



Cam Parish Council

Annual Reports 2024

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Chair's Annual Report

Chair of Cam Parish Council Cllr Jonathan Fulcher

In my final year as Chair, our Parish Council has faced a busy and at times a turbulent period.

For most of 2023 the draft local plan put forward by Stroud District Council has dominated much of our thoughts and time. A local plan is an essential part of setting the direction for housing development across the area controlled by a statutory controlling authority and as required by law the plan was referred to government inspection.

The hearings subsequently heard were further opportunities for local resident groups, stakeholders and local councils, such as Cam Parish, to challenge, question and understand the direction of travel proposed by SDC and the effects that it would have on existing infrastructure, both local and beyond. The biggest question posed by the inspectors regarded the impact on motorway junctions north and south of the Stroud area leading to a request to pause the hearings process and for strategic authorities to engage with SDC to pursue an action plan to answer these issues and others raised against the proposed plan. In December this year after further public consultation we will discover where this leaves us all.

A positive outcome of the need to scrutinise the implications of any future development in many areas like Cam was the evolution and growth of community groups like the Cam Community Action Group (CCAG) and the neighbouring Wisloe Action Group (WAG) in the parish of Slimbridge. These groups form an essential part of resident representation and while not against development they hold legislators to account over the way housing is delivered and can point out ways supporting infrastructure should accompany such building and complement Parish and Town Council representations. Our Parish has led from the front on this issue engaging with SDC, the inspectors, the media, CCAG and other Parish and Town Councils and I am proud of our efforts to deal with this matter in a non-political and informed manner.

Crucial to our parishioners in the last year have been further works at Jubilee Playing Fields where the car park was improved, expanded and opened to all users on a daily basis with alterations also made for pedestrians and disabled visitors to make the site more accessible and safer. This has meant that we can continue to deliver and host community events at Jubilee such as the Go Wild summer dates last August and the now annual Skate4Josh event as well as continuing to provide local sporting clubs to carry on with their programme. Challenges remain, with issues remaining around the Jubilee pavilion building, and the parish council addressing maintenance issues, issuing a new grounds maintenance contract and putting together an ambitious further 5-year plan for the whole site.

Other matters addressed in the last year by our Parish Council have included the ongoing delivery of youth services by the Door, a trial of a shuttle bus in our area, a successful Remembrance Event at Hopton Green last October, agreeing a new lease period with Tesco to allow us to continue working with our partner, the Stroud Valleys Project organisation (SVP), to maintain and improve the area for nature at Rackleaze (land behind Tesco between their balancing pond and the River Cam) and another hugely enjoyable and rewarding Christmas event on the last Saturday of November, now a date in every local diary. The work to plan this year's event is already underway in conjunction with local traders, the church and community groups.

The work a Parish Council does should always address local need and in collaboration with groups such as SVP, GL11, the cadets and scouts, the RBL and veterans, local charities

including the Rotary Club and the Lions we are always striving to meet that need and by engaging with the public, both through our office in Noel Way and by outreach, to better understand local priorities. We can always do more, and I appeal to local people to get involved and even consider joining the existing volunteer councillors by becoming a councillor themselves and giving your part of Cam a stronger voice.

Sometimes, local need and national, even global challenges, coincide to the effect where the action we take is part of a much bigger picture and the existential issue of climate change is one such example. By taking on the challenge of biodiversity net gain and the reduction of carbon emissions we are playing a part in tackling a problem that will face generations to come. Again, by working with partners at District and County level and environmental groups we will achieve more than by acting in isolation. After I step down as chair in May I will look to continue this work as a councillor and representative on external agencies and committees and eventually hope that by keeping our own Neighbourhood Development Plan up to date and in line with District and National policy we can enlist the help of our wonderful parishioners to help us towards that goal.

Despite staffing challenges and legal hurdles Cam Parish Council continues to listen to and reflect local concerns and by becoming much more strategic and proactive deliver better local services and facilities across the diverse area we call Cam.

After three years of serving residents as chair of parish council I can truly say it has been an honour and would have been an impossible task without the support and hard work of our staff and fellow councillors alike.

Vice Chair's Annual Report

Councillor Mark Morton

Well there goes another year!!

It never seems to surprise me how quickly the years are going by, who recalls the country wide shortage of toilet rolls, well that was four years ago!

I have tried to support the Chair in any way I could from nudging and pointing when the Chair had not noticed a Councillor wanting to join a conversation to covering when the Chair was absent.

I was due to do the Remembrance Day laying of wreath on behalf of the council, but for the first time ever I had to excuse myself due to flu and several broken ribs, not a mixture I would recommend.

I have enjoyed my position as Vice Chair over the last 12 months and it's great to see more people coming on board to represent the local public. We still have a vacancy or two and it would be great to see younger people join us so we might appreciate the younger person's outlook.

Patient Participation Group

Councillor Jon Fulcher

Despite losing some members this year the committee continues to enjoy a good working relationship with the Orchard clinic and with Jonathan Pape continuing as chair, have made great strides on a number of fronts. Nevertheless, the need for more members on the committee reflecting a wider demographic is still pressing.

