SUMMER 2023 NEWSLETTER

KINGSMEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Introduction from the Chair, Cllr Helen Weltman

For residents who are new to Kingsmead, I'd like to give an overview of the history of the Parish Council (PC)

When Kingsmead was originally built all the communal land including, parks, ponds, fences, trees and most of the grass, was managed by a private company, who collected a fee from each property. However, the management company often failed to collect all of the fees, leading to a shortfall of monies and this gradually led to a lack of maintenance.

All properties also had to pay a parish precept to either Northwich Town Council or Davenham Parish Council, depending on which area of Kingsmead you lived on. However, neither Council had any powers to maintain any of the land.

A resident's association was formed, which lobbied the then Vale Royal Borough Council to form a PC, while at the same time asking the developers who built the estate to gift the land to the PC.

In 2011 the PC was formed, and this then became responsible for maintaining the area.

The only areas the PC do not maintain are the roads, pavements, the roundabouts and some small amounts of grass. If you have issues with maintenance of any of these areas, please report it to Cheshire West and Chester Council at: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Or report it to your ward Councillors
Cllr Dan Marr - Dan.Marr@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
Cllr Gaynor Sinar - Gaynor.Sinar@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

At the last uncontested election on 4th May, one of our Councillors Steve Chappell stood down. We'd like to thank Steve for his hard work over the years. We did welcome a new Councillor Alex Swift, who you may already know from his volunteer work at our events.

In Memory of Former Councillor Bill Simpson

It is with much sadness that the council reports the recent passing of former parish councillor Bill Simpson. Bill was an original member and Chairman of the Kingsmead Resident's Association and worked hard with his colleagues to negotiate the ultimate handover of the Kingsmead Estate from the developers to its residents. Through this work and Bill's vital contributions, the Parish Council was formed allowing residents to have a direct input into the way Kingsmead is managed and maintained.

The Parish Council would like to pass on its sincere condolences to all of Bill's family and friends.

Making the Most of the Kingsmead Environment Cllr Spencer Jewitt (Chair of the Parks & Environment Committee)

Kingsmead has some lovely beauty spots and pond areas where we can feed ducks, watch fish swimming and enjoy lots of natural wildlife. This is one of the many benefits we have being Kingsmead residents. As part of our ongoing strategy to maintain and improve the estate we have installed a number of benches made of recycled plastic, strategically placed to maximise use of the natural environment. This has proved to be very popular with many residents. We have also carried out a good old-fashioned spring clean, which has seen road and wildlife signs cleaned and extensive path edging carried out to enhance the beauty of Kingsmead.
We hope you enjoy these improvements to our village.

