

BRAMBER PARISH COUNCIL - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: 12th April 2017

I would like to start by thanking the members of the Parish Council for their support during the past year in particular those who had volunteered their time attending meetings and events.

Our Clerk Paddy has worked hard and long this year to keep up with the increasing workload and has continued to help with groups/committees outside of her normal responsibilities. This meeting represents a good opportunity to publicly say a big thank you on behalf of the Parish for yet another years' exemplorary contribution.

Thanks also to Lynne Broome, our Tree Warden, for her expertise and help in assessing an unusually large number of tree-related applications.

Thank you to our County Councillor David Barling (WSCC) for keeping us up to date on County matters and also for his timely response to us on the numerous occasions where we have needed his help. Thanks also to David Coldwell and Ben Staines, (Horsham District Council) for their continued support over the last 12 month. The SAYS charity has not had an easy ride over this period but David has always stayed calm and reasoned and steered the ship on a steady course.

Thank you to our 2 Neighbourhood Wardens for their continued commitment to helping make our Parish such a pleasant place to live.

Outside of the Council special thanks are also due to the many volunteers who continue to provide invaluable service to the upkeep of the Churchyard, the Hanging Baskets, the Christmas Tree, the Flood Committee, and the Annual Fete - John & Moirag McCarthy, Dave & Aud Bowskill, Roger & Lesley Glanville, Dennis & Wendy Steele, Ron Ballam, Jon Staton, Mike Roney, Andy Hodge, Sauwanee Deardon, Graham & Teressa Ingram, Marcus Powell.

Council Members

Regretfully we will be losing Marilyn Goddard and Nick Mills in the near future and my thanks go to them for all the input they have provided on many matters.

Footpaths.

Our footpaths continue to be widely used by both residents and visitors to the area. The Parish Council helped finance the installation of Information Boards at various points along the paths to inform users of the flora and fauna in the vicinity.

A dog bin and dog fouling notices have also been installed this year.

Clays Hill

We have made good progress this year on the potential use of portable Speed Indicator Devices on both Clays Hill and 2 separate locations in The Street. We know now what types of devices will be used in each location and are very close to ordering them. Upper Beeding have expressed interest in sharing the use and therefore the costs of one of the devices. Thanks go to Mike Croker and Di Goodall for their joint contributions in making this happen.

The proposal to have a 30 mph sign at the bottom of Clays Hill is still being considered.

Village Hall

We have continued to represent Bramber on the B&B Village Hall Committee. The Village Hall Committee have continued to keep the facility running effectively and there have been no major issues during the year. They continue to seek funding for an updated sound system and have further plans for improving the Hall. There is currently a vacancy for Treasurer.

Thanks got to Mick Tilley for representing the Council on the Committee, and also for maintaining the Councils' website.

The Burial Board

Administrative changes have been made this year and a new Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee established. Steyning, Upper Beeding and Bramber each have 2 representatives on the Committee which is hosted by Upper Beeding.

The major project for the Committee at the moment is the purchase of a further piece of land at Botolphs. I am pleased to say that Nick Stubbs, one of Brambers' representatives, has volunteered to project manage this initiative.

Neighbourhood Plan

Stilted progress has been made this year for a variety of reasons and Nick Mills will be reporting on this later.

Housing and Planning

We have dealt with 31 Planning Applications and 19 Tree Applications this year.

Steyning Area Youth Service

Much good work has been done by Emma and her team throughout the year. Some examples of activities are:-

- Tuesday and Thursday youth clubs,
- Youth club in Upper Beeding for a younger age group at the Hub.
- There are links with the Downland Scheme which is looking to involve young people in its management and also with the Patients' Participation Group which is interested to find out about youth access to medical services.
- the team are working in partnership with Coastal MIND to provide some consultation work with local young people. There has been a growing need for access to mental health services.
- Mentoring young people who are in need for various reasons.
- volunteers are still needed to help out in both Steyning and Upper Beeding

I urge you all to read Emmas' latest update report to see the full range of activities available to the young people of the area.

The SAYS Management Committee was re-established in November as the Joint Parishes Youth Committee and acts as the main point of contact with Horsham Matters on operational issues.

The funds held for youth activities by the SAYS charity have been run down this year and in future contracts with Horsham Matters, the providers of the service ,will be directly with the 4 Parish Councils involved. The SAYS charity will be discontinued soon, as no further useful function for it has been identified.

Neighbourhood Wardens

Paul and Mike have worked hard this year to maintain good knowledge and contacts with the youth of the area in particular:-

- Section 59 Notices in relation to inappropriate Moped use,
- Dealing with incidences of Anti Social behaviour
- Periodic Monitoring the use of the new Footpaths
- Assisting with the Youth Service activities
- Liaising with Police on relevant matters.
- Warning residents of any current Scams that they may encounter

Environment

The Environment Agency no longer have any responsibility for the maintenance of ditches and streams in the Parish.

The Bramber Emergency group have been discussing how it can best serve the community in the light of this change. To that end funds have been received from Operation Watershed for the purchase of relevant equipment that residents can use to clear their own ditches and streams. Additionally a demonstration of ditch clearing is to be provided by the Environment Agency once the new kit is available.

Our volunteer group carried out sterling work in keeping residents informed during periods of significant electrical outages during January. Many thanks to Dave Bowskill and John McCarthy.

A cold snap during January was severe enough for our salt spreader to be used on 2 occasions to keep our pavements safe.

Discussions were had with our County Councillor regarding the bad state of the pavement n The Street. As a result Bramber is now on this years' list of priority cases for pavement repair

Parish Council Finances

Budget for 2015/16 - £24,205

Actual Spend - £24,057

The Council decided to raise the precept by just £500 (less than 3%) towards expected costs of the Neighbourhood Plan.