The Cam and Uley practice has stabilised under a new practice manager and learnt from earlier problems with vaccination clinics so that recent attempts have been trouble free, delivering a better service for patients. PPG committee members play an important role in helping to improve the customer experience and also volunteer time to help with managing large scale vaccination sessions.

This year has continued to see the Cam and Uley practice buck the trend when it comes to new appointments, seeing more incoming staff bolstering both the frontline and support teams. Under the chair's leadership the committee keeps abreast of national as well as local policy issues and updates and this helps the committee understand the challenges faced by a modern clinical delivery service.

There are still ongoing issues with the Uley premises, at times only offering a more limited service, but through the partners at Cam and Uley there has been a growing realisation that the practice has to keep pace with the population and shifting demographics of our area. Consequently, there is an increased urgency and willingness to work with stakeholders and partners, including Cam Parish Council, to provide a larger, all-encompassing medical centre offering Cam residents joined up medical and social prescribing services looking to the future needs of patients.

The challenge will now be finding an appropriate site, funding, and the political will and stamina to see the project come to fruition. The PPG will have a valuable role to play towards this end in carrying the community with us in the coming years with delivery planned by 2029/30. This would provide Cam with a more accessible surgery and dispensing service with better patient parking and in-house training facilities and a certain amount of future proofing given the growing local needs.

The committee has recently carried out a review of its constitution and core aims, continues to meet quarterly and will soon hold an AGM. We thank the practice manager and senior partners for their ongoing hospitality and cooperation.

Stinchcombe Hill Trust

Councillor Jerry Fowler

Update of key points following the last meeting of Trustees from the Stinchcombe Hill Trust (SHT) held on Thursday 19th March 2024.

A conservation report on the volunteers' activities on the hill, which will cease, for this financial year at the end of March 2024. Over the last six months there have been 44 days of activity, including scrub clearance as part of Farming in a Protected Landscape (FIPL), which has been largely completed and the clearing of fallen ash from footpaths has been completed.

Over the last 12 months 146 hours of volunteer work has been carried out on the hill, clearing scrub and putting brash into windrows.

Phases I and II of the FiPL scheme: Now complete; the costs associated with both phases are broken down as follows and have been paid to the contractors:

- Kathy Meakin's aerial and botanical survey - £2,980
- Project management (Pip Green) - £2,640
- Scrub clearance - £5,227.50

Trustees have approved Phase III of FiPL: An application to **Cotswold Natural Landscape (CNL)** will be submitted. Three bids were submitted for Phase III of FiPL; they were from:

- FWAG
- Pearsons
- Nicholsons

Gloucestershire Commons:

The trust has been approached by Stroud District Council to take part in a meeting of Gloucestershire Commons to discuss best practice when maintaining sites.

Website: The website now has a link to the Golf Club's website and provides details of the ash dieback felling programme and other items of interest, such as the ecology. Councillor Fowler to investigate linking to CPC website and or social media.

Photographic Archive: The Trust will examine historic photographs donated to assess whether they might be suitable for an exhibition celebrating the 100th anniversary (2028, 2029 or 2030?). In the future, the material may be deposited with Gloucestershire Archives (GA) as either a gift or a long-term deposit. The trust will also catalogue the material.

Ash dieback: An estimated 40% of the felling program is complete. Felling of ash on the **Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI)** is still the priority, along with any trees that may pose a hazard to golfers or the public. So far there is no sign of any ash recovering from the infection. It is hoped that the felling of ash will be 70% completed by September 2024 and 100% (1829) completed by the autumn of 2025.

The focus on SSSIs means that the proposed upgrade to the Cotswold Way to allow for wheelchair access to the Stanley Tubbs Shelter will not be possible in 2024 (due to the fact that no new funds have been allocated by CNL or Gloucestershire Highways.) The brash left from felling ash on the SSSI has been stacked in windrows by volunteers. Whole timber has been left in an appropriate location to be processed later.

Seating on the hill: The trust has completed an inventory of sites and comments on what to do with future requests. Options and recommendations identifying vacant sites and reconciling their ownership will be created. Any future agreements for memorial benches may require contract details of the family as some benches were anonymous and wished to remain so, it is difficult to discuss required ongoing maintenance.

Events:

Orienteering - Bristol Orienteering Klub have made a request for an evening / night-time event. A clarification of the route and proposed date has been requested along with a risk assessment and relevant insurance cover.

Dursley Dozen - Trustees approved running of the next Dursley Dozen race 16th February 2025

Bristol Rotary Club and Bridges for Communities have arranged a visit to the Korean Friendship Trail by 50 international visitors for the 11th April 2024 (1100-1315 hrs).

Stinchcombe Hill Golf Club:

Bore hole - The bore hole has been sealed, relined and connected to the distribution system; however, the Club will only extract 20 Cubic metres of water per day for the foreseeable future to determine requirements before asking Severn Trent / Environment Agency for an abstraction licence.

