Old Basing & Lychpit
PARISH COUNCIL

BUSINESS PLAN
2026-2031

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Plan Revised October 2026

INTRODUCTION

The role of local and parish councils is ever changing, with increasing demands on its resources to maintain and improve the lives of its community.

Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council recognises that an effective local council relies on establishing and maintaining the confidence and trust of residents through conducting its activities in a transparent manner. This includes clearly setting out its aims, objectives and future plans, as well as being approachable and consultative. To add value to the community, the Parish Council needs to be relevant to all members of the parish. The Council is focused on achieving outcomes and solutions.

This Business Plan encompasses the Council's key principles and sets out what the Council plans to achieve during the next five years (2026-2031).

The Plan will be monitored and reviewed annually and reported to residents.

THE PARISH

The Parish of Old Basing & Lychpit is the second largest in the Basingstoke & Deane district, covering about 5,300 acres. The two wards of Old Basing and Lychpit are divided by the course of the chalk stream, the River Loddon. The Parish is home to over 7,000 people in more than 3,000 dwellings. According to the 2021 census, 46% of the population are aged over 49 years and 24% are over 65 years old.

Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council owns three main areas of land; a modest area at Belle Vue Road provides an open green space and a children's play area, and a small plot known as Broadhurst Village Green is preserved for community amenity. The main Old Basing Recreation Ground is a larger space, incorporating;

- archery, bowling, cricket, football and tennis facilities
- adult exercise equipment
- a children's play area
- a 'multi use games area' for mixed ball games
- rooms for hire for indoor activities such as pilates and crafts.

To the southeast of the Old Basing Recreation Ground, the Parish Council also owns an allotment site with over 100 plots, a burial ground, a three-bedroom dwelling (The Groundsman's Cottage) and a smaller community space (The Beddington Centre). The access road for these facilities, Riley Lane, is also privately owned by the Parish.

Lychpit Hall is a popular space for indoor health, welfare and social activities. Although owned by Hampshire County Council, this Hall is managed by the Parish Council who hold a long-term lease for the facility. There are several other smaller children's play areas, and a skate park, dotted around the Parish which are owned and managed by the Borough Council. Basing Common provides a great space for walkers and families. The southernmost area of the Common has been turned into a football pitch for junior players.

The significant increase in population in close proximity to Old Basing & Lychpit is placing more pressure on the amount and type of recreational and leisure facilities that are available to meet the needs of the expanding population, particularly for (older) young people.

With easy access to the M3, A30 and A33, and close to the Basingstoke mainline railway station with fast links to Central London, travel to Old Basing & Lychpit is reasonably simple by car. However direct public transport links, such as an effective bus service, to the Parish are poor and intermittent. There is a well-used cycle route connecting the Parish to Basingstoke.

THE COUNCIL

Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council has 12 Councillor positions and benefits from having 9 positions filled at the time of publication. Eight seats were filled in the election (uncontested) in 2023. Councillors hold their seats for four years (so until May 2027) unless unexpected circumstances dictate otherwise.

The Council is a body of elected members who work together to act as one voice. It intends to actively recruit good Councillors where necessary, aiming for a representative and diverse mix of the community taking seats at the table.

Councillor Cathy Robinson (Parish Chair)
Councillor Francesca Maritan- Hawkins (Parish Vice-Chair)
Councillor Phil Bean
Councillor Sarah Brown
Councillor Lou Eddy
Councillor Jordan Fox
Councillor Martin Keyte
Councillor Les Orvis
Councillor James Rowlands

The full Council is ultimately responsible for all the functions and decisions of the Council. It is supported by five members of staff;

Kate Hope – Parish Clerk
Jamie Chandler – Assistant Clerk
Jennifer Laidlaw – Administration Officer
Alison Martin – Litter Warden
David Rose – Litter Warden

The Parish Clerk acts as the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer wherever stated in legislation.

Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council further benefits from the General Power of Competence which grants additional powers to the Council's activities.

