



Edmund de Langley  
&  
Isabella de Castilla

# KINGS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL 2018/19

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome.

Firstly, let me introduce my fellow Councillors:

Alan Anderson

Alan Represents North Ward, is a member of the Planning and Licensing Committee and the Personnel Committee, is the Council's Finance portfolio-holder, and a Dacorum Borough Council Councillor for the Kings Langley Ward. Alan also represents the Council on the Kings Langley Local History & Museum Society.

Gerry Angiolini

Gerry represents Central Ward, is Vice-Chair of the Council and the Personnel Committee, Chair of the Planning and Licensing Committee, and works tirelessly on many aspects of the Council's activities, including the Christmas Lights event, the Best Kept Gardens' Competition and helping with the village carnival\*.

Derek Collins

Derek represents Central Ward and is a member of the Council's Vision Group (Business) and a stout campaigner for road safety. Derek also represents the Council on the Community Centre Association.

Rene De Silva

Rene represents South Ward, is Vice-Chair of the of the Planning and Licensing Committee and represents the Council on the Kings Langley Local History & Museum Society.

Sandra Jackson

Sandra represents South Ward. She is a strong campaigner for environmental protection, particularly our grass verges and is a member of the Council's Vision Group for Environment, and Communications with particular responsibility for Social Media and representing the Council on Village News. Sandra has just resigned from her position as a senior co-ordinator for the Dacorum Neighbourhood Watch (but will remain a local representative). Sadly, Sandra is also retiring as a Parish Councillor and I would like to thank her personally for her tremendous all-round contribution over the last 3½ years.

Alan Johnson

Alan represents South Ward and is a member of the Planning and Licensing Committee and the Council's Vision Group (Leisure) and has also taken a very special interest in green / environmental matters. Alan is a school governor, organises the Kings Langley "Puffaten"\* , litter picks and has special responsibility for the village garden (and much of the work) and the Council's allotments. He is also very active in the scout movement, helps Gerry with the gardens' competition and is also a Trustee of the Kings Langley Charities.



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## Bob McLean

Bob represents North Ward, is a member of the Planning and Licensing Committee, the Personnel Committee, and helps with the village carnival\*. Bob is also a Dacorum Borough Council Councillor for the Kings Langley Ward and a Trustee of the Waterside Centre. Bob will not be standing as a Borough Councillor in the forthcoming elections.

## John Morrish

John is a member of the Council's Vision Group (Environment). John has been the driving force behind the recent Parish survey. He represents the Council on the Parish Paths Partnership – being responsible for producing the new village map, organises the High Street market\* and is a leading member of Transition in Kings (TIK)\*. John has also been working to improve the canal towpath.

## Mark Rogers

Mark is a member of the Planning and Licensing Committee and the Council's Vision Group (Business) - working hard to set-up a local High Street business group. Mark also represents the Council on the Community Centre Association.

And, finally, me, Howard Button, Chair of the Council and the Personnel Committee, a member of the Planning and Licensing Committee and Vision Group (Transport / Highways). In between campaigning for improvements to the paths and roads and protecting the grass verges, I lend a hand with everything, including the village carnival\*.

My thanks to all our Councillors for their support and dedication, working on your behalf, and for their support of me in the role as Chairman.

\* Not a Council run activity or event

I would also like to say a thank you to the Parish Council's staff for their exceptional efforts throughout the past year:

- Paul Dunham - Clerk to the Council
- Beverley Ross - Administrative Assistant
- Paul Savin - Village Warden

I would like to welcome our new Warden. I'm sure you would all agree that he is doing a tremendous job.

## **SPEAKERS & GUESTS:**

I would like to take the opportunity to introduce our speakers and guests:

- Mr Gary Lewis, Mr David Fisher & Mrs Frances Stickley (Kings Langley School)
- PCSO Ian Martin

Unfortunately, County Councillor Richard Roberts is unable to attend this evening.



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## **COMMUNITY SAFETY:**

Once again, we would like to thank our Community Police team who continue to work in keeping Kings Langley safe. We are very fortunate to live in a village where crime is very low. That is not to say we are entirely crime free; we do suffer minor crime like burglary, car break-ins etc. but these average around 12 or 13 a month in total.

Our PCSO Ian Martin reports on these at your monthly Parish Council meetings and any trends in any particular area are addressed and where possible enhanced activity, such as more regular patrolling, initiated.

We also have a high coverage of Neighbourhood Watch which is a distinct advantage and we should thank PCSO Martin and Cllr Sandra Jackson for this. Regular 'OWL' reports via email alert your Councillors to any activity that warrants attention.

You should find some crime statistics with the agenda pack.

## **CONTACT WITH THE COUNCIL:**

Anyone wishing to contact the Council can telephone or visit the Council premises at Charter Court, Vicarage Lane. Opening hours are 9.30am to 12.30pm, Monday to Friday.

