



Nash Mills Parish Council Annual Reports

April 2021



NASH MILLS
PARISH COUNCIL

Welcome to the Nash Mills Parish Council Annual reports.

Due to Coronavirus restrictions, we have provided all reports in advance of the short formal meeting that is taking place on the 12th April 2021.

Please contact me by email clerk@nashmillsparishcouncil.gov.uk should you require any clarification of any matters contained in the reports.

We are hoping to hold a longer, community forum later in the year, should it be deemed safe to do so once restrictions have been lifted.

Details will be posted on to our website and we look forward to welcoming you.

Kind regards

Nikki

Nikki Bugden
Clerk to Nash Mills Parish Council
Responsible Financial Officer
07493 519458



NASH MILLS
PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's Annual Report 2021

It has been a challenging year for many of us in Nash Mills whilst navigating the Covid-19 pandemic. For some, their lives have changed for the better; for others it has brought heartache and pain. I have said this in my last few "letters from the Chair" in our magazine that we must remember we are all fighting our own battles and to be kind with each other. Respect each other's views even if we do not understand them; I hope as a parish through the Facebook page and magazine we have brought some light to you all in these unprecedented times.

The council were quick to adapt to a new way of working and indeed the 'virtual meeting' has become a regular part of many of our working lives. This technology has enabled us to continue to conduct business and to engage with our community at monthly meetings. Our public attendance has been good, and it has been lovely to see that the remote technology has enabled some new faces to join us rather than have to venture out to the village hall, particularly on those dark winter evenings.

It has been a busy year In Nash Mills, our councillors have been actively researching projects and working their way through the priorities that we set at the start of our term. The reports in this annual report pack give more detail of the variety of matters that council have considered and progressed, or are indeed still researching.

We are now half way through our four-year term and I am delighted to see that we are making huge inroads to safety measures for our residents, with our defibrillator site having been chosen, two new speed indicator devices being bought, and a new, additional CCTV camera being approved at The Denes; all of these works funded by NMPC.

Our working groups, supported by the clerk, have delivered Christmas lights at The Denes, verge hardening schemes throughout the parish are in progress and inspections with repairs at the play park in Bunkers Lane have been undertaken. Our parish magazine team and social media team have worked tirelessly to keep everyone informed throughout the pandemic and NMPC has been able to support our local businesses by offering free advertising in the magazine.

As the chairman of the parish council, I am supported by a fabulous team of councillors, our amazing clerk who keeps the parish boat steady and is the backbone of the parish council and our brilliant warden on the front line keeping our parish clean, safe, and beautiful.

Nikki works hard to ensure that the projects that council approve are investigated, relevant permissions sought and ultimately the project is delivered in line with our financial regulations. Nikki is also responsible for ensuring that all of our actions are taken appropriately in line with the laws and duties of a parish council, that our finances are in order and that everything is correctly administered with all due consideration to risks and statutory obligations. Dave, our recognised 'face on the street', works incredibly hard supporting our residents whatever the conditions. Dave liaises with the Herts County Council and Dacorum Borough Council teams, whilst providing invaluable support to Nikki in her role.

I am proud of what we have all achieved this past year under such difficult circumstances and I look forward to continuing our work, hopefully under easier circumstances, in the coming year.

There is no "I" in TEAM and collectively we all make up the jigsaw puzzle, bringing our own strengths that form a parish council where we all strive to do our best to help and assist our parishioners.

Thank you all for your amazing work, loyalty & dedication.

Cllr Lisa Bayley Chairman



Personnel Committee Report Nash Mills Parish Council Annual Meeting 2021

The year has been a challenging one for everyone, with all of it spent under Covid-19 lockdown or other restrictions. Whilst the personnel committee has not met during the year, a number of personnel matters needed to be resolved in response to Covid-19 and other statutory policies and procedures had to be carried out.

The chair of personnel, chairman of the council and the clerk met on a number of occasions at various stages of Covid restrictions to consider the appropriateness of our warden continuing to carry out his work. Dave was requested to remain at home during the first lockdown in the spring, in line with lockdown restrictions and for his personal safety. An updated risk assessment was produced; Dave has been able to work since the summer and has adjusted his start time and 'routes' to remain as safe as possible. We are grateful to Dave for his continued efforts around the parish, which we know our residents appreciate, and we continue to ensure he is trained and equipped appropriately.

In September 2020 we processed increased salaries for the clerk and warden in line with the 20/21 NALC scales. As these were statutory increments, they did not require approval from the committee, but were noted at full council.

