

**HELIONS BUMPSTEAD
PARISH COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2017-18**

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Chairman's Overview

Parish Council elections are held every four years, and this has been the final year for the present Council. Two councillors retired before the election; Alistair Goddard was our footpaths representative, and Mark Istance oversaw the maintenance of the children's play area. My thanks to them both for all that they have contributed.

A new Council was elected in May 2015, and I am pleased to report that we are now back up to full strength, with a full team of seven members. A warm welcome to our newcomers, Sue Kehr, Peter Richardson and Laura West.

All current Councillors' contact details can be found at the back of this document. If there are any issues that particularly concern you, please do contact any one of us and we will do our best to sort out the problem.

As well as the usual matters that the Parish Council deals with on a daily basis, there have been several major issues that have taken up Councillors' time over the past year. We reported on many of these issues last year, and so they may seem familiar; some have been resolved, others not quite yet.

The planning application for a **wind turbine** just across the county border in Suffolk, very close to Ladygate Wood, was rejected in February 2014 by the Development Control Committee of St Edmundsbury Borough Council after a concerted campaign led by ourselves and our neighbours at Hazel Stub. At 78m high, the turbine would have blighted the landscape for many miles around, but especially from Crooks End, Pale Green and Drapers Green.

The applicant chose to appeal against that decision. The Parish Council submitted a carefully considered and detailed paper to the Planning Inspector, urging him to uphold the decision taken by St Edmundsbury.

Planning appeals can be a long drawn out process. We have twice been invited to add further comments to our submission, following changes in policy documents adopted by St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

My thanks to Neville Nicholson for co-ordinating all our efforts to prevent this wind turbine being imposed upon us. The deadlines for submitting documents to the Planning Inspectorate are always short, but the wait for the outcome can be very long; we will keep you informed through the usual channels.



A mock-up of the view of the turbine from Haven Farm

Another planning matter of great concern to the village is the future of our village pub, the **Three Horseshoes**. The landlords, Mr & Mrs Jennings, closed the pub at the beginning of June 2014, and then applied to Braintree District Council for a Lawful Development Certificate to reopen as a book / bric-a-brac shop.

A large number of objections to the planning application, including one from a QC specialising in Planning Law, successfully resulted in the application being refused by BDC.

Again, the applicants have chosen to appeal against Braintree's decision, and again the Council has put together a detailed and well-reasoned paper to the Planning Inspector, setting out clearly why he should uphold the original decision to refuse the change of use from a pub to a shop.

The applicants refer in their Appeal Statement to the possible conversion of the pub to a teashop. They cannot change their application at the Appeal stage in this way. Changes in Planning Law in April 2015 mean that if in the future the owners wish to change the use of the pub, they will have to submit a full Planning application, which means that the whole village can have a say in the outcome.

The Council has organised two **public meetings** during the year to keep villagers informed about the pub, and has been greatly encouraged by the huge turnouts and the support generated. Your response in writing to the Planning Inspectorate in significant numbers greatly aids our case. I am particularly grateful to Neville Nicholson and Alison Meldrum for putting our submission together, and to Richard Russell for obtaining legal advice from a specialist in Planning Law.

In April 2014, the Council registered the pub as an **Asset of Community Value**, which means that if the pub is ever put up for sale, the village will have a period of six months to raise the capital to buy it. We set up the **Three Horseshoes Steering Group** to look into the practicalities of doing just that, and have been delighted at the response from the village, with many generous offers of capital investment.

But our pub is not yet up for sale. Perhaps the owners will now do the decent thing and enter into meaningful discussions with the Council about its future.

You may recall that about 3 years ago we received some grant funding from Braintree's MiCommunity fund, which enabled the Council to buy our own **small gritter**. We recognised that Essex Highways cannot possibly grit every small lane in the county, but this enabled us to keep our minor roads safer.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that in those 3 years we have had **no reports** of accidents or other incidents in Sages End Road, Water Lane or on Boblow Hill. They were a regular occurrence before then, with several minor injuries, and cars ending up in the stream along Water Lane regularly.

As well as seeking out grant funding, the Council makes small grants to village organisations to assist with running costs – for example to the Pavilion and to the Village Hall. This year we also supported the new **Youth Club** with a small grant to cover its initial set-up costs, and we are very pleased to see that it is thriving, and providing a much-needed service for the teenagers amongst us.

There are many other matters that the Council has been dealing with this past year, most of the are on-going, and for reasons of space I will not comment on them here. But there is one matter that we must celebrate! The most important improvement to the infrastructure of our village for the past 50 years is the provision of **Superfast Broadband**.



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The aerial on the church tower

The Council realised that central government's roll-out of a cable superfast system across the country was never going to benefit us here in Helions Bumpstead. So we set out to find our own solution. We found it in the provision of a wireless system, which bounces a radio signal from an aerial on the church tower to all of our homes.

