

Final Report on the Carlton New Homes Bonus Fund

New Homes Bonus funding was introduced by central government in 2011 as a way of encouraging communities to accept new housing development. The intention was for the funding to be additional to other government funding, and for the money to be used to support local infrastructure projects. The funding was not ring-fenced, and there was an expectation that a proportion of it would be passed on to parish councils (p.1388/8; 1435/17; 1442/9c refer).

In the event, H&BBC was one of the very few District Councils to pass any New Homes Bonus funding to parishes, and it was made clear that this policy would be reviewed in 2014. This review has now taken place, and regrettably H&BBC has decided that no further New Homes Bonus Funding will be passed on to parishes.

The Carlton New Homes Bonus Fund was set up in 2013 so that there would be a separate record of the funds received and how they had been spent. The separate identification of the source of a significant capital sum would also have simplified external auditing of the PC's accounts under the rules applicable at that time. The intention was to use this money to create the Carlton Diamond Jubilee Orchard, followed by other major capital projects such as the acquisition of land for public recreation. The anticipated receipts would have been significant – about £8,000 in both 2015 and 2016 – because of the amount of new development in Carlton.

Carlton New Homes Bonus Fund: Summary

Financial year	Receipts £.p	Payments £.p	Fund Balance £.p
2011-12	1076.85		1076.85
2012-13	1076.85		2153.70
2013-14	2904.41		5058.11
Carlton Gardening Group set-up		200.00	4858.11
DJO hedging & trees		658.14	4199.97
DJO gate & fixings		243.78	3956.19
DJO trees		184.16	3772.03
2014-15	4409.02		8181.05
DJO land purchase & fees		2790.00	5391.05
DJO picnic bench & base		279.18	5111.87
DJO path construction		1498.64	3613.23
DJO fruit trees & stakes		132.35	3480.88
Estimated expenditure 2015			
DJO shrubs and hedging		400.00	3080.88
Grounds maintenance		200.00	2880.88
Carlton Gardening Group		200.00	2680.88
Park bench and base		1500.00	1180.88
Bulb plantings		200.00	980.88

The figures in Report 2014-03 for the DJO Project were estimates; the figures above for 2013-14, and 2014-15 are correct and have been reconciled with the accounts. Some small items of expenditure for the DJO Project have been charged to Clerk's expenses. By the end of 2015, New Homes Bonus Funding will have paid for the Carlton Diamond Jubilee Orchard with about £1,000 left over.

The draft budget for 2015-16 includes an allocation of £2,000 to the recreational land reserve.

I recommend that the New Homes Bonus Fund be closed, and that the remaining funds be absorbed into the general budget.

C J Peat
Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer 7th January 2015