village Online Newsletter Manager were great promoting our events.

The raffle coordinated by the village hall committee, was another fantastic success with outstanding prizes including a £100 cash prize. We offered 3 points of sale on the day and sold tickets prior to the fete. A great effort too, by the village hall team, for distributing many prizes after the fete.

Another refreshing new fete addition was the Duck Street Family Disco taking place between the fete ending and the Eagle fete evening party starting. We were so fortunate that Bluebird Care sponsored our disco enabling the PTA to purchase fun items for children and provide refreshments.

Following tradition, the Fete Exhibition was well supported with some stunning exhibits from many participants in the categories including flowers, baking, vegetables, fruit, craft and photography. Children could enter too and proudly received encouraging feedback from our expert judges.

During the afternoon there were 2 appearances from the vintage car enthusiasts who hooted their horns loudly through Duck Street. It was a wonderful spectacle coordinated by our Am Dram fete representative.

So much goes on behind the scenes during the fete like the superb car park organising in the Field kindly loaned by John Benson, coordinated by the Am Drams. Pre fete parking and road closure signage are all created and installed ready for our fete visitors, by fete team members.

Also there are so many admin tasks like the creation of flyers and their distribution.

This year, for the first time, we appointed a committee role to oversee the media. Our rep used social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook, promoted fete news which worked well. Another fete volunteer set up a fete WhatsApp Group for those volunteers heavily involved with fete day.

The role of programme creator, taken on by a committee volunteer was outstanding, coordinating our adverts which were sold successfully by our Shop fete rep and others. The programme creator also managed the articles, content and promotion of sponsors.

Like in 2023 the fete programme included a beautiful map, hand drawn by another fete volunteer. For the first time a QR code was included so everyone could see what fete activities were going on from their phones.

As 2023 we put on a fete evening party thanks to the Eagle pub. We secured a great local band and invited the local Plough Restaurant in Grately to provide food. We organised a bucket collection at the party which raised more fete funds.

Overall, a highly memorable fete which would not have been possible without the input of so many people in our community including all residents affected by the road closure.

It's impossible to name everyone who supported us.

Of course, a huge thank you to the Elected Fete Committee Officers and the Fete Committee.

At the Fete AGM on 20th November 2024, we were able to distribute the fete profits and donations by our fantastic local community and businesses to our Abbots Ann Village Community Organisations. We distributed a fantastic amount of £10,000. Thanks also to the Parish council who provided an AAPC grant.

The fete is not just about money it also gives happiness as expressed by a villager.

"You and your team have planned, organised and pulled off the most successful village fete ever, even the inclement weather could not dampen the enthusiasm of the visitors, participants and volunteers.

Many people will have so many wonderful memories of the afternoon and evening. So the Village Fete was exactly what it should be; successfully incorporating and involving every aspect and age group of our village.

A big thank you to you and your committee, it was a brilliant day.”

So we move on to this year, fete day Saturday 6th September 2025. We have decided to hold the fete in the village centre again, using for entertainment/ exhibitions the main buildings such as the church, Eagle Inn, Community Shop and the Village Hall to showcase our village to approximately 1000 visitors.

We are pleased to announce our main fete sponsor as Bluebird Care. Bluebird Care will be helping us financially and providing volunteers at our Plant Sale on 17th May and the main fete event. Evans and Partridge Estate Agents will also be sponsoring the fete again and providing boards advertising the fete. McDougalls have also offered free flour for fete baking and our local Eagle inn have stepped up yet again to donate food for the plant sale and fete BBQ.

Entertainment is now being lined up for another hopefully successful fete. Please look out for our updates on the village website, Parish Magazine and social media platforms.

We thank the Chair of the Parish Council Andy Jordan, your committee and Parish Clerk for the continued fete support and look forward to working alongside you this year.

Thank you

Anne

Anne Cunningham Chair Abbotts Ann Fete Committee 2025



ABBOTTS ANN PARISH ASSEMBLY REPORT

| Local Support | Water Quality | Groundwater |

Annual Overview

40 members grew to 65 over the year and we expanded our water quality monitoring sites along the brook from 6 to 9. Two of these sites are within the parish of Abbots Ann; Vitacress and Mill Lane.



Chemical testing kit

23 of our members are active volunteers without whom we would not be able to carry out monthly monitoring.

