

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Dear Resident,

I am so pleased to have been elected as the Chairman of Steyning Parish Council for the ensuing year.

Since I originally joined the Council, I have come to learn how hard and conscientiously my colleagues work for the good of the area. Previously, I have been a member of a District Council and a County Council and I can truthfully say that the one I have enjoyed the most is Steyning, because it is so embedded within our community and close to the aspirations of residents.

In the coming year, we hope to build on the work that we have been doing in keeping our streets and parks clean, supporting the local business community, fighting anti-social behaviour, and promoting all the positive aspects of Steyning and the many clubs and organisations within it.

Finally, I would like to say a word of thank you to our previous chair, Sue Rogers, who did such a sterling job of guiding the Council for the last two years. Sue is now one of our two District Councillors, along

with George Cockman, with whom I will work closely. I would also like to thank retiring Councillors Jackie Campbell, David Herson and Shelley Marks-Thompson, all of whom have contributed greatly and given generously of their time. They will all be missed.

DAVID BARLING - Chairman, Steyning Parish Council



ANNUAL REPORTS PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Planning Committee – Report by Cllr Devlin

The Planning Committee consists of seven Councillors who meet at 7pm on the first Tuesday and the third Tuesday of the month. The role is to consider all planning applications as a Consultee to the District Council, in some cases the County Council and in the future, the National Park Authority. As a result of the recently introduced Localism Bill it is likely that the Parish Council will be empowered with the authority to make certain planning decisions. It would also have the power under the bill, to prepare and ensure enforcement of a Parish Plan and to organize a referendum on certain substantial planning matters.

I have attended several meetings over the year concerning the South Downs National Park including the selection and election of the Parish Council representatives. The Authority becomes operational on 1st April 2011. The town of Steyning is outside of the park but much of the Parish is within it. The shadow authority ceases to exist but the Chairman is remaining as Chair of the new Authority for the foreseeable future. The headquarters are to be in Midhurst but there are likely to be several regional offices. The SDNP is responsible for planning within the designated area but it is anticipated that 90% of the decisions will be delegated to the pre-existing authorities. The

park authority will not delegate decisions on large developments such as more than ten houses and County Council responsibilities such as waste management, water control and mineral extractions. It is intended that there will be a planning link officer, responsible for our District. Hitherto footpaths and rights of way on the South Downs were the responsibility of the overseeing authority, the Joint Committee. This responsibility, in West Sussex, was delegated from WSCC but now WSCC have insisted on clawing this back. There is some concern about the future of rights of way and footpaths within the park.

The most significant development in the town is the new Grammar School boarding house, which is nearing completion. There was considerable concern about the completion date as the main building contractor went into liquidation. However, a new contractor has taken over and it is to be officially opened we believe in June. The Planning committee have been concerned about certain developments within the conservation area. The main problem appears to be that the defined parameters of the area did not include fenestration. New parameters are to be defined in association with the HDC Conservation Officer and it is hoped that the area can be extended.

Steyning Centre Committee - Report by Cllr Marshall

Another year has passed by since our last report to the Council and spring appears to have arrived. We can report that the fabric of the Centre has been well maintained, the heating system is working well since the boiler was upgraded last year, and there has been a reduction in the gas consumed within the Centre.

The décor and the floors are in very good condition and have been well maintained over the past year; even after being used by approximately 800 visitors per week.

Our new additions to the Centre are our pride and joy and they sit on the roof where they unfortunately cannot be seen. These are our Solar Cells which have generated electricity for the Centre for almost a year and have contributed so far about £500 saving to our electricity overheads for the Centre.

Additional savings have also been made by negotiating with the Water Board a reduction to the Centre's water costs.

The gardens are looking nice and tidy and this is due to our gardener Claire who obviously likes gardening. We are assured that Claire has plenty of ground round the Centre that has to be filled with plants so if you have any spare plants please pass them to Claire to add even more colour to the grounds.

