

Castle Hedingham Parish Council Annual Report 2016



Our **village sign at Forge Green** has been refurbished this year. We are also very pleased with the **renovation of the War Memorial** which was finished in time for Remembrance Sunday in 2015. Over 20 trees have been planted at Sheepcot Road this year, which will form a **Memorial Avenue** to commemorate those of the village who lost their lives during World War I.

Parish Council meetings are normally on the 4th Monday every month at Castle Hedingham Club, starting at 7.45pm. There is a **Public Forum** as the first agenda item at each meeting, when parishioners are very welcome to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any matter that they wish to bring to the Parish Council's attention. Alternatively you can contact the Clerk on 07845 056597 or at castlehedinghamparishclerk@gmail.com to report any items or concerns. **The agenda** for each meeting is posted a week in advance on our village noticeboards, and on our website at www.castlehedingham.org. **Minutes** of meetings and other supporting documents are also available from the website.

Braintree District Council's Local Plan is due to be published for full public consultation during June/July 2016. The Parish Council was consulted during March and is grateful for the excellent response rate to our survey from around 30% of parishioners which has enabled us to send a comprehensive response to BDC reflecting your views. The Local Plan should be completed in 2017 and will determine which sites may be allocated for housing development during the period until 2033. More information can be found at www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200230/planning_policy/701/new_local_plan

In June 2015 the Parish Council adopted a new **Grant Awarding policy**. It is simple to apply for a grant - just send a letter or email to the Parish Clerk stating your request and how the funding will benefit the people of Castle Hedingham. Individuals or organisations are welcome to apply, as long as it can be demonstrated that the funding will be of direct benefit to a part or the whole of the Castle Hedingham community. The full Grant Awarding policy can be found on the website



www.castlehedingham.org. In the past year we granted £60 for the British Legion Remembrance Wreath, £100 to the local Citizens Advice Bureau, £250 to the Parish Magazine, and £30 to the Magna Carta Exhibition.

Castle Hedingham Playing Field has been the subject of much discussion during the year both at Council meetings and in the wider community, and Councillors have worked hard to reach a resolution which would benefit the village. Sadly we are not able to present workable proposals to the community at this time, but are committed to maintaining the current site to the best of our ability in the meantime.

Neighbourhood Watch has also been on peoples' minds due to the increase in crime and reduction in police presence in the village. We are hoping that a local Neighbourhood Watch scheme will soon be revitalised, thanks to the efforts of a resident who has recently moved to the village. The Parish Council will gladly support a new scheme and anyone interested in getting involved can contact the Parish Clerk who will put them in touch with the new Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator.



New lamps were installed during the year in the New Park street lights. These are more efficient and will be less costly to run and maintain. **Improved security lighting** is also due to be installed at the Memorial Hall and Castle Hedingham Club.

Highways issues continue to be challenging, with many problems seeming slow or impossible to resolve. This year the Parish Council has requested a reduction of the speed limit at Station Road to 30mph to improve safety for pedestrians, but the request has been refused. Problems with **blocked drains** have also been difficult to resolve. The Chairman mapped every drain in the village and we have shared this map with Essex Highways to try to improve communication. Residents are encouraged to report any problems including potholes, blocked drains or pavement damage to Highways at <http://www.essexhighways.org/Report-a-problem.aspx>



Magna Carta 2015 celebrations were funded by a grant that was received in the 2014/2015 financial year. The Magna Carta exhibition is now at Saffron Walden museum. We are organising a permanent home for the embroidery and tapestry panels, painting and facsimile Magna Carta when they return to the village in 2017. The Magna Carta 800th Anniversary noticeboard designed by students of Hedingham School is now in place at Forge Green.

High Speed Broadband has not progressed as fast as we would have hoped, due to a delay by the Diocese of Chelmsford in granting a faculty application for a wireless transmitter on the tower at St Nicholas Church. The Parish Council involved our MP, James Cleverly, who was happy to support us in trying to resolve this, however progress is still slow.

We appointed a part-time **Village Maintenance Operative** early in 2016 and are delighted to welcome Adam Redgewell to the Parish Council team. He empties village waste bins weekly, carries out regular litter picking, keeps footpaths and verges tidy and undertakes a whole range of other maintenance and repair jobs in the village. If anyone notices a particular area of the village which needs attention from Adam, they are asked to please inform the Parish Clerk on 07845 056597 or at castlehedinghamparishclerk@gmail.com. We have also appointed a new **Grass Cutting contractor** this year to look after the village greens, the playing field and the cemetery.

A “**Clean for the Queen**” village litter pick was carried out in March – grateful thanks are due to all the volunteers who collected 20 bags of rubbish. We may make the village litter pick an annual event in spring if we have enough enthusiastic volunteers. Several residents also collect litter regularly when they go for a walk, which helps enormously in keeping the village tidy.

The Parish Council accounts for 2015/2016 are summarised below. Copies of the full accounts are available at the Annual Parish Meeting, displayed in the St James Street notice board and on the website at www.castlehedingham.org

The precept is the Parish Council share of the Council Tax. The Localism Fund grant from Braintree District Council is expected to reduce to zero by 2019/2020, so the Parish Council is making up the shortfall by a 3% increase in the precept which represents an increase for a Band D property of 96p per year.

Grant income includes street cleaning (BDC) and grass cutting (ECC) grants, and £12,855 from the War Memorials Trust which represented 75% of the War Memorial renovation costs. Magna Carta 800th Anniversary funding was received in the year 2014/2015

Income	£
Precept and Localism Fund	27,784.60
Other Grant Income	18,075.63
Cemetery Income	1,220.00
VAT recovered	3,209.22
Other Income	1,296.43
Total	51,585.88
Expenditure	£
Village Maintenance	13,504.11
Village Infrastructure	18,228.34
Wages/Administration	14,691.72
Magna Carta 2015 spending	9,280.60
Grants/Donations	440.00
VAT	5,681.08
Total	61,825.85
Net Income	-10,239.97
	51,585.88

Parish Council and other useful contact details:

Chairman

Mr Garry Southgate

14 Crown Street CO9 3DB

01787 461638

garry.southgate@icloud.com

Parish Clerk

Mrs Claire Waters

25 Bayley Street CO9 3DG

07845 056597

castlehedinghamparishclerk@gmail.com

District Councillors

Mrs Jo Beavis

07771 984365

cllr.jbeavis@braintree.gov.uk

Mr Hylton Johnson

01787 463991

cllr.hjohnson@braintree.gov.uk

Braintree District Council

01376 552525

BDC planning applications:

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

BDC Environment (fly tipping)

01376 552525

County Councillor

Mr David Finch

07834 252070

cllr.david.finch@essex.gov.uk

Essex County Council

08457 430 430/01245 430 430

Essex Highways

0845 603 7631 (24 hrs)

<https://secureweb1.essexcc.gov.uk/Highways/Report-a-highway-problem.aspx>

Street Lighting

Bowmans Park

Greenfields: 01376 535 400

Abbey Cottages/Allfrey Court

Flagship Housing: 0808 168 4555

4 street lights New Park

please contact the Parish Clerk

Emergency Numbers

Braintree District Police

101 (or 999 for emergencies)

https://www.essex.police.uk/contact_us/online_services/report_non-emergency_crime.aspx

Anglian Water – report a leak

0800 771 881 (24 hrs)

<http://inyourarea.digdat.co.uk/AnglianWater>

UK Power Networks - power cuts and emergencies

0800 316 3105 (24 hrs)

<http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/internet/en/power-cuts/report-it/>