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wireless system, which bounces a radio signal from an aerial on the church tower to all of our homes.

The Council is very grateful to St Andrew's church for their help and co-operation in this project. It's good to work together on something that will benefit the whole community. There have been many hurdles to overcome along the way, but with patience they have all been dealt with and the system is now up and running.

Many people have been involved in achieving this, but my special thanks go to Nigel Turner for negotiating with the diocesan authorities in Chelmsford, to Gary Disley, MD of our chosen wireless Broadband provider Buzcom, and to Martin Catchesides for refusing to give up. If you have not yet signed up for the new service, please contact Buzcom direct.

Superfast Broadband really will change lives for many of us. It's not just about being able to use Netflix or iPlayer without interruption, but about our children being able to access their homework, and small businesses being able to exchange data, as well as the myriad functions like buying a new tax disc for the car, which we are now required to complete online. This is a great achievement, something we should all be proud of, and that will benefit the village for years to come.

Jane Catchesides

Chairman
May 2018

Officers

At the Annual Council Meeting in May 2017 councillors and parishioners were appointed to the following positions:

Chairman: Jane Catchesides

Vice-Chairman: Sue Kehr

Planning Committee: Jane Catchesides, Sue Kehr, Chris Brown

Finance Committee: All Councillors

Parish Property Trustees Representatives: Gordon Moore, Maureen Watts

Grants Co-ordinator:

Jane Catchesides Cathryn Carlisle

Transport:

Highways:

Traffic:

Footpaths:

Judy Howard, Sue Cunningham

Website:

Jane Catchesides, Cathryn Carlisle, Martin

Catchesides Chris Brown

Jane Catchesides, Sue Kehr

Village Hall Representative:

Older People's Representative :

Younger People's Representative:

Helions Mutual Support Network:

Children's Play Area:

Sue Kehr

Neighbourhood Watch:

Neville Nicholson

Contact details for current Councillors and the Parish Clerk can be found at the end of this report and on the Parish Council's website, in the village magazine and on notice boards in the village.

Meetings

During the 2017-18 term there have been 12 full Parish Council meetings, 9 Planning Committee, 2 Finance Committee and 2 Extraordinary Council Meetings, and the Annual Parish Assembly held in April 2018

Parishioners are welcome to attend all Council meetings, which are held in the Village Hall Committee Room. Council Meetings are normally held on the second Monday of every month at 7:30pm. The dates, times and agenda items are advertised on the notice boards, website and in the village magazine. The members' record of attendance for this year is included towards the end of this report.

Finances

The Finance Committee met in December and January to agree the Parish Council's budget and set the precept for the following financial year. The precept request is submitted to Braintree District Council in January each year.

A summary of the accounts is included with this report. The accounts were independently audited by Yvonne Morton prior to being externally audited by a Government appointed external auditor.

Insurance

Insurance was provided for equipment and street furniture. Zurich Insurance provided the Parish Council's insurance and the policy also included cover for personal accident, legal fees, fidelity and employer's and third party liability insurance.

Grants

The Parish Council annually provides supporting grants to the Village Hall, Sports Pavilion, Cricket Club, Church, with running costs and general maintenance. Requests for grants from other local clubs and organisations, which would benefit the village, are considered by the Parish Council. Further details can be obtained from the Clerk.

VAT

The Parish Council reclaims VAT paid on goods and services throughout the year.

Subscriptions

The Parish Council subscribes to the following organisations: -

- 1) National Association for Local Councils
- 2) Essex Association for Local Councils.
- 3) Braintree Association of Local Councils,
- 4) Rural Community Council of Essex,
- 5) Campaign for the Protection of Rural England,
- 6) 100 Parishes Society.

Poppy Wreath

A Royal British Legion poppy wreath is laid at the Remembrance Sunday memorial service in Castle Camps on behalf of parishioners. A wreath was also laid on the war memorial located between the Village Hall and Recreation ground.

Communications

Village Magazine

The Parish Council produces its own magazine, printed in colour and distributed free of charge to all residents. Jackie Tyler has continued to edit the Magazine to a very high standard. Advertising helps to offset the costs of production.

Website

The Parish Council's website address is

www.helionsbumpsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk

The Parish Council's website provides a wealth of information about all that goes on in Helions Bumpstead, and is available for all to use. The website is hosted and maintained by Bojangles Design, but managed and updated by the Parish Council.

Parish Council Office

The Clerk can be contacted there by telephone at her home on **731 964**

The Clerk can also be contacted by email at the address below:

helionb.pc@gmail.com

Notice boards

The notice boards are regularly updated and are at the following village locations:

- 1) Outside the Village Hall in Mill Road
- 2) Drapers Green
- 3) Wiggens Green

Highways and Transportation

Highways

The Parish Council liaises regularly with Essex County Council when problems occur on our roads.