During May 2007 the users and the Centre Committee decided to replace 250 chairs used within the Centre that were well past their sale date. The Fire Regulations now call for chairs including the new chairs to be firmly fixed together when in use, which is causing some upset with the users; the Committee is currently working on a solution to this problem.

The annual inventory of the Centre has taken place, and we are pleased to note that nothing is missing. Bookings of the Centre are building and we can look forward to a good financial income for the year.

Welcome to our two new caretakers Keith and Steve who have joined us after the departure of Shaun who has gone to pastures new.

MEETINGS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Finance & General Purposes	5 th July*, 2 nd August*, 6 th Sept* 2011
Highways & Lighting	21 st June*, 26 th July 30 th August 2011
Steyning Centre	19 th July*, 23 rd August, 27 th Sept 2011

Full Parish Council	13 th June, 11 th July 12 th Sept 2011
Playing Fields	28 th June, 16 th August*, 20 th Sept* 2011

Planning will be held on these evenings at 7.00 pm. Members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings which are held at The Steyning Centre. Meetings are at 7.30pm except Planning marked which is at 7.00 p.m. All agendas are displayed on the Public Notice Board at the High Street car park. Contact: 01903 812042.

Email: spclerk@btconnect.com or steyningcentre@btconnect.com

Highways & Lighting Committee – Report by Cllr Lloyd

We have had a very busy year and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all my colleagues on the committee for all their hard work and support in my year as Chairman.

This year saw the completion of the 21 new parking spaces in Newmans Gardens Car Park which has brought valuable additional parking to the town. This was only made possible because of the close cooperation between us, HDC and the Steyning Partnership. As part of the plan we have changed the configuration of the car park so that the long term parking is on the West side, which has greatly improved the flow of the car park. The landscaping of the new area is still work in progress.

As part of the overall re-vamp of the car park we are installing 4 Sheffield style cycle racks opposite the re-cycling bins at the top of the witten leading to the High Street.

One of our major projects this year was the instigation of a Severe Weather plan to avoid the problems we had in the winter of 2009/2010 and, it was put into action, very successfully, late last year. We now have 4 permanent salt/grit bins in the High Street – 2 funded by the Parish Council, 1 from a local resident and 1 from local traders. In addition we had Hippo bags of salt delivered to strategic positions around the town.

Our street cleaner was out clearing snow from the pavements in the High Street and we also hired the services of a digger to clear roads in key parts of the town. It was good to see so many volunteers from all parts of the town, using the salt and keeping roads passable so that the town could continue to function. The continued success of our plan relies heavily on volunteers and we still need more.

Having listened to the increasing number of cyclists visiting the town, we are installing a new covered cycle rack, for 8 cycles, in the High Street car park. This will offer a higher degree of security.

Other projects completed this year were:

- The repair of the Southdown Terrace steps and cutting back

of the greenery to make them safer. This work was carried out by the Young Offenders Team.

- We worked with WSSC to tidy up the Mobile Waste Service in Fletchers Croft car park
- We installed a more robust baby change unit in the WCs in the High Street

Other projects under consideration are:

- A new sign at the White Horse roundabout – to replace the mixture of confusing signs in place currently - to direct visitors to the Tourist Information Centre at the post office and other places of interest.
- To put advertising boards in the bus shelter in the High Street for the benefit of local traders, clubs and societies.
- To launch our 'Steyning in Broom' campaign which is aimed at signing up traders and home owners in the key streets of the town, to litter pick and weed the fronts of their properties so that Steyning stands out as shining example of a well-kept country town.
- New signage to direct visitors to the War Memorial in the Memorial Playing Field.
- Replace trees that have been removed or fallen down, but never replaced.
- Working with WSSC to improve the flooding problems in the Horsham Road and Mouse Lane.
- To look at ways to improve the current street sweeping contract.