Alterations to the course – Irrigation to the 16th has been improved. The club has requested an alteration to the 6th tee so amalgamating men's and women's tees. This was approved.

The club has asked permission to plant some shrubs along the 7th fairway. The trust has offered some buckthorn and has recommended planting Whitebeam if more trees were required. The club has also asked whether approval could be given to create a water feature, that would double as a reservoir for excess water. This was approved in principle subject to details, and the tentative inclusion in a future FiPL application.

Next proposed meeting 24th Oct 2024.

Cam, Dursley & Uley Joint Woodland Management Committee

Christina Carter

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Overview of the committee

- The Committee is external to Cam Parish Council, Dursley Town Council and Uley Parish Council
- It was set up in 1994 in a contract with Stroud District Council (SDC – the landowners)

The Function of the Committee

The governance agreement with SDC delegated powers to the Cam, Dursley and Uley Joint Woodlands Committee to manage woodlands and grasslands – all of which are environmentally sensitive:

- 40 Hectares of woodland in Dursley (Cockshoot Wood) and Cam (Sheep Path Wood & Westfield Wood) that comprise of rare ancient woodland
- 31 Hectares of grassland at Cam Long Down and Cam Peak
- 5 Hectares of grassland and woodland at Uley Bury

The Management requirement is to:

- Maintain paths, gates, fences, cattle grids, trees, ponds and parking areas
- Provide and operate a conservation plan

Objectives of Management Plan:

- To maintain lands under management according to best practice for the recreation and exercise of local residents and visitors
- High level Stewardship of environmentally sensitive areas

Membership of the Committee:

- Two councillors from each of the three parishes

Supporting officers:

- Clerk/Finance officer – honoraria payment
- Part time paid Land Manager – contracted
- Footpath Warden – honoraria payment
- Officer from SDC

Funding Sources:

- Stroud District Council
- RPA (Rural Payments Agency)
- Cam Parish Council
- Dursley Town Council
- Uley Parish Council
- Donations in kind from Cotswold Wardens
- Occasional donations

Meetings

- Quarterly meetings are held usually on a Monday evening at 7 pm Extra meetings may be necessary occasionally

General Report

The Management Committee has spent the year addressing regular maintenance tasks such as dealing with broken fences and gates, fallen trees (many this year caused by storms), blocked footpaths, scrub cutting, bracken cutting, supervising grazing arrangements, and general conservation. A big difference in our work load this year has been down to ash dieback. A survey was carried out in Cam and Dursley Woods that identified trees with the disease and a felling priority list. It's an issue that has been intensifying our responsibilities for many years but over the last year, as the affected trees become potentially more unstable, this has meant much more felling than previously, stretching resources more than ever.

Regular reports, by our Footpath Warden, on the footpaths across the land within our responsibility are invaluable. They mean that any issues such as diseased and fallen trees can be assessed quickly, by our land manager, and dealt with appropriately.

Part of the CDUJWMC's job is to protect the natural landscape. Cam & Dursley Woods, a rare, ancient woodland, Cam Peak and Uley Bury are all environmentally sensitive areas which offer a rich diversity of habitats that provide refuges and corridors for plants and wildlife. They require specialist knowledge to maintain and conserve them. Advice is taken from our Land Manager, the Forestry Commission and other bodies.

One question that is often asked about the ash felling is whether it will lead to deforestation, but we want to assure those concerned that regeneration will take place naturally and if not then planting new trees is an option.

The committee is currently working on artwork for welcoming signs that will incorporate information about the woods, to be placed at the entrances to Cam and Dursley woods.

Grazing at Cam Peak and Uley Bury is an important element of the conservation programme and grazing contracts are arranged accordingly.

Other issues that have challenged us in previous years continue, like anti-social behaviour such as littering and fly tipping, including dumping of spoil in the woods, theft of wood left in the woodland as part of our conservation programme, illegal camping, motorised vehicles, damage to trees, the forest floor and grasslands. While incidents have come down since the pandemic, all of these issues remain a concern.

Changes within the committee

On 24/04/23 Jonathan Fulcher was voted in as Chairman, David Lungley as Vice-Chairman and the committee approved Christina Carter as the new clerk.

The committee was allocated a new SDC Officer, Mike Wardell to replace Rozelle Jachowicz who has retired. He is Senior Community Services Officer recently moving departments from 'Independent Living' into 'Open Spaces' with a focus on biodiversity.

Cam councillor Mike Grimshaw joined the committee in July 23. Doina Cornell resigned as a Dursley councillor and CDUJWMC member in December 2023.

The committee works within a governance agreement with Stroud District Council (SDC – the landowners) which was last updated in 1994. This agreement is currently being reviewed.

Financial statement

Lloyds Treasurer's account:

Opening balance 06/04/23	£25796.40
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Balance at 25/03/24	£23307.33
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Income over year to date:	£22346.00
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Expenditure over year to date:	£23535.00
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Estimated budget requirement 24/25:	£32,500.00
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Specific events

Cam Peak



Grazing at Cam Peak: The committee approved a reduction in fee having considered the need to retain cows grazing there as part of our conservation plan against the fact that the grazier's income may be negatively affected by the Basic Payment Scheme changes which could affect their decision to carry on with the contract. The grazier offered to contribute in other ways by cutting the roadside and pond hedges and dealing with bramble patches in that area.

The traditional procession and the placing of the cross on Cam Peak by Churches Together at Easter 2023 went smoothly.



The committee is not responsible for the safety of this popular annual event but has ensured that the 120-year-old flag staff to which the cross is attached is secure as part of its general maintenance work at Cam Peak and to preserve it as part of the area's historical heritage. This requires regular filling of holes that develop around it by carrying filling material from elsewhere in the area that is in keeping with the soil in the eroded spots.

On the Bridle Path inside the gate at the bottom of Cam Peak an issue needed to be resolved with a utility company who had been responsible for some cabling work. The ground had not been restored properly and an incident with a horse had been reported. The area was restored and is now safe.

Regeneration of the grass on top of Cam Peak: The fence placed on Cam Peak to help regenerate the grass there was finally removed in December 2023. It was important to have had the fence in place to protect extremely worn areas. It was done this way because of the ecological importance of the area. It is unimproved acidic grassland which is a 'priority habitat' under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. The acid soils of Cam Peak are uncommon in this part of Gloucestershire and contain interesting and some rare plants such as Sheep's-sorrel, Bird's-foot, Sea Mouse-ear, Early Hairgrass, Trailing Tormentil, Heath Bedstraw and Western Gorse. Fledgling trees are also regularly removed to preserve the historically open grassland eco zone.

Conservation work and biodiversity

The Chairman stated his ambition for the committee to work closely with SDC and particularly with the new Biodiversity officer, to ensure that biodiversity is at the heart land stewardship. The biodiversity officer complimented the approach as one that it is important for all management committees such as ours, landowners and councils to get on board with.

Controlling Himalayan balsam in Cam and Dursley Woods: The plant is problematic because it is invasive, spreads fast and competes with native plants for light, nutrients pollinators and space, reducing biodiversity rapidly.



Volunteer working parties who spent many days and weeks in 2022 pulling the plant up made a big difference to its spread in 2023. Our footpath warden continued to organise sessions in spring and summer 2023 to ensure getting on top of the problem.



We are grateful to all the volunteers from the committee, the Cotswolds Wardens, the Stinchcombe Hill Trust and other members of the public who attended these working parties.

A certain amount of our felled timber is left in Cam and Dursley Woods, as part of our conservation plan, to encourage biodiversity of species. Some has been illegally removed.

Uley Bury: Work continued with the Uley volunteer group in collaboration with our land manager to manage the slopes above the woodland, to maintain them as a valuable low scrub and grassland habitat for certain rare species. Thanks go to all involved including the Uley footpath warden.

Cam Institute Charity
Councillor Mark Morton

We only meet twice a year but I always look forward to these meetings.

At the last meeting for Grant Funding in October 2023 I was shocked to see the amount of application, a true sign of the times with no one escaping the costs of living.

The committee considered applications for grants and below is a list of grants given.

Cotswold Vale Talking Newspaper	£140
Hopton School House	£250
Woodfield Youth and Community Centre	£300
Stinchcombe Village Hall	£250
Cam Cricket Club Youth Section	£250
Winterbotham Memorial Hall	£500
GL11	£250
Gloucestershire Breastfeeding Supporters	£200
Dursley Running Club Juniors	£250
Cam Sports Club	£500

Although not all applications received the amount, they applied for it was felt by the Trustees that some grant was better than nothing.

Dursley United Charities
Councillor Miranda Clifton

This is a small locally based charity formed some years ago from an amalgamation of two or three smaller historical charitable organisations in Dursley and surrounding parishes. Having recently merged with the Dursley based Twemlow Trust, the charity also incorporated the Cam parochial charity whose funds had become too small to make it a viable body on its own, the objectives of the two bodies being broadly the same. This year an area of farmland owned by the charity and rented to a local farmer has been sold with the money raised being incorporated into the charity's funds.

The DUC provides various types of grants: to help people with further/higher education e.g. for college or university expenses; Christmas benefactions, which are granted on recommendation from health visitors, social services etc. for people in particular need, and individual one-off grants which are given to people in cases of emergency - usually referred by a health visitor or other care professional. This year the charity again received a large donation from a local benefactor which will enable the disbursement of grants to a greater number of residents experiencing particular hardship (on the recommendation of a recognised body).

As well as grants to individuals, the availability of grants to local organisations is advertised once a year. Disappointingly there weren't very many applications last year with Churches Together being the only organisation to receive a grant, as some of the other applications did not comply with the purposes of the charity.

Woodfield Youth and Community Centre
Councillor Miranda Clifton

The Woodfield Youth & Community Centre is owned by the community and run by a group of trustees representing local residents and the parish council who meet every couple of months to oversee the management.