HOW THE COUNCIL WORKS

All Parish Councillors attend a Full Council meeting on a Tuesday of each month. The Council has appointed Standing Committees to carry out some of its functions, enabling the council to focus skills and resources. These are currently:

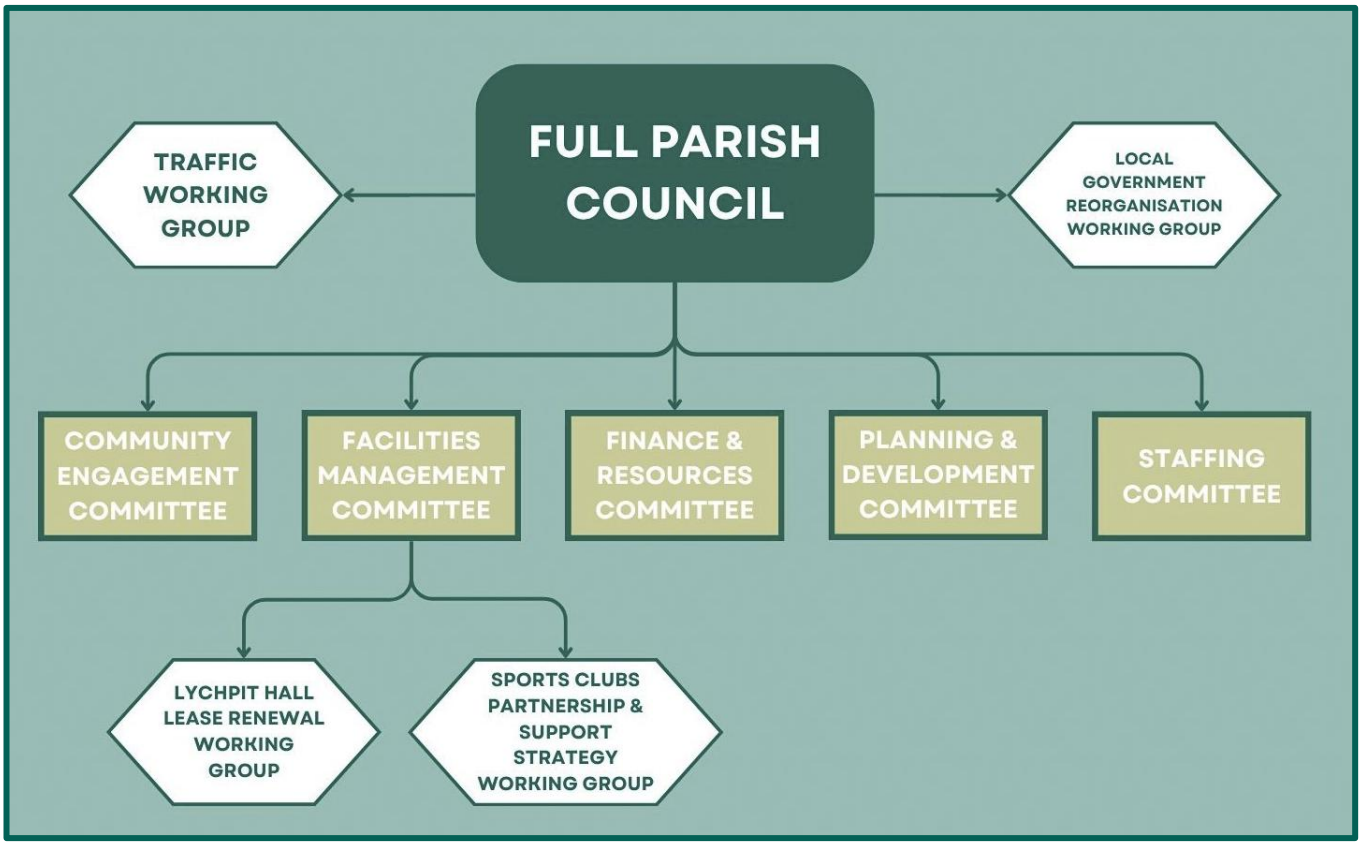
- Community Engagement
- Planning & Development
- Facilities Management
- Finance & Resources
- Staffing

Committees have the power to appoint sub-committees, working parties or advisory groups for specific purposes who report back to the Committee.

