

## Message from the Chairman

It is with regret that I have to start this report with the news that our Parish Vice Chairman, Chris Graham, has resigned from the Bray Parish Council (BPC).

It has been a pleasure to have worked with Chris over the past nearly twenty years and he will be sorely missed.



We would like to congratulate Councillor Derek Wilson who has been elected for and accepted the role of Vice Chairman for Bray Parish Council. Derek has been a councillor for Holyport Ward for 10 years and plays an active role within various other committees inside the council.

BPC continues to oppose the planning application and associated appeal to build a large film studio on Green Belt land between Holyport and Fifield. We were assured that the approval of the Borough Local Plan (BLP) would help to resist speculative planning applications and so protect the remaining Green Belt. Well, it looks like the studio application will be another “test case”.

The Green Belt land in Bray Parish has already been significantly reduced by the BLP and there is little sign of improvements in infrastructure to accommodate the increased population and resulting increase in traffic. The speed limit reduction for the A308 Windsor Road, promised immediately after the last Borough elections, has still not materialised. This change does not cost any money, so the delicate state of RBWM’s finances cannot be a credible reason for this lack of action.

It would appear that the new Westminster administration has plans to launch another attack on Green Belt land around the country. Our new government has invented a new category of Green Belt land that can be designated Grey Belt and so be available for development. During the run up to the national elections a disused petrol station site in Enfield northeast London was cited as an example of “typical Grey Belt land”. One petrol station is hardly a basis for a major country wide land grab.

Grey Belt land has been described as “untidy and neglected Green Belt land”. I wonder who exactly will be deciding what untidy and neglected looks like and how will they tell the difference between neglected and currently fashionable rewilding?

We shall see.

## Allotment Competition Results 2024

Despite the horticultural challenges 2024 has presented, Bray Parish Council judges along with an office representative pressed ahead with the annual allotment inspection which took place on Monday 15th of July.

The Councillors spent time perusing the plots at the allotment sites at Bray and Gays Lane, judging each plot on overall usage of the land, whether they displayed a good variety of plants and ensuring they were free of weeds.

The judges agreed unanimously, and Bray Parish Council would like to extend our sincerest congratulations to Morne Oosthuizen of 16a Bray Allotments, and Gina Walter of Plot 10, Gays Lane Allotments who were judged the winners of the Competition.

Congratulations also go to Christine Gibbins of plot 16b Gays Lane and Patrick King of plot 11b Bray who received the runner up places and were presented with their prizes on site by Councillor Margaret Pierce.

**Miss Dawn Hampshire**  
– Assistant Clerk



## **New Acorn Nursery opens at Braywood First School**

Pre-school children in Bray, Fifield, Windsor and surrounding areas can now benefit from a lovely new nursery that has opened at Braywood C of E First School in Oakley Green Road, Windsor. The Acorn Nursery offers 16 places to children who are in the academic year before they start school.

Long-standing Braywood Headteacher Mrs Susan Calvert says: 'We can offer a warm, welcoming and nurturing environment for 3 to 4-year-old children, with the added advantage of being part of a school environment where the children are taught by experienced teachers who can offer learning opportunities that can challenge, inspire and extend children's learning.

'We offer a beautiful school environment set in fields where nursery children can explore plenty of outdoor learning in their 'Secret Garden/Forest area'. There's also an outside playground with climbing frames and slide, and the opportunity to develop their social skills further by playing with the Foundation and Year 1 children.

'Every child is treated as a special individual and as such is supported by individual learning outcomes that support every child's own interests and needs. The trained, nurturing staff offer well-planned activities throughout the day to give scope for adventurous and imaginative play and learning

The Nursery also offers flexible hours to support working parents. We work closely with all parents to ensure a mutual relationship for the benefit of the children. Every child has a key worker to monitor the individual child's development, share learning progress and discuss any concerns. The Nursery's aim is to provide the best possible start for all children.'



## The Royal Berkshire Archives

The Royal Berkshire Archives (formerly the Berkshire Record Office) retain the archives of the Royal County of Berkshire and look after almost 900 years of the County's history.

In 1939 Berkshire County Council established a Berkshire Records Committee to consider how to look after the official and private records stored in the basement of the Old Shire Hall in the Forbury, Reading. Due to the Second World War progress of the project was hindered, with the appointment of the First County Archivist of Berkshire being made several years later in 1948 .

The Berkshire Records Office was first located next door to the old Shire Hall in the Forbury, Reading from 1948 – 1980, with the first Conservator appointed for document repair in 1971.

In the winter of 1980/1981, the entirety of the Berkshire County Council including the records office moved to the new Shire Hall at Shinfield Park in Reading. A new modern Records Centre was created to manage the administrative records and in 1994 the search room, offices and workrooms moved to a bigger space within Shire Hall.

