



# From the secretaries of the Bidwell West Community Association

## Minutes - Bidwell West Community Association Annual General Meeting

Updates in italics. Actions in bold.

**Date** Thursday 16th March 2023  
**Time** 19:30  
**Venue** Dunstablians Rugby Club, Bedford Road

1. Acting Chairman's Welcome
  - a. Acting Chairman Tim H, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Tim asked who attended the meeting last year and who was new to the area before explaining more about the Bidwell West Community Association  
The association members are residents, working together, to represent all residents of Bidwell West and build community. Although we can try to address concerns from residents with the appropriate bodies, we are not a management company for the estate. We want to be more than only dealing with issues and complaints, we want to be proactive in organising events and groups, working with local partners to disperse information, and help Bidwell West to be an amazing place to live.
2. Apologies for Absence - Only Samantha from the association not in attendance, due to illness.
3. Approval of the minutes from the last AGM - 26th January 2022 and 9th March 2022
  - a. Minutes were made available to all attendees and were approved by Matt Hawkins and seconded by Paul Stanley
4. Matters arising from the previous AGM
  - a. Bidwell West Primary School

- i. 31st January CBC Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee formally approved. Tuesday, 7th February 2023 CBC Executive formally approved the following recommendation.
 

“Approve the Free School presumption, under section 6A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 for the delivery of a new 2FE (forms of entry, 420 place + 60 place Nursery) primary school, proposed on developer contributed land under the s106 agreement at Bidwell West in Houghton Regis for September 2025.”
- ii. Vik has done a freedom of information request which led to the discovery that the pupil forecast for the Houghton Regis education cluster area was outdated, and that then led to the recognition of need for additional school places. Which moved the process along.
- iii. BWCA management committee have requested to be included as one of the stakeholders, to be consulted as part of the free school process.

High level timetable for competition process	
Report to CS O&S and Exec to request agreement on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free school presumption route</li> <li>• Expenditure (subject to RSC regional director approval of sponsor)</li> </ul>	February 2023
4-week pre-launch consultation	May 2023
Complete specification for DfE Launch Competition	May/ June 2023
Submit details of steps taken to seek proposals and the proposals which have been received, to the ESFA.	June
4 weeks for consideration of proposals Assessment Panel	Autumn term
RSC regional director makes final decision on appointment of sponsor – announce decision	Winter 2023/ Spring 2024
Pre-opening phase, sponsor completes a statutory 6- week consultation.	September 2025
2 form of entry primary school opens in Bidwell West	September 2025

- b. Community Building - David Skinner gave an update
  - i. Temporary building | donated by Baytree Dunstable currently in storage. Waiting for the community land to be transferred from consortium to CBC. We are disappointed this building hasn’t been installed and opened sooner, outside of our control. As soon as we are able to have it installed, we will.
  - ii. Community Centre | around 100 residents engaged in the first round of consultation last year that has helped the charity engage an architect. June 2022 Council exec approved the charity project, pending fully costed business plan. Second phase of consultation in the coming

months to share what is currently being considered following the first consultation, and to check if we're on the right path.

c. Parks and Public Open Spaces

- i. Bellway - site has been completed, however the developer is currently undertaking snagging works. The opening of this play area is due to take place in January 2023. (Obviously this is now late, have chased developer and council to find out why - no update yet)
- ii. Countryside - the play area has been completed but the developer is still finishing works in the road that adjoins the site. This work involved various heavy equipment and it was decided to keep the play area closed to minimise Health and Safety issues. The developer is in the process of appointing a management company to manage the play area, with the view to opening in Spring 2023. (Waiting for an update on this timescale)
- iii. Taylor Wimpey - site has been completed. The developer has not opened the play area as they are in the process of agreeing the management by a private management company. The developer is also waiting for the grass to establish within the site before opening. As such, we expect this play area will be open in March/April. (Waiting for an update on this)
- iv. Urban Park - Parks now being completed. Intention is for them to handed over to HRTC in the next couple months. Pavilion/ changing rooms delayed, opening in the autumn.
- v. We know it's frustrating, but the parks, football pitches and grass areas that are fenced off are for a reason. People breaking can unintentionally cause damage, which delays the handover as the council can't receive them damaged.

d. Allotments

- i. First allotments (terra croft) off Ashberry have been handed over to HRTC and applications have been received. Further allotments are scheduled for within the Countryside development (likely that the allotment site will be laid out mid-late 2024 with handover to HRTC in the first half of 2025.) And Bellway (no timeline for this).

e. Community Safety

- i. There are many significant conversations and meetings happening at the moment around Bidwell West involving residents, Community association, council and police. It can feel like very little is happening, but often in these situations actions being taken are intentionally behind the scenes as it is gathering evidence, establishing patrols and surveillance.
- ii. As residents we can continue to report crimes, suspicious behaviour and information directly with the police online. This helps establish

what's going on, and informs so many other decisions, not just responding to that individual issue.