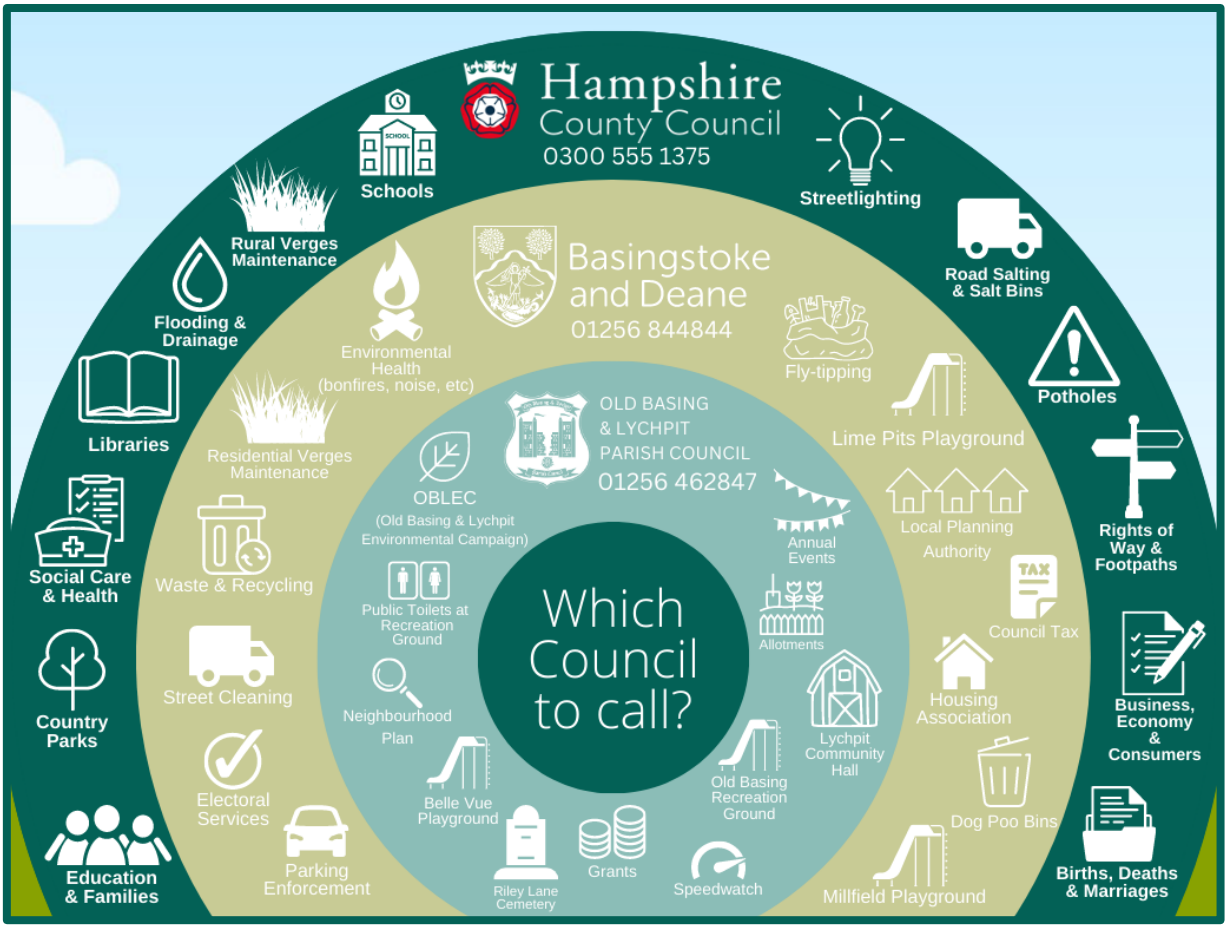
Each Committee has its own Terms of Reference. These are a set of powers given to it by the Full Council. Each Committee can take decisions within the limits given to it. Anything falling beyond those limits must be referred to in Full Council.

