

Chairs Annual Report 2025/2026

My second year as Chair has been just as interesting with regular focus in the meetings on the land grabs; the allotments; planning permissions; potholes and speeding. We as a group have achieved many things to support our community, I especially thank those individuals who have gone above and beyond, you know who you are.

Firstly I would like to thank Denise Corney, our Parish Clerk, who have supported us so well this year. Getting to grips with our Finance, Audit and not least trying to change to a bank which would be so much easier for us to use. She has kept us all on the straight and narrow, ensuring that we are compliant across the board.

I would also like to thank our councillors, for their time and dedication to their community, thank you for your help in running this council. Councillor William Murdock has had to resign due to continuing ill health, I would like to thank him for his years of support on the parish council, his detailed knowledge of planning will be hard to replace, we will all miss him.

Our Traffic Committee, a group of hard-working dedicated villagers across our Parish, who have spent many hours marking our many potholes and getting us fast tracked to them being filled. The Parish mobile speed indicator board has been on Bix main road, Middle Assendon and Lower Assendon this year; and the Traffic Committee reported back the findings of the stored data at our meetings.

The Traffic Committee Speed Watch group now has 5 fully trained individuals and have had two official sessions with the "speed gun", targeting the Bix Dual Carriageway. They provided the Police with the vehicle registrations of those speeding through our villages; although the fastest vehicle registration was found to be false.

The Village Hall is a great asset, appreciated by the villagers. We are very grateful to the committee for all they do for the community. The Dog Bins are still very popular and regularly used, keeping the footpaths cleaner and safer for walkers and locals.

The Community Hub runs Coffee Mornings every month on the 3rd Wednesday, this has been popular with the residents. There are regular Craft Clubs, the Henley Arts Trail, a Flamenco Evening, and a Local History talk.

I must thank Bryony Lewis our footpath representative, who has been walking all our paths, clearing brambles and signs, regularly replacing them as they are needed. This is appreciated by the many locals and visitors who use them. The pathway alongside the Dual Carriageway from Lower Assendon to Bix, is regularly pruning back by locals, continues to be appreciated by all who use it. We are hoping that OCC let us know when they are going to do their annual prune, as last year they did it immediately after our locals!

The Litter Pick this Spring saw people helping across all three villages, the weather was reasonable and we covered all areas within our boundaries, there were comments that the litter did not seem so bad. It was noted that as we moved the date to avoid Mother's Day, we clashed with the time of the church service, members of whom usually participate; we will next year ensure that the pick is neither on Mother's Day or a regular Church service day.

I would like to thank our OCC councillor, Ben Higgins, who has faithfully attended our meetings, and helped us with many issues, we are very grateful for his support and service. Notably he stepped in to get trained as community speed watch so we could meet the minimum numbers.

I would like to thank our SODC councillor, Jo Robb who has supported us through the year, and following up on issues raised at our meetings and by email. We appreciate that she turns around any questions quickly, even though she is extremely busy across her parishes.

On behalf of the Parish I have been liaising with the Smith Centre developers, now called the Bower, who have continued to hold public meetings for the residents surrounding their

building. Last winter the parking of the workers vehicles were congesting the road; they kept us informed that they had rented an adjoining field, although the excess of rain delayed the implementation whilst materials were found to make the field suitable for parking. They have their next meeting in the Village Hall on the 20th May.

Gigaclear have supplied fibre to our two thirds of our villages under the government scheme to supply broadband to more remote areas. Whitehall decided for competition purposes they could only supply two thirds of the properties the others will remain with Open Reach. After a full year Open Reach still have not answered our queries as to when they may supply the remaining properties.

Our Allotments situated between Middle and Lower Assendon villages, have had a recent surge in applications; hopefully 3 new villagers. We are going to use some of our CIL monies to improve these. There are still some remaining, full and half plots if you are interested, please contact the Clerk.

I thought it would be an idea to let you know what Charities the Parish Council support on your behalf they are:

- Millies Dream, to support a defibrillator in each Village, the Village Hall in Bix, the Golden Ball in Lower Assendon and the Rainbow in Middle Assendon.
- The local Churchyard maintenance, so that it a pleasant place for all parishioners to visit or see across the wall.
- The Comet Bus which takes people who cannot drive shopping in Henley.
- National Allotment Society membership, who gives us great support.
- The Chiltern Society, supporting our area.

Finally, I would like to thank all the parishioners who take the time to attend these meetings and contribute to our Parish, it is appreciated.

Karen Duthie

Chair Bix and Assendon Parish Council.