

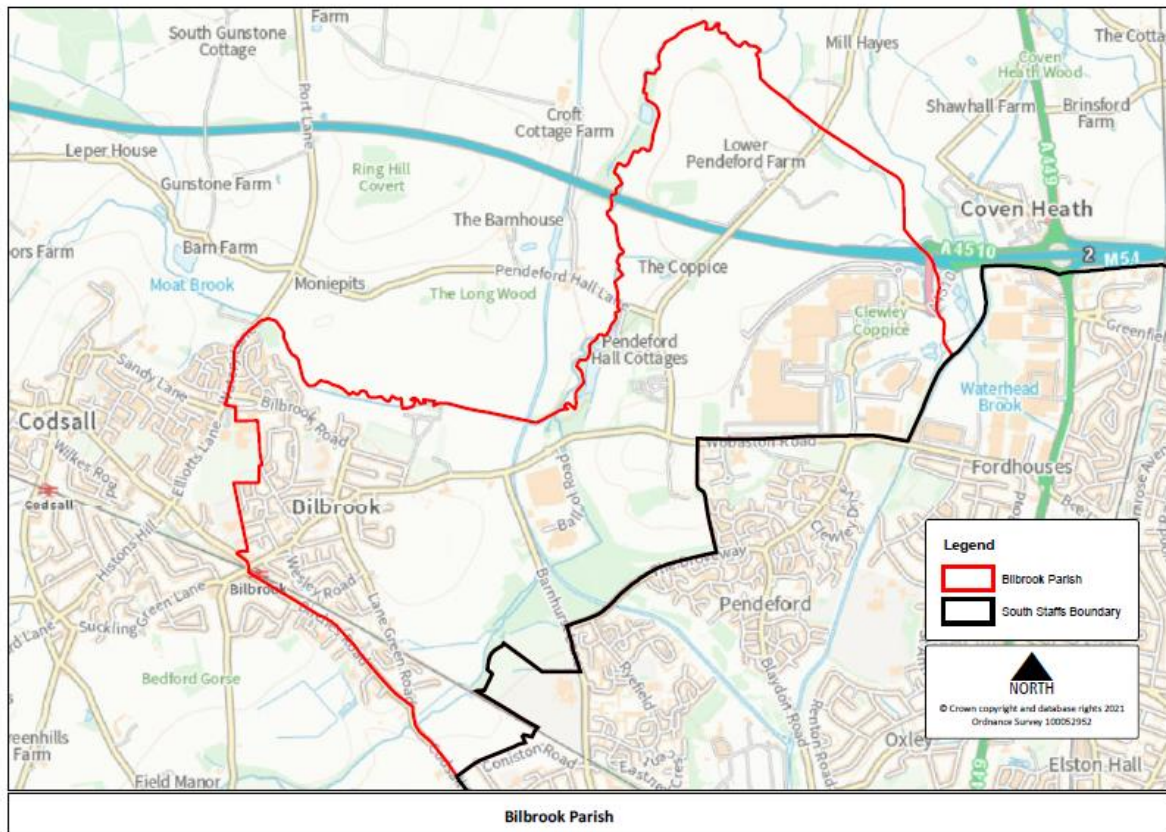
BILBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

Business Plan 2023-26

Introduction

The purpose of this Business Plan is to detail Bilbrook Parish Council's vision and key priorities on what it can achieve alone or by working with partners¹. The plan aims to help Bilbrook Parish Council be proactive rather than reactive in its decision-making by operating in a more coordinated and consistent way. The Business Plan should help our local community to have a better understanding of what we do and improve accountability.

Bilbrook Civil Parish Profile



Bilbrook is a semi-rural civil parish in South Staffordshire and has a border with the City of Wolverhampton. It has 4,116² residents mainly in the South-West of the Parish. Bilbrook comes from “billers” (an old word for watercress), which grew in the local Moat “brook”.

Large areas of the Parish are agricultural and there is a high-tech business park although most residents are employed outside of the area. The village is likely to have significant and rapid growth, with a large residential estate of over 848 homes seeking development approval.