In October we were delighted to congratulate Nikki, our clerk and RFO, on completing her CiLCA course and passing in such an exemplary manner. This was a great achievement when set against the backdrop of her usual amount of work, and all the extra effort required as a result of Covid-19. In line with her contract of employment, Nikki was moved up one point on the pay scale. We continue to support and fund Nikki's ongoing professional development.

In line with the NMPC appraisal scheme, the chair of personnel recently conducted the annual appraisal of the clerk, and an appropriate report will be made to council.

On behalf of the personnel committee, I would like to record our thanks to both Nikki and Dave for their efforts throughout the challenges of the past year.

Councillor Steve Roberts
Chair of Personnel Committee



Finance Annual Report April 2021

Nash Mills Parish Council has remained 'open for business' during what has been a very challenging year for us all.

Our finances started the year in a very healthy position and council was tasked with looking at the substantial reserves that were on deposit and earmarking them for projects that will have a positive impact on our parish. We were also fortunate that we obtained funding commitments from both Herts County Council and Dacorum Borough Council to enable phase one of our verges project to be instructed.

This year NMPC has spent approximately £72,000 on all expenditure and a quarter of this was a donation to Nash Mills Village Hall to enable the Trustees to undertake much needed works to resurface the car park.

The parish council's community support was further extended by funding free advertising for local businesses in our parish magazine for the duration of the pandemic. This has resulted in many new businesses being given the opportunity to raise their profile and increase revenues.

In this difficult year we were able to bring some Christmas cheer to The Denes with funding for the Christmas lights installation.

Our staff have supported councillors and residents throughout the pandemic and parish funding has enabled our clerk to obtain her professional qualifications to ensure that the council remains compliant with statutory processes and the safeguarding of public funds. Our park has been professionally inspected and repaired and we have undertaken the necessary risk assessment of trees in the play park, with the resulting works kindly being funded by our landlord Abbots Hill School. We also received our bill from Dacorum Borough Council for the 2019 parish elections.

Following reports from residents about concerns with speeding and road safety, the parish council has funded two new speed indicator devices at a cost of £10,200 (one on Georgewood Road and one on Bunkers Lane) by using the community infrastructure levy funds that are awarded from Dacorum Borough Council, and we have committed parish funding for next year to improve safety at the Denes by installing a new, second CCTV camera (£18,000).

Council has decided on a new home for our defibrillator that was purchased some time ago and we are eagerly awaiting its installation at The Denes shops.

I am proud to say that we have worked hard as a team to cut non-essential costs and re-negotiate contracts to approve a budget for 2021/22, that has resulted in the average precept amount per band 'D' property remaining unchanged for our residents - something that, in these times of rising costs and financial difficulty, is very important to us.

We are currently looking at our remaining reserves to ensure that we apportion these to projects that will further benefit Nash Mills and we welcome residents' views on what these may be. We will check that business costs and ongoing expenditure are accounted for in line with statutory guidance. This will ensure that the funds we have acquired from our residents are being used for the benefit of both our current residents and future generations.

Cllr Jan Maddern (Vice-Chairman, Lead Councillor Finance).



NASH MILLS
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Parish Warden Annual Report- 2021

As you would expect, this year has been very different with Covid restrictions in place.

Throughout the year there have been three lockdowns which resulted in a huge increase in litter and fly tipping all over the Nash Mills area.

During the spring I painted all the seats and signs, helped clear and tidy both memorial gardens and cut back the trees along the path in Bunkers Playing field. It has been good to see Bunkers playing field and park, and the memorial gardens being enjoyed by so many people.

In June I was able to clear Bunkers Lane of litter while it was closed for one day for tree work.

At the moment the 2 main ongoing issues are the recycling and litter bins being overfilled with general household waste and food, and excessive amounts of fly tipping. This year I have made 16 reports to HCC for potholes and broken bollards, and 31 to DBC for fly tipping.

My job has really helped me this year and I still enjoy meeting the people of Nash Mills.

I would also like to say a huge thank you to Nikki who has been a great support.

David Drew
Nash Mills Parish Warden



NASH MILLS

P A R I S H C O U N C I L

Clerk Annual Report April 2021

It has been a busy year adapting to a new 'remote' way of working to ensure that council could conduct business and provide their usual services during the coronavirus pandemic. Fortunately, we have noticed that public engagement with the use of Zoom has been good and our meetings have been well attended.

Council have worked hard to look at ways in which we can utilise our healthy reserves for the benefit of our community and the creation of several working groups has enabled a wide variety of projects to be investigated.

It takes a considerable time for projects to work their way through from ideas to implementation and I have been fortunate in that I have been very ably supported by my fellow officers at both Dacorum Borough Council and Herts County Council to work through the steps relating to various permissions, licences, funding, and consultations.