In 1998 the BCC was abolished, and the Berkshire Records Office began life as a joint service to 6 unitary authorities within Berkshire. The six authorities combined funded a new building in Coley Avenue, Reading where the Archive office moved to in October 2000 and remain today.

The services they offer range from assistance with research, copying services, talks and visits, conservation, record archiving and retention. They also welcome volunteers to assist them with such things as preserving the records, creating lists and indexes of the documents in their collections, and in return they can learn new skills whilst discovering more about local history.

Bray Parish Council staff and members have visited the Archives a number of times recently for both archiving and research purposes and the staff there were kind enough to provide a tour of the conservation area and the strong rooms. Moreover, they had prepared various documents relating to Bray Parish going back as far as 1332, written in Latin.

It is an absolutely fascinating facility with incredibly knowledgeable and passionate staff - a very interesting and worthwhile place to visit.

[The Royal Berkshire Archives \(berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk\)](http://berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/royalberkshirearchives>

<https://twitter.com/BerksArchives>

<https://www.instagram.com/berksarchives>



## Bray Village Fete: A Sun-Kissed Community Celebration

After more than a decade, the much-loved Bray Village Fete made a triumphant return on September 8, 2024, drawing together residents and neighbours for a day of community spirit and entertainment on Bray Village Green. Blessed with sunny weather, the fete was filled with laughter, live performances, and delectable food offerings, marking a memorable occasion for the village.

The festivities began with music filling the air, as the Susan Handy School of Dance charmed the crowd with a lively Mary Poppins performance, followed by spirited sets from the local band Watershed, and a grand finale from Second Wind. The energy was palpable, with attendees of all ages enjoying a diverse range of entertainment throughout the day.



But it wasn't just the music that stole the show—food was a major attraction.

Celebrity chef Giancarlo Caldesi delighted visitors with his signature Italian pasta, while

The Crown served up their classic prawn cocktail. Collaborating for the first time, The Fat Duck and The Hind's Head offered their new creation of Perfectly Imperfect sweets.

Additionally, the Monkey Island Hotel impressed with its selection of produce and signature cocktail. On the field, attendees also sampled treats from Dublicious Food and a unique ice cream creation by Roberto's ice cream van, made specially for the fete.



Coffee lovers flocked to Vicky Weddell at the Money Row Beans stall, while the bar—run by volunteers from Bray Village Hall—served drinks in custom-designed Bray Village Fete-themed cups.

One of the standout moments of the day was the dog show, where local pooches competed for top honours, proudly accompanied by their owners. The day wrapped up with a highly anticipated raffle, with lucky winners taking home exciting prizes.



Local community groups and charities played an active role in the day's events. The Friends of St. Michael set up a stall selling second-hand books and Bray memorabilia. Bray Brownies and Rainbows introduced children to girl guiding, and School Drive, a local charity, sold stylish Bray Village bags. In another corner of the fete, Bray & Holyport Senior Citizen Club held a popular tombola, and the Braywick Court School PTA satisfied sweet teeth with homemade cakes. Meanwhile, Eton Excelsior Rowing Club organized a successful rowing competition.



With the success of the 2024 event, attention has already turned to the Bray Village Fete 2025. We are inviting new members to join the committee and be part of what promises to be another spectacular community event. Those interested can reach out via [hello@brayvillagefete.co.uk](mailto:hello@brayvillagefete.co.uk).



For many, the fete was more than just a day of fun—it was a celebration of the strong sense of community that defines Bray.

## Fifield Fun Day

I think this year was probably the best yet! We had record crowds, so many that our clicker broke! But we estimate somewhere in the region of 1,700. And the atmosphere was fantastic, so many lovely families, all determined to have a jolly good time – and they did!

Of course, the one thing we could not organise was the weather, and it was absolutely perfect, hot, but not too hot and very sunny. The only downside to that was, because of the dry conditions, it was decided that it would be a fire risk to run the big engine Lady Patricia, but Hornpipe and Swanscombe circled the show, filled to capacity with happy passengers.

The dog show had a record number of entries and the hilarious, musical mats for dogs, is growing in popularity. The small fairground area and all our children's games were busy all day and the reptiles fascinated and educated by giving children hands-on experiences with these exotic creatures. For the adults, the craft area had a wonderful selection of interesting and unique items, and the catering area, with barbecue, tea tent and bar was constantly busy.

To close the show, our councillor, Suzanne Cross, brought her band, The Country Chicks, to entertain us with country music and line dancing. What a fantastic performance and what a great way to end a wonderful day.

