

EAST HOATHLY WITH HALLAND PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2010

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome to the 115th Annual Parish Meeting. Firstly I would like to thank the members of the council for all their efforts this year. All of these people have given their time free of charge for the Parish and have worked hard on your behalf. This has been the first year for a long time that we have had a full complement of councillors to share the load for the whole year.

Also on my list to thank are Barby Dashwood-Hall (our District Councillor, who is here tonight), Nick Bennett, our County Councillor, Lindsay Wogens (School Governor Representative), Trina Hunt (Responsible Financial Officer) and Vic Tidswell our Internal Auditor.

Once again a massive thank you must go to our Parish Clerk, Ann Newton, without whom we could not function. She has a tremendous amount of experience and knowledge and we appreciate her guidance as well as the hard work that she does on behalf of our community.

Update on Activities reported on last Year

• **Provision of allotments.**

A significant part of this year has been taken up with work on the allotments. I am pleased to report that despite the length of time that this is taking, we are at least progressing. I hope that this particular project will be completed during this year.

We are currently working with an ecological consultant to put in place the final necessary reports required by Wealden District Council and Natural England which, whilst being costly, are things that should have been undertaken in the past in view of the habitat of this area.

I am hopeful that the resulting allotment area will provide a very valuable resource for the community and the surrounding wildlife.

• **Management of the woodlands on the Church Marks Lane development.**

As mentioned in last year's report, the council agreed to take on responsibility for the woodland at the rear of Church Marks Lane. This is ongoing and at the time of writing is with our solicitors. We are also looking at Wealden's management plan for the area and are currently working with Mr Andrew Wright, local resident and expert in the field, to see if we might be able to vary this to fit more appropriately the habitat and tree species etc to be found in the woodland.

I am aware that the woodland itself is currently in an unacceptable state and we are discussing with Hillreed Homes about clearing and tidying the site in the next few weeks prior to us taking over responsibility for the area; once this has been done we will look into getting someone in to manage the woodland, along with local support.

- **Provision of a Youth Shelter**

In my report last year I asked for volunteers from the younger members of the community to get involved with this project. There is potentially some money available from Wealden for this project and maybe for some additional equipment such as an exercise circuit etc but we do need some input from those people likely to use the facilities. We have not had anyone come forward which is disappointing so I would like to again ask for volunteers from people who have teenagers and from the young people themselves.

- **Speed Camera and Speed Limit in Halland**

I am delighted to report that the speed limit in Halland has been reduced, however there is considerable concern in the hamlet that the new limit is not being adhered to and in fact the removal of the speed camera has encouraged drivers to drive excessively fast through the hamlet again. This is hugely disappointing (although not unexpected) as the council did argue for the camera to be maintained.

Local resident Stephen O'Halloran has been carrying out a very effective lobbying and information campaign with the County Council and is making some progress. I would like to thank him for his efforts in this and if anyone wishes to be put in touch with Stephen to support this campaign, please can you contact me and I will arrange for this to happen.

The council is very keen to have the speed camera back as soon as possible as there have been a number of serious accidents on this stretch of road during the year, which had reduced when the camera was in operation. I believe from the police and Nick Bennett that the situation is shortly to be reviewed.

- **Recycling**

We asked Wealden to look into a recycling venue for Halland, to run alongside the new CROWN roadside collection scheme due to be implemented later on this year. The CROWN scheme does not include glass recycling and we identified a site which was considered suitable for glass recyclables, however we have now heard from Wealden that they are not prepared to spend money on providing what (particularly in view of the land raise issues) would be an essential resource for the Hamlet.

- **Pathways and Footpaths**

During the year the Council learnt that ESCC is renegotiating the promised monies from the two housing developments in East Hoathly to be spent on sustainable transport needs. The County Council had agreed to discuss with the Parish how this money might be spent. We have suggested that a footpath by the A22 in Halland or a cycle path between the two villages would be of benefit. We have been advised that the County Council will consider these suggestions as part of their sustainable transport needs programme, however we may have a fight on our hands to prevent this money from being either reduced or diverted elsewhere.

New Activities

- **Landraise**

The major issue of the year was the reopening of plans for a potential landraise site within Halland/ Laughton area. The council is very much against this proposal and has been involved with the action group which Barby Dashwood-Hall's instigated to fight the proposals. There have been a number of meetings arranged both in the village and also in Hailsham. We have appreciated Barby's support, that of Stuart Meier from Campaign for Rural England and both the local MPs (Charles Hendry & Norman Baker). This will be an ongoing project and the next decision as to which sites will be shortlisted will be made this autumn where we all will be able to voice our views again, so we expect to be involved in further work to discredit this proposal again this year. However, in the meantime please help to keep awareness of this disgusting proposal high by emailing Councillor Lock and our MPs. There are also some car stickers for you to take away this evening; and look out for the placards, which will shortly be appearing along the A22.

Challenges and Opportunities for the future.

The Wealden 2011 – 2026 Local Development Framework has identified a number of sites within the parish where building work might be approved. We need to be alive to the challenges and opportunities that such proposals might bring. The Council is aware that the majority of residents would want us to oppose new development within both of the villages and we will strongly resist any plans to impose developments upon us, however we must not allow us as a community to miss out on possible grants and investments that such developments can bring to the community. Clearly, we will not be successful in resisting all attempts to build new properties in the village and I would welcome any thoughts from parishioners about what we might request in return from any such prospective developers.

DAVID VAUGHAN

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War Memorial Sports Ground Trust

Firstly, my thanks must go to Derek Keeley whose efforts we could not do without. Not only has he helped us to maintain the Pavilion, play area and field, but he also organises all of the bookings for these venues, which can be a challenging task at times. I am also please to see that other sports are starting to use the field too.

The Carnival Society hosted another brilliant, fireworks celebration last year, which is a huge contribution in bringing together the residents of both Halland and East Hoathly.

Please could I remind all residents and users of the fields to note that cars should not be driven across the fields as this can make the cricket and football playing surfaces dangerous.

- **Improvements to the Pavilion.**

During the year Derek has organised a new, and safe, secure garage door for the storage facility and also the bench has been refurbished.

We are still aware that the Pavilion is old, cold and needs replacing, however in view of the current economic climate this is unlikely to happen for the foreseeable future. As mentioned last year, there are improvements that we can make to help the amenity more user friendly whilst we as a Council are not prepared to increase the precept burden on the Parish, next year there potentially could be some money available for minor improvements and repairs as we will no longer be paying for the long pond loan.

I asked last year for the views of parishioners and the clubs using the Pavilion about what needs to be done and importantly also for some fund raising schemes that we can implement as a community; this is a good resource for the village – whilst not perfect it is better than many communities have - and I really would like some ideas and feed back from parishioners and some volunteers to make it happen.

DAVID VAUGHAN