Monitoring takes two forms: 1) chemical tests for phosphate, nitrate and ammonia and 2) invertebrate counts. All data indicates that the Pillhill Brook is in good condition. But....

we want to aim higher than good.



Kick sampling at Mill Lane

We have built and launched a website to keep everyone up to date on the results we are getting and what we are up to..

Local Support

The PBA wants to thank the parish council for helping to fund the chemical testing kits. We'd also like to thank local landowners Rosemary Powell Griffiths and Caroline Land for permitting access to their land for monthly water quality monitoring and other surveying activities. We also would like to thank Vitacress's at Abbots Ann for giving us access to their water quality data and the new Farm Manager Daniel Crabb for offering to help to clear large blockages in the brook with his chainsaw.

Water Quality Indicators

High rainfall over the winter has resulted in above average flow which has definitely benefited the water channel. Gravels have been scoured and unwanted sediment from the central channel removed so we really can describe much of our wonderful chalk stream as gin clear.

Redds

PBA volunteers counted 24 redds or trout nests along the brook from East Cholderton to Abbots Ann this February. A large number of these were found in the water meadow owned by Caroline and John Land. Although we didn't find any redds north of the A303 we did see a 12" trout up past Fyfield Church. So this gives us hope that next spawning season we will find redds here.

Friendly algae



Red coloured mayfly nymph

Red mayfly nymph caught in the brook. Unfortunately not a rare and endangered olive (Baetidea) but one that has been snacking on the red algae *Batrachospermum* often referred to as the frogspawn algae. This algae is highly sensitive to pollution, making it a reliable indicator of clean and unpolluted freshwater environments.

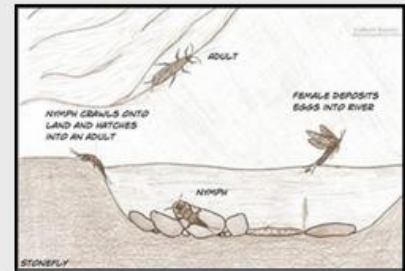


Frogspawn algae

Stoneflies

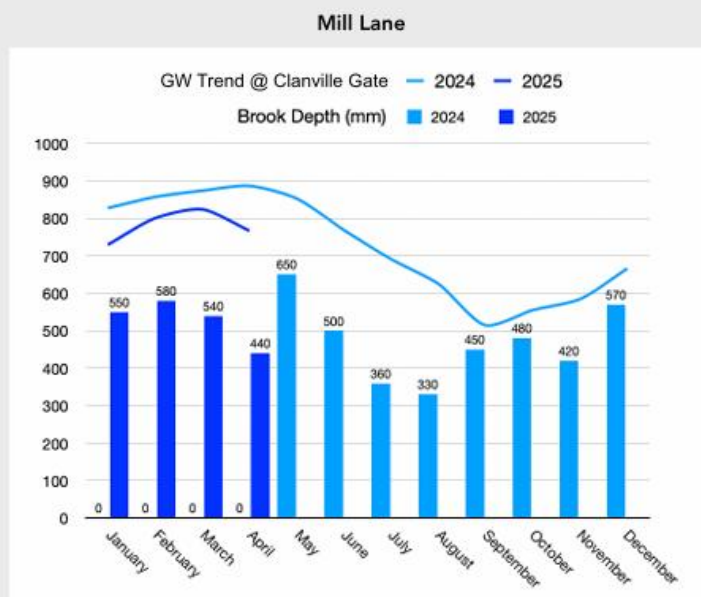


Volunteers are starting to find growing numbers of stoneflies all the way along the brook. This is good news as these creatures are highly sensitive to pollutants too.



Groundwater

The last two winters have been exceptionally wet; 657 mm in 23/24 and 474 mm in 23/24. As a result groundwater levels rose to unprecedented levels; 91.5 m in April 2024 and just under 90 m in March 2025. The PBA tracks brook depth at each monitoring site and from this month will be contrasting this with groundwater level. We know depth is related to flow and a healthy flow benefits both animal and plant life in and around the watercourse. The PBA's aim is to care for and protect the brook. To do this we want to understand the ecology of the brook during all flow conditions. It is only through regular monitoring that we will achieve this.