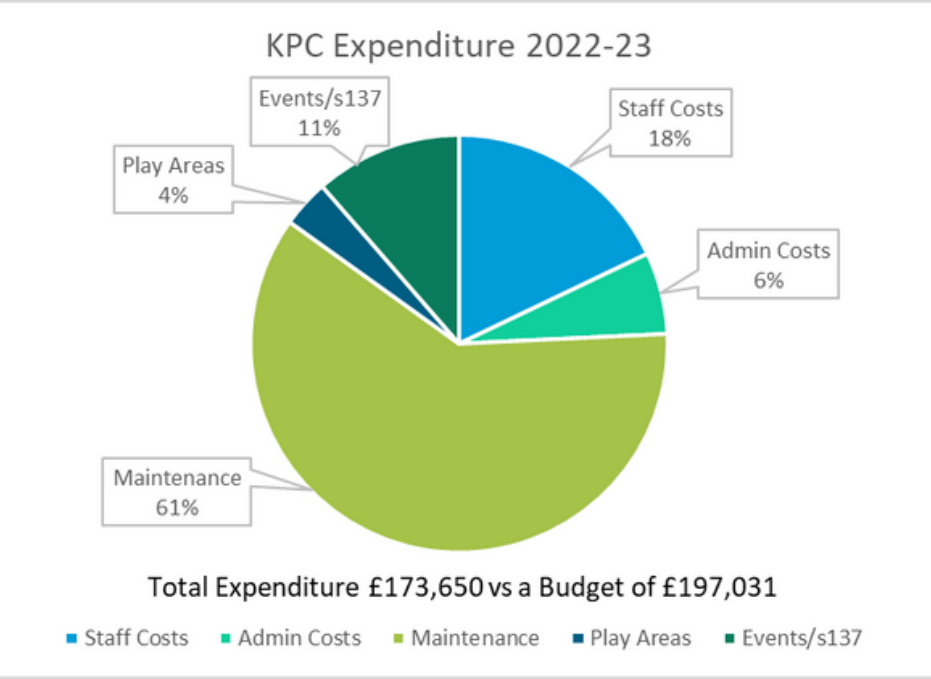




Kingsmead Parish Council finances are in good shape, Cllr Neil Martin (Chair of the Finance Committee)

The parish precept was frozen for the 2023/24 financial year, which has resulted in a 0% increase in the parish charge for all bands of council tax in Kingsmead. This was a consequence of adequate reserves being accumulated over recent years to meet prudent financial guidelines of 25% of the council's budget. The council decided to freeze the precept this year to help all households through the current cost of living crisis.

Spending in the previous financial year can be summarised as follows:



The prudent financial management last year has also allowed the parish council to create a reserve of money to fund new play equipment in 2023 for the Kingslawn/Mereworth play area.

Despite this year's static budget, the council held the King Charles III Coronation Event in St George's field in May and will run the Christmas Lights Switch-On Event in December.

You are welcome to attend any parish council meeting to express your opinion on any aspect of the parish's finances.

Management of Kingsmead Trees and Woodland Areas, Cllr Chris Reed

Our trees are a significant part of the parish. They contribute to the appearance of all parts of our community and the Parish Council works hard to successfully maintain this habitat.

In November 2020 the Parish Council, along with a qualified Arboriculturist, surveyed all trees within the Parish and produced a 5-year plan to implement the work needed. This is available on the PC website. But with the effects of the pandemic, the work was never progressed.

The main area of concern within the report was the number of Ash trees that are infected with Ash Dieback and the likelihood that more healthy trees could become infected. As soon as possible the Council took the decision to start to remove those identified trees that were close by or near to public footpaths and rights of way in order to lessen the risks to the public if they were to fall. This work is ongoing but also in line with this work is a plan for a replanting scheme using native species to replace those trees removed.

In a well-managed environment trees provide shelter, shade and pleasure, and a constantly changing backdrop to the landscape of the Parish, as well as habitats for wildlife. Trees provide privacy and can effectively conceal less attractive parts of the built environment. An abundance of trees is visually attractive and can positively influence property values ensuring the parish remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.

Most people see trees as beneficial but do not want the adverse effects caused by the lack of tree management. They resent trees that shade the garden, protrude onto the paths and the highway, shed leaves, destroy the view, and ruin television and satellite reception.

The full tree policy of the Council can be found on the Parish Council website and residents are asked to read this before contacting us for any work to be done. It should also be noted that any work carried out on our trees without our permission in an offence and we will take any action required.

Celebrating the Big Events with Kingsmead PC, Cllr Spencer Jewitt (Chair of the Events Working Group)

In 2022 KPC put on an event at St. Georges field to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee. This was a huge undertaking by the Parish Councillors aided by an excellent volunteer group from Kingsmead residents. The scale and success were unexpected with a fantastic turn out and thankfully sunny weather. 2022 was also the year that saw us coming out of a COVID Pandemic, a time that had affected most of us in some way, including isolation from each other, giving added meaning to the event as a coming together of neighbours and friends.

Sadly, 2022 also saw the death of our beloved Queen and the Coronation this year of King Charles. With the success of the celebrations in 2022, we thought it was a great idea to put on another event to celebrate King Charles being crowned. Once again, the sun came out and so did our residents, enjoying a fun family day out. These events were both free of charge for the community, but this year we decided to hold a raffle with some great prizes donated by many local shops. The event raised an amazing £700 for The Joshua tree, and we thank you for your support.