The Moat Brook runs along the northwest border of the Parish into the River Penk at Pendeford Nature Reserve to the east of the Parish. The River Penk joins the River Sow, which joins the River Trent, which joins the River Humber and eventually flows into the North Sea from the Humber Estuary, near Grimsby, Lincolnshire.

The Village has amongst other things a village pub, a church, a First and a Middle School, a Village Hall and a thriving village shopping area.

¹ Partners include but are not limited to South Staffordshire District Council, Staffordshire County Council, South Staffs Housing Association, Support Staffordshire and Staffordshire Police.

² 2021 Census

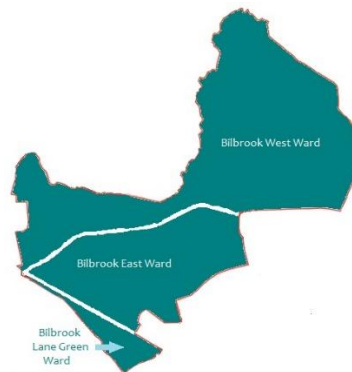
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The Civil Parish of Bilbrook has several stunning walks and public footpaths that cross through our beautiful parish.



Bilbrook Parish Council



Bilbrook Parish Council is the first tier of civil local government, closest to the community and has an important role in promoting and representing the interests of residents. The council, which is non-political, is made up of 13 volunteer Councillors from three wards. Elections take place every four years, the last one being in May 2023, when 10 councillors who stood for election were returned unopposed and 3 appointed by co-option. The Parish Council gained the General Power of Competence in 2022 when the Clerk passed CiLCA.

The Parish Council owns and maintains property and land in the Parish on behalf of the community.

The Council elects a Chairman and Vice-Chairman annually at the Council's Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May and reports to the wider electorate at the Annual Parish Meeting, which is normally held in April.

The Parish Council meets on the first Wednesday of the month (except August) at Bilbrook Village Hall, Joeys Lane, Bilbrook, WV8 1JL. All meetings are open to the

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public. A public forum at the start of the meeting is set aside for the public to raise any issues with the Council.

Councillors are unpaid and receive no remuneration for their time spent on parish duties other than mileage for council-related travel at the standard government rate applicable at the time.

One of Bilbrook Parish Council's most important responsibilities is the management, maintenance and improvement of its community assets; namely the Twentyman playing fields (including the skatepark field), Bilbrook Allotments and the Grazing Field on Pendeford Mill Lane (known as Bank's Field). The Parish Council is also responsible for Bilbrook Village Green which is common land looked after by South Staffs District Council.

The Twentyman Playing Fields were gifted to the Parish Council in the 1960s and since then have been well-used for sport and recreation. Parts of the fields along with the Parish Council-owned village hall are managed by a separate charity (The Twentyman Playfields Association)

Our Vision:

To make Bilbrook Parish a safe and stimulating place to live and work within.

Our priorities:

1) Excellent services - We endeavour to solely or with others provide efficient and responsive services, ensure repeat business, high levels of satisfaction and low numbers of complaints.

2) Growth and development of our community spaces - We will seek to grow the role of The Parish Council by enhancing our community facilities whilst addressing climate change issues and protecting and improving leisure and recreational facilities.

3) Excellent Governance – We will work to ensure both councillors and receive training to ensure effective internal controls.

4) Community engagement – We will encourage local democracy, inclusivity and engagement with communities using a wide range of methods³ providing the opportunity for comment and involvement in decision-making.

Key Documents

The key documents that support the Parish Councils priorities include:

- **The Code of Conduct** - encourages a high standard of conduct from councillors when they are acting in their official capacity.
- **The Action Plan** - gives a clear focus of council activity.
- **Community Engagement Policy** - details how Bilbrook Parish Council is committed to engaging with and empowering its residents/communities so that they can be actively involved in decisions that affect them

³ Platforms include a website – www.bilbrookparishcouncil.gov.uk, Social media, The Bilbrook Buzz newsletter, Two noticeboards and Community Events

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- **The Emerging Neighbourhood plan** - will support development across the parish and includes issues raised by the community as part of the consultation process.
- **Three-Year Budget** - sets the costs of our activities and how they will be funded.
- **Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Statement of Internal Controls, Risk Assessments, the Scheme of Delegation and committee/working group terms of reference** – help ensure the Parish Council has a sound system of governance and internal control.
- **The Environmental Policy;** recognises the council's responsibilities to minimise adverse impacts and maximise positive impacts on the Environment.