In general, Committees are responsible for advising on, monitoring and reviewing their areas of responsibility, and working up proposals for the future. They cannot change the existing Council policy or decisions. If they think such a change is desirable, they must refer the matter to the full Council, with a recommendation.

The current Committee structure, as illustrated below, aligns with budgeting and financial reporting and with the Council's strategic priorities.



WORKING TOGETHER



The relationships between the Parish Council and Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council and Hampshire County Council are fundamental for effective local governance and community development.

The Parish Council is the closest level of government to the community, addressing local issues and representing the interests of residents. It works closely with the Borough and County Councils, which manage broader services such as transportation, education, and public health. Through collaboration and communication, the Parish Council helps to ensure that local concerns are heard and considered in the wider decision-making processes.

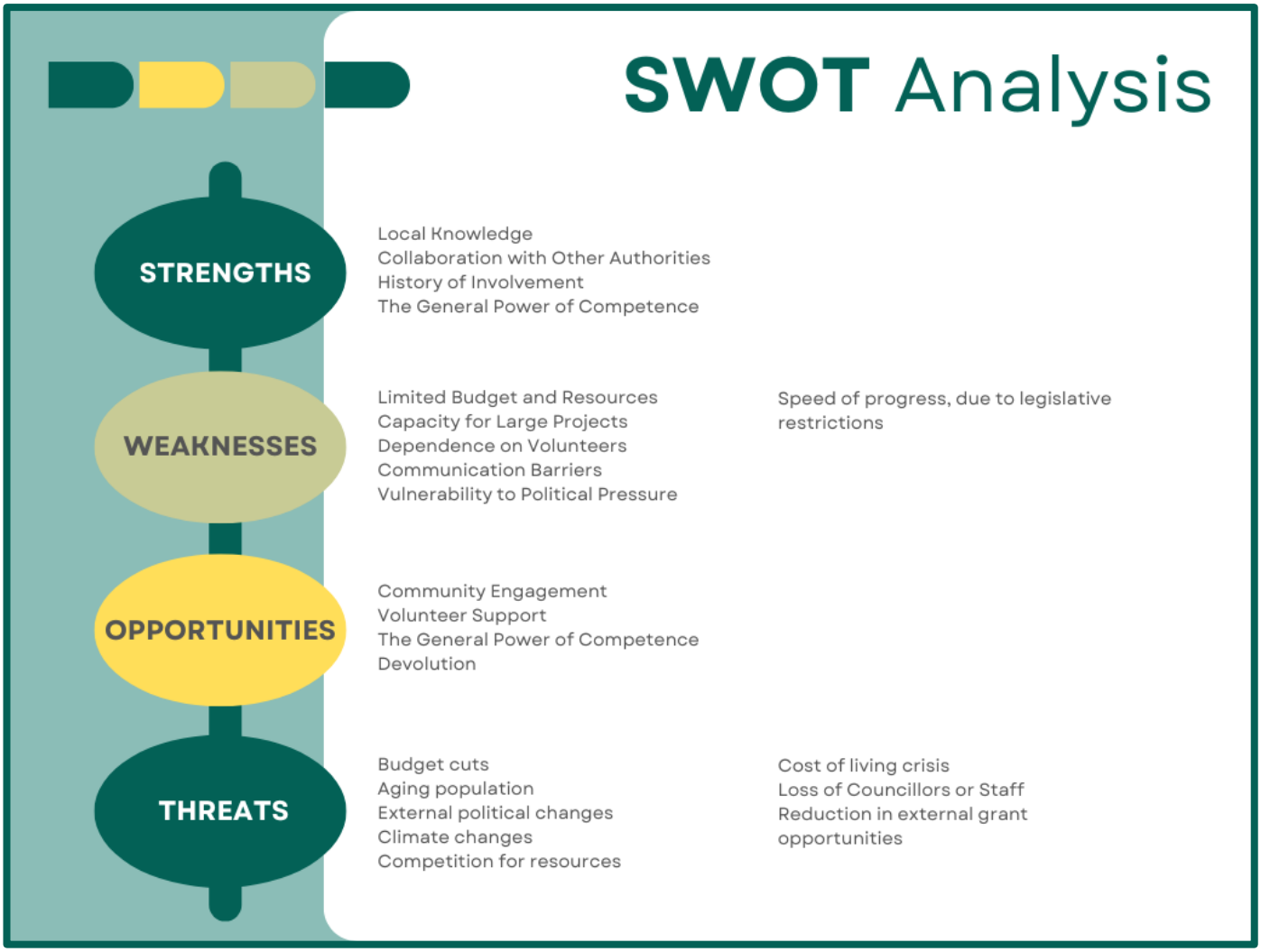
These partnerships aim to foster efficient service delivery, enable resource sharing where possible, and allow for the alignment of local projects with county or borough-wide strategies.

