



Newsletter no. 41

Summer 2024 Bulletin

BILLING PARISH COUNCIL

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Chairman's Report

2023 – 2024

I wish to start this year's annual report by paying tribute to our colleague Steve Rockall.

This year marks Steve's 25 years as a councillor for Billing Parish. On behalf of our community, many thanks Steve.

Congratulation also goes to Carrie, our clerk, who after two years study has successfully passed her Certificate in Local Council Administration, well done.

My thanks now go to all of you here tonight and to everyone who is involved in the running of the council. You make an extremely good team.

During the year, we all agreed on a biodiversity policy which ensures we do all we can to protect our planet – new trees have been planted, grass allowed to grow and the introduction of more wildflower meadows and adherence to advice regarding utilities etc. In addition, the encouragement of our younger generation to make maximum use of our green spaces. Anyone visiting the playing field at a weekend will join at least 100 parents cheering on their offspring and witnessing the good manners and sportsmanship being instilled into these young players – my special thanks must go to all involved.

During the forthcoming year, it is intended to refurbish the much-used footpaths in both Little Billing and Great Billing Pocket Parks and renew the cricket wicket. A small working party has been formed to review the play areas in the sports field and the MUGA in the pocket park. Any suggestions you have would be much appreciated.

The police regularly attend our meetings and their latest reports are that, apart from shoplifting, we are thankfully enjoying a much-appreciated lull in crime and disorder. No doubt the recent reintroduction of surveillance cameras in various crime hotspots have assisted. Long may it continue.

It is unfortunate that despite it being well over 12 months, no decision has been made regarding the future of Bellinge Community House.

Litter continues to be a problem and our thanks must once again go to our residential team of Litter Wombles. It would help if everyone took it upon themselves to pick up any small other items left within 12 feet of their front door. Once again, my thanks to you all for your input.

John Marlow

Chairman

Ange & Steve Marsh: The Longest-Serving Publicans of The Elwes Arms, Great Billing

A Legacy of Hospitality

Ange and Steve Marsh have etched their names into the history of The Elwes Arms Public House as its longest serving publicans. Their journey began with their two young children (soon to become three) on December 14, 1986, when they took the reins of this beloved establishment. Little did they know that their tenure would span decades, leaving an indelible mark on both locals and visitors alike.



It all started when a representative from Manns & Norwich Brewery approached Steve one night when he was working as a Compère at Cinderella Rockafellas and asked if he had ever thought about becoming a landlord of a pub. Steve hadn't, but if he were to ever take on such a role, there was only one pub he desired – his local, The Elwes Arms. The representative, however, dismissed the idea. "No chance," they said. The Elwes Arms, with its picturesque charm, was like a chocolate box nestled in the village – a rare gem.

Yet fate had other plans. Against the odds, Ange and Steve found themselves at the helm of The Elwes Arms, weaving their legacy into its very fabric after the opportunity was turned down by an extremely experienced but very tall man. In 2026 they will celebrate 40 years as Landlord and Lady of this treasured venue.

Over the years, they have both juggled with jobs outside of the pub, Steve's broadcasting career spanning nearly three decades and Angie working for the children's Trust as a manager and bringing up three children. But countless stories have unfolded within these 16th century walls. From raucous laughter during camel racing and quiz nights to heartfelt conversations over a pint, they have witnessed it all.

Community Spirit and Charity Work

Ange, Steve, their staff, and customers have always been dedicated to giving back to the community. They have raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for both local and national charities, including Wizz Kids, Great Ormond Street Hospital, Children in Need, various defibrillator initiatives and many community-led fund raisers. Their efforts have not only provided much-needed support to these causes but have also strengthened the bond within the community, showcasing the true spirit of The Elwes Arms.

Their warmth and genuine hospitality have made The Elwes Arms more than just a pub; it's a second home.

The Story Behind Billing Parish Council's Logo

Have you ever wondered where the Billing Parish Council logo comes from?

Well, parts of it are inspired by the Coat of Arms of the Elwes family, who moved to Billing Hall in 1799. Let's dive into the fascinating world of heraldry to understand more about this unique design.

What is a Coat of Arms?

A coat of arms is a distinctive heraldic design painted on a shield. These designs are often inherited, passed down from one generation to the next. They serve as a unique identifier for families, individuals, or organisations.

Elements of a Coat of Arms

A coat of arms typically includes several key elements:

1. **Shield (Escutcheon):** The central element displaying the main design.
2. **Crest:** Positioned above the shield, often on a helmet.
3. **Supporters:** Figures or animals on either side of the shield.
4. **Motto:** A phrase that reflects the values or aspirations of the bearer.
5. **Mantling:** Decorative drapery tied to the helmet above the shield.
6. **Helmet:** The helmet placed above the shield, indicating the rank of the bearer.

Symbolism and Meaning

Each coat of arms is unique, featuring specific designs and symbols that hold particular meanings. These can range from simple geometric shapes to intricate symbols like crosses, crescents, dragons, or castles. Colours (known as tinctures) and symbols (known as charges) represent various traits or historical references.