Resources

As with many organisations, our greatest asset is our people: our staff, unpaid Councillors and volunteers. These individuals work tirelessly towards improving the parish for the community that they support.

The precept for 2023-24 was £97,500. Income is also generated from allotment lettings, the Lawn Lane Solar Farm, renting of Parish land for grazing and actively applying for grants to support our projects

Budget 2023-24		Prior Year	Budget	Actual to date	To go	Forecast	Budget	Budget +1	Budget +2	2022-23 Forecast v 2023-24 Budget
Budget Heading		2021-22	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	
10	Precept	87,000	92,000	92,000		92,000	97,500	101,400	104,442	6%
20	VAT Repayment	6,922		7,768		7,768				0%
30	Solar Farm	5,086	2,450	-	-	-	-	2,450	2,450	0%
40	Land Rent	2,430	2,430	2,430		2,430	2,430	2,430	2,430	0%
50	Allotment Rent	679	860	860		860	1,530	880	880	78%
60	Grants / Donations	12,751		66,645	26,250	92,895				0%
70	Bank Interest - Barclays	5		13		13				0%
80	Bank Interest Nationwide	38								0%
90	Other Income		-							0%
Non-Precept Income		27,911	5,740	77,716	26,250	103,966	3,960	5,760	5,760	10%
Total Receipts		114,911	97,740	169,716	26,250	195,966	101,460	107,160	110,202	-48%
100	Staff Costs	27,298	36,646	24,177	12,790	36,967	39,109	41,070	43,140	6%
110	Administration Costs	2,157	2,650	2,799	873	3,672	3,824	3,470	3,010	4%
115	Office/Hall Hire	264	4,902	2,830	1,136	3,966	5,088	5,350	5,620	28%
120	Personnel Cost (Training/travel)	1,220	1,600	182	1,418	1,600	1,500	1,360	1,220	-6%
130	Insurance/Audit/Legal & Professional	7,669	7,940	5,107	11,410	16,517	6,210	5,580	5,870	-62%
140	Subscriptions	879	1,140	738	375	1,113	1,110	1,150	1,190	0%
150	Elections	2,094	3,160	-	1,000	-	1,000	3,500	3,500	#DIV/0!
160	Grants/Donations	3,883	4,000	2,455	1,545	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	0%
170	Open Spaces/Village Improvements	30,570	36,517	94,275	17,311	111,586	20,772	21,791	22,424	-81%
180	Allotments	1,418	860	814	300	1,114	1,530	1,070	1,080	37%
185	Community Engagement	682	8,850	4,891	2,156	7,047	5,849	1,692	1,690	-17%
190	Christmas Lights Switch on	8,722	9,900	524	10,038	10,563	11,883	9,740	9,977	12%
200	Remembrance Day	257	670	98	590	688	130	130	130	-81%
210	Civic Sunday	-	500	-	-	-	500	500	500	
220	Allowances	-	400	61	-	61	400	400	400	556%
240	Misc / Contingency (includes Jubilee & Coronations Events)	-	4,000	-	-	-	4,000	4,000	4,000	#DIV/0!
300	Reserves (Ring Fenced)	-	59,540	-	-	-	65,176	-	-	
Total Payments		87,114	183,275	138,951	60,942	198,894	172,081	104,803	107,752	43%
Receipts less Payments			- 85,535	30,764	- 34,692	- 2,928	- 70,621	2,357	2,451	
Not covered by ring fenced reserves			- 25,995	30,764	- 34,692	- 2,928	- 5,445	2,357	2,451	

Date of Review	Description of Revision
Sept 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The population changed based on the 2021 census. • Term dates changed following the 2023 elections. • Budget figures changed to 2023-24.
Sept 2022	New policy. (Requirement of LCAS Quality Award)