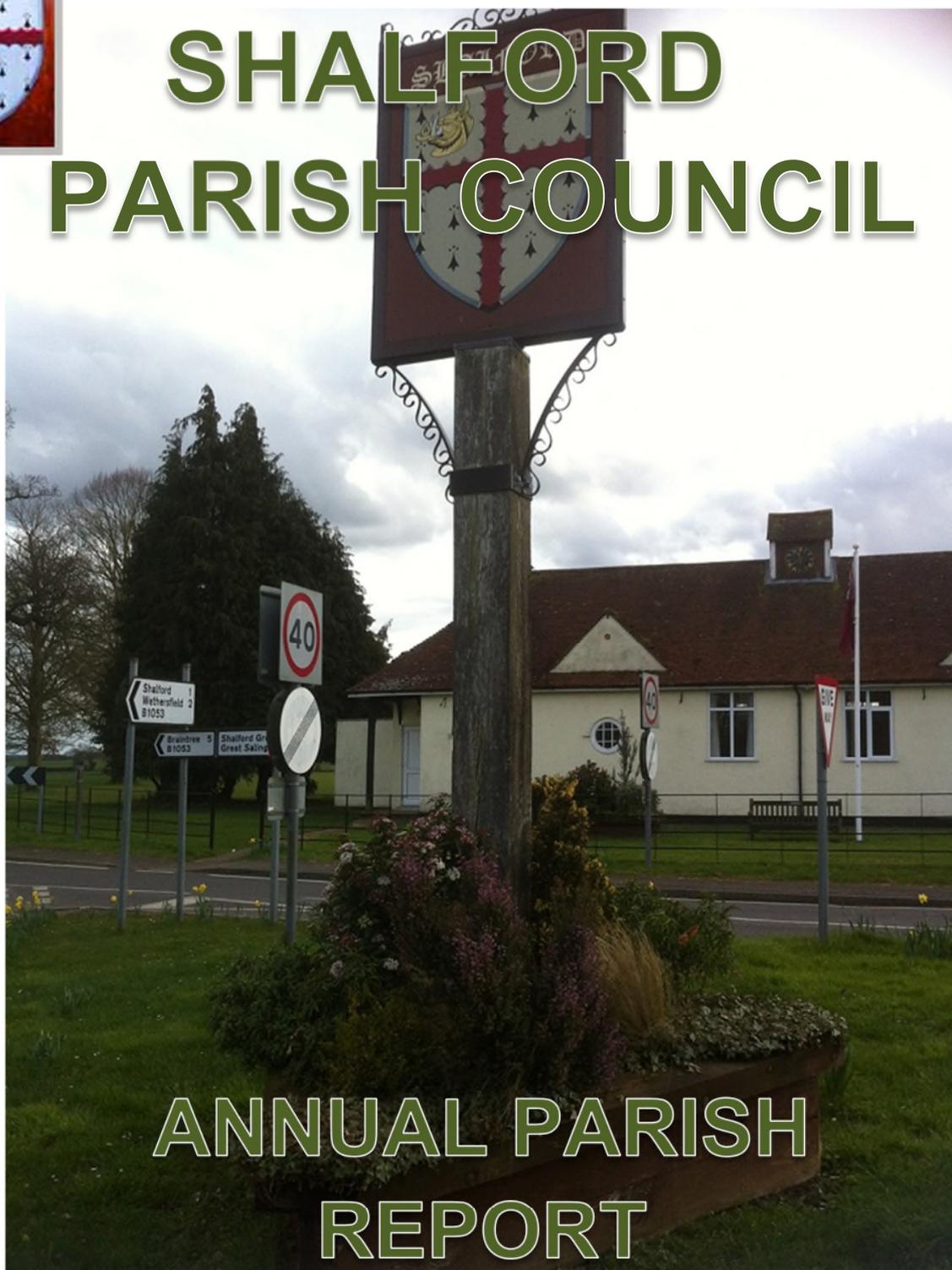




SHALFORD PARISH COUNCIL



ANNUAL PARISH REPORT

for the residents of Shalford
Year 2015/16

Parish Council Meetings – all welcome



Parish Council meetings, which are open to all, are held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, in the Village Hall, commencing at 7:30 p.m.

