

TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 21st May 2013

(To published on the Website, on the Notice boards and in the Parish Magazine)

This report is a summary of the work of the Parish Council for the year ending 31st March 2013. The full Parish Council met ten times. Mrs Julia Cook joined the Council in July as a Co-opted Member.

Parish Council members have an area of responsibility and serve on one or more of the Council's committees. During the year councillors have attended various meetings and courses on subjects such as Planning, Rural Broadband and Transport.

Our Clerk, Mrs Jayne Halfhide continues to ensure that all our policies and procedures are up to date and in place. I would like to thank her for the enormous amount of work she does on behalf of the Council. Jayne passed Section 7 of the Certificate in Local Council Administration in June enabling the Council to adopt The General Power of Competence.

Ward Councillors are invited to attend all meetings. Our District Councillors Margaret Galione and Tom Cunningham have attended meetings and we thank them for the work they undertake on our behalf. Our County Councillor, Michael Lager, has been in regular contact with our Clerk and receives copies of agenda and minutes of our meetings.

We are always pleased to welcome members of the public at our meetings and thank you for your interest. The suggestion box, situated in the shop, continues to be an effective means of communication.

Planning and Highways

Twelve planning applications were considered during the year, as well as two tree preservation orders which were considered by our Tree Warden, Angus MacWillson. Angus is always on hand to give advice regarding the trees in the Parish and I thank him for his work on our behalf.

I would also like to thank Terry Blunden, who is our Greenfields Representative,

I am pleased to report that the Terling Inn is now open again and I would like to thank the Pub Working Group for liaising with those concerned.

Although potholes continue to be a problem on some roads I am pleased to report that some work has been carried out in Ranks Green and ongoing repairs are made throughout the Parish, although not always as swiftly as we would like.

We continue to be concerned regarding the damage to the area around Terling Ford caused by the owners of large vehicles using the area as a playground. Despite liaising with Councillors Lager and Louis from Essex County Council and with our MP Priti Patel the problem still has not been resolved.

Concerns have been expressed regarding the speed of traffic in certain parts of the villages and the parking on roads near the school as parents drop and collect their children. The Police are monitoring the parking at the school and parents have formed a working party to try to find ways of resolving the problem. Unfortunately not enough volunteers came forward to conduct a Community Speed Watch which would be the first step towards requesting further speed control measures in this area.

I would like to thank PSCO Nikki Doubleday and her colleagues who have attended Parish Council meetings during the year to report on the policing of the Parish. They follow up any issues which give us cause for concern.

Thank you to the members of the Planning and Highways Committee, Robin Dixon, Pauline Bird and Reg Hunt for their work on these issues.

Environment

Environmental issues are a major part of the work of the Parish Council.

We continue to be a member of the Parish Paths Partnership to ensure that the footpaths are well maintained and accessible to all. Thank you to the many volunteers, led by Sheila Alder and Sue Poole in Fuller Street and Trevor and Joyce Lewis in Ranks Green, who arrange our litter picking sessions in Fairstead, part of our Street Cleaning Agreement with Braintree District Council. Thanks too to all the Parishioners who pick up litter as part of their regular walks around the villages and those who attended the Terling litter picks last Spring and Autumn. Your help is much appreciated. Similarly, reports of dog fouling are followed up with the Dog Warden. All issues of fly tipping are reported and dealt with promptly.

We are liaising with Braintree District Council Planning Department and the Environment Agency regarding problems with the slurry pit in Ranks Green.

We installed a new bench at the top of Hull Lane to commemorate HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June.

Thanks to the Environment Committee, Darren White, Trevor Lewis and Louisa Sime, and to our Village Handymen, Daniel and Alan Jiggins who do so much to keep our villages looking so good.

Health and Welfare

The Recreation Ground is now fully operational and is regularly used by Terling Villa Football Club and a Veterans Team. Thank you to Louisa Sime, Trevor Lewis and Julia Cook who monitor its use.

The children's playground is checked weekly and ROSPA carry out an annual inspection. I would like to thank David Anderson who repaired some of the equipment.

In August the Parish Council funded a Children's Activity Day in the Village Hall.

The Parish Council also contributed towards the costs of the Always Welcome Club outing.

I would like to thank Debbie Burns who checks the defibrillator each week.

The weekly buses to Braintree, Witham and Chelmsford and the Monday Shopper Bus, which picks up passengers at their door, continue to operate I would like to thank Daphne Parris for attending the Passenger Transport Meetings and for her hard work in keeping these services running.

Thank you Ann Anderson and Sheila Alder who make up the Health and Welfare Committee, Trevor Lewis, who spends an enormous amount of time advising us on Health and Safety issues and ensuring that our Risk Assessments are up to date, Pauline Bird, our Village Hall Council Representative and Julia Cook our School Representative.

IT and Communications

Thanks to Colin Cutler, our IT and Communications Adviser, our web site is regularly up-dated and is an excellent source of information. The Internet Café in the shop continues to be used as is the Events Board. Thanks to Colin, to Ray Pond and Sarah Elliot and to Wendy Hill for their help and support.

Village Design Statement

A public meeting was held in November attended by Jan Cole from the Rural Community Council of Essex. Following that meeting Parishioners were invited to comment on the draft report. We are in the process of applying for a grant for the final phase of the project.

I would particularly like to thank Colin and Heather Cutler, Paul Harrison and Robin Dixon for their work on this project.

Finance

I am pleased that the precept for the financial year ending March 2014 will remain unchanged. The unaudited accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2013 are available to be viewed by arrangement with the Clerk. Thanks to the Finance Committee, Ian Smith, Sheila Alder and Robin Dixon.

Estate Liaison

Pauline Bird and Trevor Lewis liaise with local landowners on behalf of the Council. I would like to thank the landowners for the support they give to our Parishes in so many ways.

The Parish Council have considered a number of consultation documents circulated by Braintree District Council, Essex County Council and other organisations and have ensured that the views of the Parish were submitted for consultation, including comments on the proposed reduction in the number of Councillors on Braintree District Council.

This is a brief summary of another year. Should you wish to know more the minutes of all our meetings are available on the website www.terlingandfairstead.co.uk or by application to the Clerk.

It only remains for me to thank my Council colleagues for their support and for their hard work throughout the year

Thank you for your interest and I hope to see you at a Parish Council Meeting in the near future.

Sarah McNamara
Chairman
21st May 2013