We do not yet, have a final figure for the money raised but we are optimistic that our two main charities; Chattertots (supporting Downs Syndrome children) and SERV OBN (delivering out of hours supplies to hospitals) will receive substantial cheques.



## Update on Holyport Studio Application 22/03374/OUT

Studio Application 22/03374/OUT - Appeal Inquiry

Both BPC and Holyport & Fifield Community Action Group (H&FCAG) are working together with RBWM against this application and have registered as active parties (Rule 6) to ensure we can participate fully in the Inquiry.

BPC is focusing on Green Belt and H&FCAG are additionally working on Highways, Flooding etc and are fund raising to be able to call on professional expert witnesses at the Appeal.

Date of Appeal ; starts Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and is forecast to last for 10 working days. It will be held at RBWM Windsor.

Cllr Louvaine Kneen, Chair of Planning, Holyport Ward

## Sir Michael Parkinson Cricket Weekend

Amongst its many attributes, Bray Village is also home to a picture-perfect cricket ground where the sound of leather on willow has been heard for over 200 years and the Parkinson family has formed deep roots.

My father was President of the Cricket Club until the day he died, and I've been Chairman of the Sports Club for over a decade. We have both in our differing ways strived to ensure that this will always be a place where cricket, hockey and football can be played, occasional serious drinking enjoyed (at least until the following morning!) and pre-school tots can make their first steps up the educational ladder.



On the late August Bank Holiday weekend, we remembered my Father and his love of the club with a Gala Dinner and Celebrity Cricket match which also kickstarted a fundraising drive aiming to raise enough money to allow us to redevelop our ugly duckling of a pavilion and future proof it for another 200 years.

There were too many highlights to include but suffice to say all who attended went away with their own special treasure trove of memories, some newly forged and some dipped in nostalgia from when days like this were commonplace.

The weekend was also a reminder of what can be achieved when people not motivated by personal gain pull together for a common purpose and turn the word "community" into more than a buzzword for a cynical politician. We should be rightly proud of our local Sports Club.

Mr. Mike Parkinson



## Holyport Fair 2024

An enormous thank you from the Holyport Village Fair team and the Memorial Hall.

We hope you enjoyed the fair as much as we did! With enormous efforts come enormous rewards! We had an amazing kick start from our main sponsor, Andrew and Alix Bower from Westbrook Waste who with funding enabled us to make some investment and get off the ground. The day was a combination of the Traylens Fairground, trade stalls, local run old fair stalls, fabulous foods and drinks.



As a result of a herculean effort from the core team on getting this moving and all the volunteers, we managed to make more than £23,000.00 profit.

This is an amazing amount of money by anyone's standards, but to our community Memorial Hall, this will make a tremendous difference.



This will go toward the general upkeep of the hall, maintenance of the grounds and playground, servicing of key equipment for the stage and new signage. It is with heartfelt thanks to you the community and the amazing volunteers that made this happen; we hope to be back for the Holyport Fair 2025!

Melanie Campbell – Holyport Village Fair Team



The Holyport Community Hall are proud to share the installation of two significant statues: the D-Day Commemorative Unknown Tommy Statue and the Women in War Statue. These installations serve as poignant tributes to the bravery and sacrifices of our armed forces and the crucial role of women during wartime.

These statues have been purchased through the Royal British Legion, this was made possible through a donation from Bray Parish Council and a donation from the monies made from the Holyport Village Fair. A very fitting tribute for the Holyport War Memorial Hall, we will remember them.



Holyport Community Trust

## Bells & Bell Ringing at Bray Parish Church

At the west end of St Michael's, Bray there is a tower and within it A 'Ringing Chamber'.

This is accessed up steps from an external door locked with an ancient, very large key.

The eight bells housed there can ring to summon parishioners to a church service, peal to celebrate a wedding for example, or toll on a significant sad occasion such as the death of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

It was recently announced in church that visits can now be made to the tower and its bells when the bell ringers practise on Monday evenings 7:30-9pm. Maggie Ross is 'Captain of The Tower' and her group of bell ringers (now fifteen) range in age from 8 to 90, the youngest using a training bell. Learning the skills of bell ringing takes time and patience and is co-operative. Links within the group are strengthened by social activities, competition with other groups, for example in South Bucks, and visits. Bray bell ringers once rang at St. Martin in the Fields.

Bells hang within a frame and in 1985 Bray bells were rehung within a new one. The tenor bell is the heaviest, weighing 24 CWT (hundredweight). The treble bell is inscribed 'Feare God, Honour The King' 1678. Restoration work on Bray bells has been carried out by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry.

For many years Bray had 6 bells, and this is indicated by the title of a public house once situated within the Lich Gate, now an almshouse. 'The Ringers', another public house in an ancient cottage became the premises for Heston Blumenthal's restaurant 'The Fat Duck'. The last two of Bray's 8 bells were added in 1948, one in memory of a parishioner's wife, the other commemorating a member of the RAF killed over in France in 1944.