The Door youth worker continues to be based in the centre for one session a week; the army and air cadets meet regularly on three evenings. Woodfield Tots which provides parent support classes, soft play for local toddlers and a place for a chat for their carers is a regular daytime booking and there is the increasingly popular bingo on a Friday night. The centre is also available for hire for

private parties and events. At Christmas a 3-course lunch for older residents was held – organised and run by the committee.

After several years when there was very little income, the revenue from the cadets gave a welcome boost to funds, although the huge increase in energy and water costs is rapidly eating into that. Some of the available funds were used to have the ceiling in the main hall replaced with new energy efficient light installed and we were pleased that a working party provided by Atkins came to the centre for a volunteer workday and completely redecorated the foyer and main hall, which now looks much more attractive. There is still a lot to do: the committee is considering how to improve what is now looking a rather tired building; amongst others the kitchen needs replacement, the youth room is in great need of redecoration and sundry other repairs are required.

The committee consists of a small number of very committed and hardworking volunteers from the local community; any local residents or councillors with enthusiasm and commitment would be welcomed to join the committee and help to keep this valuable community asset going for the benefit of our residents.

Rackleaze Wetland Annual Report

March 31st 2023 - April 1st 2024

Clare Mahdiyone, Chief Executive Officer, Stroud Valleys Project

At the start of April through until August a major part of managing the wetland site has been the brush cutting of the footpaths and seating area for the public to walk, rest and enjoy the wildlife area, see photo opposite. This work is very rewarding as many people passing through or visiting the site have always commented on the good work that has been achieved to keep the area inviting for people to enjoy.

Another positive step with this management of the public space is that we have been able to provide a balance between wildlife and people, giving visitors the opportunity to seat or walk around the area but also allowing wildlife to thrive. This balancing between people and space can be seen by quite literally for example from the great show of some sixteen Southern Marsh Orchid flower spikes that flowered this June (2023) see the



below photograph of some of the beautiful flowering orchid spikes.

Along with this management on-site we also try to maintain the overflow spill way from the adjacent balancing pond as at times this can become clogged up onsite. By keeping the overflow area clear we minimise any issues of flooding which has been a concern of several the residents that live adjacent to the wildlife area. See photography below, July 2023, of cleared grassland area next to

overflow, this allows any water to flow on to site in a controlled manner.

Another major job on-site is the cutting and composting of comfrey that grows on the wildlife area. This work we try to do in the months of September and November allowing insects, bees etc a late food source just before winter. The clearing away of the can be quite a big task but this year the work of collecting and composting has become easier with the help of members of staff from Kerry Foods Ltd who on several occasions have come along to help with the work. I would like to thank Jon Fulcher who made the initial contact with Kerry Foods as now we are able when needed, with a bit of forward planning, to get a large group of people on-site to help with this work. As we moved into the winter months, we have been helped by Cam PC contractors who have supplied us with large amounts of woodchip for us to put out the footpaths on-site. This once again has given visitors better access on the footpaths around the wildlife area, see opposite photograph of volunteers raking out wood chip on paths (January 2024). This supply of wood chippings is very useful to us, and I hope it will continue as it gives the area a feel of being managed, having fresh wood chippings keep the site looking good and well looked after. Again, several walkers and visitors have commented about how nice and well-kept the area looks when the footpaths have been freshened up. Since we have had wood chipping delivered the group must have applied over five tonnes of chipping to the footpaths.



Another one of our winter jobs is to maintain and enhance the laid hedgerow that runs adjacent to the nearby balancing pond. This year for the first time we were able to source all the hazel bindings (heathering) from Hazel clumps on-site or adjacent to the wildlife area the pictures below show binding being processed and then tied into the hedgerow giving it needed support and structure. new bindings for hedgerow February 2024.



Finally, by the end of the financial year (March 2024) the group set about scrub clearance of encroaching bramble, the reason to control this encroachment of scrub is to give better opportunities for the smaller flowering grassland plants to grow. This again is an annual clearance job linked into areas where we have flowering wetland plants and orchids growing. As a result of this sensitive management in particular places on-site we have seen more flowering orchid spikes year on year. All of this would not have been achieved unless it was for the great work that SVP and other volunteers have put into the wetland area. The site has become a place for wildlife to thrive and for people to rest and enjoy as well as increasing volunteers and visitors' well-being.



Blooming Cam

Jo Lewis

The Blooming Cam volunteers meet each Wednesday afternoon with the aim of keeping the centre of Cam tidy and colourful with fresh planting, weeding, cutting back and clearing.

We look after the large bed running around and in front of Froffy Coffee café on Noel Lee Way, the garden at the Lower Cam war memorial garden, the two flower beds at the bottom of Cam Pitch and the flower pots and ground around Hopton War Memorial. If we had more volunteers then we'd like to spread our gardening efforts further, but at the moment these areas keep our small team of six gardeners busy.