Anticipated Local Government Reorganisation is expected to bring changes to how local government operates and how responsibilities are shared. While the full impact is still emerging, the Parish Council may see changes in its relationships with principal authorities and increased expectations around local leadership and representation. During this transition, maintaining strong partnerships, clear communication, and a focus on the Council's role as the closest tier to the community will be essential.

MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES

The local council environment is subjected to frequent changing opportunities and threats which are outside of Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council's control, such as fluctuating economic challenges and funding cuts affecting Hampshire's local government service delivery.

Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council considers itself to be in a strong position to quickly respond. The Council understands its strengths and weaknesses to help guide itself to informed, realistic and sustainable decisions determining when and how Councillors can step in to help.



BUDGET & PRECEPT 2026/27

The Council and its Committees have capital and revenue budgets available to use, in order that they can carry out their duties. The budget for each function is approved annually by the Full Council, usually in November for the forthcoming financial year.

Committees can incur or approve expenditure only within their budget. Except in case of extreme urgency, any other expenditure must be approved by the Full Council.

Estimate 2025/26	**Description**	**Estimate 2026/27**
£'000		**'£'000**
213.0	Recreation and Leisure	227.4
175.0	Finance and General Expenditure	193.1
0.0	Capital Expenditure	0.0
4.2	Communications	4.2
392.2	**Gross Expenditure**	**424.7**
	Less:	
(127.3)	Income	(132.7)
0.2	Funding from Reserves	(0.4)
243.2	**Council Tax Requirement**	**291.6**