Agendas will be published on the notice board and web site at least 3 clear days in advance of the meeting.

Each meeting starts with the Public Forum - a short period of time when residents can ask questions or raise issues with Councillors.

Please contact the Clerk for any further information relating to your Parish Council.

Parish Council Meeting Dates 2016/2017

16th March	20th April APM
18th May	15th June
20th July	No Aug meeting
21st Sept	19th Oct
16th Nov	21st Dec
18th Jan 2017	15th Feb

Contact Details for the Parish Clerk

Mrs Cathryn Carlisle, Herkstead Green Bungalow, Cornish Hall End, Braintree, Essex CM7 4HH Tel: 01440 731964 email: shalford.pc@vodafoneemail.co.uk

Chairman's Report



I would like to record a vote of thanks to all members of Council for their considerable support and contribution to the Parish throughout the course of this last year and also to our Clerk of 9 years who has consistently supported Council in the work it has undertaken.

The Parish Council has worked hard to improve communication and dissemination of information in the village but we are long way from reaching our goal of signing all Shalford residents to our monthly newsletter and informative website. The Council's award-winning website has been run by David Eversden since 2004 and gives details of council services, local groups, events, businesses and a village calendar of events, picture gallery and much more.

A Parish footpath map was produced in 2009; the inspirational Cllr Oates persuaded the Parish Council to invest in a highly desirable Parish Footpaths Map. Shalford has about 22.5 km (something over 14 miles) of off-road footpaths, and about 3 miles of Bridleways. The last of these splendid maps was handed out last week and we are now seeking a good Cartographer to produce a new revised map.

Village enhancement is the vision of Cllr Golding and in 2009 he proposed the use of planters as a means of bringing some colour to areas of the village where it would be impossible to create flower beds. His enthusiasm and determination has prevailed and we now support 6 planters.

Continuing the theme of village enhancement, we have seen a dramatic improvement in the fencing round the village hall, the PC have planted trees on the green opposite the Village Hall and on Whites Hill. Currently the Parish Council is researching the potential to gate the village as a means of reducing motorists' speeds as they pass through the village.

We have two items listed on Braintree District Council's Local Highways Panel meeting, March 2016; one is traffic calming measures, The Street, Shalford, and the other the Implementation of a Quiet Lane, Water Lane, Shalford. Negotiations with BDC on the design of the parking area at Stoneley Park are ongoing and finally the PC have launched an initiative to bring local horse riders together in a bid to create safer riding routes within the Parish.

Corinne Eves

Vice Chairman's Report



Other than being the vice chair for Shalford Parish Council for 2015/16, my main role over the years has been the maintenance of our community web site.

When, in 2004, a call was made for a website for Shalford, I offered my services. Later, I became a Parish Councillor. Over the years we have won two awards - for engaging the local community, and for the information that the site provides. In 2006 and 2010 the Chairman of Essex County Council presented us with the award for best Parish Council site (promoted by EALC), and again in 2011, with a Certificate of high recommendation. Essex Association of Local Councils dropped the awards for web sites the following year.

The Parish Council produces an electronic newsletter which goes out to 170 people monthly. People from Somerset and even Canada have signed up for this service. Our aim is to encourage every household to sign up to the newsletter, and to get 'in the know'.

During August 2015, Open Reach connected our Shalford Telephone Exchange to the fibre optic network, which has given a threefold increase in Broadband speeds for many residents living within range; however for outlying areas of our village poor connection speeds are still being reported. This is a nationwide problem for rural areas, which may be cured by Open Reach being given more time and Government investment.

As a Parish Council, we are currently researching costs of wireless broadband, within the County Broadband project and is a subject in our May 2016 meeting Agenda.

