

# Effingham Parish Council

## Chairman's Report 2006

The past year has been very varied with the Parish Council dealing with many issues.

The largest planning issue we have dealt with this year is the re-development of the Convent site on Lower Road. This planning application is still ongoing, with the matter going to a Public Planning Inquiry shortly to resolve the outstanding issues. The developers plan to restore The Red House and Lodge to make three residential units and convert and extend the adjoining buildings into six two-storey cottages.

We have also been working jointly with East Horsley Parish Council on their proposal to improve the surface of Bridleway 109 to enable it to be used by cyclists. Bridleway 109 runs from East Horsley through Great Ridings Wood along Old London Road and joins the junction of Orestan Lane and Calvert Road.

By upgrading the surface of this bridleway it would enable cyclists to link into a much larger cycle network in Surrey and will also enable pupils of the Howard School living in East Horsley and the areas of Effingham around Orestan Lane, Calvert Road and Dirtham Lane to cycle safely to the school using only bridleways, cycle paths and minor roads. Not only would this promote cycling, but it would help reduce the volume of traffic on local roads at the beginning and end of the school day.

Although at present we are still at the planning stage, we are pursuing methods of funding this work, and hope to be able to report further positive news during the next year.

You will recently have received your 2006-7 Council Tax bill from Guildford Borough Council. Guildford Borough Council collect council tax on behalf of themselves, Surrey County Council, Surrey Police Authority and Effingham Parish Council, and for 2006-7 it is split as follows:

- Surrey County Council (SCC) 75%
- Surrey Police Authority (SPA) 12%
- Guildford Borough Council (GBC) 10%
- Effingham Parish Council (EPC) 3%

After a lot of discussion Effingham Parish Council decided to increase the Parish Precept (our part of the Council Tax) by 7.9% this year. Whilst we realise that this is appears to be large percentage increase, a Band D property only pays a total of £33.51 per year to Effingham Parish Council, an increase of only £3.54 per year, or just under 30p per month.

Our major expenditure continues to be the grant we give to the King George V Playing Fields Association (KGV). This year we will give a grant of £20,000.00, which amounts to 45% of our total expenditure. The KGV is a wonderful resource, and is

used by most villagers at some point, whether to walk their dogs, use the playgrounds and sports fields or to attend some of the numerous events held in the hall.

This year we have also allocated funds for the maintenance of footpaths, verges and other areas in the village. This type of maintenance work is not actually the responsibility of Effingham Parish Council. However, both we and individual residents have found it increasingly difficult to get what we consider to be the necessary work carried out by Surrey County Council, despite constant requests. Therefore, after much discussion the difficult decision was made that at present it seems the only way to be sure of getting the work done, and to ensure footpaths and similar remain safe and useable, is to make an additional charge and if necessary pay for the work ourselves.

We obviously hope that this will not be necessary, and that the joint SCC/GBC Community Work Gangs, which visited the Parish during 2005 will continue to be funded and that they will visit the Parish again during this financial year, and attend to those jobs falling within their respective remits. But, given our previous experience, we felt we had no option other than to make provision to pay for the work if necessary.

We have also allocated funds to pay for re-fencing work at the allotments and for repair work on four bus shelters in the village. The work on the bus shelters has already started, and will be paid for jointly by Effingham Parish Council and GBC.

On Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 8pm we will be holding the Annual Parish Meeting at the King George V Hall in Browns Lane. This is a meeting which any resident of the village can come along and raise any issue affecting the village. The meeting is open to those residents aged under 18 too – you don't have to be on the Electoral Role to attend, take part and ask questions.

For example, you could raise something which has happened in the village, good or bad, in the past year, an issue on which you would like action taken, a concern you have about one of the areas in the village which belong to the Parish Council, or you can come along without wanting to raise any specific matter, to meet other villagers, and to see what others are talking about.

Our monthly Parish Council meeting are also held at the King George V Hall in Browns Lane at 8pm on the last Tuesday of every month. The meetings are open to the public and the agenda is displayed on the notice board at the Post Office.

I hope to see you there,

Alison Mouser  
Chairman, Effingham Parish Council