2023-2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Coronation picnic lunch (May 2023).
- Community 'Warm Hub' (Winter 2022/23).
- Christmas at the Rec community carol singing (2023 onwards).
- Grant funding to support a new football pitch for junior teams to use on the edge of Basing Common (2023).
- Grant funding to support the renovation of the Village Hall toilets (2023).
- Improvements to Recreation Ground security – automatic gates (2024).
- Installation of a new pavement along Basing Road from Swing Swang Lane to The Street (2024).
- Environmental efficiency improvements to Parish-owned buildings, including cavity wall insulation, heat pumps and solar panels (2024).
- Upgrade to Parish Office/Councillor IT equipment (2024).
- Replacement Cricket nets at Recreation Ground (2025).
- New picnic benches on Parish-owned grounds (2025).
- Full tree surveys and creation of a tree maintenance schedule (2025).
- Creation of a new Business Plan and annual strategy discussion (2025).
- Introduction of new website and branding (2025).
- Addition of a Staffing Standing Committee (2025) and restructuring of Parish Office staff (2025/6).
- Collation of technical documents to support response to the Borough Council's Local Plan Update consultation; covering the River Loddon, Landscape, Heritage, Environment and Ecology for the next five-year period (2025).
- Grant funding to support a new Carnival Football Tournament, the Old Basing Schools trail and fun-run event, the Basinga community magazine (2025).
- Adoption of Broadhurst Village Green (2025).
- Reintroduction of the Parish Award at the Community Partnership Evening (2025).
- CIL Funding Allocations;
    - £60,000 to refurbish the Recreation Ground public conveniences
    - £45,010 to improve the safety of Milkingpen Lane Footpath under the railway bridge
    - £60,000 to contribute towards refurbishment works at Lychpit Hall
    - £10,000 to conduct a biodiversity audit and create an action plan
    - £2,553 for boardwalk improvements at the Millfield Conservation Area
    - £64,616 to resurface the Royal British Legion car park and improve the accessible bathroom facilities
    - £15,000 to support new flooring at Old Basing Village Hall
    - £2,375 to refurbish the cloakroom at St Mary's Church and upgrade the vestry boiler (2025).
- Creation of a Charter for the River Loddon, providing the first signature and advocacy of the River with the expectation that other interested organisations will join in due course (2026).
- Work to amend the current Neighbourhood Plan, to keep it relevant and valid for a further five-year period (2026).
- Resurfacing of the Recreation Ground footpaths (2026).

2026-2031 PLAN

VISION

Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council is committed to representing the interests of all residents and businesses within the Parish.

THE COUNCIL'S VISION

Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council recognises how proud residents should be to live in such a diverse and beautiful area and aims to listen to, and communicate with, the community to meet its gradually changing needs.

THE COUNCIL'S VALUES

1. **Integrity** – making ethical, transparent and well-intentioned decisions
2. **Accountability** – striving to keep the burden on local taxpayers to a minimum
3. **Respect** – to the community and the built and natural environments
4. **Openness** – sharing all Parish-related information unless individual or commercial confidences apply
5. **Inclusivity** – communicating as effectively as possible with all residents and improving physical access wherever possible
6. **Civility and respect in public office** – conducting all Parish business in a respectful and polite manner

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

AIM 1

To work with local authorities and other relevant stakeholders to enhance the quality of life for all residents; providing services which reflect the needs of the community, whilst preserving the historical and environmental assets of the Parish.

- Capture the needs of the community and ensure that these are reflected in planning responses.
- Participate in significant planning processes in a timely manner.
- Specify improvements to infrastructure (including environmentally) which supports the well-being of residents.

OBJECTIVES

1.1 To update the Neighbourhood Plan (by Autumn 2026).

1.2 Keep the website up to date and use social media, including Facebook, to interact with younger members of the community (by end of 2026).

1.3 Consider holding two 'open' meetings with allotment tenants each year (by end of 2026).

1.4 To explore a suitable format for 'Meet Your Councillor' sessions to provide residents with an opportunity to meet and chat with Councillors face to face (achieved in 2023, with limited success – a new format to be explored and arranged by September 2026).

1.5 To improve the safety of the road in the parish and specifically to improve the safety of pedestrians walking around Old Basing's narrower roads (particularly at Milkingpen Lane Railway Bridge) (by end of 2027).

1.6 To feed into the Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council's Local Plan Update (by 2027).

AIM 2

Providing, maintaining and safeguarding high-quality community facilities that support safe, healthy recreation, and well-being across the Parish.

- Provide and maintain and invest in outdoor public spaces, play equipment, allotments and indoor facilities to appropriate standards.
- Ensure community assets are safe, accessible, well-managed and compliant with relevant regulations and guidance.
- Enable the effective operation of facilities owned by the Parish and support, where appropriate, facilities not directly owned by the Council that deliver essential services or infrastructure to the community.
- Manage and allocate Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding in accordance with the Council's investment policy, prioritising facilities and infrastructure that meet identified local needs.
- Take a planned and proportionate approach to the maintenance, renewal and long-term viability of community facilities.