Billing Parish Council's Logo

The Billing Parish Council logo incorporates elements from the Elwes family's coat of arms, specifically the shield and motto.

The Shield: The Elwes family's shield, made up of red, yellow, and blue, dates back to 1673. An image from a copperplate engraving was included in Richard Blome's *Britannia*, an atlas published that year. Sir Gervase Elwes of Stoke Juxta Clare, Suffolk, was one of the contributors to this work. The colours on the shield have specific meanings: gold (yellow) represents generosity and nobility, red signifies strength and magnanimity, and blue stands for loyalty and truth.

The Motto: The Elwes family's motto, *Deo non fortuna*, translates to "Through God not by chance." Mottos are thought to have originated either as war cries or from the family's heraldic badge, which were used on items like letterhead. They convey the values, beliefs, and aspirations of the bearer of the coat of arms.

Today's Use

Today, coats of arms are used by individuals, families, organisations, and even countries to signify heritage and identity. They are often displayed on official documents, buildings, and family heirlooms. Variations of the Elwes Coat of Arms can be seen on pillars around Great Billing Village.

By integrating these elements, the Billing Parish Council logo not only pays homage to the Elwes family's heritage but also reflects the rich history and values of the community it represents.



Celebrating 25 Years of Dedicated Service: Councillor Steve Rockall



This year, we pay tribute to our esteemed colleague, Councillor Steve Rockall, who has faithfully served the Billing Parish Council for an impressive 25 years. His unwavering dedication and passion for our community have left an indelible mark on the lives of residents in Ecton Brook, Bellinge, Little Billing, Great Billing, and beyond.

Born in Northampton, Steve Rockall has always championed the importance of green spaces, sports facilities, leisure activities, and wildlife conservation. His commitment to enhancing our local environment has been a driving force throughout his tenure.

When Steve joined the Parish Council in April 1999, he was still actively serving as a Police Officer in Northamptonshire, a role he had dedicated three decades to. His ongoing experience in law enforcement has greatly influenced his approach to community safety and well-being, ensuring that our neighbourhoods remain secure and welcoming.

Steve's impact extends far beyond council meetings. He actively engages with residents, listens to their concerns, and advocates for positive change. Whether it's organising community events, supporting local initiatives, or collaborating with fellow councillors, Steve's tireless efforts have made a lasting difference.

As we celebrate this milestone, let us express our heartfelt gratitude to Councillor Steve Rockall. His legacy inspires us all to continue working together for a vibrant, inclusive, and thriving Billing Parish.

Thank you, Steve, for 25 years of selfless service!

Billing Fayre 2024: A Roaring Success!

Once again Billing Parish Council were delighted to see the local community out in force on Saturday, June 29th, for an afternoon of fun, entertainment, and community spirit.

Farewell to *Blast from the Past*, Welcome *The Conundrums*

The Billing Parish Council have had to bid farewell to the beloved *Blast from the Past* band. Their nostalgic tunes and energetic performances have been a staple of the event for years. Stepping into the spotlight, the new band *The Conundrums* captured hearts with their fresh sound and dynamic stage presence. Their blend of rock, folk, and indie vibes had the crowd dancing and singing along. We look forward to more memorable performances from this talented group in the future.

Elliots Castles Saves the Day:

When the original bouncy castle company cancelled at the last minute, Elliots Castles stepped in swiftly to provide the inflatable fun. Martin and his team's commitment to ensuring a delightful experience for the children was commendable.



Mark Your Calendar:

The next Billing Fayre is already on the horizon! Save the date for **Saturday, 28th June 2025**, and join the community for another fantastic day of celebration.

For more information, feel free to contact the Billing Parish Council. Let's keep the spirit of the Billing Fayre alive and thriving!



The Legal Landscape of Private E-Scooters in the UK

E-scooters have become increasingly popular, enticing riders with their convenience and eco-friendly appeal. However, before you hop on one, it's essential to understand the legal framework governing their use in the United Kingdom.

Buying an E-Scooter

It's true that e-scooters are readily available from various retailers. Their sleek design and promise of efficient urban mobility make them an attractive purchase. However, owning an e-scooter doesn't automatically grant you the right to ride it anywhere you please.

Where You Can Ride:

Riding a private e-scooter on a UK public road, cycle lane, or pavement is strictly prohibited. These areas are off-limits for e-scooters.

The only permissible location for using a private e-scooter is on private land with permission from the land owner. If you have access to private property with the land owner's permission, feel free to ride away!

Some e-scooters like Voi, which are being used across Northampton, are part of government trials, which allows them to operate legally in specific areas. However, this doesn't extend to personal e-scooters.

Enforcement and Consequences

Section 59 Warnings:

- Under the Police Reform Act, Section 59 allows police officers to issue warnings if a vehicle (including e-scooters) is used in a manner causing alarm, distress, or annoyance.
- Receiving this warning doesn't prevent your e-scooter from being seized.

Seizure and Prosecution:

- Police can seize any private e-scooter being used on a public road or footpath.
- Riders may also face prosecution for traffic offenses related to e-scooter use.

