

Dear Parishioners

**Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Report**

The Parish Council would like to invite you to attend the **Annual Parish Meeting on Friday May 3rd at 8.00 pm** at the **Memorial Hall**, Castle Hedingham. Please find below a summary of the Parish Council activities during the past year:

**Public Forum**

The Parish Council has a Public Forum as the first agenda item at each meeting. Meetings are held monthly, usually on a Monday evening at the Castle Hedingham Club, commencing at 7.45pm. The Councillors invite you to take the opportunity to address the Council on any issues you may have. Alternatively, you are welcome to contact the Clerk on [castlehedinghamparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:castlehedinghamparishclerk@gmail.com) to report any items or concerns which you wish to be brought to the Parish Council's attention.

**Planning Applications**

The Parish Council reviews and comments on all planning applications made within the parish boundary. They make recommendations to Braintree District Council Planning but all final decisions are made by Braintree. Details can be found on Braintree District Council's website.

<http://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/online-applications>

A planning application for a new housing development on the old Premdor factory site in Sible Hedingham has been submitted by Bloor Homes. The site lies partly within the Castle Hedingham Parish boundary and the development would have a major impact on our village. Objections to the scale and nature of this development have been submitted by Castle Hedingham and Sible Hedingham Parish Council.

The Localism Act 2011 will bring major changes to the planning process, hopefully giving people more power over what happens in their local communities. The Parish Council intends to work hard to understand the full implications of these changes, and continues to protect our parish from unwelcome or inappropriate development.

**St Nicholas and Parish Cemetery**

Repairs were carried out to damaged tombs at St Nicholas church yard during the year. The Parish Council supported repairs made to the church clock, and the renovation of the flagpole. Remedial work has been carried out to the yew trees adjacent to properties in Falcon Square.

**Redundant Poles in St James Street**

The Parish Council has actively supported the petition for these to be removed. BT has been slow to respond, and the Parish Council is pursuing this to get the work completed.

**War Memorial**

A decision has been made to renovate and restore the War Memorial in St Nicholas Church Yard. A contractor has been identified who is experienced at this specialist work and has recently successfully completed a similar project. It is hoped this work will be completed by 2014, the centenary year of the start of World War I.

**Village Maintenance**

Sadly Mr A Carr, who carried out many years of hard work on general village maintenance, passed away last May. The Parish Council has decided not to replace Mr Carr, and litter picking and other village maintenance jobs are now carried out by the Parish Council's private contractor. Litter picking is carried out weekly between May and September, and every two weeks between October and April.

**National Grid Proposals**

Consultations on the proposed siting of a new substation to the west of Twinstead have been on-going. Concerns have been raised about the nature of the consultation process, including the misleading name "Bramford to Twinstead Tee project" which does not accurately inform people that a substation might be located in Castle Hedingham. The Parish Council has joined with Braintree District Council and Essex County Council in rejecting all three substation options, and requesting that the option of extending the existing substation at Braintree and cabling underground is given proper consideration. It now appears that a substation at the Colne Valley Railway site is unlikely due to transport difficulties at Gosfield Bridge. The Parish Council has also strongly objected to the Delvyn's Lane site and is pleased to note that Braintree District Council has also submitted a response to National Grid that this site is totally unacceptable for a new substation. The current consultation period ended on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

**Public Toilets at Memorial Hall**

As part of the Localism Agenda, Braintree District Council is transferring responsibility for the Public Toilets to the Parish Council. This is a valued local amenity which the Parish Council intends to continue to maintain to its current high standard for the use of residents and visitors to our village.

**Highways Matters**

The Parish Council continues to have regular contact with Essex County Council Highways regarding maintenance issues in the village. Please note that it is possible to report faults and track progress on Essex County Council's website at: <https://secureweb1.essexcc.gov.uk/Highways/Report-a-highway-problem.aspx>

**Superfast Broadband**

Essex County Council aims to achieve 100% coverage in Essex by 2016. A survey to drive demand is available at <http://www.superfastessex.org>

### Police Support

Castle Hedingham is supported by PCSOs Belinda Ruffle and Kim Chapman, who regularly report at the monthly Parish Council meeting. There have been a number of burglaries in the parish this year. These are generally opportunist, occurring during the working day through unlocked doors or open windows. Residents are encouraged to call the Police on 101 if they see any suspicious activity, and to note down a car registration number if possible.

Suspected unlawful doorstep traders, including those claiming to be ex-offenders on rehabilitation schemes, have been investigated by Trading Standards and found to be bogus. Call the police on 101 and they will check for the relevant identification and permissions.

There has been an increase in nuisance telephone calls about computer faults, asking for personal details. This scam can lead to a computer virus which gives access to bank details. Police advise calling 1471 to identify the caller number, then requesting it is blocked by the telephone service provider.

Our local PCSOs can be contacted by telephone on 101, or by email at [belinda.ruffle@essex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:belinda.ruffle@essex.pnn.police.uk) or [kim.chapman@essex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:kim.chapman@essex.pnn.police.uk)

Yours sincerely,

Sonia Allfrey  
Chairman

### Donations

The Council made the following donations in the 2012/13 Financial Year: To keep the Post Office open while a new sub postmaster was recruited and trained - £1500; British Legion - Wreath - £60; Solar Society - £500 to help with start up costs. Jubilee donation to Friends of St Nicholas Church - £1050.

### Accounts

Below is a summary of the Parish Council income and expenditure for 2012/13. Copies of the full accounts are available at the annual Meeting and are displayed in the St James Street notice board near Buckley's Tearooms.

#### **Income:**

Precept and Parish Support	£28,548.00
Other Grant Income	£10,237.57
Burials	£3,831.48
VAT recovered	£2,472.86
Other Income	£2,933.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>£48,023.87</b>

#### **Expenditure:**

Village Maintenance	£16,114.74
Administration	£13,382.02
Donations	£3,110.00
VAT	£2,531.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>£35,138.04</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>£12,885.83</b>
	<b>£48,023.87</b>

#### **Contacting the Council:**

##### **Chairman**

Mrs S Allfrey  
Southernns  
37 Bayley Street  
Castle Hedingham  
CO9 3DG  
Tel. 01787 461108

##### **Parish Clerk**

Mrs Claire Waters  
25 Bayley Street  
Castle Hedingham  
CO9 3DG  
Tel. 07845 056597  
[castlehedinghamparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:castlehedinghamparishclerk@gmail.com)

#### **District Councillors:**

Mrs J Beavis	07771 984365	<a href="mailto:cllr.jbeavis@braintree.gov.uk">cllr.jbeavis@braintree.gov.uk</a>
Mrs. W Scattergood	01787 267800	<a href="mailto:cllr.wscattergood@braintree.gov.uk">cllr.wscattergood@braintree.gov.uk</a>
Mr H Johnson	01787 463991	<a href="mailto:cllr.hjohnson@braintree.gov.uk">cllr.hjohnson@braintree.gov.uk</a>

#### **Other useful Numbers**

Braintree District Council	01376 552525
Braintree District Council Environment (Fly Tipping)	01376 552525
Essex County Council	08457 430 430
Essex County Council Highways	0845 603 7631 (24 hours)
Street Lighting Outages (Bowmans Park and Allfrey Court)	0845 603 7631
Street Lighting Outages (New Park)	please contact the Parish Clerk
Hedingham Police Community Support Officers	101 ext. 407102 or 07855 781127