

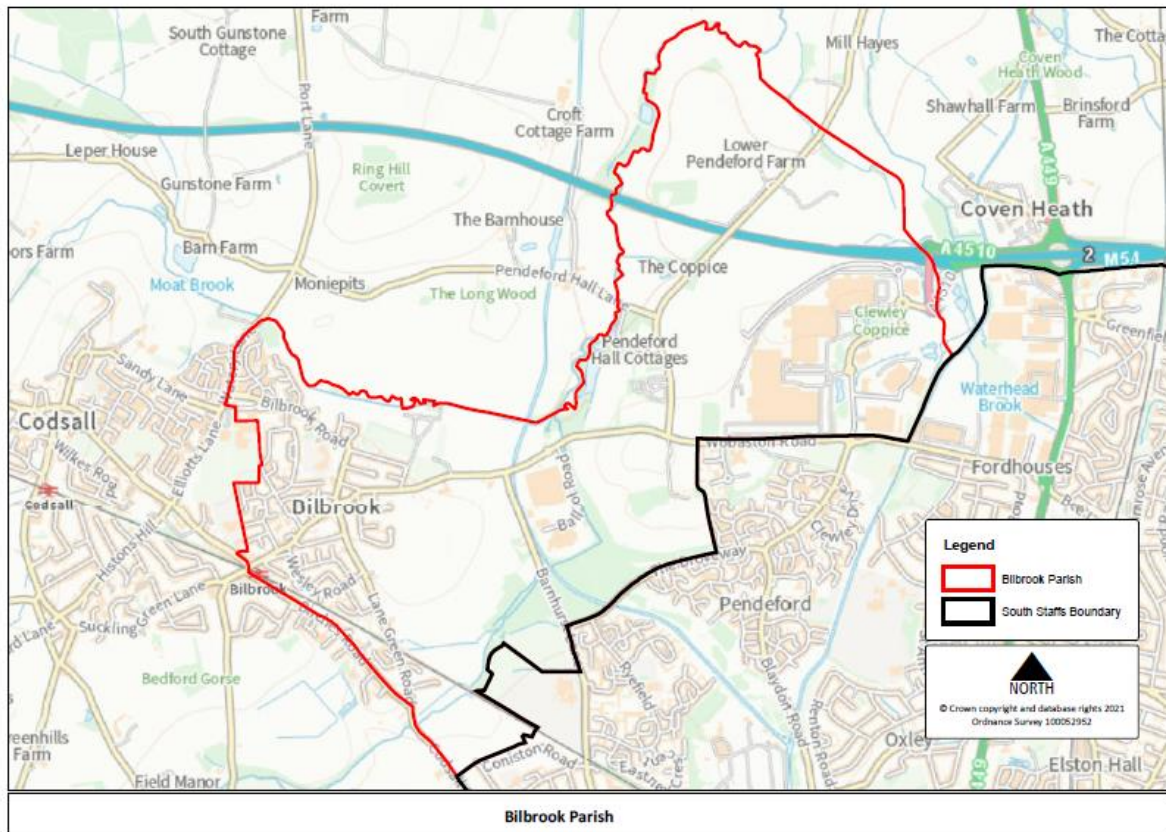
BILBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

Business Plan 2024-26

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

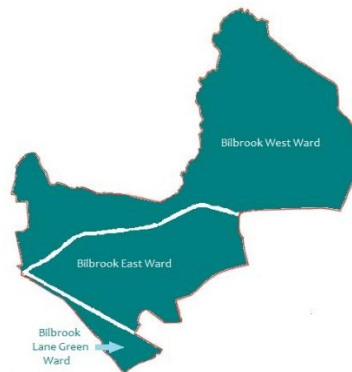
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The Civil Parish of Bilbrook has several stunning walks and public footpaths that cross through our beautiful parish.



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.

5) Sustainable procurement – We will consider environmental, social, and governance factors when buying goods and services.

6) Environmental impacts – We will consider the environmental impact of our projects.

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

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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
- **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 2024-25 is £105,000. 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

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Budget 2024-25		Prior Year	Budget	Actual to date	To go	Forecast	Budget	Budget +1	Budget +2
Budget Heading		2022-23	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
10	Precept	92,000	97,500	97,500		97,500	105,000	109,200	112,476
20	VAT Repayment	7,768		22,195		22,195			
30	Solar Farm	-		2,990	-	2,990	2,990	2,990	2,990
40	Land Rent	2,430	2,430	1,215	1,215	2,430	2,430		
50	Allotment Rent	965	1,530	602	880	1,482	880	880	880
60	Grants / Donations	93,395		6,735	16,500	23,235			
70	Bank Interest - Barclays	96		156		156			
80	Bank Interest Nationwide	480				-			
90	Other Income	3,363	5,328	2,906	1,069	3,975	5,901	£6,200	£6,510
Non-Precept Income		108,497	9,288	36,799	19,664	56,463	12,201	10,070	10,380
Total Receipts		200,497	106,788	134,299	19,664	153,963	117,201	119,270	122,856
100	Staff Costs	40,730	44,405	24,560	22,922	47,482	58,271	61,180	64,240
110	Administration Costs	3,434	3,924	1,941	2,247	4,188	5,070	4,770	4,370
115	Office/Hall Hire	4,372	5,088	2,460	2,120	4,580	4,950	5,200	5,460
120	Personnel Cost (Training/travel)	428	1,500	448	692	1,140	1,300	1,180	1,210
130	Insurance/Audit/Legal & Professional	14,462	4,210	3,446	12,942	16,388	5,340	5,060	5,320
140	Subscriptions	959	1,110	603	468	1,071	1,160	1,050	1,090
150	Elections	-	1,000	210	2,500	2,710	2,500	2,500	2,500
160	Grants/Donations	2,455	4,000	-	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
170	Open Spaces	98,190	20,772	13,499	39,540	53,039	20,342	20,969	21,599
180	Allotments	814	1,530	1,587	293	1,880	880	880	880
185	Community Engagement	6,063	6,249	5,949	1,050	6,799	3,950	7,660	4,170
190	Christmas Lights Switch on	8,778	11,883	567	6,942	7,509	10,996	8,414	8,843
200	Remembrance Day	138	130	407	70	477	170	170	170
210	Climate Change	-	-	-	200	200	700	700	700
230	Young People Engagement	-	2,000	-	600	500	2,000	2,100	2,200
240	Other / Contingency	61	4,400	-	-	-	4,400	4,400	4,400
300	Reserves (Ring Fenced)	-	64,526	-	-	-	66,466	-	-
Total Payments		180,883	176,727	55,678	96,586	151,964	192,495	130,233	131,152
Receipts less Payments		19,614	- 69,939	78,621	- 76,922	1,999	- 75,294	- 10,963	- 8,296
Not covered by ring fenced reserves		19,614	- 5,413	78,621	- 76,922	1,999	- 8,828	- 10,963	- 8,296

Date of Review	Description of Revision
Sept 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget figures changed to 2024-25. Fifth & sixth priority added
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)