



# EFFINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

[www.effinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.effinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## CHAIRMAN'S HALF-YEAR REPORT 2011

**Your Parish Council exists to represent and work in the interests of everyone in Effingham. To be effective we need to tell you what we are doing and to seek your views and at times your help and participation. We introduced half-year reporting last year and hope you will find this second half-year report of interest.**

I am delighted that following the May elections we have a new Parish Council with a good mix of experienced and new Councillors representing a wide range of expertise and village interests. We especially welcome Gill Bowerman, Hilda Brazil, Sarah Peskett and newly co-opted Alyson Reay, who join the re-elected Liz Hogger (also our Guildford Borough Councillor), Andrea Lightfoot, James Nicholls, Ian Symes, James Wettenhall and myself, Arnold Pindar.

This report covers the half year since we were elected, which has been a very busy period.

### **Effingham Village Recreation Trust (EVRT)**

Effingham Parish Council has three main responsibilities relating to the Effingham Village Recreation Trust. Firstly, the Council is Custodian Trustee on behalf of EVRT. This means that it holds the freehold (title deeds) for EVRT's properties and land. This covers the King George V field and buildings, similarly for the cricket ground, and also for a small piece of land close to Effingham Junction Station. It is a Custodian Trustee's responsibility to see that managing Trustees do not dispose of assets in their care, and receive fair rents from the users of the facilities.



*The KGV Fields are managed by EVRT*

Secondly, for many years the Parish Council has made annual grants to the Trust to support its activities. The grants are provided from the Parish Precept, i.e. our local council taxes. They are discretionary and compete with other village and Parish Council needs. Budgeting for the next financial year commences at our November/December Parish Council meeting where councillors consider all the competing financial needs for the coming year (commencing in April each year) including any bid from EVRT. The final budget is confirmed at our early January meeting.

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## ***continued.... Effingham Village Recreation Trust (EVRT)***

In recent years regulations on the auditing of Parish Council accounts have been tightened up. Councils now need evidence of precisely how any grant would be used, and to show that the grant was needed, i.e. in Effingham's case for instance that the Parish Council is not subsidising the activities of user groups such as the rugby club, scouts, EPFA etc. and that money was not available to fund the Charity from other sources.

The grant made to EVRT from the Parish Precept for the current financial year is £15,340. This sum is tied to specific deliverables mainly relating to the general public amenity areas of the King George V field, including the groundsman's work on these areas, playground maintenance and tree surveys, hedge cutting etc.

Finally, the Parish Council has a general duty to the village which includes broad interests in our wonderful rural community, including the King George V fields and Effingham Common facilities. We, therefore, welcome concerns and issues raised by villagers and will play our part in trying to resolve problems that may arise. Recently, concerns were raised about communications between EVRT and particularly the Effingham Playing Fields Association (EPFA). We trust that informal discussions between the Parish Council and the Trustees will go some way to help resolve these concerns.

## **Success! Grit bins for Effingham**

As mentioned in our last report, Effingham residential areas, especially south of the A246, are topographically some of the highest across the Guildford area and the village as a whole can suffer greatly in heavy snow falls. We reported that we had acquired ten green grit / salt bins (different from the Surrey County Council [SCC] yellow bins) to place at the 'worst of the worst' places in the village. As you may have read in the local press some time ago, SCC say their policy will not allow us to place grit bins on highway verges. However, undeterred, led by Liz Hogger and James Nicholls, we have found locations on private land and, with the help of Guildford Borough Council [GBC] officers, the bins are now in place ready for the winter.



*The Parish Council's grit bins are green!*

I would like to thank all the Effingham residents who have kindly agreed to place a bin on their private property so it can be close to the roads, and at the same time accessible to nearby residents. I would ask anyone who spreads the grit to ensure that they do not contaminate these public-spirited persons' gardens by spilt grit and salt.

Please note, this grit / salt is for use only on our publicly-maintained local roads to assist vehicles to get in and out of specific black spots in severe weather – NOT for any other purpose. This is very important. Not only do we need to get to and from work, schools and shops etc but in recent snowy periods Care Services were unable to reach those they serve. The grit / salt mix is very effective if used on snow that has already been pressed down by vehicles etc but should be spread very thinly – preferably from a gloved hand rather like spreading lawn seed. Note how grit lorries on the main roads deliver grit in a fine and widely spread spray. Try to avoid concentrated patches. Do not spread on fresh snow falls as this is ineffective. This will help to conserve stocks as it is unlikely that we shall be able to arrange a refill later in the winter as Borough stocks reduce.