OBJECTIVES

2.1 To regulate Memorial Safety Testing procedures (by end of 2026).

2.2 To secure the ongoing use of Lychpit Community Hall with Hampshire County Council (finalised by September 2025).

AIM 3

Nurturing a stronger, more connected community with a shared sense of belonging across the Parish.

- Encourage participation in community life by residents of all ages, backgrounds and localities.
- Support inclusive events, activities and initiatives that bring people together and strengthen local identity.
- Improve communication and collaboration between the Council, community groups, volunteers and residents.
- Promote volunteering and civic pride, helping residents to play an active role in shaping their community.
- Ensure community spaces and activities are welcoming, accessible and responsive to local needs.

OBJECTIVES

3.1 Support and promote community events and initiatives that encourage social interaction, inclusion and wellbeing across the Parish.

3.2 Work with local groups, schools, clubs and voluntary organisations to strengthen partnerships and coordination of community activities.

3.3 Improve awareness of community opportunities by maintaining clear, accessible and timely communications through parish publications, the website and social media.

3.4 Encourage volunteering and local involvement in parish projects, events and decision-making processes.

3.5 Review the availability and use of Parish-owned community spaces to ensure they meet the evolving needs of residents and support community cohesion.

OUTCOMES

Success, or otherwise, will be measured against the following outcomes:

- There is greater participation in the governance of the parish by all sectors of society, actively recruiting engaged prospective Councillors from a diverse range of localities and backgrounds.

- Existing services and future developments are responsive to the needs of residents across the parish.

- Good governance is maintained, ensuring that our activities are efficient and effective.

- A variety of media is employed to ensure the Council is accountable to, and approachable for, residents.

- Inclusion, debate and input from all residents is encouraged, having special regard for the engagement of younger members.

- Environmental sustainability and biodiversity are actively promoted, ensuring that changes made today do not create future harm.

ACTION PLAN

ACTIONS OUTSTANDING 2025-26

PRIORITY	PROJECT	BUDGET	END DATE
HIGH	Neighbourhood Plan Update	£14,044.00	Autumn 2026
HIGH	Lychpit Hall Lease Renewal	legal costs	Summer 2026
HIGH	BDBC Local Plan Update	£5,000.00	AWAITING FURTHER UPDATE FROM BDBC
MEDIUM	Parking improvements on The Street	*to be determined*	CLOSED

YEAR ONE 2026-27

PRIORITY	PROJECT	BUDGET	END DATE
HIGH	Pedestrian Safety along Milkingpen Lane (Manor Lane to Church Close/The Street)	£45,010.00	April 2027
HIGH	Refurbishment of Public Conveniences at Old Basing Recreation Ground	£60,000	November 2026
HIGH	Regulate Memorial Safety testing procedures	None	April 2027
HIGH	Biodiversity Audit/Action Plan	£10,000	March 2027
HIGH	Establish Community Engagement Committee and ascertain effective strategy for stronger engagement with residents	None	March 2027
MEDIUM	Community Governance Review	None	AWAITING FURTHER UPDATE FROM BDBC
MEDIUM	Update Emergency Plan	None	September 2026
MEDIUM	Promote River Loddon Charter and encourage other signatures	None	September 2026
LOW	Local Council Award Scheme	None	May 2026

- Annual Parish Meeting (May)
- St Mary's Church Flower Festival (May)
- Old Basing & Lychpit Carnival – Scarecrow & Carnival Stall (June)
- End of Term at the Old Basing Recreation Ground (July)
- Community Partnership Evening *(Move from December 2026 to May 2027?)*
- St Mary's Church Christmas Tree Festival (December)
- Christmas at the Rec (December)

YEAR TWO 2027-28

PRIORITY	PROJECT	BUDGET	END DATE
HIGH	Refurbishment of Lychpit Hall facilities (kitchen, bathrooms, committee room)	£60,000 reserved to date	April 2028
MEDIUM	Cemetery drainage improvements	£16,000	April 2028