I have been able to implement more than 30 new policies and risk assessments to ensure that NMPC are compliant and up to date. We converted the accounts over to a parish specific system and we successfully passed both our external and internal audits. The website has been updated to contain all policies and procedures, and I have created agenda packs to enable our residents to access the relevant meeting documents in advance of meetings with the historic documents remaining available. We continue to work at making our documents accessible for all.

Our play park now has a regular external safety inspection and repair programme (in addition to our regular warden checks) and we have conducted a tree risk survey of the trees in our playpark to enable our landlord to undertake the necessary safety works.

The reviewing of costs and contracts has enabled me to present to council a budget that reflected the councils desire to ensure that our precept request did not increase this year.

Council has encouraged me in my quest to become a qualified officer and I undertook the necessary 200+ hours of studying this year to complete and pass the Certificate in Local Council Administration.

I am lucky that I am supported in my role by our very experienced warden who has remained an invaluable source of knowledge and assistance during this challenging year, my role is made all the easier with his support.

Both of us are fortunate that we support, and are supported by, a very proactive team of Councillors and I look forward to facilitating the new projects that council are investigating for implementation in the coming years whilst remaining ever grateful for the kindness, support, and assistance I receive from our brilliant Nash Mills community.

*Nikki Bugden
Clerk to the Council
31st March 2021*



WORKING GROUP REPORT MAY 2020 – MAY 2021

The Verges working group.

Objective of working group

The Working Group was set up to look at 'Saving the Green Verges' within the Nash Mills Area and offer alternative ideas and proposals for the Council to review.

Working group members

Councillor Michele Berkeley (Lead)
Councillor Alan Briggs
Councillor Mandy Lester
Councillor Jan Maddern

Progress so far

A Photographic Report was prepared for the Council and was discussed in the monthly council meeting in July 2020. It was agreed by all Councillors that, in order to make matters easier to obtain approval at Council, we should split the works into two separate phases; some of the areas identified were seen to be problematic as some were directly outside residents' homes.

This resulted in **Phase 1 of the verges** schedule being agreed, and in October 2020 some members of the parish council met with our local county councillor Tina Howard, and Herts Highways officer Peter Wright, for a socially distanced review of the following areas that were of concern: -

The Denes
Bunkers Park
33-35 and 37-39 Meadow Road
Georgewood / Junction Highbarns
Georgewood / Junction Barnacres
East Green
Mill Close

Following the meeting, and after various discussions and exchange of correspondence between the Parish Council, Herts Highway and Dacorum Borough Council, we were so pleased with the positive outcome that these bodies supported our thoughts and approved to fund the following works to be carried out in 2021: -

The Denes (Repairs to the Verge and install Double Height Kerb)
Bunkers Park (Repairs to the Verge and install Verge Marking Posts)
33-35 and 37-39 Meadow Road (Install Grasscrete)

This was fantastic news, and we are most grateful to all those involved and who assisted in making this happen.

There were some unresolved issues with some of the other verges in phase 1 and unfortunately works to **Mill Close** could not be agreed, as DBC's Trees & Woodlands officers would not support the scheme suggested, due to the protection of trees in the vicinity and the impact on the roots etc.

Options for **Georgewood / Junction with Barnacres** and **Georgewood / Junction with Highbarns** – still require further consideration.

East Green – Suggestions for these verges had to be postponed, due to an opening of the ground back in October 2020 but will be considered again once the investigation reports have been received and the area has been made safe.

Next steps

We hope to conclude the proposals for **Phase 1** later this year. We can then begin discussions regarding **Phase 2** and the best way to progress several of the Green Verges that are of serious concern on that list.

Cllr Michele Berkeley
Vice-Chairman Personnel



NASH MILLS
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NMPC Annual Reports 2020-21

Defibrillator Working Group

This year, the council developed an implementation plan for the defibrillator which was acquired by the previous council. We are pleased to have within the working group the expertise of a Nash Mills resident who is a lead First Responder of a team of 6 who respond to category 1 (life threatening) incidents in the East of England region.

Our plan envisages the acquisition and installation of a lockable cabinet for outside installation and compliance with the East of England Ambulance Service norms. An installation location has been identified in the Denes, we now await formal approval from Dacorum Borough Council to attach to their building / electricity supply, and from Hertfordshire County Council. Once these approvals are received, we will finalise the details of our plans for registration with the East of England Ambulance service, regular inspections, periodic maintenance, signage, and local awareness.