Tim Tayler – St Mary’s Church

Abbotts Ann PCC report for the Annual Parish Meeting 30 Apr 2025

St Mary’s forms part of the Anna Benefice along with All Saints’ Upper Clatford and St Peter’s Goodworth Clatford.

The church is managed by Abbotts Ann Parochial Church Council. The PCC manages St Mary’s and works with the two other PCCs to support our rector, Reverend Teresa, and the ministry team. Like all Christian churches we exist to serve God and love our neighbour.

We provide modern and traditional services for all ages - at St Mary’s, out of doors and online. Four nights a week our evening service on Facebook reaches up to 50 around the world.

Here, it’s heartening to see the pews so busy at major festivals and when the school holds services in church.

It is always a pleasure to lead regular assemblies at Abbotts Ann Primary School. Children there have a highly developed sense of spirituality.

Teresa goes into the Nursery School on Tuesday mornings for story time and the children now join us in church for Primary School services.

Pastoral support to the community is very important. Men’s Café meets weekly in the village shop to put the world to rights while Little Steps, our monthly toddlers’ group at All Saints’, is going from strength to strength.

On request, we visit those who are finding life difficult or just fancy a chat. We serve the whole village in that respect, not just churchgoers. Some of the people we help never come to our services.

Our building is in fairly good shape. We’re extremely grateful to Abbotts Ann Parish Council who have kept the churchyard tidy, funded the clock maintenance and liaised very efficiently over burials in the parish burial ground. The excellent St Mary’s Church Building Trust supports our repair work and we appreciate the War Memorial Hall Committee for providing such a good venue for our Messy Church services.

We are developing a scheme to make the nave more accessible, welcoming and user-friendly. But we’re not going to compromise the church’s Georgian features.

We also aim to provide a loo. We thought we’d raised half the money. However costs have risen so we need to do some more fund raising before we can start applying for grants. The options we’re looking at include a self-contained WC outside the bell tower stairs.

At the village fete we ran the cake stall, we hosted the flower show in the church (which attracted over 300 visitors) and sold programmes. We’re very grateful for the fete committee’s generous grant towards our recorded music capability.

We’re fortunate to enjoy the support of our bell ringers, the handbell group and the choir.

Financially, whilst income is down, and expenses are up, we are just about holding our own.

Finally, I must mention our volunteer helpers. Many are not even church goers. But they undertake tasks week in, week out. We could not keep St Mary’s running without them. So thank you very much, all of you.

Helen – Village Hall Committee

Report prepared for AAPC AGM (30.4.25)

“In 2029, our 100 year old Village Hall will meet or exceed all modern building and energy efficiency standards, and provide a vibrant hub for the local community”

The Village Hall is a key asset for the community, playing an important role in community events such as the Village Fete. It hosts the Abbotts Ann Nursery School and the Abbotts Ann Players, as well as being used regularly by village organisations such as the WI and the Church, and is a popular venue for family celebrations and for local businesses.

The Hall is managed by a Committee, which currently comprises four Trustees and five Volunteers, with representation from 3 regular users and a volunteer Building Manager. We employ a part-time caretaker. We are always looking for new members of the Committee.

Financial Year 2023/2024

The following are the headline figures at the end of the last financial year (30.9.24):

Total Operating Revenue	£17,834	
Of which Hall Hire	£15,719	
Total Operating Expenses	£16,900	
Operating Profit	£934	
Donations and Grants	£6,154	
Capital Expenditure	£10,724	

Our income comes from Hall hire, 100 Club Lottery, donations and grants.

Hire prices were last increased in July 2023, and, following completion of substantial improvements, these will be reviewed shortly. Utilities account for our highest costs.

Key Improvements (FY 23/24 and to date)

There has been renewed energy to move forward with improvements, both to the building, but also in the management and systems for the Hall. The successful fundraising exercise in 2023 to replace the flat roof kick-started this more proactive approach, followed initially by a period of catch-up with outstanding maintenance and repair work. With increasing utility costs, there is an emphasis initially to reduce costs where possible and improve energy efficiency. With this in mind, we have carried out the following work, amongst other:

- Replacement of the windows at the rear of the building with double glazed units (Fete Grant)
- Redecoration and new carpeting for the Jubilee Meeting Room (Reserves and REPF Grant)
- Replacement of most of the lighting with LED bulbs (Reserves)
- Replacement of tables and chairs (Reserves and donation)
- Installation of an easy-to-use Bluetooth sound system (Donation)
- Installation of a remote system to manage heating on an as-needed basis (Reserves)
- Refurbishment and replacement of guttering and downpipes to the front of the building (REPF Grant)
- Refurbishment of the lobby and toilet off the Jubilee Room (Reserves, donation and REPF Grant)
- Replacement of the fire door opening off the rear lobby (Fete Grant)
- Replacement of front and rear stage windows (REPF Grant)
- Cavity wall insulation (REPF Grant)
- Replacement of stage window coverings with electric black-out blinds (Reserves)
- Our booking system is now synchronised with an automatic payment system
- We use the village events booking system and village email distribution system

For the current financial year to date, the Fete Committee and the Rural England Prosperity Fund (which resulted in £26,000 worth of work with a 75% grant of £19,945) have awarded grants. We have also obtained a substantial refund from our electricity provider for invoice errors. An application has been made to the Centrica 'Energy for Tomorrow' Grant fund, and further capital improvements will be included in a Community Asset Fund Grant application in June 2025.

Increasing Use of the Hall

- Events : The Hall Committee has provided more events for the community and more are planned :

- Halloween Ball for children (to be repeated)
- An Introduction to Line Dancing (to be repeated)
- 2 x IT Workshops (with more planned)
- 2 x CPR/Defibrillator Workshops (with 1 more planned)
- We now advertise regularly – in the Parish Magazine and the Test Valley edition of The Forum. This is beginning to result in more enquiries and bookings, including from businesses.
- We now have an extensive website and Facebook Page for promotion.

Report prepared for AAPC AGM 30 April 2025

By Helen Clark, Trustee, Abbots Ann War Memorial Hall

Ray Lucas – Abbots Ann Action

Abbots Ann Action (AAA)

Statement

Synopsis for the Parish Assembly 30th April 2025 of the role of AAA in relation to development.

Abbots Ann Action was formed in 1998 as a response to the threat of a development of 2000 or more houses in Little Park following the sale of large parts of it to a property Company. The buyer, Ilchester Estates were under a contractual obligation to pursue planning permission for major development. We have been instrumental over the years since in getting Little Park designated as “Countryside” in successive versions of the Test Valley Borough Local Plan and also in getting the Little Park area designated as a Local Gap, which is a designation intended to shape the pattern of development and preserve the separate identity of Abbots Ann by preventing coalescence with Andover.

Abbots Ann Action is now a group of 4 who have operated by providing support to the Parish Council; by following developments in planning policy that affect Abbots Ann, recommending responses and where appropriate encouraging residents to comment.

The government has set a target of building 1.5 million houses by the next election and all local planning authorities have been issued with individual targets. Test Valley’s target represents an increase of 78% over the current draft Local Plan figure. The planners at Test Valley are working on an amended Local Plan to accommodate the increase and will be consulting the public on this later this year. We will work with the Parish Council to analyse the effects on Abbots Ann and consider an appropriate response.

The planners say that these changes and others will make it impossible, for Test valley to meet it’s legal obligation to plan for a 5 year land supply. This will make it vulnerable to pre-emptive planning applications by developers such as the current application at Barrow Hill, Goodworth, Clatford for 40 houses which the planners are recommending be approved despite local opposition and non-compliance with the Local Plan.

We can expect to see a large scale application in Abbots Ann before long.

Another possible risk is removal of the designated Local Gap between Abbots Ann and Andover.

We are approaching a period in which a more active response to development threat is likely to be necessary and for which we will need a wider range of campaigning skills than the current Abbots Ann Action team possesses. Please come forward if you would like to help and make your friends and neighbours aware.

Ray Lucas
Chairman

Abbots Ann Action

1. Luke Rose Architect

A pre-planning application has been issued and a response received from TVBC.

2. The response was positive but requested a considerable amount of information for a full planning application; for example, community survey, viability of proposed sporting activities, reduction in height and

glazing of the design, details of materials to be used, security measures, light and noise spill, impact on ecology and trees, biodiversity net gain assessment, flood risk assessment, car park management. Responding to these concerns is relatively simple although laborious and there is currently a number of sub-consultant fee proposals issued to the Parish Council for approval to respond to these concerns.

