

January 2024

Parish Council budget

At their recent meeting, Bishopstoke Parish Council agreed to increase their budget for the year 2024-25 in order to fund all current services as well as putting money aside to fund the new Memorial Hall, the regeneration of play areas and an additional member of staff to ensure that residents receive better service and faster response times.

The Memorial Hall is likely to cost at least £3 million and although the Borough Council has committed to provided over £1 million for the project the rest will need to be funded through grants and loans. The money being set aside now is to avoid larger jumps in the budget in the future when loans have to be paid back.

Bishopstoke is blessed with 6 play areas, a skate park, a small BMX track and a MUGA, only two of which have received any major renovation or upgrades. A play area normally lasts around 15-20 years with proper maintenance and depending on the size will cost between £60,000 and £100,000 to fully rejuvenate. The creation of a play area fund will enable the Council to replace individual pieces of equipment (which can cost up to £30,000 for the larger items) or even whole play area as necessary without having to have sudden increases in Council Tax.

Currently the Council employees 3 officers, 2 of which are part time. Another post is being created to ensure that we can reply to all enquiries more quickly and that all our services run more smoothly.

Allotment Officer vacancy

The Council is seeking to employ an Allotments Officer who will also be responsible for helping to run Carnival and other events. All the details of the post, which will initially be for 20 hours per week, can be obtained by emailing the Clerk.

New Cemetery gates

Bishopstoke Cemetery has recently had a pair of new gates installed. Created by Southern Metal Craft Ltd and paid for through contributions from developers, the new gates are beautifully constructed and supported by twin pillars with "Bishopstoke" and "Cemetery" spelled out on each one. There is also a new sign just outside the cemetery to complement the gates. It is expected that when the cemetery extension off Sewall Drive is finally transferred to the Council there will be a matching set of gates installed there too.

Carnival 2024

Planning for Carnival 2024 is due to kick off on February 6th with the first meeting taking place at 7:00pm in the small meeting room at Bishopstoke Methodist Church. Anyone interested in either helping run the whole event, or simply helping out on the day, should come along and find out what they can do to help.

Bishopstoke Champion

The Council is looking to find our second Bishopstoke Champion, following in the footsteps of our first Champion, Kiaran Gillingham, who was a worthy winner last year for his tireless work in our local environment and on the River Itchen in particular. To find out more, and get hold of nomination forms, please contact the Clerk.

And Finally . . .

Anyone thinking about having an allotment in Bishopstoke may not have to wait as long as they think. The current waiting time for an allotment at Underwood Road is under 6 months which means new applicants could well be on their allotment before the summer. If you are interested in finding out more take a look at our website www.bishopstokepc.org/allotment-information.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Tuesday 12th March at 7.30pm and will take place in Bishopstoke Methodist Church. For further details or information about anything the Parish Council does please visit the Parish website.

*For further information, please contact the Parish Clerk: David Wheal
by email: clerk@bishopstokepc.org
or visit the Parish website at: www.bishopstokepc.org*