### Inscriptions of the Bells

Bell	Note	Weight (cwt-qtr-lb)	Inscription
Treble	D	6-2-24	To the memory of Anthony Barker R.A.F. killed over France July 1944. Per Ardua Ad Astra
2	C#	7-0-21	Presented by John Harrison in ever grateful memory of his beloved wife Beatrice Ethyll who died at Bray 5 May 1946. Gillett & Johnson, Croydon 1948 E.S.C. Lowman, Vicar
3	B	7-0-16	Feare God, Honour the King 1678 (Cast by Henri Knight III at Reading)
4	A	8-2-4	Henri Knight made this bell ano 1612 RG. HP. EL. TW. (Cast by Henri Knight I at Reading)
5	G	9-1-14	Henri Knight made this bell ano 1613 (Cast by Henri Knight I at Reading)
6	F#	12-0-10	Perpetuis annis memor esto Mariae Johannis Cujus sub cura fueris mala pelle futura. T. Mears fecit. This bell was recast 1914. Rev. Chas. Andrewes Raymond, Vicar. Frederick Islay Pitman) Frederick Thos. Ford) Churchwardens 1812
7	E	16-1-20	Thos. Ward. Wm. Lee : Churchwardens 1771 (This bell bears the mark of Thomas Swain, of Longford)
Tenor	D	24-0-27	1656 (This bell was cast by Ellis and Henri Knight of Reading)

Cllr Margaret Pierce

The Tenor Bell



The 4th Bell



The 4th and 5th Bells



The 6th Bell



## From Halloween to New Year's: Festive Events in Bray.

As the colder season approaches, there's always something to look forward to in Bray.

On October 31st, Bray Village Hall invites Halloween enthusiasts, both young and old, to join the spooky celebrations. Continuing the tradition, there will be a Bray Village Spooky Map, ensuring plenty of excitement and Halloween treats for everyone.

For those who prefer more traditional celebrations, The Pavilion (MBCC) will host their annual Firework Display, complete with hot chocolate and a variety of delicious food.

Autumn evenings in Bray won't be dull! On November 15th, Bray Village Hall will hold an Open Mic Night, providing an opportunity for local talent to shine.

Not long after, on December 7th, join us for the Bray Christmas Market at Bray Village Hall. It's the perfect opportunity to buy Christmas gifts from local vendors, witness the Christmas tree lighting, and celebrate with your neighbours.

Finally, start the new year off right by joining the Survivors Brunch at Bray Village Hall on New Year's Day. This event was a huge hit last year, so be sure to check Bray Village Hall's social media to book your spot and avoid disappointment!

**Cllr. Joanna Filipczak-Korczak**

## St. Michael's Church – Dates to remember

- Saturday 26th October Craft Fayre in Church and Hall 9.30 am - 12.30 pm
- Sunday 3rd November at 4.00 pm - All Souls Service where we remember all those we have loved and lost. Light a candle for a departed loved one.
- Sunday 10th November at 10.45 in church - Remembrance Sunday Service (with Act of Remembrance at the Bray Village War Memorial at approx 11.15 am) and at 3.00 pm Music at Bray: Peng Lin (piano)
- Sunday 1st December at 4.00 pm in Church - Advent Carol Service with St Michael's Choir (Not an early Christmas Carols service but a special selection of music to begin Advent)
- Saturday 7th December at 3.00 pm Christingle Service - For children of all ages! The Christingle oranges will be distributed.
- Sunday 8th December at 3.00 pm Community Carol Service - a sing along with carols and Christmas songs
- Sunday 22nd December at 4.00 pm Traditional Carol Service with St Michael's Choir - Carols and Lessons
- Sunday 24th December at 3.00 pm Blessing of the Crib service - for Children of all ages! Carols and stories around the crib, about 40 minutes
- Sunday 24th December at 11.30 pm Midnight Mass with carols and choir
- Sunday 25th December Christmas Day 8.00 am Communion (about 30 minutes, quiet and reflective) and at 10.00 am Christmas Communion with choir and sermon (bring your Christmas present to show everyone)!

**The Reverend Canon Ainsley Swift, Vicar**

**Did you find this?**



These beautiful memorial pebbles can be found on the Holyport War Memorial on the green. There is a pebble painted in memory of every casualty from the Parish from both the first and the second world war.

**Where is this?**



This is a statue of a very important figure in the history of Bray, but do you know where it stands and who it represents?

**Ward Councillor Contact Emails**

Cllr	Ward	Contact Email
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<b>VACANT SEATS</b>	Oakley Green & Fifield	