

# LAVERSTOCK & FORD PARISH COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

ENSURING THE PARISH IS A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE FEELS PART OF A SAFE & SUPPORTIVE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Our staff team and councillors work hard to engage with, and listen to, our residents. With the help of a team of volunteers, the bi-monthly Parish Council Newsletter is delivered to every house and business in the Parish. Our new website provides information accessibility for all and in our efforts to reach all members of our community we have a vibrant social media presence. We continue to support local groups and initiatives through our grants programme. We work with the Police and other agencies to address community issues.



## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

THAT DEVELOPMENT IN THE PARISH RESULTS IN A THRIVING SEMI-RURAL COMMUNITY WITH EXCELLENT FACILITIES AND HERITAGE ASSETS

After extensive public consultation councillors and volunteers drew up the Laverstock and Ford Communities Neighbourhood Plan. This plan strives to protect areas of significant importance to our communities, amenities and heritage within the Parish and to ensure that future development meets high standards of design, environmental performance. The Parish Council provides a voice for residents as a statutory consultee for all development proposals within the Parish.



## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

STRIVING TO PROMOTE & SUPPORT SAFE, SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL ACROSS THE PARISH

The Parish Council is a member of Wiltshire Councils Southern Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group, where many initiatives have been progressed, including 20mph zones in Milford, parking restrictions at the schools in Laverstock, and our Speed Indicator Device which is used in Ford, Old Sarum and Laverstock. A Volunteer Footpath Warden group has been formed alongside a Speedwatch Team. We seek to improve cycle routes within the parish.



## CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENT

DELIVERING INITIATIVES TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE OUR ENVIRONMENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Our Environmental Policy focuses on reducing pollution and encouraging sustainability. These principles continue in our Neighbourhood Plan. Our open spaces are managed to protect and enhance bio-diversity, with chalk meadow grassland and dedicated wild flower areas. Through the Parish Environmental Action Group, councillors, staff and volunteers work enthusiastically to help improve our environment.



## PUBLIC AMENITY

PROVIDE ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY SPACES FOR PLAY, RECREATION, COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND THE ENJOYMENT OF NATURE

The Parish Council maintains 23 Play Areas, 3 outdoor sports courts, trim trail equipment and a skatepark, as well as nearly 40 acres of Public Open Space, including amenity grassland, wild flower meadow and grassland and wooded areas. We work with volunteers to provide 3 indoor meeting spaces for our community.



## ACCOUNTABILITY

TAKING OUR DUTY TO ACT RESPONSIBLY, LAWFULLY, AND IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF OUR COMMUNITIES

We do our best to carry out all of our work in a professional way which provides residents with value for money and opportunities to be heard and participate in decision making





## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

ENSURING THE PARISH IS A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE FEELS  
PART OF A SAFE & SUPPORTIVE LOCAL COMMUNITY

*LOVE YOUR PARISH: An ongoing campaign to engage with the community, raising awareness of the work and scope of the Parish Council, through public events, meetings, Parish Newsletters and other communication channels. Our staff team and councillors work hard to engage with, and listen to, our residents. In early 2023 we launched a new website, meeting the latest standards on accessibility for all and providing a wealth of information. Social Media pages have also been introduced, in our efforts to reach all members of our community. We continue to support local groups and initiatives through our grants programme, and have helped fund youth activities, the community farm and improvements to community centres, as well as some of the larger groups such as Victim Support, Citizens Advice and St Johns Ambulance.*

**ACTION 1.** May 2023 - The Parish Council attended community days and events during summer 2022, and are planning to attend more this summer, also working with the Land Trust & Wiltshire Wildlife Trust to run a Community Day at Castle Hill Country Park in Sept 23. Articles continue to appear in the Parish Newsletter; consultation and engagement activities devised for Play Park installation and community events in 2023.

**NEWSLETTER/MEDIA:** Improve written communications via the Parish Council newsletter. With the help of a team of volunteers, the Parish Council Newsletter is produced bi-monthly and delivered to every house and business in the Parish. Building relations with external local press and media.

**ACTION 2.** May 2023 – Continue to work to build a network of external media contacts to promote the work the Parish Council does and reach as many residents as possible.

