

MARKYATE PARISH COUNCIL



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Clerk to the Council: Mrs V Tilley

Chair's Report 2026

Welcome to the 2026 Annual Gathering of the Parish Council, I hope you are all well.

The Parish Council have adopted the red phone box outside The Nook, and it is now in use as a book exchange, we are applying for permission to install 'book exchange' signs to replace the current 'telephone' signs and to add historic photos of the High Street in the windows.

The new Cemetery has now been open for over a year and it has been a learning curve, but after some teething problems is now running smoothly. Our thanks to Gordon Mead for his continued practical help and assistance.

The council has continued the program of tree works in Peggy's Field to ensure the village green is as safe as possible for all users and our neighbours, but without causing damage to the trees which could make them unstable.

Both our internal audit in May and external audit in June for financial year 2024/25 were passed without incident, apart from one advisory note which had already been rectified. During these audits all documents and accounts are examined thoroughly and are publicly available for viewing, with notices on the notice boards and our website.

We are continuing with our refurbishments of the Village Hall and Y2K Hall ensuring these continue to meet all health and safety requirements, with decorating also completed in the Main Hall. We now have the king's coronation memorial benches installed near the play area too, and a bike rack to help encourage sustainable travel.

My thanks to Cllr Richard Peterson, Chair to the Halls and Budget & Finance Committees for all his hard work on this and many other jobs in

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the village. Richard also sits on two other committees, Markyate Cemetery, and Planning and the Aley Green Joint Cemetery Committee.

My thanks to former Cllr Sheila Pilkinton, previously our Chair to the Budget & Finance Committee. As many will know, Sheila and her husband Dick were very active in the village, especially with the History Society and May Fayre. They have now moved away to the Kettering area. We thank them for everything they have done, especially Sheila's 45 years + service to the parish council, her knowledge will be greatly missed.

My thanks to Cllr Bert Chapman who continues as the Chair of Markyate Cemetery Committee and still offers his advice and contacts at Dacorum where needed. Bert also sits on the Planning and Aley Green Joint Cemetery Committees.

Cllr Selma Hakki has been looking after the parish council's social media and bringing forward the comments of residents to the council for which we are very grateful. She sits on the Halls and Planning Committees.

Cllr Celestine Ononye always offers practical help where needed and brings a business perspective to the council. He sits on the Staffing and Planning Committees.

Cllr Matt McCann chairs the Staffing Committee bringing his personal experience of working for another council. He sits on the Budget & Finance and Planning Committees; he also liaises with the village school. Matt completed the training for road closures, allowing the Remembrance Day Parade to continue to march along the High Street.

Cllr Helen Renvoize sits on the Staffing and Planning Committees bringing her experience as a local business owner and is a valuable in-person link to residents.

Councillor Madeline Collins has just completed her first year on the council and sits on the Planning Committee. Her fresh perspective has been appreciated this year.

Cllr Keith Johnson unfortunately needed to step away from the parish council while dealing with family illnesses, we hope he will feel able to return to the council in the future.

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Borough Councillor Jane Timmis continues to do good work on our behalf chasing up enquiries with the various departments and keeping us updated with news from Dacorum Borough Council.

Our thanks also to our new County Cllr Caroline Smith-Wright who is looking into barriers outside the new shop and looking after the Highways aspects. Both Caroline and Jane attend our meetings when they don't clash with their other council commitments.

We also have some non-councillor members of Committees who make important contributions. Our thanks to Gordon Mead, Evelyn King and Rev Jo Burke.

My thanks go to Vicki and Alannah for all their hard work in the office, supported by Debbie, and to the village warden Wayne, for all his hard work in ensuring everything works as it should, as well as Jane our halls cleaner and Aidan, our weekend caretaker who has also completed his first year with us this month.

I close by wishing you a happy and safe summer and thank you for joining us this evening.

Cllr Bunyan
Chair