

## **ORLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL**

Notes from Orlestone Parish Council's Annual Assembly held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 7.30pm in the Hamstreet Sports Pavilion, Hamstreet, Ashford, Kent.

**Present: Parish Councillors:** George Sparks (Chairman), Mike Wady, (Vice-Chairman), Tony Isted, Steve Shorter, Andy Othen, Vicky McKissock, Mags Wellsted-Boorman, Mike Wady and the Parish Clerk (Sue Stiffell)

**Also Present:** Kent County Councillor Mike Angel; Borough Councillor Gareth Bradford, Borough Councillor Aline Hicks; PCSO Andrew Hoodless; Margaret Hanlon (WI representative) and members of the public.

**Apologies:** Angela Bromfield (Victory Hall & St Mary's Church), Andy Ansley & Graham Woodcock (HDSLAs) and Community Warden Catherine Carter.

1. **Welcome by Chairman & Parish Council's Annual Report:** George Sparks welcomed those in attendance. He thanked all of the Parish Councillors for their commitment to the community throughout the year. He highlighted the various groups in the village that the Parish Council had supported during the year which included the HDSLAs, the Festival of Transport, the Firework Committee and Victory Hall. *(Full report attached)*

2. **Annual Reports From Representatives of the Community:**

**Kent County Councillor Mike Angel:** Thanked members for inviting him to the meeting and reported that his work as a Councillor involved various committee appointments. Issues that concerned him were roads and their infrastructure and the effect of development on rural roads. During the last year KCC had been restructuring their organisation this had resulted in new employment contracts and some £5 million had been saved. *(Full Report Attached)*

During a brief discussion following Cllr Angell's report it was highlighted that Bethersden Parish Council were concerned about the effect that development at Chilmington would have on the A28. It was highlighted by a member of the public that the development would affect many rural roads in the area.

**Borough Councillor Aline Hicks:** reported

- The Borough Council's tax increase was one of the lowest in the country.
- Consultation concerning the new Junction 10a had taken place.
- Development in Ashford Town included a new college which was due to open in late 2017, plans for a new cinema opposite Debenhams and 200 residential units opposite 1-8 Elwick Road was being considered.
- A new Model Railway Museum had been granted planning permission as well as expansion at the Outlet Centre.
- Residential development was planned for along Victory Way.
- The Council is to take over the control of landscaping and maintenance from Landscape Services.
- Consultation is ongoing to decide which lights are to be reinstated.
- Parish Boundaries were reviewed.
- The Chief Executive at ABC has moved and Tracy Kerly has been appointed as his replacement for two years. *(Full Report Attached)*

**Borough Councillor Gareth 'Brad' Bradford:** Introduced himself for those present explaining that he had been a Councillor for just under a year. Following on from Cllr Hick's report he highlighted that the new railway museum would be an international attraction. He was enjoying his work as a Borough Councillor and his main aim was to work for the community he lived in.

**PCSO Andrew Hoodless:** introduced himself explaining that he was the new police community support officer and had taken over from Gary Carr (who had left to join the regulars) about two weeks earlier. Figures for the area for the past year being:

Thefts	9
Criminal Damage	8
Burglaries (all)	11

He advised that items of significant value be kept securely and if anything suspicious was noted to contact Kent Police on tel no 101. He would be carrying out speed checks in the area and if specific locations were a problem he asked that he is informed.

### 3. **Annual Reports From Local Clubs and Organisations:**

**Hamstreet WI:** Margaret Hanlon reported that the Hamstreet WI had been busy during the year with members celebrating the WI centenary by going to the Rare Breeds Centre for tea; a couple of members had been chosen to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace. Further celebrations would be taking place to celebrate Hamstreet's WI 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The group met every month in Victory Hall with various themes being held each month, various outings were planned and the group were working on growing a wild flower garden by the entrance gates to the Pavilion. A recently held clean up resulted in approximately 14 bags of litter being filled and various street signs being cleaned – this being part of the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebratory initiatives. It was hoped that the idea of having a defibrillator in the village and adult exercise outdoor equipment would be explored by the Parish Council and the WI were happy to help in any way they could.

**The Hamstreet Branch of the British Legion:** It was highlighted that the group met in the sports pavilion on the third Thursday of every month and that all were invited to attend and there was no need to have served in the services to attend.

**Hamstreet Neighbourhood Watch:** Sarah Shorter explained that the group met on the third Monday in the Sports Pavilion and regular updates were posted on their Facebook page. The group had been running for about a year and had over 200 members.