**YOUTH PROVISION:** Ensure that access to youth facilities and activities are available to all

**ACTION 3.** May 2023 - Working with Wiltshire Councils Southern Area Board, the Parish Council have allocated funds in the 2023/24 budget to improve youth provision in the Parish. We are supporting Old Sarum Youth Club with funding and are working with Community First in investigate setting up Youth Clubs in Bishopdown Farm and Laverstock.

**ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR:** To work with partner organisations to address the issues that cause most concern for our residents, including littering and anti-social behaviour.

**ACTION 4.** May 2023 - The Police and Crime Commissioner has been invited to attend the Annual Parish Council meeting, and councillors continue to engage regularly with the local Police team. Meetings have been held, or are planned, with local housing associations and community groups to discuss how the Parish Council can help address such problems. The Parish Council continues to support community litter picks throughout the parish in partnership with local agencies, for example, the 'Litter Pick Me Up' campaign in April & May 2023.



## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

THAT DEVELOPMENT IN THE PARISH RESULTS IN A THRIVING SEMI-RURAL COMMUNITY WITH EXCELLENT FACILITIES AND HERITAGE ASSETS

*Between 2017 and 2022, hundreds of hours were dedicated by councillors and volunteers to draw up the Laverstock and Ford Communities Neighbourhood Plan. Based on extensive public consultation with residents and businesses within the Parish, the Plan strives to protect those areas of significant importance to our communities, protect the heritage within the Parish and to ensure that any future development meets high standards of design, amenities and environmental performance. After many rounds of analysis, consultation and review, the plan was formally adopted by Wiltshire Council in October 2022 which means that it now forms part of the Wiltshire Council Development Plan, and its policies will be given full weight when assessing planning applications relating to land within the parish boundary. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee for any planning and development within the Parish. Our ward councillors consider all applications within their area, with larger or controversial applications considered by all councillors. Councillors are issued guidance with our Planning Policy and guidance documents, and can attend training organised by the local association of local councils. This ensures that all applications are dealt with fairly and professionally, taking into account the views of our residents and the needs of our communities. We continue to work on the projects detailed:*

The council devotes a considerable amount of time to major planning applications such as those currently underway in relation to Old Sarum Airfield and Church Road. We seek to ensure community members are aware of such applications and are encouraged to participate in the process and we use our local knowledge to ensure that at every stage of the process issues such as heritage, landscape, traffic and environmental impact are considered.

### **PLANNING POLICY:** Review of Planning Guidance for Councillors

**ACTION 1.** April 2023 - a review of the current Planning Policy to include a new 'Developer Protocol', together with a review of the guidance document to be presented at next Operations Meeting.

**ACTION 2.** May 2023 - The Parish Council continues to engage with planning consultants and residents over the possible plans for development on the airfield.

**ACTION 3.** May 2023 - Working closely with the Land Trust and Wiltshire Wildlife, the Parish Council continues to work towards improving Castle Hill Country Park.



## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

STRIVING TO PROMOTE & SUPPORT SAFE, SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL ACROSS THE PARISH

*Through both its Neighbourhood Plan and Environment Policy, the Parish Council strives to promote and support safe and sustainable travel across the parish. It is a member of Wiltshire Councils Southern Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG), where many initiatives have been progressed, including 20mph zones in Milford, parking restrictions at the schools in Laverstock, and our Speed Indicator Device which is used in Laverstock, Ford and Old Sarum.*

### **SPEEDING**

Establish a Community Speed Watch team of trained volunteers to target areas of concern.

**ACTION 1.** May 2023: Parish Cllr Jones completed training for the Team Leader role. Several other volunteers have now completed training in the use of the equipment. Access has been given to a shared camera with the Milford Speed Watch Group. Work is ongoing with Wiltshire Police to establish appropriate sites in the parish.

Speed Indicator Device SID

**ACTION 2.** May 2023: Our SID is part of a county project where data from multiple devices is collated and submitted to Wiltshire Police to help inform their interventions. Sites continue to be assessed within the Parish.

