

## Keep up to date with Bromham Parish Council

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[www.bromhamparish.co.uk](http://www.bromhamparish.co.uk)
- Be a 'friend' of ours on Facebook,  
[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)
- View agendas and other  
information on noticeboards  
around the village.
- See minutes of meetings in the  
Parish Council office, on the  
website or at Bromham Library.
- Public welcome to attend Parish  
Council meetings and can speak in  
the first 15 minutes of meeting.
- Staff available daily in the Parish  
Council office

### Bromham Parish Councillors

Sian Woodfine, Chair  
Keith Smith, Vice Chair  
Mick Burgess  
Trevor Roff  
Roger Hawkins  
Valerie Brinson  
Liz Luder  
Anne Baker  
Mira Tysoe  
Chris Arnouti  
Dylan Simmons  
Robert Stretton  
Vacancy x 2

Bromham Parish Council  
Bromham Village Hall  
Village Road, Bromham,  
Beds, MK43 8JP

Phone: 01234 828851

E-mail: [julie@bromhamparish.co.uk](mailto:julie@bromhamparish.co.uk)

[www.bromhamparish.co.uk](http://www.bromhamparish.co.uk) &  
Facebook/Bromham Parish Council

Office opening:  
Monday–Thursday 10–2pm  
Friday 10–12 Noon

## About Parish Council



Bromham Parish Council

Bromham Parish Council

01234 828851

## Powers and Functions of Parish Councils

Parish and Town Councils (known collectively as Local Councils) are the first tier of local government and the closest to the community they serve. A Town Council is a Parish Council which has resolved to call itself a Town Council. The Chairman of a Town Council can also be called the Town Mayor. There are some 8,500 Parish and Town Councils in England. As a tier of local government they are elected bodies, with discretionary powers and rights laid down by Parliament to represent their communities and provide services for them. All local authorities are constituted in the same way with Councillors elected by the Local Government Electorate and a Chairman, who must be one of them. Local Councils vary in size and capacity; many are very small, representing a few hundred people, others represent communities of over 30,000 people with budgets over £1m and expenditure and staffing levels per head of population similar to a small District Council.

A Local Council is a body corporate with perpetual succession and a name. It comprises a Chairman (or Town Mayor), and Councillors. The number of Councillors is fixed by the District Council. A Local Council's lawful acts, assets and liabilities are its own and not those of its Councillors.

A local Council must act within the law. It can only spend, raise or use money if it has a statutory power to do so, otherwise it acts ultra vires (beyond its powers). Local Councils have a wide range of powers under different acts of Parliament. Most of these powers are discretionary, ie the Council *may* do something, rather than it *must* do something. The exercise of these powers may be subject to various consents, from, for example, the owner of land or another public body such as the Highways Authority. Almost all Local Council powers are concurrent with those of the District Council, i.e. the power may be exercised by either the Parish/Town Council or the District Council.

A Local Council has the unfettered right to raise money by precept (a mandatory demand) on the District Council. The precept required by the Local Council is then collected by the District Council as part of the council tax levied on tax payers in that Parish. Local Councils act as a sounding board for local opinion and have important rights of consultation. County and District or Unitary Councils are obliged by law to consult the Local Council on certain matters affecting the Parish.

The range of services and amenities provided by Local Councils varies enormously. Many provide public seats and shelters, litter bins and notice boards. Some provide recreation grounds, public halls, cemeteries, allotments and swimming pools. All play an important role in maintaining and improving local services and facilities, supporting local voluntary organisations and activities and influencing and lobbying on local development.

## Parish Councillors

Parish Councillors are volunteers who are either elected or co-opted onto the Council, once elected Councillors serve for a period of 4 years. (Next elections 2015) Bromham has fourteen Parish Councillors representing the village.

You can become a councillor if you:

- are British, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union
- are 18 years of age or over
- are registered to vote in the area or if you have lived, worked or owned property in the area for at least 12 months before an election.

Bromham Parish Council has monthly meetings, always the 1st Tuesday of the month (except August), it also holds sub-committee meetings on a monthly basis, Amenity, Planning and Finance & General Purpose.

Parish Councillors have a responsibility to be well informed about diverse local issues and views.

- Prepare for and attend meetings

- Take part in discussions at meetings and form sound judgements based on what they hear, and then abide by majority decisions
- Ensure with the other Councillors that the Parish Council is properly managed
- Represent all the village and not small sections of it
- Maintain proper standards of behaviour

Being a Parish Councillor takes approximately 10-15 hours per month depending on the amount of time Councillors are willing to give. Most Councillors sit on Parish Council and one other committee, therefore attend 2 meetings per month. Regular correspondence is sent by email or hand delivered.

Residents are welcome to attend Parish Council meetings. There is a 15 minute session on the agenda for members of the public to speak.

## Staff

Bromham Parish Council employs 3 staff based in the office in Bromham Village Hall: Clerk to Parish Council, Administrative Assistant and Handyman.

The Clerk is the Council's principal advisor and Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for ensuring that the lawful instructions of the Council in connection with its functions as a Local Authority are carried out.

The Clerk and Parish Councillors attend meetings with other relevant organisations including Bedford Borough Council and the Partnership Network of Parish and Town Councils to keep themselves informed about local issues and represent Bromham's views and concerns.

For more information on Parish Councils and being a Parish Councillor contact The National Association of Local Councils [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk), [www.beacouncillor.gov.uk](http://www.beacouncillor.gov.uk), or Bromham Parish Council.