David Eversden

The Councillors

Our elected officers for the 7 seats are:-

Chairman: Councillor Corinne Eves (2011)

Vice-Chairman: Councillor David Eversden (2006)

Other Council Members:

Councillor Alan Oates (2005)
Councillor Gillian Askew (2012)
Councillor Colin Golding (2008)
Councillor Mandy French (2015)
Councillor Cliff Stevens (2015)

District Councillor Peter Tattersley
Peter Schwier

County Councillor Roger Walters

Planning Committee Chairman: Councillor Colin Golding

Website: Councillor David Eversden

Village Hall Committee Representative: Councillor Gillian Askew

Parish Clerk: Mrs Cathryn Carlisle



Cllr Oates



Cllr Askew



Cllr Golding



Cllr French



Cllr Stevens

The Details – what we do

Finances-

The Parish Council holds two separate accounts at Barclays Bank pc in Braintree: A current account for routine daily business and an investment account which holds reserved funds for projects and non-routine expenditure.

The Parish Council is VAT registered and claims back VAT on valid expenditure. An internal audit is undertaken, and the appointed External Auditors are the Audit Commission.

Subscriptions-

The Parish Council subscribes to the following organisations for consultation purposes:

National Association of Local Councils
Essex Association of Local Councils
Braintree Association of Local Councils
Rural Community Council of Essex

Grants to local organisations-

St Andrews Church PCC £2000 - A contribution towards the cost of cutting the grass in the Churchyard.

Village Hall Management Committee £2000 – A contribution towards the maintenance costs of the Village Hall.

These grants are available to provide equipment or to use for projects that will help the organisations flourish in the village.

Insurance- The Parish Council holds insurance cover for its equipment and street furniture. It also holds public liability insurance, personal accident cover, legal fees and employer's liability insurance. All insurance cover is provided by Aviva.

Planning- The Parish Council presided over 15 planning applications and TPO's last year. The Parish Council is a Statutory Consultee under planning legislation. As such it can make recommendations to Braintree District Council as to whether a particular application should be approved or not but BDC do not have to accept those recommendations.

Highways- The Parish Council liaises regularly with Essex County Council when problems occur on our roads.

Street Lighting- The Parish Council provides streetlights for which power is obtained from E-on Ltd. All lights are annually maintained and cleaned: A & J Lighting Solutions undertakes this service.

Footpaths- Footpaths are cut by contractors employed by ECC, and the Parish Council liaises with ECC on the quality of this service. Due to financial constraints ECC now only cut footpaths once a year.

Grass Verge Cutting- The Parish Council contracts MD Landscapes to cut grass along the sides of the roadways.

Bus Shelter Maintenance- The Parish Council employs Mr Paul Edwards to clean the bus shelters and empty the rubbish bins.

Dog Waste Bins- These are provided by and emptied by Braintree District Council

Notice Boards- The Parish Council provides Notice Boards at the Village Hall and in bus shelters at Clifffield, Church End and Jaspers Green. The Clerk regularly updates the notice boards around the village, which provide local information.

Website- The Parish Council uses the Shalford Community website to inform the public of meetings and display confirmed minutes of meetings. The address is: www.essexinfo.net/shalford

Annual Parish Meeting- Since 2009 it has been a statutory requirement for a Parish Council to organise the Annual Parish Meeting which is an opportunity for residents to ask questions of the Parish Council and for organisations in the village to talk about their activities and recruit new members.

Stoneley Park- The Parish Council has liaised with Essex County Council and discussions regarding the proposed parking area are ongoing.

Regrets

Shalford and Wetherfield Branch of The British Legion.

The Wethersfield and Shalford branch of the British Legion, sadly, was forced to close on Monday 14th March 2016 as there was nobody willing to fill the committee positions that are necessary to sustain an active branch, let alone the three active members required on top of the named positions. The only official posts filled were those of President, Vice chair and Secretary. This was despite repeated appeals for people willing to fill the empty posts. The members are now offered the opportunity to join another branch, either Finchingfield or Braintree and Bocking or to just keep affiliated with the national organisation.

Bendlowe Trust

At the Annual Parish Meeting 2015, Alex Tanner, stood down as Trustee and Chairman of the Bendlowes Trust. The constitution requires that the Parish Council appoints a new trustee. Despite our efforts no-one has come forward to investigate further the requirements of the post and we fear that without support, our village will lose this charity, which has been established and served the people of Shalford since 1573.

Green Heart of Essex Campaign

March 2016 - Shalford residents now enjoy the results of the November 2010 'Green Heart of Essex Campaign' in which 5000 daffodils were planted.

