

MADINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL --- Two Councillor vacancies

Following the resignation of our chairman Stuart Hawkins, we currently have only three Councillors. The Parish should have five Councillors, with a minimum of three required for a meeting to be 'quorate'. We thank Stuart for his work in the past, and would now like to encourage two more people from the Parish to join the Council and help us with decision-making for the benefit of the whole village.

Because we have to vote on important issues it's essential to have enough people on the Council to represent a wider range of views and it will be difficult for the Council to continue to provide services for the community if these places are not filled. In particular, all expenditure has to be agreed at a quorate meeting of the Council.

The Parish Council provides a voice to represent the village in our local democracy. We regularly liaise with district Councillors on matters affecting the village and the wider locality, such as the impact of the A14 road improvement works, the Guided Bus project and the 'Oxford/Cambridge rail link.

Each year a percentage of the Council Tax we all pay comes to the Parish Council and we decide how it should best be spent. Part of this 'precept' goes on maintenance and running costs, for example on the provision of street lighting for the village and grass cutting for the playground and village hall. Some is used to support our village hall and to pay for the parish magazine, with remaining funds spent on issues the Council thinks will benefit the village as a whole. Examples of specific expenditure in the last few years are new playground equipment, and a speedwatch kit to help monitor rush-hour traffic. We can source additional funding to help with infrastructure projects, for example traffic calming measures. Last year the Council was successful in securing County Council financial support through the Local Highways Initiative programme to install a 40 mph buffer zone at the top end of Church Lane; and after the Avenue was closed by Highways England, the Council funded a traffic survey to assess the effect of the closure on rush-hour traffic.

As a strong Council we can make more of a difference. We want to keep our voice as a village, rather than face the prospect of having to join forces with Coton or Girton or Bar Hill if our numbers shrink further.

What's involved in becoming a Parish Councillor?

Councillors have a responsibility to:

- attend Council meetings (unless there are extenuating circumstances). These are every six weeks (there are no meetings in August)
- consider the agenda and any related documents in advance of the meeting
- participate in the Council's discussions, considering all the relevant facts, including the views of others expressed at the meeting
- if issues come to a vote, respect decisions made by the majority of Council members
- ensure, with other Councillors, that the Council is properly managed
- represent the whole electorate, not just the views of a minority

If you think you might be interested in becoming a Councillor, or if you are unsure but would like to know more, please contact the Parish Clerk, Sarah Meech madingleyparishclerk@btinternet.com or any of the existing parish Councillors: David Ousby (david.ousby@gmail.com), Joan Hinde (jgs11@cam.ac.uk) and Fiona Naughton