- iii. We can't begin to imagine how upsetting and worrying it is for those of our neighbours who have experienced break-ins and theft. And we know the anxiety that many others are feeling because of this. But also, we have an incredible growing community of good neighbours here looking out for each other. Police and council have continually commented that the wealth of intelligence and information they have received from this community is unprecedented for a new estate where rarely neighbours know each other this well, this soon.
- iv. Previous Activities
  - 1. 18th June 2022 - hosted a community safety event with Cllrs and community safety team. Planning to host another one.
  - 2. Streetwatch patrols have happened, residents are welcome to get involved with this.
  - 3. Community action involving door to door conversations around antisocial behaviour.

## 5. Reports/Updates

### a. Interim Chairman - Tim Haines

- i. Tim gave this thanks to the management committee - both current and those who have stepped down since their election last year.
- ii. Tim talked of his and the groups engagement with council, councillors, developers etc.
- iii. Opening of Dominos/ Coffee shop - challenges around co-op as they've started the lease but haven't started to fit out the shop unit yet. They're being chased as much as possible to find out what's going on.
- iv. Provision of bikes, bus route (know issues and transport plan has been submitted for the area), Bins (know they're not being emptied).
- v. Past Community Events
  - 1. Queens Jubilee Fun Day | 800 residents attended, over £3000 raised for charities.
  - 2. Summer fun events | Magic show and Teaching Tallon Animal encounters (with HRTC, at Dunstablians) well attended. Bug Lab in blue water wood.
  - 3. Christmas Market
  - 4. Carol singing in the square
  - 5. Litter picks.
- vi. Tim then handed the floor to Jane Bellard from Bidwell Water Savers. Bidwell Water Savers is aiming for the area to be the first water neutral housing development in the world. Looking at bringing down the daily use across the development. They will also be coming to the Easter event where more information will be available.

b. Secretaries Report

- i. Charity Registration - In Samantha's absence, Tim gave an update on this. We have tried to register as a charitable organisation, but it was declined based on the membership of the charity. This is ongoing work and we will need to propose changes to the community association's constitution, which will be addresses at a meeting later in the year.
- ii. Tim once again acknowledged the former members of the management committee (Tim, Nicky, Rob and Rick) and thanked them for their hard work when part of the committee. Tim also thanked Sam and Matt for their hard work in organising meetings and writing up minutes and agendas for each meeting.

c. Treasurers Report

- i. Paul gave an update on the community associations finances. Grants have been received for events and we were able to give donations to NICU unit at the Luton and Dunstable Hospital of £1020 from the Jubilee event.

The following letter was received the following day in relation to this donation:



Bidwell West Community Association  
12 Colosseum Drive  
Houghton Regis  
Bedfordshire  
LU5 6QD

**Luton & Dunstable University Hospital**  
Lewsey Road  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU4 0DZ

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Tel: 01582 491 166

Dear Bidwell West Community Association,



We are so grateful for your kind and generous donation of £1020.00 for our NICU given to help support the needs of patients, their families, and those in our charge at the Luton and Dunstable Hospital.

As you may know, each year, many patients receive care from a clinical ward or specialist department, some of which are reliant on financial donations like yours to help facilitate the acquisition of equipment and comfort items that enables them to boost patient wellbeing.

This letter is to say "Thank you" for electing to support the Luton and Dunstable Hospital.

Your compassion is truly appreciated by hospital staff, patients, and by their families.

Yours sincerely

*Qandeel*

Qandeel Shabbir

Charity Assistant

[Qandeel.shabbir@ldh.nhs.uk](mailto:Qandeel.shabbir@ldh.nhs.uk)

01582 718259

- ii. The opening of an association bank account is ongoing
- iii. Future donations are welcomed for events and generally (when the bank account is opened).

## 2022-2023 Balance

	Total	Jubilee	Christmas Market	Easter Egg
Income	£4,054.07	£3,452.87	£531.20	£70.00
Expenditure	£2,686.22	£2,252.87	£433.35	
Balance	£1367.85	£1,200.00	£97.85	£70.00

## 2023 Budget

	Total	Easter Egg	Future Events
Income	£1,570.00	£570.00	£1,000
Expenditure	£600.00	£600.00	TBD
Balance	£970.00	£970.00	TBD

### 6. Management Committee Elections

- a. There are up to 5 spaces available on the management committee. There have been 6 nominations for these spaces.
- b. Everyone at the AGM has a vote and can vote for up to 5 candidates each.
- c. Must have over 50% of votes to get onto the committee.
- d. Jane Bellard (Bidwell West Water Savers) and Evi Richardson (Local Resident) volunteered to count the ballot forms.
- e. The vote took place and the announcement of who has been elected to join the committee will be done tomorrow (Friday 17th March) rather than at the meeting to save any embarrassment about not getting enough votes etc.
- f. Anyone who wants details of the votes can request these from the management committee.
- g. Elected to the management committee are (in no particular order):
  - i. Garry James Butterfield (Thorn Fields/Taylor Wimpey)
  - ii. Christopher Clark-Bailey (Brambleside/Bellway)
  - iii. Ryan Duffield (Oakwell Place/Abbey)
  - iv. Amy Garrod (Thorn Fields/Taylor Wimpey)
  - v. Anita Potter (Millard Grange/Countryside)

### 7. Sub Committee

- a. We are looking for volunteers to be part of sub committee groups for events and other items. If anyone would like to get involved, then they are advised to get in touch with the management committee.