The office telephone number is 01923 261828. The Council can also be contacted by email: [klpc@kingslangley-pc.gov.uk](mailto:klpc@kingslangley-pc.gov.uk).

The Council also has a website: [www.kingslangley-pc.gov.uk](http://www.kingslangley-pc.gov.uk) on which you will find a range of information including the Council's agendas and minutes, and there is a Facebook page.

The Council meets on the first Tuesday of each month, whilst the Planning & Licensing Committee normally meets before Council meetings and on the third Tuesday of the month. These meetings are open to all and we would welcome more members of the public attending. A list showing the dates of these meetings and Council surgeries is available.

A list showing Councillors' contact details is displayed on the notice boards throughout the village and is also available from the Council office and website. This list also shows the contact details for the two Dacorum Borough Councillors for the Kings Langley Borough Ward and for the County Councillor for the Kings Langley County Division.

## **Portfolio Holders / Vision Groups:**

The Council continues to operate its "portfolios" so that each Councillor is responsible for an area of activity such as highways, environmental, and social and business issues etc., or a geographical area of the village, so that there can be a clearer focus on problems allowing a single Councillor to "own" and tackle them and report back on progress to the full Council, helping to reduce the duplication of discussion at council meetings.

Various aspects of the Council's "Vision" initiative continue to be progressed, resulting in the setting up of a business focus group, better communications via Social Media, production of a new village map and the resurrection of a village newspaper.

Work continues on overhauling the village garden, extending the improved canal tow path and exploring possible routes for cycle ways through the village, a human sun dial, and trying to find ways to deter vehicle damage to grass verges.



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## **WW1 Remembered:**

During the centenary commemorations, Beverley, the Council's Administrative Assistant, has been producing an information sheet for each soldier on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death and the bells at All Saints church were tolled in his memory.

Much of this work culminated in what was the final ceremony to commemorate the centenary the War which took place, on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018. There was a service in All Saints' church, which was very well attended, followed by a ceremony at the war memorial and the planting of a commemorative tree in the village garden, in memory of all those who made sacrifices relating to the First World War. The plaque was unveiled by Sarah Fisher, whose family gave the garden to the village. (Dr Reginald Fisher was injured, and his brother Captain Mortimer Fisher died in the war.) An excellent "Order of Service" was produced by Beverley and Denis Miles of the History Society with biopics of all the WW1 soldiers on the war memorial. There was also an exhibition in the church.

## **Best Kept Gardens Competition:**

Another highlight of the Council year. The standard was as good as ever, despite the long hot period and was celebrated at the presentation evening held in October.

A very special thanks to Flowerhouse (Tina and Maggie) who supported the presentation evening with some wonderful excellent flower arrangement and for, most generously, donating the arrangements for the charity auction which took place later in the evening, raising £355.

Thank you to those of you who attended the presentation evening, particularly for being so generous in supporting both the raffle and the auction of items, and to the individuals and organisations in the village for their generous donations. A total of £795 was raised for Christian Aid in Kings Langley in its centenary year.

## **Christmas Lights Festival:**

The Christmas Lights Festival continues to be a major and popular item on the parish calendar and I would like to thank the entire community for its support. This year Father Christmas and his "various" little helpers paraded along the High Street to his grotto led by the Hemel Hempstead Training Band.

The Council continues to work in close partnership with Community Action Dacorum (Dacorum Council for Voluntary Service) in organising the event, and I would also like to thank everyone for their help, including other members of the organising committee who got stuck in on the day, and, of course, a massive thanks to the incredibly generous sponsors, which also makes it possible to make grants to the many volunteer and performing groups (or their chosen charity) and helpers.

## **Carnival:**

Once again, another good year for the carnival and good weather, and all very well organised by the Kings Langley Carnival Committee under the chairmanship of Carol Lingwood. Although this event is not directly the responsibility of the Council, it has supported it for several years as it is a major community event, and as such nominated Councillors are members of the committee alongside residents of the village.



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The money raised at the event enabled substantial donations to be made to various village charities and groups.

## **Planning and Development:**

The Parish Council Planning Committee will continue to carefully monitor planning applications, especially to ensure that the Green Belt is maintained, and that the village of Kings Langley is not subsumed into the Hemel Hempstead, or indeed, Watford conurbations. The Council will always consider the concerns of its residents and support appropriate objections. Alas, sometimes the planning process and policies do not provide the same support, and applications are allowed despite everyone's efforts and objections.

The main focus of the Council's activity in this area has been in its campaign alongside the Kings Langley and District Residents' Association and other bodies to defend the Green Belt in Kings Langley vis-a-vis Dacorum Borough Council's Draft Local Plan, which identified areas of land for potential housebuilding. The updated version of the plan is still awaited. This hasn't been helped by the Government changing targets on several occasions.

## **Consultations / Lobbying / Highways:**

The Council is consulted on a variety of issue that may affect the village and does its utmost to represent residents appropriately.

It also lobbies organisations on behalf of residents, in particular the County Council on highways and road safety issues and Dacorum Borough Council on planning and development matters. The Council continues to press for:

- Safety improvements in the High Street and beyond, particularly in the Vicarage Lane area and the "pinch-point" problem in lower High Street
- The introduction of parking restrictions in the laybys by the football club so that they are not taken up by long term lorry / trailer parking
- A resolution to deal with the pinch-point in lower High Street and the various traffic and safety issues associated with Vicarage Lane
- And improved maintenance of the village's roads, pavements and general highways environment.

The Council regularly lobbies your County Councillor to seek improved measures for safer roads but is usually pushed back by statistics.

## **Parish Plan Survey:**

During December and January residents were asked to say how they would like Kings Langley to be in the future. Well over 1000 responses were received both on-line and on paper. Cllr Morrish will be providing a brief update at today's meeting.

## **Annual Grants to Local Organisations:**

In addition to donations relating to the Christmas Lights Event, the Council continued its support to local organisations in the financial year 2018/19, making grants to:

- The Puffaten
- Kings Langley Bowls Club



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- Kings Langley Carnival
- Kings Langley Arts and Crafts Society
- Kings Langley Charities
- The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal
- The Hospice of St Francis (in respect of former Councillor Douglas Walker)

## Village Environment:

### Damage to Verges:

Sadly, this is a continuing and, seemingly, worsening problem throughout the village with particular 'hotspots' outside schools, outside the football ground and in many cases directly outside private houses where the damage is clearly being done by householder's vehicles. We thank the Football Club for its efforts to control parking, but, unfortunately there are still those who don't really care.

As the 'portfolio' holder covering this issue I would ask that all householders take responsibility for the area directly in front of their property, too. Please help us in trying to protect our environment.

### Fly-Tipping:

This seems to be getting worse, especially in Barns Lane and Rucklers Lane. Our Warden makes regular trips around the area, taking photos and these are reported by the office to Dacorum Borough Council. You can report it too on 01442228000 or <http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/environment-street-care/clean-safe-green/flytipping>

### Volunteer Litter Picks:

Litter remains an issue in the village despite the efforts of our Warden and the team from the Borough.

A new schedule of litter pick days has been issued and we would encourage residents to join us in this continuous task of maintaining the cleanliness of the village environment. You will find the schedule on notice boards and on the website and advertised on Facebook.

### The Village Garden and flower beds:

The Council continues to maintain the village garden, the flowerbeds at the entrance to Great Park, and those under the village entrance signs, and the High Street planters. The village garden is undergoing a major overhaul under the auspices of Cllr Alan Johnson. Several unwanted trees have been removed and others cropped and much of the ivy has been removed. Several hundred shrubs have or will soon be planted. We are also in the process of assessing the safety, suitability and management of some of the major trees in the village garden and the allotments (off Sunderland's Yard).

### Dog Litter Bags:

The Council continues to provide these free of charge for those who live or walk their dogs in the village and would like to encourage more dog owners to make use of the bags, **but please, please also to deposit them in the appropriate bin.** It is encouraging that the number of dog litter bags being issued is increasing.



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## **Car Parking:**

It appears that the final piece to deal with inconsiderate parking in the Rockcliffe Avenue area, in particular blocking Avenue Approach causing safety / access issue, will shortly be resolved.

Issues with overstaying in the High Street persist despite many representations to Dacorum Borough Council to increase / improve Parking Attendants' patrols.

## **Budget 2019/20:**

The Parish Council has not increased its precept for 2019/20.

## **The Focus for 2019/20 and Beyond:**

The Council will progress the continuing issues that are raised at Council or Parish Surgeries, "Vision" group initiatives and assist the various Portfolio Holders to implement agreed solutions, which are:

- Road Safety / Speeding
- Parking
- Litter and graffiti
- Leisure activities for all Groups across the village
- Improved communication via Social Media and Newsletter
- Focus on improving / maintaining verges
- Lobbying for improvements to the highways
- Extending the canal tow path
- Cycleways
- Defending the "Green Belt" from development
- The Parish Plan

The Council will continue to press for action and improvements in these areas, working with the relevant bodies.

Your Parish Councillors are unpaid and give up their time and effort on your behalf, because they care about the village and the residents' issues. Much of what we do, we know, is appreciated by you, but without your support none of us would be here, and we aim to continue to support and further the needs of the village wherever possible.

**Thank-you.**

**Howard Button  
Chair, Kings Langley Parish Council.**