



EFFINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

www.effinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

CHAIRMAN'S NEW YEAR REPORT 2013

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.

What a year we have had with a great deal of Parish Council activities not to mention the Olympic events taking place just down the road! Due to pressure of work my usual half year report has this year become a New Year newsletter. So firstly, very best wishes to you and your families for 2013.

Parish Clerk

One important task that is currently underway is to recruit a new Parish Clerk. Sadly, our Parish Clerk, Sue Morris, will be leaving the Parish Council in February. We thank her most sincerely for all she has done for the Council over the past 10 years. She has provided well researched and argued advice, has maintained and developed robust management systems, and has helped so many residents and Councillors with a very wide range of problems and issues. Along with this newsletter we are sending out an invitation to apply to be our next Parish Clerk and we very much look forward to receiving applications from our local community.

Parish Councillor changes

In recent months we have been sorry to lose two of our elected parish councillors, Hilda Brazil and James Nicholls. Hilda has stood down from the Parish Council for personal reasons, but I very much hope she will continue to be involved in village issues such as youth facilities, where she has much to contribute. James resigned from the Parish Council in October and I want to thank him for nearly 22 years of public service he has given to the Parish Council and to the village. I hope James will continue to contribute to village life through other channels.

I am delighted to announce that Paula Moss and Dr Chris Bell have recently been co-opted onto the Parish Council. They are already hard at work bringing new ideas and enthusiasm to Parish Council work. This will greatly help us meet the many challenges facing the Council.

However, we still have one vacancy on the Parish Council and I would encourage anyone interested in joining us to contact the Parish Clerk. You can find details on the leaflet delivered with this newsletter.

The Olympic Legacy

During the Summer, when I wasn't watching the cycle road races or at a couple of Olympics and Paralympics events, I was glued to the TV screen. The events were intended to inspire a generation – but how might that translate when brought into our small but very special village?

On 5th October representatives from the village community got together to consider future opportunities to develop and enhance the wonderful facilities at the King George V fields and hall. There have been increasing calls for a radical look at the facilities, especially to provide more facilities for youth and older people, and people with disabilities. The Rugby Club has already announced their plans to improve and extend their changing room facilities and the meeting considered that these plans should form part of a wider initiative to extend and improve the King George V facilities for the whole Effingham community. These plans need to be taken forward in 2013.

In addition, the Parish Council is encouraging the Trustees of Effingham Village Recreation Trust (EVRT), who manage the KGV Fields specifically for the benefit of Effingham residents, to work with the Parish Council to maintain and improve the public amenity areas including the playgrounds, the woodland and the pedestrian entrance on the A246. We want Effingham residents to feel proud of the Fields, and to make good use of them for all sorts of recreation, including walking and children's play as well as formal sports.

Community Fund

My last report described the initiation of this scheme. Letters explaining the aims and how to apply for funding were sent out to village groups and organisations. We are delighted to have been able to support projects benefiting the community proposed by the Effingham Brownies, Effingham Cricket Club, Effingham Village Recreation Trust, the Effingham Local History Group, Effingham Village Day, and the planting of a Jubilee Oak on the King George V fields by the Volunteer Tree Warden.

Jubilee Oak on the KGV Fields



Railings at the A246 pedestrian crossing – SUCCESS!

At last, the railings opposite the entrance to Norwood Road on the A246 have been repaired. For more than four years since they were damaged by a road traffic accident, the Parish Council and Liz Hogger our Guildford Borough Councillor, supported by Bill Barker our County Councillor, have been asking for the repairs to be carried out but there has been inadequate funds to undertake the work. Luckily, a little lateral thinking and the costs were reduced by replacing the damaged railings with existing panels taken from the lay-bye end, shortening the length of the railings by two panels. The verges around the railings were also tidied up, and along with the resurfacing of the road and lay-byes, this very visible area of the village looks a lot better.