Keep an eye out in 2024 as plans are already under way for another summer extravaganza on St. Georges field and remember that we will hold our usual Christmas event at The Kingfisher in December.



An exciting change coming to our play areas

Kingslawn Play Park will be getting a refurbishment this summer with the installation of an exciting new swing. After the previous climbing frame had to be removed for safety reasons, the large round area in the park has been sadly empty for a couple of years. The new swing will be suitable for a wide age range of 2-14 years and will be a great addition to Kingsmeads many play parks. The existing trim trail and Great Gable climber at Kingslawn will be retained, giving a diverse range of activities all in one location.



Picture of the new swing - sorry beach not included!

The Parks and Environment Committee is reviewing all the play areas and will be creating a long-term plan for continued development.

Wildflowers in Kingsmead, Cllr Laura Hoey

For several years the Parish Council has been trying out wildflower meadow strips along the spine road through Kingsmead.

The first year was very colourful as the annuals produced a vibrant display of blue, white and yellow flowers. The following two years weren't quite so brightly coloured as the base perennials needed to establish themselves. Cllr Reed and myself sowed yellow rattle along the strip last year to discourage the growth of grasses and hopefully encourage the growth of more perennials this year. We've now had a lovely display of white oxeye daisies along the strip and if you look closely, you will see several different other species of wildflower. We've also had some orchids growing in areas of the spine across from the college.

As the wildflower strip matures we should see more colourful flowers again, as species such as red and pink campion, cornflowers, clovers, poppies and other perennials take longer to establish themselves.
We hope that you all enjoy this initiative to try to bring wildlife into Kingsmead. In addition, Cheshire West and Chester has sown a triangle of wildflower seeds on an area of their land along the spine at the corner of Monarch Drive. We are hoping all these areas will provide some colour and additional habitats for wildlife and insects.

Kingsmead Community Litter Picks



The Parish Council will be running regular litter picking days on the last Sunday of every month.

July 30th Aug 27th
Sept 24th Oct 29th

10am – 12pm

Why not come along and help keep your community a nicer place to live? All are welcome, but children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Litter picking equipment (gloves, bin bags and litter pickers) will be available to collect at the Parish Council noticeboard on Kingsmead Square.

If you can't join us on the day, tell us instead about the "grot spots" that need clearing

We look forward to seeing you!

Contacting the Parish Council

Please use the message page on our website:
www.kingsmeadpc.org.uk

OR

Contact the Parish Clerk
E: clerk@kingsmeadpc.org.uk
T: 01606 533858

Watch out for updates on the Kingsmead Residents Facebook Page

Kingsmead Parish Council Meetings

Kingsmead Parish Council typically meets on the third Monday of the month. Meetings are held in Kingsmead School and usually start at 7.30pm.

Residents are welcome to attend the meetings to discuss issues or raise items of concern with members of the council. A Public Open Forum takes place near the beginning of each meeting, after which, attendees may stay for the remainder of the meeting but are unable to participate in any formal proceedings once the public forum has closed.

An agenda is published on the Parish Council website and noticeboard (in Kingsmead Square) a minimum of 3-working days before any meeting. The agenda will confirm the meeting date and time.

The following is a list of proposed meeting dates for the current civic year:

JULY 24th NOT the third Monday	AUG No Meeting	SEPT 18th	OCT 16th	NOV 20th
DEC 18th	JAN 15th	FEB 19th	MAR 18th	APR 15th

In addition to the Full Council meetings, there are also two committees which regularly meet. The Parks and Environment Committee meet on the second Monday of the month and the Finance Committee meets quarterly. These meetings are also held in Kingsmead School at 7.30pm. Agendas and confirmation of the dates for these meetings are published on the Parish Council noticeboard and website.