In the autumn of 2023 we planted several sacksful of Spring bulbs around the area so that everyone could enjoy the zing of cheerful colour in the new year. These were a huge success.

Cam Parish Council secured funding for the volunteers to enjoy a Christmas coffee and cake afternoon in December 2023 and there was even enough left for us to have a platter of sandwiches at our first meeting of the year when we held a planning meeting to discuss our plans for the new gardening year.



Volunteers (photo above) enjoying the Christmas coffee and cake.

Volunteers (left and right) in gardening action!



We always need more volunteers and if anyone would like to join us, please contact Jo Lewis at Cam Parish Council or by ringing 01453 548884.

Cam & Dursley Youth provision – The Door
Councillor Miranda Clifton

Cam Parish council jointly with Dursley Town council continues to employ The Door for our youth work provision. The contract was renewed and revised from September so that for Cam there is now youth club on one session a week at the Woodfield Youth & Community centre and planned further outreach work in the local community

At the Cam youth club sessions, the key has been consistency, building a core group of regulars who can help establish the identity and grow the youth club. This has been a positive process so far and the overall attendance has improved: there is a consistent cohort attending faithfully. The Door continues to explore ways to progress youth work in Cam and intends to have more of a presence amongst young people in Cam: they joined in with the Christmas Lights Switch on, running some games and activities, and were also part of the organisation for Skate4Josh, a very successful and enjoyable event. The youth worker has also been working on the possibility of an after-school club at Woodfield Primary school for Year 6s.

Many Cam young people go to the Vibe in Dursley, so in Cam the session has been a useful respite for them – a ‘Ca[l]m’ space. At the Woodfield session the Monday Munch club has been a great success with the young people: there were pancakes for Pancake Day, brownies for a young person’s birthday and mac ‘n cheese. Thanks are due to Kerry Foods who provided initial funding for this.

As well as providing a local youth club, The Door’s Intensive Support team supports a number of young people and their parents, although it has recently had to suspend referrals to this service due to high demand and lack of volunteers.

The youth workers keep in regular contact with the PCSOs and have introduced themselves to the new head teacher at Rednock, where our youth worker has continued his weekly lunch time visits and has at times stayed on to support individual students, helping them find the right support. The Door provides a useful all round support system for the young people of both Cam and Dursley.

Dursley and District Community Association
Jane Ball

Thank you to the Council for giving us a grant of £2000.

The grant was used straight away to have new carpet and flooring in the Lister Lounge at the Community Centre. We did go slightly over budget and we used some of our revenue to make up the difference.

Many of the Centre users have commented on the new look and all think it is a much-needed improvement to the room.

Many of the users of the Centre live in Cam, not least the Chairman and myself, so once again thank you.

Arthur S Winterbotham Memorial Hall
Councillor Mark Morton

As always, a pleasure to join the meetings at Arthur Winterbotham Hall.

The problems the committee continually faces are the general upkeeping and replacement of items within the hall.

The committee have been forced by current ongoing increase in costs to raise the rental of the hall and this has been accepted by the cliental.

An old fire door within the hall was found recently to be no longer up to standard required and has been replaced. The committee is looking at cleaning the ceiling area with a view to painting it in the near future.

The hall remains to be utilised by many local groups who appreciate the facilities.

The web page has recently been updated as has the booking contact number which is now a virtual land line number.

GL11 Community Hub
Paul Grainger, Communications and Fundraising Manager

GL11 Community Hub gratefully received a grant of £1,797 toward the end of last year, to support the pilot first year of our new 'Care & Repair' project in 2024.

Care & Repair is a trusted handy person service for Cam residents over 65, or any adult living with a disability. The project aims to provide help with small jobs in the home and garden, to help maintain people's independence and ability to stay living in their own home for longer.

The type of things Care & Repair can help with are general DIY, such as replacing a light bulb, installing a safety rail, furniture moves on return from hospital, fitting a key safe, etc.

Cam West has the highest proportion of people 65+ living alone in Stroud District. From our initial community consultation, we estimated Care & Repair might help up to 50 people in this first pilot year. These beneficiaries are older and disabled residents of Cam, particularly those on low incomes/pensions/benefits.

Although this project is currently on going through the rest of 2024, we are to date, in the first quarter of the year, running ahead of that original estimate, having completed 18 Care & Repair jobs over a total 41 handyman hours delivered. Obviously we will be able to report more fully on final numbers, and a breakdown of the types of works carried out, at the end of this year, but clearly it is already meeting a community need, and helping support older people in Cam to stay living independently in their own homes for longer.

Cam and Dursley Transportation Group

David Smith

Cam and Dursley Transportation Group (CDTG) works to improve bus and train services and facilities in the area.

The 65 Stagecoach West bus service runs hourly Mondays to Saturdays. The route from Gloucester is via Stonehouse, Eastington, Cam, Dursley, Uley, Selsey then Stroud. During 2022 the service was frequently cancelled because of a driver shortage. The Stagecoach West managing director was the guest speaker at the CDTG AGM in August 2022. We demanded a reliable service and pursued this with senior management. As far as we are aware there were no cancellations last year caused by driver shortages.