## Planning applications

Your Parish Council continues to be vigilant over planning applications. Over an extended period we have been monitoring and commenting on an application to redevelop the Grade 2 Listed Building, Ranmore Manor, with a new office building on the site of the current Ranmore Garage and two further houses as 'enabling development' to provide funds to pay for the costly renovations of the Manor. This sort of application is always controversial and we, and later the Guildford Borough Council Planning Committee, made site visits to consider the proposals in great detail. The greatest concern was over the level of parking available for such a remote site. Revised plans have now been passed and it appears that a solution has been at least partly found to meet parking needs.

At a Parish Council meeting (4 October 2010) developers the Minton Group presented outline plans for a 70 bed care home specialising in dementia care to be built on the old St Lawrence School playing field site in Church Street. The short presentation was followed by a lively debate by Councillors and 69 members of the public in attendance. Whilst we do not at this time challenge the research carried out by the developers into the needs for a care home somewhere within a 5 mile radius, most of those present, for a variety of reasons, were against the initiative going ahead on that site. To date no formal planning application has been made by the Minton Group.

## Police Matters

Gregor Culross, our Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), subject to availability, attends Parish Council meetings to give us the crime figures that are thankfully usually very low, and to consider any issues raised by the Council or villagers present. Some months ago we commenced a procedure of inviting residents from small groups of roads to attend specific meetings at 19.45 hr to discuss any issues relating to their roads. This has been very successful in helping the police to prioritise activities in Effingham. We are sorry that we have not kept to the original schedule in recent months as we have been temporarily without our clerk, Sue Morris. However, we hope to reinstate this system when she returns. In the meantime, if you have any issues you wish to raise, you are welcome to attend on Parish Council meeting evenings at 19.45 hr. The dates and agendas of our meetings are available on our website, details at the end of this report. Alternatively you can use the new Police telephone number for non-emergencies: 101.

**101 is the new simple telephone number to report incidents  
and concerns to your Police Safer Neighbourhood Team.  
999 remains for genuine emergencies.**

## Damaged street furniture (railings etc)

I had hoped to report that the accident-damaged railings at the A246 pedestrian crossing had been repaired by now. Surrey County Councillor Bill Barker offered to fund the repairs out of his discretionary budget. Sadly although agreed, the repairs are still outstanding, although we hope they will be completed shortly.

## Effingham Common Road footway

Whilst investigating things to be done as part of our 'Spruce up the Village' initiative, the poor state of the Effingham Common Road footway was brought to our attention. We were delighted when Surrey County Council recognised the dangerous state of some sections of the footway and overgrown nature at other places. They commenced work earlier this year and our expectation was that major repairs would be completed during the summer. However, work ceased not long after it had begun and we are currently chasing SCC to speed up completion of the work.

# Effingham Commoners' Day 2011

We would like to thank all who made Effingham Commoners' Day, Sunday 25th September, such a success. We especially thank Adam Owen and his team from Guildford Borough Council for taking on so much of the organisation. Also thanked are:

- The animals – geese, cows, sheep and goats!
- Hilda Brazil for organising the Gypsy caravan and cooking delicious traditional food.
- Surrey Archeological Society for their display
- The Cricket Club for providing refreshments
- Longbowman Paul Messett for archery lessons, with profits going to army charities
- Effingham First Responders
- Effingham Local History Group for their display and newly published research
- Hattie Hyder for juggling demonstrations, and local artist Roger Day for his display of chainsaw carvings
- The entrants to the photography competition 'Life on Effingham Common'



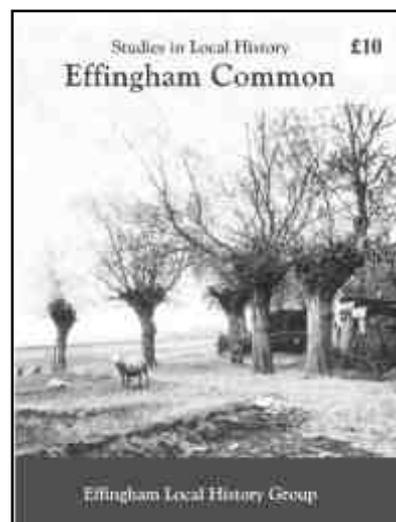
*A guided tour of Effingham Common led by Adam Owen*

Over 300 attended the event which I found a very pleasing and relaxed afternoon on our own very special Common. The historical and ecological tour by Adam Owen provided further insights into past use and changing habitats, and into his plans to make a number of improvements to the common including re-establishing two lost ponds.

We would like to know your views of this event to help us in planning for future years. Please fill in and return the feed-back form enclosed with this Report.

## The History of Effingham Common

To add to the great day out on the common, Effingham Local History Group launched their new publication "Studies in Local History: Effingham Common". Priced at £10 it is selling well from local shops including Effingham Post Office and Sibleys' Newsagent. I have no hesitation in recommending it to every household in the Parish. It is well-researched, well-written and gives the fascinating story of our ancient (and not so ancient) common.



**ARNOLD PINDAR**  
Chairman, Effingham Parish Council

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