

**Annual report by Kim Moloney  
Chairman of Grendon Underwood Parish Council  
Annual Parish Meeting – 18th May 2026**

The past twelve months have flown by, we've faced some challenges and dealt with them head on, not least the ground conditions around the play equipment on the playing field. In July we encountered some of the most extreme weather conditions on record. We're on heavy clay known to hold water in the winter and crack heavily during the summer months. 2025 witnessed the biggest cracks around the play equipment known to us. You could literally lose a small child in some of them! We were left with no alternative other than to close the play area until repairs had been completed to user safety standard.

During this time, I witnessed the enormous efforts of our volunteer Councillors shovelling and lugging tonnes of top soil, grass seeding and watering every day, twice a day for seven weeks in the sweltering heat. They got on with the job – old school. It was a challenge but we did it! Not only can we thank this wonderful team of volunteers but we must also record our thanks to Grendon Underwood Football Club helping out with the top soil and grass seed, the Village Hall for the water and EKFB for the site fencing. However, just as we were getting somewhere with the improvements the fencing was pushed down and our ground repairs were vandalised, not once but twice. This was quite a blow, caught on CCTV and dealt with by TVP. EKFB came up trumps again and installed six feet high secure fencing at no charge to us. We reopened in October with the addition of two new items of play equipment that we hope will bring many years of joy to the community.

We thank Winslow Rotary Club, Saye and Sele Foundation and the Rectory Foundation for their generous grants enabling us to purchase the new play equipment. Without these grants it would not have been possible.

We've earmarked future S106 monies for all weather paths to and from each item of play equipment to enable safe passage all year-round without wading through the mud!

### Finance

We continue to operate a six month reserve. This has been achieved only due to incoming grants that accounted for over 40pct of our income. We record our thanks to the following for their generosity:

- £2000 Winslow Rotary Club
- £1000 Saye and Sele Foundation
- £2000 Police Crime Commissioner Office (PCC)
- £2500 Rectory Foundation
- £1000 Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE)

The £2000 from the PCC grant enabled us to purchase two new CCTV cameras to record activity around the play equipment. I attended the formal TVP training for CCTV users and can report we are fully compliant and have a robust CCTV policy in place. Thank you to Cllr Martindale for putting this together.

In September we were awarded an £1100 credit by SSE. It was very welcome and is fast diminishing on the power supply to our street lighting.

We met in December to agree the annual budget for 26/27. It was evident that incoming grants and the goodwill of our volunteer Councillors subsidise operational expenditure considerably. Grants alone accounted for over 40pct of our income. Over recent years costs have increased, mandatory obligations have doubled and grant streams are drying up, in part due to red tape but mainly due to the economy. We were left with no alternative other than to make the extremely difficult decision to increase the precept. We've taken pride in the knowledge that there's been a zero increase by this Parish Council for over thirteen years and only achievable due to the hard work of our Councillors. The increase is miniscule and equates to only 8 pence per week per registered voter in Grendon Underwood.

### Contracts

For far too many years we've been heavily reliant on Parish Councillor volunteers to oversee village maintenance tasks. I've known we ask far too much of them and in the absence of additional volunteers we made the decision to appoint and agree an annual contract for an independent maintenance/inspection contractor for our play equipment. It is formally inspected four times a year and this is in addition to our regular monthly inspections and mandatory annual inspection.

We have a maintenance contract for our Council owned laptop and data.

We have a website and email maintenance contract with a government approved provider.

We are in our second year of a three year contract for the village mowing which currently includes St Leonards Church grounds.

One of the biggest headaches we're dealing with is the new mega prison. The saga has been ongoing for the past five years. I could write quite a book on it but all the information related to it are posted on the Buckinghamshire Council planning portal. Suffice to say, it's happening whether we like it or not. We each owe Edgcott resident Roger Behagg an enormous debt of gratitude, he has put in literally thousands of hours taking on the MoJ with their outrageous visions for our community. He has gone above and beyond, taking on the big boys and saving the community thousands in professional fees. Without Roger we would be lost. I urge each of you to study form on the planning portal and object to the MoJ's latest traffic management plans. It will affect every one of us in the locality. I add my own personal thanks to Cllr Jackman, our planning lead, the mind of a genius with golden nuggets enabling us to challenge the ludicrous thought processes by the MoJ.

We're through to the next round of Highway Safety funding for Broadway to install traffic calming measures. We'll shortly be entering a period of consultation, led by Buckinghamshire Highways. Don't hold your breath as this has been in the pipeline for the past 8 years!

We continue to work on grant applications for essential equipment and improvements to the village.

We carry out monthly play equipment and defibrillator inspections.

Of all our achievements during the past twelve months securing our new Clerk is the greatest and we welcome Sue to the team. She is conscientious, hardworking and extremely professional and we are very grateful that she has taken on the role on a permanent basis. Thank you Sue.

Thank you to our two Ward Councillors at Buckinghamshire Council, Cllr Frank Mahon and Cllr Patrick Fealey. Frustratingly for all neither hold a magic wand to make the mega prison, deranged planning applications or pot holes go away. Final decisions sit with the powers that be in Buckinghamshire Council and even those decisions are often overturned with permissions granted on appeal and contrary to opinion the Parish Council do not have a voice either.

I'd like to put on record my personal thanks to Cllrs, Martindale, Jackman, Benfield and Scanlon who really are Grendon Underwood's community unsung heroes. They continue to give up many hours of their precious time, working hard for our community, all as volunteers, no pay, no perks, no expenses – nothing! I thank each of you for your loyalty, support, dedication and hard work, always rolling up your sleeves and getting on with the task in hand. Thank you.

Kim Moloney

Chairman of Grendon Underwood Parish Council