For education around the use of e-scooters and road safety go to <https://ridesafe.voi.com> and complete the online training.

Successful Celebration of D-Day Landing at The Elwes Arms

The Elwes Arms was abuzz with excitement and reverence as the community gathered to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings. The event, organised by the Elwes Arms and Billing Parish Council, was a heartfelt tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of those who fought in one of the most pivotal battles of World War II.

The celebration began with a fish and chip supper and featured live music from the era, with performances of classic wartime songs that had the crowd singing along.

At 9.15pm Reverend Richard Burbidge read out the national tribute followed by the lighting of the Beacon, where attendees gathered to pay their respects to the fallen soldiers. The Beacon illuminated the night, symbolising the enduring light of freedom and the sacrifices made to secure it.

Overall, the D-Day celebration at The Elwes Arms was a resounding success, bringing together the community in a shared act of remembrance and celebration. It was an evening filled with reflection and joy, honouring the past while looking forward to a future built on the values of courage, unity, and peace.

Asset of Community Value Nomination Approved for Bellinge Community House

The West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has officially approved the asset of community value nomination submitted by Billing Parish Council making Bellinge Community House a designated asset of community value under Section 89 of the Localism Act 2011.

WNC agree that Bellinge Community House meets the requirements of Section 88 of the Localism Act and recognise the value it could have on the social wellbeing and social interests of the local community.

The Property will remain on the Council's list of assets of community value for a period of 5 years.

Billing Covenanted Churches Together (BCCT)

On 16th March, on a fine spring morning, over 30 people from the Billing churches came together to take part in a Lent Walk visiting all the churches in the parish.

Starting out from All Saints Little Billing, a group walked along the paths by the stream and then up 'Celebration Avenue' to St Andrew's Great Billing where coffee was served and where others joined the party. A Lent Reflection was led by Rev David Lunn before moving on to Our Lady's for a quiet time and a reflection led by Father Brendan Killeen. The morning concluded with prayers led by Rev Ian Forsyth and a Bread & Soup lunch at the Methodist chapel.

The BCCT was established over 25 years ago and is committed to enabling the different church denominations to work together and support each other whenever possible.



All Saints, Little Billing



Catholic Church of Our Lady

Join Us for the November Remembrance Services

Honouring Our Heroes

We invite you to join us for the Remembrance Services this November to honour and remember those who have served and sacrificed for our freedom.

Service Details:

- **Little Billing War Memorial**
 - Time: 9:30 AM
 - Date: November 11, 2024
- **Great Billing War Memorial**
 - Time: 11:00 AM
 - Date: November 11, 2024

These services are a time for our community to come together, reflect, and pay tribute to the brave men and women who have given so much.

Please join us in showing our respect and gratitude. Your presence will make a difference.

Lest We Forget

For more information, please contact the Parish Council or visit our website.



Join Our Green Community! Volunteer at Great Billing Pocket Park!

Are you passionate about nature, community, and making a positive impact? Look no further! The Great Billing Parish Council invites you to roll up your sleeves and join our vibrant team of volunteers.

What's It All About?

- **When:** Every Wednesday morning from around 9:15 am until noon.
- **Where:** Meet at the Bernard Weston Pavilion in the heart of the picturesque Great Billing Pocket Park.
- **Why:** Because together, we're changing the face of the parish—one open space at a time!

What Will You Be Doing?

Our green-fingered tasks include:

- **Weeding:** Tackle those pesky invaders and keep our flower beds looking fabulous.
- **Litter Picking:** Help us maintain a pristine environment for everyone to enjoy.
- **Planting:** Get your hands dirty and contribute to the park's natural beauty.
- **Path Maintenance:** Keep our trails safe and accessible.
- **Tree and Hedge Care:** Prune, coppice, and nurture our leafy friends.

Why Volunteer?

- **Fresh Air & Exercise:** Swap your desk for the great outdoors.
- **Community Bonding:** Meet like-minded neighbours and forge lifelong friendships.
- **Feel-Good Factor:** Know that your efforts directly benefit our award-winning park.

All ages and abilities are welcome! Wear sturdy footwear or Wellingtons, bring your gardening gloves, and let's make a difference together!



For more information, contact
Paul Marks on 07725 856784

Council Meeting Dates

Parish Council Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 7.30 pm at the Bernard Weston Pavilion on the Playing Fields at Great Billing Pocket Park. Agendas and approved Minutes may be found on the website. Forthcoming meetings will be held on:

📅 9th September 2024

📅 11th November 2024

📅 14th October 2024

📅 9th December 2024

ELWES ARMS PRESENTS

23-25 AUGUST

SAVE THE DATE

Elwes Beer Festival

23RD - 25TH AUG

BEER - FOOD - LIVE MUSIC

FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY. IT'S GOING TO BE A FANTASTIC WEEKEND HERE AT 37.

ELWESARMS.COM

SCAN ME

@ELWESARMSGREATBILLING

If you would like to have your say in the newsletter, please contact:

Clerk to the Council, Mrs Carrie Goodridge
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To find out who your local councillors are, please scan the QR Code or visit www.billing-pc.gov.uk/councillors

