

Shalford Parish Council



Annual Report 2013/14

Annual Report for Shalford Parish Council Year ending April 2014

Parish Council met on the following dates during year 2013/14

17th April	15th May
Annual Parish Meeting	2 nd May
19 th June	17th July
No Meeting August	18th September
16th October	20th November
18th December	15 th January 2014
19th February	19th March

Parish Clerk: Mrs Cathryn Carlisle

Elected Officers for the 7 seats are:-

Chairman: Councillor Colin Golding

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Corinne Eves

Other Council Members:

Councillor Alan Oates
Councillor Gillian Askew
Councillor Caroline Macdonald
Councillor David Eversden
Councillor Neil Birks

Planning Committee Chairman: Councillor Corinne Eves

Website: Councillor David Eversden maintains the Shalford Parish Council Website

Village Hall Committee Representative: Councillor Gillian Askew

Chairman's Report

Residents are welcome to come and air their views at the monthly Parish Council meeting and a time slot is allocated to this on each agenda.

The Council submits a proposed budget to Braintree District Council each January and receives funding known as the precept to meet that proposed budget. The precept forms part of residents' Council Tax. We are pleased to say that the Parish Council has not asked for any increase in the precept for the last 4 years. However as the number of residents paying Council tax varies year on year the amount individual households pay may go up or down accordingly. Later in this report you will find the details of how the Parish Council has spent some of this money this year and the full audited accounts are published on the website and are available from the Clerk.

Planning is an important issue to all residents and the Parish Council responded to the District Council's Land Allocation and Development Plan consultation after seeking resident's views via a questionnaire.

Our efforts to improve the visual aspects of the village have continued with the reinstatement of the grass verges on Whites Hill where an unsightly unofficial lay bye had been created and we plan to plant some additional trees further down Whites Hill once we receive a license from Essex County Council.

Following the severe storms of this winter we are looking to strengthen our emergency plan so that we can provide support for vulnerable people if the power supply to the village is lost or the village gets isolated through flooding. Looking forward, Shalford will be put on the map when the Tour de France comes through the village in July and we have been working with the District and County Councils as well as neighbouring Parishes to ensure we make the most of this once in a life time event.

Colin Golding

Colin Golding
Chairman

Finances

The Parish Council holds two separate accounts at Barclays Bank PLC 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. Shelia Bronson undertakes the internal audit 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 organizations –

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

Village Hall Management Committee £4500 – A contribution towards the running cost of the Village Hall.

The Parish Council gave a donation of £850 to Shalford School for playground equipment.

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 – All members of the Council sit on the Planning Committee. The Committee is chaired by Cllr Corinne Eves.

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. The Parish Council considers planning applications either at a Planning Committee or at a full Council meeting where deadlines allow. Observations are then submitted to Braintree District Council taking into account local information and issues. The Parish Council has looked at in the region of 15 Planning applications during the year. It has also responded to Braintree District Council's Land Allocation review which will form part of Braintree District Council's District Plan.

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 which we believe has been far from satisfactory this year. We have taken this up with ECC.

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 the George Car Park and in bus shelters at Shalford Green 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 Assembly – The Parish Council organised the Annual Parish Assembly which is an opportunity for organisations in the village to talk about their activities and recruit new members.

Stonely Park – The Parish Council has liaised with Essex County Council with regard to reinstating the parkland following the closure of the Civic Amenity site and at long last a planning application has been submitted to allow this work to commence.

Contact Details for Clerk and Councillors:

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Neil Birks: neil@neilbirks.co.uk

Parish Council Meeting Dates
2014/2015

16th April	15th May APM
21st May AGM	16th June
9th July	Aug No Meeting
17th Sept	15th Oct
19th Nov	17th Dec
15th Jan 15	18th Feb
18th March	

Meetings of the Parish Council are held on 3rd Wednesday of the month, in the Village Hall and commence at 7:30 p.m.

Agenda's will be published on the notice board at least 3 clear days in advance of the meeting.

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

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