### **CYCLE NETWORK**

Working with LHFIG to provide/improve cycle links, in particular links through Ford to connect Old Sarum/Longhedge with the city

**ACTION 3.** May 2023: Assessment works were carried out by Sustrans in January 2023 and their report/recommendations are expected shortly. A bid to the Active Travel Fund has been made to investigate how access from the Ford Road through to Bishopdown Farm, along Green Lane, could be improved to make this a safe walking and cycling route into the city.

**ACTION 4.** May 2023 The Parish Environmental Action group are exploring the promotion of cycle and walking routes

**ACTION 5.** May 2023 The Footpath Warden Group is surveying footpaths for issues and obstacles



## CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENT

DELIVERING INITIATIVES TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE OUR ENVIRONMENT  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER AGENCIES

*Through careful management of the land, buildings and open spaces that we own, and working with other groups and organisations, the Parish Council strives to introduce initiatives to protect and improve our environment. In 2022 we adopted our Environmental Policy, focusing on reducing pollution and encouraging sustainability. These principles continue in our Neighbourhood Plan, where new planning applicants are encouraged to focus on sustainable energy provisions. We are currently working on the following:*

### **BIODIVERSITY**

Our open spaces are managed to protect and enhance bio-diversity, with chalk meadow grassland and dedicated wild flower areas. In January 2023, the council launched the Parish Environmental Action Group who work enthusiastically to help improve our environment.

**ACTION 1.** May 2023 - 130 whips from Queens Green Canopy project have already been planted at sites on Castle Hill Country Park and Old Sarum Country Park. With significant numbers of trees felled this year due to ash dieback, we continue to investigate suitable species for replanting.

**ACTION 2.** May 2023 We are considering sewing wildflower strips at Norman Drive Open Space and working with the Land Trust to develop wildflower planting at the Castle Hill Country Park

### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

Emergency Plan and Sustainable Energy:

**ACTION 3.** May 2023 - during the coming year, the council will be working to create an Emergency Plan, covering flood, drought, power outages etc, and working to identify emergency community resilience hubs providing safe and warm spaces for vulnerable residents.

**ACTION 4.** May 2023 - the Parish Council continues to work with management committees at our buildings to identify ways to reduce energy consumption and provide renewable energy sources such as the use of LED lightbulbs and the provision of solar panels.

### **FACILITIES**

**ACTION 5.** May 2023 - The Parish Council have already provided a Community Garden at Longhedge, but we would like to provide allotments for those wishing to grow their own produce. Suitable sites are scarce, but we continue to work with the Land Trust and others to try and facilitate allotment provision within the parish



## PUBLIC AMENITY

PROVIDE ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY SPACES FOR PLAY, RECREATION, COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND THE ENJOYMENT OF NATURE

*The Parish Council owns and maintains 23 Play Areas, three outdoor sports courts, trim trail equipment and a skatepark, as well as nearly 40 acres of Public Open Space, including amenity grassland, wildflower meadow and grassland and wooded areas. We have an established programme of regular inspections, working with professional consultants where necessary, to ensure all our facilities meet high standards. In addition, the Parish Council works closely with the management teams on the areas we own, but are leased, such as River Bourne Community Farm, Castle Hill Country Park and Old Sarum Community Centre. The projects detailed below aim to ensure a range of high-quality facilities are available to our residents.*

### **PLAY AREAS**

Continue to work with developers at Longhedge to progress the transfer of a further 5 Play Areas and an Outdoor Gym, on completion, to the Parish Council

**ACTION 1.** April 2023 - 4 Play Areas are nearing completion and awaiting final inspection prior to handover. One further play area still to be built. The Outdoor Gym is almost complete and will be opened at the same time as the adjacent play area.

Replace/refurbish the outdated play areas transferred from Wiltshire Council in 2022

**ACTION 2.** May 2023 - St Judes (Bishopdown Farm) and Partridge Way (Old Sarum) have already been completed. St Peters Road (Bishopdown Farm) and St Lukes Close (Bishopdown Farm) are nearing completion. Contractors have been appointed for Sycamore Drive (Bishopdown Farm) and Drake Close (Bishopdown Farm) with works planned for summer 2023.