**The Hamstreet Victory Hall Committee:** The Chairman of the Committee (Angela Bromfield) had provided a report which was made available to those present. It was highlighted that the existing committee would be standing down in 2020 to make way for a younger committee as the existing members felt that they did not have the physical strength to fulfil the hall's needs. (*Full Report Attached*)

**The Friends of St Marys Church, Orlestone:** A report had been provided and made available to those present it was noted that there would be a flower festival on 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> July and a folk evening was to be held on 30<sup>th</sup> July. (*Full Report Attached*)

### **Conclusion:**

The Chairman thanked those for attending the meeting and explained that last year the Parish Council had introduced a Community Award Plaque. This is to be presented annually, to someone who worked for the community of Hamstreet helping to make it a better place; last year the award was presented to Keith Taylor. During discussion members of the Parish Council had agreed that this year Sid Gittens be awarded with the plaque; the Chairman highlighted that Sid was always there with a helping hand.

## **Chairman's Annual Report For The Annual Assembly - Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

The year started with an uncontested election and the council has had 2 vacancies for most of the year. I am pleased to announce that Mr Tony Isted, from Lancaster Close was co-opted onto the council last month. There is still one vacancy therefore should anybody be interested then contact the Clerk or myself for full details.

During May we were pleased to entertain our friends from Therouanne for a very enjoyable weekend. We hope at some time to resurrect the football match between our communities and Andy Othen is in contact with their Mayor.

Once again the Festival of Transport held in June and Firework night held in November were both very successful. We look forward to these events again this year and are hoping to have a Christmas tree Committee later this year.

The council was pleased to continue its support for The Victory Hall, The Friends of St Marys and The Sports & Leisure Association. Other donations were made to the Hamstreet Branch of the Royal British Legion and the Parish Council covers the cost of maintaining Johnsons Corner.

We have been working towards allocating the S106 money due to the village as a result of the Lancaster Close Development. Ashford Borough Council will shortly be carrying out a consultation over the play facilities within the Parish.

We have maintained close contact with our County Councillor, Mike Angell and our Borough Councillors, Aline Hicks and "Brad" Bradford. They have attended our meetings whenever possible and I take this opportunity to express our thanks to them for their assistance throughout the year.

I also take this opportunity to thank all of the Parish Councillors for their commitment to the community throughout the year. The council takes this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers who also give their time to ensure that this remains a thriving community and an enjoyable village in which to live. It has been brought to my attention by a few members of the numerous clubs and societies in the village that many of them are advancing in years and that unless some fresh younger blood comes forward to join these committees then the community as we now know it is in danger of losing these facilities and functions.

I am sure that many of you will have noticed an increase in the Precept which is made up from your council tax, which is being given to Orlestone Parish Council. This was not the Councils intention. When the precept figure for the new financial year was decided, we calculated the number of houses in the parish taking into account the 54 new houses just completed on Lancaster Close. Allowing a reduced amount of £30 per household, it had been £34.29, we calculated that we could increase the Precept by £1,500 but it would only cost each household £30. However Ashford Borough Council did not take into account all of these new dwellings and as a result the OPC portion of your Council Tax increased by nearly 6%.

In conclusion on behalf of all councillors thank our Clerk, Sue, for all her help and assistance throughout the year. I look forward to another constructive year (my thirtieth) with the Parish Council.

**George Sparks (Chairman of Orlestone Parish Council)**

## Mike speech to Parish Councils

Thank you for inviting me to give you a brief note of my activities during the past year. Since the years 2011/12 the County Council has saved £500 million. There is still £52 million to be saved over the next year.

The savings have been achieved by restructuring the organisation, entering in to commissioning contracts for services which have reduced overheads and still get value for money and which have not affected the delivery of front line services.

Before you ask the money that was invested in Iceland has now been recovered not only by KCC but also the Kent and Medway fire and rescue service plus interest.

I am engaged as follows at County Council :

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Commissioning Advisory Board, Planning Committee, General Purposes Fire Authority Committee, Fire Authority Board, Sussex Community Rail Partnership Strategic Board, Joint Transportation Board.

These keep me pretty busy as well as constituency matters which are growing with the housing developments

In the latter there are issues which concern me in that the pressure is now on our rural roads and infrastructure or lack of. I am glad to say that Parish Councils are involved in discussions with ABC and KCC officers expressing their worries. This I fully support .

Among other things I am pressing the NHS for a health centre in Chilmington Green with facilities for Xray and consultant clinics in order to keep much of the need for patients having to visit the William Harvey.

**Aline Hicks**

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**From:** "Aline Hicks" <aline.hicks@btinternet.com>  
**Date:** 03 April 2016 19:31  
**To:** "Aline Hicks" <aline.hicks@btinternet.com>  
**Subject:** Annual Meetings 2016

Borough Council tax increase by £4.55p this year – allowed to do so by govt as Ashford was one of the lowest in the country. All ratepayers in the borough received a leaflet indicating how the total bill is calculated.

Consultation with Highways England over J10a. ABC held a special Planning Meeting at which members of the public and parishes were given the opportunity to voice their views. The committee endorsed the recommendations submitted and these went forward to HE as ABC is only a consultee in this process. Many people expressed the view that improvements to the Barry Road Junction should be included in the overall plan.

Ashford Town is being developed with the new college on track to take on students in Autumn 2017. A new cinema is planned opposite Debenhams along with a budget hotel and housing and eateries. Opposite 1-8 Elwick Road development for 200 residential units is being considered. Off Station Road a new office block is planned for the Commercial Quarter following expressions of interest from companies who attended a Council Exhibition in London.

To the south of the railway line, the model railway museum has been given planning permission, as well as the expansion of the Outlet Centre. Chapel Down will take a prime position beside the railway bridge and next to that will be a new store - Aldi seem committed. Opposite this will be another hotel with some residential units. Further along Victoria Way opposite Victoria Park dwellings are planned for both sides of the road, and a car park will be provided off Victoria Way with pedestrian access over the railway to come out opposite Debenhams.

The council is also taking control of landscaping and maintenance from Landscape Services in the town and I expect you will already have seen the improvements to the roundabouts.

The capping of some lights throughout the borough has caused some concern but this was done on H&S grounds and consultations are ongoing with ABC and KCC to decide which to reinstate.

During the year the Borough Council reviewed the Parish Boundaries and after much consultation I was able to arrange a further meeting at which a more amicable agreement was reached with Warehorne. The Boundary Commission are reviewing the wards for Borough councillors so some boundaries may change but given the increase in population the number of councillors could remain the same.

I was sorry to see our Chief Executive John Bunnett move onto pastures new as he was one of the main instigators in getting Ashford moving. Ashford is currently regarded as one of the most go-ahead places in Kent. It could be that boundaries might change or

03/04/2016

federations formed and this is why the new Chief Executive, Tracey Kerley, has only been appointed for two years

—NEW DIRECTORATE

I am sure you all read the local paper and keep up to date with developments in the area but if you have any queries I will do my best to answer them.

Thank you

## **Hamstreet Victory Hall Committee**

### **Chairman's Parish Assembly Report 2016**

It is with great delight that again we can report on another successful year for the Victory Hall.

Our monthly boot fairs still remain our main fund raiser followed by our annual jumble sale (which is said to be the best in Kent) and we eagerly await the results of this year's sale in April.

Bookings continue to increase and again we are complimented on the up=keep of the hall and all the facilities included in the hire price.

We value the financial support given by Orlestone Parish Council for the grass cutting and support from Ashford Borough Council and Borough Councillors.

We cannot thank local residents enough for their support and help which is given in so many ways.

I am pleased to work with a great committee and team of volunteers who with their help we would not have the success we do.

Going forward with the additional people and houses in the village, we feel we do not have the physical strength to fulfil the hall's needs so we have made the decision that in 2020 we will all stand down and make way for a younger committee with more mental and physical strength.

The hall is of huge importance for the village, providing a venue for hundreds to enjoy recreational, physical, educational and social events.

With the additional houses in the village we would like to see a new village hall complimented by a new play park and additional parking to facilitate both the hall and doctor's surgery.

We regularly hear in and around the village how "Hamstreet is a lovely place to live with such friendly people and so much going on". We as a committee like to feel that we put a lot of hard work into helping make Hamstreet a nicer place to live.

Angela Bromfield

Chairman

Victory Hall Committee

## **Friends of St Mary's Parish Assembly Report 2016**

St Mary's is our Parish Church, set in a beautiful spot and admired by many who visit and compliment us on and the beauty of the Church how well the Churchyard is maintained.

We, as Friends, are very dedicated in maintaining both the outside and the inside of the Church, therefore enabling us to hold regular services. In order to achieve this we have to raise funds, with our main fundraisers being our biannual flower festival, annual valuation afternoon and folk evening.

The Christmas Tree Festival was an extra special event last December and proved to be a great success, enjoyed by other three hundred people. We received so many wonderful compliments on how beautiful the Church looked. As a result of the success, the Church of the Good Shepherd is holding a Tree Festival this year and we hope each year, one of the Saxon Shoreline churches will take a turn.

We thank Orlestone Parish Council for their financial help towards the grass cutting and value the small team who maintain the Churchyard.

One of our challenges is to encourage more people to attend services and just to see our beautiful Church. When we are no longer able to look after St Mary's we hope these people will carry on our work.

We thank everyone who supports St Mary's and look forward to seeing you at our next fundraising events:

- **Flower Festival on 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> July 2016 – theme Beatrix Potter**
- **Folk Evening on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

**Angela Bromfield**  
**Chairman**  
**Tel: 01233 732833**