**8. Provisional upcoming events**

- a. An Easter Egg Hunt is planned for Easter Sunday. DONations have been received and we will be buying 250-300 eggs for the event, unless more registrations come in before the event
- b. Provisional events as follows:

## 2023 Events (Provisional)

Date	Event
Sunday, 9 April 2023	Easter egg hunt
Sunday, 7 May 2023	Coronation Big Lunch
Monday, 8 May 2023	Litter Pick (Coronation - the big help out)
Sunday, 23 July 2023	Litter Pick
Saturday, 26 August 2023	Fun Day
Saturday, 21 October 2023	Litter Pick
Saturday, 2 December 2023	Christmas Market (11am-3pm)
Saturday, 23 December 2023	Carols in the square

**9. Any other business**

- a. "The Square" where is it?
  - i. Behind the coffee shop in the car park
- b. Can we donate Easter Eggs?
  - i. Not necessarily for the event as we want all eggs to be the same and we've received funding for them. If we need more we will come to the residents. But you could potentially look at supplying a donation as a raffle prize
- c. Allotments - where are they and how do you apply?
  - i. Contact Houghton Regis town council to declare your interest in a plot and get on to the waiting list. The next allocation won't be ready for around a year though.
- d. Dog Waste Bins - where are they?
  - i. There is one on the path on Bellway, opposite the Linden estate. This one is currently over flowing and there is a promise of more on the way.



We have been informed that the general bins can be used as multi purpose bins.

- e. When will the road markings be added to the roads?
  - i. Highways won't mark them until the roads are adopted by the council. There is a likelihood that when they are marked that there will be a lot more double yellow lines to prevent parking on the main roads, though this is tbc.
- f. When will Thorn Road be opening? And when will the road be surfaced?
  - i. Some of Thorn Road is yet to be adopted by the council. They won't resurface the road until then. Some of the road surfacing will be done by the consortium in the mean time. As a reminder, you can report road issues on the Fix My Street app or website. This goes directly to the relevant council to deal with.
- g. When will the traffic lights on Thorn Road start working?
  - i. Again, needs to be adopted by the council. The lights next to the coffee shop are likely to be longer before they're on due to the construction of the school opposite.
- h. Can local businesses offer discounts to local residents?
  - i. Yes! Use the facebook page to advertise (1st of each month) or the Buy & Sell Group anytime. Also, on the Bidwell West website there is a local business guide. We're also looking to kick start the local newsletter again and could offer advertising space with this. Maybe a local residents mailing list can also be used
- i. What is happening with the closed off road outside Linden? And the dirt on the road here too.
  - i. Email has been sent to planning enforcement department at the council to say that the roads are not being kept clean. Thorn Road is currently closed, but not by the council it seems. Not sure yet on when it will be opened up again.
- j. Street Lights are not working in a couple of areas around the estate and some areas are very dark at night.
  - i. Street lights need to be adopted by the council along with the roads. And when building work is taking place, a lot of lighting is turned off while ongoing. There is no lighting on the brook path, as per the planning for it.
- k. What is happening with the Co-Op?
  - i. They have taken over the lease of the unit and are paying rent on it. But no work has begun on the shop fit out. We're trying to get answers on this from the landlords as well as the Co-Op itself.
- l. When is the tender on the current Bus by Grant Palmer?
  - i. Believe it is 5 years
- m. Can the public transport for the area be improved?

- i. Transport plan has been submitted for the area which should link Bidwell West to the surrounding areas. Some other routes may be able to come through the area too.
- n. Litter is an ongoing issue. Can something be done?
  - i. More bins are needed. This is a fact. Challenge people who you see littering if you feel comfortable in doing so. Community litter picks will continue every few months.
- o. Why were the bins removed from outside the Taylor Wimpey development?
  - i. Not sure why they have been removed. Will check with the council.
- p. Is there a route planned to get from Bidwell West to the major train links?
  - i. travel plan is to link the development to other stations eventually - Luton, Leagrave and MK for example.

Tim thanked everyone for attending and invited people to have a chat with the committee and eat some more pizza that was kindly donated by the local Dominos.

Meeting closed at 21:00.