Transport

The Parish Council Transport Representative Gordon Moore continues to attend two meetings per year and liaises with Essex County Council concerning any public transport issues.

Street Lighting

The Parish Council owns the 17 footway lights in the village and e-on Ltd are the contractors from which power is obtained. The lights are regularly visually checked and any maintenance repairs are carried out by A. J. Lighting Ltd.

Roadside Verges

The roadside verges are cut twice each year under contract from Essex County Council Highways by the Parish Council. This service was undertaken by J.J. and T.H. Haylock Ltd.

Street Cleaning

The central areas of the village are cleaned, bins emptied and junctions gritted under contract from Braintree District Council by the Parish Council as part of the Street Scene Partnership. This service was undertaken by Joseph Istance.

Bus Shelters

The Parish Council owns two bus shelters. Maintenance of the bus shelters was also undertaken by Joseph Istance.

Parks and Open Spaces

Children's Play Area

This facility is inspected annually by RoSPA. Mowing of the grass around the Children's Play Area is undertaken by Malcolm Cox Landscapes.

Footpaths

The Footpaths Representative, Laura West , organised a walk along the village footpaths on Boxing Day.

Kersey

The Hatch family from Upper House generously mow and maintain the Kersey.

Recreation Ground

The cricket ground is maintained to an exceptionally high standard by Keith Andrews and Michael Clayden from the Sports Pavilion Committee.

Village Green

The maintenance and mowing of the green is provided by the Parish Council. The mowing is undertaken by Jonny Ramsey who generously donates his time to provide this service.

Planning

The Parish Council considers all proposed planning applications at scheduled Planning Committee meetings. The dates are listed on notice boards, the website, and in the magazine. Members of the public are very welcome to attend these meetings. Observations and comments are then submitted to Braintree District Council advising where necessary on local information and issues.

Village Hall

The Parish Council are the Custodian Trustees of the Village Hall; the day-to-day management is undertaken by the Village Hall Committee. The team consists of volunteer members and representatives of all the clubs, societies and organisations that regularly use the Hall. The Council is grateful for their dedication and commitment to continuing to improve the facilities available at the Hall, and maintaining it to a high standard.



Cathryn Carlisle

Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
On behalf of Helions Bumpstead Parish Council

Councillors Attendance 2017/18

| Meeting Date 2017-18 | 8th May | 12th June | 10th July | 14th Aug | 11th Sept | 9th Oct | 13th Nov | 11th Dec | 8th Jan | 13th Feb | 12th March | 10th April |
|-------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|----------|------------|------------|
| Name | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| J Catchesides | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | F | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| S Kehr | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N Nicholson | ✓ | ✓ | U | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| S Cunningham | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | u | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| M Lawrie | ✓ | ✓ | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| J Howard | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Chris Brown | | H | H | ✓ | ✓ | U | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| DC Diane Garrod | M | M | ✓ | | | M | M | M | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| CC David Finch | M | M | M | | | M | M | M | | | | |

- ✓ Present
- A Absent – No apology given
- B Apology given – Away on business
- S Apology given – Sick
- H Apology given – Away on holiday
- F Apology given – Family Reasons
- U Apology given – Reason unknown
- C No business to discuss – MEETING CANCELLED
- I Meeting cancelled - Inquorate
- R Resigned
- M Braintree District Council/ County Council Meeting

HELIONS BUMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

CONTACT DETAILS 2017-2018

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|-----------------------------|-------------------|---|--------|--|
| Chairman: | Jane Catchesides | New House Farm, Water Lane, CB9 7AN | 730422 | jane@catchesides.co.uk |
| Vice-Chairman: | Sue Kehr | Wiggons Farm, Wiggens Green CB9 7AD | 730819 | suekehr@btopenworld.com |
| Parish Councillors: | Neville Nicholson | Lancelots Farm, Drapers Lane, CB9 7AT | 730580 | NHN462@gmx.co.uk |
| | Sue Cunningham | Cosy Corner Sages End Road CB9 7AW | 730500 | suejlloyd@btinternet.com |
| | Judy Howard | Highsett Sages End Road CB9 7AW | 731817 | judyhoward@hotmail.co.uk |
| | Chris Brown | 1 Horsham Hall Cottages Copy Hill CB9 7AB | 768363 | Csbrown59@hotmail.co.uk |
| Parish Clerk: | Cathryn Carlisle | Herkstead Green Bungalow Cornish Hall End | 731964 | helionsb.pc@gmail.com |
| District Councillor: | Diana Garrod | | | cllr.dgarrod@braintree.gov.uk |
| County Councillor: | David Finch | Blacksmiths Cottage, Borley, CO10 7AE | | cllr.david.finch@essexcc.gov.uk |