Heritage

War Memorial

The working group collaborated with the Heritage Officer with the Dacorum Borough Council to achieve the restoration of the war memorial which is situated on the edge of the Nash Mills Wharf site and had suffered from neglect and botched repairs since the former factory closed. At the Wharf developer's expense, a specialist contractor temporarily removed the memorial, restored it within their workshops, then re-installed it.

The memorial is once again a fitting commemoration of the former workers of John Dickinson who lost their lives in the two world wars.

With some additional hard work by our parish warden, we were delighted that the restoration was completed in time for the Remembrance Day.

Gilman Dorr Blake Memorial

Whilst not a formal responsibility of the parish council, we have been pleased to promote awareness of this memorial to an American airman whose plane crashed in Nash Mills in 1945.

Three Tuns

The Three Tuns, thought to date back to the late 1700s, is our only remaining pub in Nash Mills and, therefore, an important community asset. As such, we felt it important to have this status formally recognised. With some great teamwork between the council and the community, we have now formally registered the Three Tuns with Dacorum Borough Council as an “Asset of Community Value” (ACV).

Whilst we hope that it will continue as a thriving going concern, the ACV status means that the parish council will be informed if the building is ever listed for sale within the five-year listing period. The council could then enact the Community Right to Bid, which gives a moratorium period of six months to determine if finance can be raised to purchase the asset.

Now that the ACV status has been granted, the Council will develop outline investigations / planning to ensure that we would be able to respond promptly should the bid process ever be triggered.

Planning

Despite the relatively small size of the parish, there are frequent planning applications for council consideration as a statutory consultee. The council reviews all applications in the context of planning guidelines, such as the National Planning Policy Framework, Dacorum’s Local Plan and its supporting documents such as parking standards, and endeavour to ensure that all proposed developments are compliant and in the interest of the parish and its residents. Any council comments or objections are recorded within the relevant application on the Dacorum Borough Council portal, as well as of course, within our minutes.

This year, the council has considered a number of applications for changes to the permissions granted for the restoration of Nash House within Nash Mills Wharf and continues to seek to influence that the development conforms to the original plans and is not over developed.

Cllr Alan Briggs
Lead Councillor Planning



WORKING GROUP REPORT MAY 2020 – MAY 2021

Communications (business as usual)

Objective of working group

This working group was set up to increase and improve the ways in which we can potentially communicate and engage with residents.

Working group members

Initially all parish councillors were members of this working group. The working group, itself, was disbanded once we reached the point where items were either completed or became ongoing tasks. This group is now more of a 'business as usual' group. Any item that had not been addressed will be continued at a later date via its own working group.

- Magazine – Nicola and Jan (with clerk editorial input)
- Social media – Nicola, Jan and Mandy (with clerk editorial input)
- The Denes sessions – All councillors

Progress so far

Public engagement sessions - During 2019 – 2020 we scheduled monthly engagement sessions at The Denes. These were held on the Saturday before our monthly parish meeting and typically attended by up to 4 councillors. These sessions were well received, and some residents would come along with particular questions or interests to discuss. These are currently on hold due to Covid.

Magazine - We have worked to increase the size of the magazine to a standard 40 pages (with, currently, an additional 8 pages to support local business) and improved the design to include a recognisable front page, a consistent flow through the magazine and increased engagement and input from Nash Mills residents.

In 2020, we made a particular point to recognise and support small businesses based in Nash Mills by way of free advertising. Several local businesses have also provided a competition prize in exchange for a larger promotion in the magazine.

Facebook - Our Facebook page has continued to grow, and we currently have around 350 followers. We share regular posts, many of which are simply informative, but we try to include some fun posts and photos.

Next steps

If required, we may like to request working groups for items not yet completed from the original scope of the communications group, such as website enhancements or events. We have also previously considered promotional material (e.g., banners) for engagement which we can look at again once we can restart our meetings at The Denes.

Cllr Nicola Cobb



WORKING GROUP REPORT MAY 2020 – MAY 2021

The Denes working group.

Objective of working group

This working group was set up as an initiative to improve the social space at The Denes shopping centre. Several items needed to be replaced (noticeboard, bench, bins) and there was an opportunity to consider how the space could be improved and redesigned, rather than simply replace individual items.

Working group members

Currently all parish councillors are members of this working group.

Progress so far

For this working group, any action will rely heavily on permissions (and potential funding) from Herts County Council. However, we have considered the items that we will require for a new space (ranging from simply replacement items to a wish list) and drafted options for layouts and positioning of items.

We have collated costings of the key items (noticeboard, benches, bins, etc) and have earmarked a certain amount from our reserves to cover those items. However, additional funds may need to be requested depending on our final agreed approach.

We met with our county councillor Tina Howard, and Herts Highways officer Peter Wright, to gain initial support and discuss options and next steps. We are currently working on the list of preferred options and layouts to present back to Herts Highways for feedback.

Next steps

During the next few months, we will agree a range of options (Bronze, Silver or Gold approach) and preferred layouts and send initial ideas to Herts Highways to obtain further feedback. Following this, we will finalise the positioning and requirements to better estimate final costings. We would like to find a local illustrator or architect who can help with an 'artist's impression' of our final version before arranging an engagement session to share ideas with residents.

Note that it is likely that we will need to re-engage with the county council after the elections in May for potential funding and timelines.

Cllr Nicola Cobb.



NASH MILLS

PARISH COUNCIL

Nash Mills Crime Report Summary from PCSO Martin 2021

NASH MILLS CRIME REPORT SUMMARY 2020

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD.
BURGLARY (DWELLING)		3	1		1				1	1			7
BURGLARY (Other)													
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	2	1	2		1	4	2		1				13
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE		2		1				1		1			5
DAMAGE OR DESTROY <£5,000	1	3			1				1	2	2	1	11
THEFT FROM SHOP							2		1	1	2		6
THEFT, OTHER	1	2	1		2	1							7
DRUG RELATED			1			2			2	3	1		9
OTHER CRIMES		1	1	2	1	1		1					7
A.S.B (Youths)													
TOTALS	4	12	6	3	6	8	4	2	6	8	5	1	65



Year End Financial Headlines 2020-21 and Budget Figures for 2021/22

Description	Amount
Brought Forward 31 st March 2020	£135588.00
Monies In	£60500.00*
Monies Out	£72000.00*
Total sum held on 31 st March 2021	£124000*
Precept requested for 2021/22	£28428.00
Budgeted Income and use of reserves	£13175.00
Total expenditure budget 2021/22	£41604.00
Use of reserves 2021/22 to support budget shortfall and to retain precept at current levels without an increase	£2697.00

*Please note that at the time of writing this report the final year end interest figures were not available and the figures used have been rounded.

Our annual return will show slightly increased income figures (showing the interest).

Please note that our full financial summaries will be available once the internal and external audits have been conducted. These will be found on the annual governance return.

The figures above may change during the audit process. Please contact the clerk for further information.



Project Status Updates May 2021



COMPLETED



ONGOING OR
IN PROGRESS



PENDING OR NOT
YET ACTIONED

Communications and visibility



- Parish logo completed and in use
- Restyled parish magazine and increased input from community
- Active Facebook page with over 350 followers
- Saturday meet-and-greets at The Denes (temporarily stopped for Covid-19)
- Website audited and accessibility issues noted



- Website accessibility improvements
- Continue to expand local articles and community input in magazine



- Parish events
- Full assessment and refresh of website

Verges and open spaces



- Protection of grass verges - list of verges split into two phases and contents of first phase agreed within parish council
- Meeting with county councillor and Herts Highways officer on grass verges
- Funding agreed to fix three damaged verges within the parish
- Promotion of Bunkers Lane play park in magazine
- Quarterly playground inspection done and repairs carried out
- Tree maintenance completed



- Working to agree remaining phase 1 verge protection areas for action
- Determining funding between Herts county council and parish reserves for remaining verges



- Discussions on contents of phase 2 for verge protection

The Denes



- Christmas lights installed and illuminated
- Costs estimated for use of reserves for a refresh at The Denes
- Meeting with county councillor and Herts Highways officer to discuss plans, permissions and approvals required for Denes refresh
- Defibrillator position agreed in principle
- Public survey related to grass area in Spring 2021 magazine



- Research for secure cycle parking
- Create plan to incorporate updated seating and new noticeboard



- Share proposed refresh plan with Herts Highways for consideration
- Full cost analysis for based on agreed plan

Nash Mills heritage



- Dickinsons' war memorial at Nash Mills Wharf - restoration completed
- Clean up of Gilman Dorr Blake memorial at Nash Green
- Google map listings added for both memorials
- Work completed to register Three Tuns pub as an 'Asset of Community Value' within Nash Mills (i.e. assets that have a main purpose of social interest in the local community).



- Continue to research history to record and publish on website and magazine



- Investigate reference to history in walks and trails around the parish.

The Nash Mills Parish Council team look forward to working with our community in the coming year and welcome meeting ideas and suggestions from our residents. Please contact our clerk

clerk@nashmillsparishcouncil.gov.uk with any suggestions or comments that you may have.

We would love you to join us at our monthly meetings, please visit our website [Nash Mills Parish Council](https://www.nashmillsparishcouncil.gov.uk) for our meeting schedule, agendas and minutes.