### **FOOTPATHS & RIGHTS OF WAY**

As part of the Parish Environmental Action Group, a team of volunteer footpath wardens has been established, to help keep these important rights of way clear and accessible to residents.

**ACTION 3.** April 2023 - the first wardens were inducted in March and have started work in Laverstock. A process will be established for residents to flag areas that need attention.

*Continued over.*



# PUBLIC AMENITY

PROVIDE ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY SPACES FOR PLAY,  
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ENJOYMENT OF NATURE

## **PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

We are developing a Tree Policy to formalise our current inspection arrangements and ensure residents are aware of our ambitions in preserving trees wherever possible.

**ACTION 4.** April 2023 - Much research has been done to draw up a proposed document, with advice from professional arboricultural consultants. The final policy is to be presented at our next Operations Committee meeting, and then presented to Full Council for adoption.

## **LONGHEDGE COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE**

We continue to work with developers to ensure works completed to specification prior to handover.

**ACTION 5.** April 2023 - developers continue to work on laying out the Community Open Space but parts have recently been opened. Inspections will be carried out to ensure all pathways, planting and landscaping has been completed to standard and in accordance with the planning specification.

## **CASTLE HILL COUNTRY PARK**

Regular quarterly meetings are held with the Land Trust and new managing partners, to ensure management of the Country Park meets residents needs, whilst protecting the integrity and biodiversity of the site.

**ACTION 6.** Ongoing with the Country Park Working Group

## **HAMPTON PARK PAVILION**

Following expiry of the lease to Wiltshire Council, we continue to work with the Pavilion owner to secure the long-term future of this community asset.

**ACTION 7.** April 2023 - The Parish Council have entered into a temporary lease with the existing owner, to enable the Pavilion Trust to continue to operate the building. We continue to work with the owner to negotiate the freehold transfer of the Pavilion to the Parish Council, so securing its future for the residents of Bishopdown Farm.

## **OLD SARUM COMMUNITY CENTRE**

The centre is leased to a charitable incorporated organisation. They have been struggling to recruit more trustees, and several of the current trustees wish to step down.

**ACTION 8.** April 2023 - The Parish Council have been working with the trustees and volunteers at the centre. An additional Trustee, as well as a new Centre Manager were appointed by the trustees and the Parish Council will be assisting with funding to ensure the continued operation of the Community Centre. The Parish Council continue to work with the trustees and volunteers to promote the centre and identify improvements.



## ACCOUNTABILITY

TAKING OUR DUTY TO ACT RESPONSIBLY, LAWFULLY,  
AND IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF OUR COMMUNITIES

### **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

*The council reviews its governing documents, policies and procedures regularly. It is a member of the Wiltshire Association for Local Councils and the Clerk is a member of the Society for Local Council Clerks. Councillors and Officers undertake training relevant to their roles, and regular and transparent reporting on our actions are posted on the website in the form of agendas, meeting reports and minutes.*

### **ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION, STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS**

ACTION 1. May 2023 - documents are based on the model guidelines issued by the National Association of Local Councils. Changes have already been made this year to allow for the councils transition to online banking, and legislative changes to contract thresholds. No changes are recommended at the Annual Parish Council Meeting for May 23.

### **GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

ACTION 2. May 2023 - in order to apply for the General Power of Competence, the Council must have a CiLCA qualified Clerk and at least two thirds of total councillors/seats (16) being elected. Insufficient elected councillors means this is not possible at this stage. To be reviewed at next elections May 2025

### **QUALITY COUNCIL AWARDS**

ACTION 3. May 2023 - To investigate Quality Council Award Scheme administered by National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

### **COUNCILLOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

ACTION 4. May 2023 - Councillors, Clerk and the Communications

Officer continue to promote the Parish Council and the valuable role councillors play to encourage filling of vacant seats, either by co-option or candidates standing at next elections.

### **SUCCESSION PLANNING**

ACTION 5. May 2023 - Clerk and Councillors to discuss succession planning over the coming year, for committee members, chairs and officers

### **ASSET REPLACEMENT**

Produce long-term asset replacement strategy and financial forecast

ACTION 6. May 2023 - detailed forecasts/cost planning to be done to inform budget requirements