Sprucing Up The Village

The Parish Council has long been concerned about the scruffy appearance at the end of the flint wall near the traffic lights on The Street. So I am delighted to report that Borough Councillor Liz Hogger has persuaded the Borough Council to use 'planning gain' money arising from the housing development of the Grove House site (the former St Teresa's prep school), plus a little funding from the Parish Council, to improve that area. A length of new flint wall will be built at the ragged end to finish it off neatly, and repairs will be made to the existing wall in The Street, with a general tidy up of the area. The work is scheduled for early spring this year.

In another project being steered by the Parish Council, new Beech trees have been planted at the A246 lay-bye in front of the Golf Club. We still want to hear from anyone who has further ideas for "sprucing up" parts of the village.

Planning

Your Council has continued to be vigilant over planning matters. The Government is proposing a number of changes to current procedures to make it easier and quicker to agree planning applications. Whilst I might support the principle of simplifying procedures, the Borough and Parish Councils are monitoring these proposals very carefully to ensure that they do not result in opening the door to unacceptable building developments.

Commoners' Day 30th September 2012

Adam Owen, Parks and Countryside Manager, Guildford Borough Council, and his team have carried out a great deal of work on Effingham Common during the past year. Commoners' Day was an opportunity to see the two reinstated ponds, one of which will be fitted with a natural liner to keep the water in, and all the clearance work of ditches and the ground along Effingham Common Road. Participants enjoyed a walk through the Common to where there had been some cottages and a brick works. The areas used to remove spoil to get at clay for brick making was pointed out along with a recently found well. Effingham Local History Group provided a display and there were demonstrations of chainsaw carving. Advice on first aid was given by the Effingham First Responders and everyone had an opportunity to taste freshly crushed apple juice from local apple trees. RHS Wisley Gardens identified apples brought along and generously provided apples for the apple-juicer, as did some residents. With refreshments at the Cricket Club, archery, hurdle-making, scything, the Surrey Hills Society stand and farm animals, a most enjoyable day was had by all attending. Sadly we are losing Adam to a new job in Hampshire. We wish him every success.



The apple juicer at Commoners' Day

A Thank you

Many of you will know that the Parish Council owns and manages the Burial Ground on Church Street, immediately adjacent to St Lawrence Churchyard. Thanks to five members of the Houlton family who have maintained it down the years since 1958, its appearance and has always been a source of great pride to the village, and a comfort to many. Sadly Gerald Houlton has recently had to retire, but we send him our grateful thanks and good wishes for his health. We also thank James Nicholls for generous and immediate help to tide over the period until new arrangements could be made.

Village Plan

2013 promises to be an interesting year for the village. The Borough Council is about to consult on a new Local Plan with revised planning policies likely to affect us all, and the Parish Council has agreed in principle to prepare a 'Village Plan', using the Neighbourhood Planning powers given to us under the Localism Act in 2011.

As well as considering land-use planning within Effingham Parish, which must be consistent with the Borough Council's Local Plan, our Village Plan will also act as a comprehensive guide for action by the Parish Council or by voluntary village groups and organisations to provide the services and facilities Effingham residents want.

Although the Parish Council is initiating the plan, we will not "own" it. It needs input and support from the whole village, so that we can all buy into our future. We will be consulting all parts of the village community, for example via a survey of every household in the parish, to find out what you want and don't want. The results relating to land-use planning will help us respond formally to the Local Plan proposals on behalf of the village. The results relating to sport, social and leisure will be given to voluntary groups and individuals keen to help us improve village facilities, especially those considering the future of the King George V Hall and Fields, while legacy activities from the Olympics and Paralympics are still high on the agenda.

Please look out for further information on our Village Plan project – we hope many of you will get involved, and we want to hear from EVERYONE about their views on the future of Effingham.

ARNOLD PINDAR
Chairman

Effingham Parish Council

The Parish Room, 3 Home Barn Court, The Street, Effingham, Surrey, KT24 5LG
Tel/Fax 01372 454911 Email clerk2010@EffinghamParishCouncil.gov.uk
www.effinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk