

HELIONS BUMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL **ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008**

Highlights of the Year:

RCCE Village of the Year Competition: Second to Ashdon
RCCE Best Kept Village Competition: Merit Award
EALC Community Consultation Award: Best Parish Plan in Essex

Helions Bumpstead Parish Council would like to report the following items and services that have been provided during the year up to April 2008:

Parish Council Meetings and Election of Officers: There have been 8 Parish Council meetings, an Annual Assembly and at the Annual Meeting councillors and parishioners were elected to the following positions:

Chairman: Mr Malcolm Rowson
Vice-Chairman: Dr Jane Catchesides
Parish Councillors: Mr Barrie Freight
Mr Mark Istance
Dr Matthew Lawfield
Mr Gordon Moore
Mrs Charlotte Purdie
Parish Clerk: Mrs Terri Freight

Planning Sub-Committee: Mr Malcolm Rowson, Mrs Jane Catchesides, Mr Barrie Freight

Major Projects Working Party: Mrs Jane Catchesides, Mrs Terri Freight,
Mrs Charlotte Purdie, Mr Mark Istance

Parish Plan Update Working Party: Mrs Jane Catchesides, Mr Malcolm Rowson,
Mrs Terri Freight, Mrs Charlotte Purdie, Mr Martin Catchesides.

Parish Property Trustees Representatives: Mr Gordon Moore, Mrs Maureen Watts

Village Hall Representative: Mrs Jane Catchesides

Grants Co-ordinator: Mrs Jane Catchesides
Transport: Mr Gordon Moore
Highways: Mr Mark Istance
Footpaths: Dr Matthew Lawfield
Website: Mrs Jane Catchesides, Mrs Terri Freight, Mr Martin Catchesides

Highlights of the Year:

For the first time for several years, the Parish Council entered the RCCE/Calor Best Kept Village competition this year. We not only received a merit award, but were also runners up in the Village of the Year competition, second to our neighbours in Ashdon, in recognition of our recent achievements.

We also entered our Parish Plan for EALC's Community Consultation Award, and were delighted to receive the award for Best Parish Plan produced to date in Essex.

Parish Plan:

The Parish Council has continued to work towards completing the actions detailed in the Parish Plan published in April 2004. Almost all have now been completed.

Meetings were held with Ian Purdie, representing the Parish Property Trustees, and Nicholas Belcher, solicitor, to try to lift the restriction on playing organised games on the Recreation Ground on Sundays. With the assistance of the Charity Commission, this is now moving forward.

The Council continued to look for ways to finance a memorial plaque to be placed on the Recreation Ground, to explain its provenance. Grants are available to maintain existing war memorials, but not to create new ones. We will continue to try to move this forward.

Work began to update the present Parish Plan. A further survey of the village was carried out in November 2007, the results analysed by the working party, and the interim results discussed by the Council. After further consultation, a detailed Parish Plan Update Report will be published next year.

Grants: The Parish Council provided a supporting grant to both the Sports Pavilion and Cricket Club.

Finances: The Parish Council holds three separate accounts at Barclays Bank PLC in Haverhill. Stuart Markley undertakes the internal audit and the appointed External auditors are Lubbock Fine Ltd.

VAT: The Parish Council annually reclaims vat paid on services and equipment. It also reclaims vat on items purchased on behalf of the Village Hall.

Insurance: The Parish Council provides insurance for its equipment and street furniture. Allianz Cornhill provides the Council's insurance and the policy also includes public liability insurance, personal accident cover, legal fees and employer's liability insurance.

Planning: The Parish Council considers all proposed planning applications either at a planning sub-committee or at a full council meeting where deadlines allow. Observations are then submitted to Braintree District Council advising where necessary on local information and issues.

Village Hall: The Parish Council are Custodian Trustees of the Village Hall, and continue to support the Hall within the precept to assist with running costs and general maintenance. The Parish Council also supports the Village Hall Refurbishment programme by making appropriate applications for grant funding.

Village Green: The maintenance and mowing of the Green is provided by the Parish Council and is undertaken by Johnny Ramsey who generously donates his time to mow the Village Green. The Parish Council also hires the Village Green on behalf of the community from the Parish Property Trustees. The Tickner family generously mows the Kersey.

Churchyard Mowing: The mowing of the churchyard is provided by the Parish Council and is undertaken by Malcolm Cox

Clock Service: The Parish Council provides the annual service to the village clock, which was undertaken by James Jewellers Ltd.

Highways: The Parish Council undertakes at least one inspection of the village's highways and liaises regularly when problems occur on our roads with Essex County Council. We were particularly grateful to Highways in June 2007 for their immediate response to the flooding in the village, and their assistance in clearing roads.

Grass Verges: C. Basham and Sons undertake the verge cutting on behalf of the Parish Council, under contract from Essex County Council, Highways. Verges are cut in spring and autumn every year.

Street Lighting: The Parish Council provides streetlights for which power is obtained from E-on Ltd. All lights are annually maintained and cleaned. Just Lamps Ltd undertakes this service

Street Cleaning and Bus Shelter maintenance: The Parish Council under contract from Essex County Council provides this service. The street cleaning which includes the gritting of junctions and the maintenance / cleaning of the bus shelters are undertaken by Dennis Saville.

Footpaths; The Parish Council works in conjunction with Essex County Council through the Parish Paths Partnership scheme to continue to improve our network of footpaths. A survey has been undertaken, and work continues in providing more way-markers and bridges to our footpaths. The mowing of the public paths throughout the village is undertaken by J T Haylock Ltd.

Transport: The Parish Council continues to attend two meetings per year and liaise with Essex County Council concerning public transport issues.

Village Magazine: The Parish Council produces its own magazine, edited by Mrs Melanie Walker, and distributed free of charge to all residents. The A4 sized magazine is produced quarterly. Local advertising helps to part fund the publication.

Notice Boards: The Parish Council provides Notice Boards at the Village Hall, Wiggens Green and Drapers Green, and in the bus shelters. The Clerk regularly updates the notice boards around the village and inside the Village Hall, which provide local information.

Website: The Parish Council's website address is:

www.helionsbumpsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk.

The website is hosted and maintained by Bojangles Design. Martin Catchesides is Webmaster on behalf of the Parish Council, and the site is updated regularly by Jane Catchesides and Terri Freight.

The website won the National Website Of The Year competition organised by the NALC.

Community Photocopier and Laminator

Based in the Parish Council Office in the Village Hall the copier offers a local photocopying and laminating service available to individuals, village groups and organisations at very reasonable rates. For details contact the Clerk.

Poppy Wreath: The Parish Council provides a poppy wreath from the Royal British Legion for the annual memorial service on Remembrance Sunday at Castle Camps.

Activity Days: The Parish Council and Village Hall Committee will be taking part in providing an Activity Day during the school summer holidays. The charge will be £5 per child and a pre-booking system is available by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01376 – 331616. This year the event will be held on 24th July.

Mobile Youth Bus: The Parish Council provides this service twice a year during school holidays and the next visit has been arranged for 22nd August 2007 at the Village Hall from 7 –9 pm.

Subscriptions: The Parish Council subscribes to the following organisations for consultation purposes:

- National Association of Local Councils,
- Essex Association of Local Councils,
- Braintree Association of Local Councils,
- Campaign to Protect Rural England,
- Rural Community Council of Essex,
- Local Council Review Publication and
- Stop Stansted Expansion.

To accompany this annual report please see the Summary of Receipts and Payments for the year ending 31 March 2008.

Terri Freight
Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
on behalf of Helions Bumpstead Parish Council

May 2008