The 65 service serves Cam and Dursley Station only at peak times. We are seeking to restore an off-peak service to the station. Last autumn we submitted a proposal to Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) for a Berkeley-Cam-Cam and Dursley Station bus service. This would be funded by the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). GCC will receive funding from central government to improve bus services in the county. We haven't heard whether our proposal will be considered. A recent GCC press release mentioned a Robin Berkeley Vale bus service. This would be introduced in the summer. No details of route, frequency etc were given.

Last May Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership introduced a bus shuttle service linking Dursley, Cam, Cam and Dursley Station and Slimbridge WWT. The service ran at weekends until September. The CDTG supported this venture through press and social media publicity. We were disappointed that the service was a one-off. It appears that funding wasn't available for it to continue.

On 19 February this year Transporobus began operating the 60 Dursley-Cam-Wotton-Thornbury service. The previous operator was Stagecoach West. We are not aware of any problems with the service.

On 8 April Gwent Vale Travels (GVT) begin operating the 62 Dursley-Cam-Berkeley-Thornbury service. The previous operator was Applegate Coaches. We have some concerns. GVT are based at Newport South Wales. We queried whether GVT could run a reliable service as they aren't locally based. We recently met Lee Murphy from GVT who assured us that they can provide a reliable service. We are also concerned that GVT buses will be running to the same timetable as the previous operator. This is an 'emergency' timetable. This was introduced by GCC when Bristol Community Transport ceased trading 2 years ago. We would like the direct service to Bristol to be reintroduced. We submitted written questions on this to the GCC March meeting and asked a supplementary question. We were told that reintroduction of the direct service is unaffordable.

Last autumn we raised through the Dursley Gazette the issue of inadequate shelter at Cam and Dursley Station from the weather. This was taken up with GWR by Siobhan Baillie MP. GWR replied that they had no plans to replace the shelters but that 'community funding' might be available. Joanna Edwards (Cam Parish Council Project Officer) recently contacted us on this issue. She is looking at funding for new shelters. We will await an update.

Cam and Dursley Parkinson's group

Kath Clements

The grant received from Cam Parish Council has enabled the local Cam and Dursley Parkinson's Group to hold monthly meetings, at the Cam Parish Council meeting room, for people living locally with Parkinson's, their carers, family and friends. These groups provide support, friendship and

information as well as a chance to socialize. The grant helps provide refreshments and contributes towards the cost of visiting speakers, which often, inadvertently, supports other charities. On average we have around 16 people attending each month. The project is planned to be ongoing with the valuable support from the grant for which we would like to thank the council.

Dursley Open Door

James Barrett

We took our members to see the film Wonka at the Electric Picture House, Wotton on 20th February 2024, which was much enjoyed by all! The cinema cost was £480, plus we incurred some transport costs.

Again, many thanks for the kind and invaluable support.

Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts Limited

Elizabeth Hall

Report for Cam Parish Council 2023-24

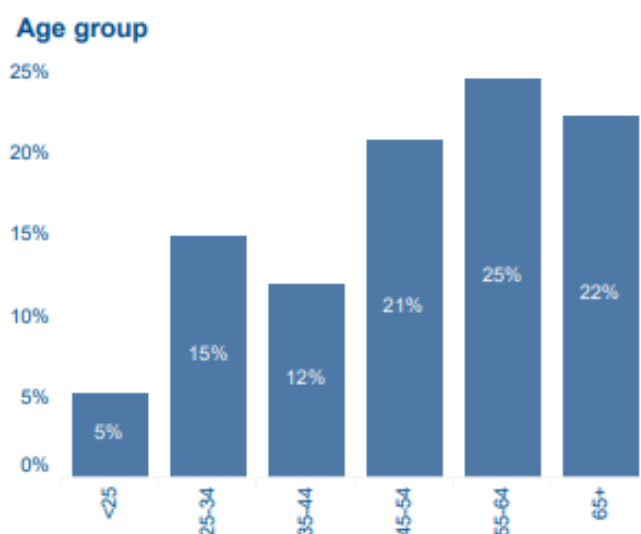
This report covers the period **from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024**. We received a grant from Cam Parish Council for the year reported on.

In this period, Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts have used the funds to assist with the costs of delivering advice to clients who are resident in the Cam parish.

During this period Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts and national Citizens Advice services such as the Help Through Hardship (Trussell Trust) and Help to Claim (Universal Credit) helpline have advised **145 clients** from Cam parish **on 771 issues**.

Demographics

Citizens Advice have advised clients across all age brackets from under 25 to over 65. Please see the graph below:



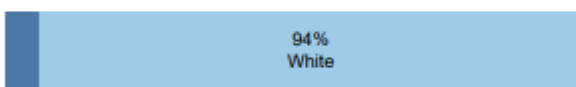
Sixty-five per cent of Cam clients describe themselves as having a disability or long-term health condition.

Fifty-three per cent of the clients described themselves as female and forty-seven per cent as male. Ninety-four per cent of clients described themselves as White.

Gender



Ethnicity



Disabled or Long term health



Financial outcomes,

During this period, Citizens Advice have achieved an income gain of £174,688 for Cam parish clients and secured £378 in reimbursements for clients. Other outcomes with a total value of £3,630 have also been secured.

Client issues

The top issues for clients in the Cam parish were:

1. Benefits including tax credits (this includes disability benefits)
2. Debt
3. Universal Credit
4. Employment
5. Utilities and Communications.

Benefit issues

The top issues for benefit advice are:

- Personal Independence Payment
- General benefits entitlement eg benefits checks
- Employment Support Allowance
- Attendance Allowance
- Council Tax Reduction

We are still seeing huge delays with PIP in every government department, from the sending out of the initial form, the health assessments, reviews of existing claims and the time taken for appeals to be heard. However, our appeal success rate is over 90% and we are securing large back payments as well as future awards at Mandatory Reconsideration and Appeal stages.

One reason why we are seeing an increase in the number of clients looking to apply for benefits is that they have been passporting clients to the DWP Cost of Living Payments.

Debt

There have been a number of clients enquiring about obtaining a Debt Relief Order. We have advised a number of clients with fuel debts and mobile debt.

Training

We have recruited two cohorts of trainees in 2023-24. Eight new trainees are now on the rota delivering advice and a further six are part way through their training. The training programme takes several months to complete – each trainee is asked to commit to one day or two half days per week. Trainees spend their time doing group training sessions, observations of experienced advisers on the telephone or doing face to face appointments and doing online training. Once on the rota, they must give advice on a range of subjects under close supervision until they are signed off as fully competent trained advisers.

It takes a considerable amount of time on the part of the paid supervisors and other staff both to conduct trainings, monitor completion of online modules and to give the close support and supervision that trainees need to feel confident and competent.

We are also aware that many of our volunteers are needing additional support as working on the frontline during a cost-of-living crisis has been and continues to be extremely stressful. Trainees are often dealing with clients who are very distressed, have mental health issues and are very stressed and anxious. We now have a staff member who is the designated wellbeing lead for the organisation.

Volunteers can claim expenses for travel to the office and outreaches and the grant from Cam parish has contributed to these expenses.

We have been investing in new laptops during 2023-24 and we are undergoing significant investment in IT during 2024-25. It is important to us that volunteers have access to well-functioning hardware, especially as we look to diversify our volunteer base. We are also aware that new trainees often struggle when they start with us as they have to get to grips with several systems in order to do the training and then to give advice – our information sources, the national Case Recording System and Office 365. We have had to increase the internal support given at the start of the training programme.

Concluding remarks

We are very grateful to Cam Parish Council for their support in 2023-24 and would be incredibly grateful for any further support.

If you have any further questions please do contact me.

Report from District Councillor

Councillor Victoria Gray, District Councillor Cam East

Cam Sports Ground:

Excellent progress has been made on the acquisition and protection of Cam Sports Ground - I continue to work closely with the trustees as do the Cam Parish Cllr's. Trustees have been very complimentary on all parties trying to help them.

Local Plan:

The draft local plan is currently still Alex at examination, various talks discussions and meetings are taking place on the current pose that the inspector has asked Stroud district Council to do. At the recent for council meeting it was decided that Stroud district Council will foot £100,000 bill to aid in the junction. 14 changes that need to be required.

We are still awaiting information on the correspondence between Stroud district Council and Gloucestershire highways following a freedom of information request that was made at the recent extra ordinary meeting at Stroud district Council chamber. As we all await details of what will happen with the local plan and what it means for Cam.

General Elections:

With general elections, taking place in May, we do expect to see some changes to our current council some new faces, and we say goodbye to some very long-standing councillors in the area of Stroud district as a whole. I am planning on running again. I do hope that I get elected for a second term to be able to continue to represent the residents in my local village.

Cam Community Action Group:

Cam community action group continue to make waves with their voice and ever-growing popular Facebook page. We are founders of the group continue to highlight demonstrate and signpost important developments that are taking place in Cam and surrounding areas most recently new development application to remove some of the car park at Cam train station I am sure this will gain much interest from residents in Cam and also the surrounding areas.

Report from District Councillor

Councillor Christopher Evans, District Councillor Cam West

During the past year a lot of my work as a councillor has involved assisting residents with individual enquiries on matters such as housing and planning. The main issue I have worked on that affects the whole village has been the District Council's draft Local Plan. I have been working with the Parish Council and residents' groups to represent Cam at a District level. The Local Plan is still with the Planning Inspectors, and there may be more public consultation next year.

Community Grant payments

Organisation	Grant received	Summary of spend and project update
Cam Youth and Community Centre	£4,000	Report included
Dursley & District Community Association	£2,000	Report included
GL11 Community Project	£1,797	Report included
Parkinson's UK	£300	Report included
Citizens Advice Bureau	£1,403	Report included
Dursley Open Door	£500	Report included