3. Sport England also commented on the application although the response was compromised by the misunderstanding that the proposal included an artificial pitch. Concern was raised that if we are providing sporting activities then there has to be a commensurate provision of facilities; for example; the provision of a football pitch needs to be supported by 2no changing rooms, self contained wc's, dry-off area, spectator WC's, match officials changing rooms/showers/wc's, external hatch to the Kitchen for outside service.
4. The risk in planning terms is that if we are proposing formal sporting activities then this has to be seen to be supported by adequate facilities; the sustainability argument.
5. Having amended the design and secured sub-consultant quotes to respond to the pre-planning concerns, I was instructed that a meeting with Cllr. Jordan and Cllr. Howard to:
 - a. Omit Bowls green and include for play area in place.
 - b. Omit football pitch
 - c. Change description to Community Pavillion
 - d. Call the site a Playing Field/Community Open Space
6. The planning application is pending instruction and completion of sub-consultant information

John Barlow – Abbots Ann Community Land Trust

The board of Abbots Ann Community Land Trust are acutely aware that after 7/8 years of work on the proposed Housing Project there is nothing tangible to see in terms of buildings as yet.

This is not for want of effort on our part. Some years ago our Architects conducted a detailed survey of the village in terms of layout, type of buildings, design, materials etc which led to the design of a development which has been the subject of 2 village consultations with modifications made to respond to comments from the community. The consultation led to overwhelming support from the village community who responded to the consultation.

You will remember that we are seeking to create a development of 24 dwellings, of varying sizes, 12 for sale on the open market and 12 to be made available through a Housing Association to provide "affordable" homes to people with a link or association with the village.

Terms were agreed between the initial developer and the land owner for acquisition but, unfortunately this did not proceed. A second developer came very close to agreeing terms but an agreement could not be concluded.

We have also had to cope with the Covid pandemic which has resulted in building costs rising significantly.

Now we are working closely with the land agent for the land owner, and their advisers, as a result of which we have agreed the terms of an invitation to tender being sent to over a dozen potential developers. In this document we have indicated the preferences that the village consultations have revealed.

We know that certainly half of them are working on a tender which will include their offer price for the site together with their proposals for what could be built in terms of layout, size, materials, quality etc. The proposals are due to be with us during the second week in May.

The CLT will play a full part in the selection of the developer. As matters develop the proposed scheme will be submitted to the village and a full consultation will take place, before any application for planning permission will be submitted. I should also add that we report to the Parish Council each month on the current situation.

Some in the village may have thought that the scheme was dead and buried. That is definitely not the case.

AACL T will be playing a full part at all stages to seek to ensure that the proposals are ones which the community supports and that there will be tangible benefits available to the village flowing from this development.

We need these dwellings, the board is determined to pursue the project which will be for the benefit of us all.

I hope to be able to report some good progress as stated above before too long.

I am happy to take questions.

John Barlow

Joint Chair of AACLT.

Councillor Jordan reiterated to those present that the AACLT has the full support of the Parish Council.

Judeth Dashwood – Abbots Ann Village Shop

Good Evening,

My name is Judeth Dashwood, and I am the Manager of Abbots Ann Village Shop.

The shop was established in 2002 - owned by the Community - run by the community and loved by the community. It is at the heart of our village!

Apart from myself and the assistant manager Beverley Banks, the rest of the staff are volunteers, nearly 40 of them and we are always looking for more! Please do consider joining us!

The shop is well looked after and compliant with all the necessary regulations, offering a wide range of convenience and household goods plus delicious local produce. There are barista made coffees, lattes, cappuccinos, teas and cake: either to take away or sit at our tables in a very charming and pleasant environment.

The shop, over the years, has grown from strength to strength and we plan to continue doing so. This year is, like all businesses, particularly small businesses, proving to be challenging given unprecedented price and energy rises.

Please do use your village shop – or – lose it!

Thank you for giving me your attention.

Dee Howarth - Handbells and Church bell Ringer.

Thursday evening practice and Sunday, average age of 75 so we need youngsters.

The handbells group are a bit younger, 9 of the members come from Abbots Ann and 2 from Andover.

Anyone is welcome to join.

6. General Q & A with the Parish Council

No questions were asked.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 21:15.