Lastly I would like to thank the small army of volunteers who selflessly litter pick around the town and those that help with the annual 'blitz' on the weeds in the High Street. Without their continued support, our town would not be the delightful place it is today.

Playing Fields Committee – Report by Cllr Ness-Collins

The committee has met regularly during the past year and dealt with the ongoing business. The committee has seven members.

The members each continue to have oversight of an area and report regularly on their own "area".

We were very fortunate to get our grant from Play England, Playbuilder for upgrading the Children's play area on the Memorial playing field just before the cut backs. The project was successfully completed and the play area moved to the centre of the field. The new area was opened in August and has been well used by the children ever since.

We continue to have a good working relationship with the Allotment Association and are represented on their committee. They are still working on their Lottery grant for fencing.

The Tennis Club's Project has been completed and the third court was built during the winter and is now in regular use. Tennis courts are available for public use and a notice is displayed stating how to use them.

The British Legion is with our support doing a complete renewal of the Memorial Garden in the Memorial Playing Field. When this is complete it will provide an area which is peaceful and calm where people can sit and relax. Improvement in the surface will mean that it will provide a fitting setting for the Memorial Service each November.

CIVIC AMENITY SERVICE

The Mobile Waste collection service will be in Fletchers Croft car park on:

June 4th & 18th, July 2nd, 16th, & 30th and August 13th & 27th 2011. The Landfill waste collection will be in the car park on 11th June 2011.

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

The CAB is now operating its outreach service at The Steyning Centre every two weeks from the New Year thanks to a decision by Steyning Parish Council, Upper Beeding Parish Council and Bramber Council to fund one extra day per month. It is held on a Wednesday from 10am to 12.30pm. Please note that an appointment system operates and appointments can be made by phoning the CAB Helpline on 0844 477 1171 or the Steyning Centre on 01903 812042.

PARKING ON PAVEMENTS

This seems to be an increasing problem in the Town. Parking on the pavement is an offence particularly if the vehicle is causing an

obstruction. This is a Police matter so please report it. Make sure you have the vehicle registration numbers and note the time and day it happens. Report on 0845 6070999 or via the Operation Crackdown website www.operationcrackdown.org

BLOOD DONORS

The next blood donors sessions to be held at The Steyning Centre, Fletcher's Croft will be on: Monday 1st August & 19th September 2011. Sessions are from 2.00 – 4.30 p.m. and 5.30 – 8.00 p.m.

STREET LIGHTS

West Sussex County Council maintains all streetlights in Steyning. To report a fault dial 0845 7581622. It is useful if you have to hand the number of the light in question.

Finance & General Purposes Committee – Report by Cllr Herson

As the name indicates, F&GP is the Committee that controls the Council Finances but it also deals with any items of Council business that do not naturally fall into the remit of any of the other Committees. The Committee meets on the first Tuesday of every month, usually 6 days prior to the corresponding Full Council meeting. I have been Chair of this Committee for the past 2 years. F&GP manages by far the largest share of the Council's budget which includes all our administration costs such as salaries and wages, ICT and printing, grants to community organisations, professional fees and training. It also includes our substantial commitments to the Neighbourhood Wardens scheme and the Swimming Pool.

Now for a few details:

- In 2010/2011 the budget allocated to administering the Council's affairs was £79,600 – approximately £500 more than 2009/10.
- The budget allocated for the Wardens and Swimming Pool contributions was increased to £45,000 giving a total F&GP budget of £124,600.
- Our Precept for 2010/2011 was just under £154,000 – thus, in the current financial year, F&GP accounts for approximately 81% of the Council's expenditure.
- For 2011/12, we aim to keep the cost of administration to the minimum possible but, regrettably, there will still need to be a 2% increase in the Precept to £157,600; in part to cover the cost of the 2011 Council elections and a contribution towards doubling the frequency of the CAB service.
- This increase amounts to just 10p/month for the "average" band D taxpayer or less than 15p/month for someone in band F!
- We continually strive to make savings wherever we can especially in the use of IT and utilities and will do whatever we can to support the Greening campaign during the coming financial year.
- We have also been successful in getting financial support from some of our adjoining Councils towards our long-term commitment to supporting the Swimming Pool and CAB service.
- During this year we have continued to distribute Parish Council News via the distinctive quarterly insert in "Your Steyning." This comes at an increased cost but we hope that the information will now reach all residents in a timely fashion.
- Also during the year we have awarded over £1,336 in grants including, for example, the Royal British Legion, the Steyning Music Society, St Barnabas, Steyning Country Fair, Steyning in Bloom and many much smaller contributions.
- Lastly, the Parish Council is actively represented on a number of outside bodies including the Local Action Team, Leisure Centre Management Committee, Joint Burial Board, Horsham Association of Local Councils, West Sussex Waste Management and more. Our representatives report progress in these areas at our monthly meetings.
- Thus, in a small way, we are able to influence developments throughout both the District and the County for the benefit of the residents of Steyning.
- This report can only provide an overview of the work of F&GP. Please see our monthly meeting Minutes or attend one of our monthly meetings to find out more.

Steyning Parish Council 10/11 Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31st March 2011

31st March 2010		31st March 2011
	Income Summary	
149,351	Precept Received	153,970
1,338	Bank Interest Received	1,584
150,689	Sub Total	155,554
	Operating Income	
1,627	Administration	1,948
20	Fin & Gen Purposes Appendix	0
14,678	Highways and Lighting	21,423
9,313	Playing Fields & Allotments	57,579
66,041	Steyning Centre	65,383
0	Ear Marked Res Playing field	0
0	Ear Marked Res Highways	3,000
0	Ear Marked Res F & GP	12,000
13,950	Ear Marked Res Steyning Centre	0
256,318	Total Income	316,887
	Running Costs	
77,879	Administration	77,626
44,521	Fin & Gen Purposes Appendix	45,000
15,391	Highways and Lighting	15,704
11,581	Public Toilets	11,024
20,297	Playing Fields & Allotments	68,354
68,979	Steyning Centre	70,757
0	Ear Marked Res Playing field	0
6,570	Ear Marked Res Highways	4,315
0	Ear Marked Res F & GP	0
24,967	Ear Marked Res Steyning Centre	0
270,184	Total Expenditure	292,780
	General Fund Analysis	
27,375	Opening Balance	31,096
256,318	Plus: Income for Year	316,887
283,693		347,982
270,184	Less: Expenditure for Year	292,780
13,509		55,202
-17,587	Transfers TO / FROM Reserves	19,185
31,096	Closing Balance	36,017

ASHURST PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Parish Council Meeting:

The next Parish Council meetings will be held on Thursday 7th July and 1st September. Meetings start at 8pm at the Village Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend all Parish Council meetings.

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on 7th April. The Chairman gave his report as follows:

At the last Annual Parish Meeting it was proposed that a spring clean be carried out on Sunday 10th April. We are pleased to inform that a small number of people turned up and 15 sacks of rubbish were removed. Another litter pick has been organised for Sunday 17th April and anyone who can help will be very welcome. The Ashurst Recreation Ground is owned by the Charity Commission and managed by the Parish Council as the sole trustee.

Quite a lot of work has been done on the recreation ground this year; Councillor Stevens has carried out a lot of repairs to the John Eaton Hut. Councillors Griffiths and Hedley have done work on many trees around the John Eaton Hut and the Cricket Pavilion. Howards Garden Care have been appointed the contractors for the grass cutting for a further 3 years.

New Agreements for the Ashurst Primary School and The Cricket Club for a further 3 years have been drawn up by Councillor Rucklidge. Jon Hutcheon has been dealing with the rabbits and moles again recently. Jon Hutcheon is unfortunately not going to be able to continue helping us with our influx of rabbits due to other work commitments, however he is going to put us in touch with a colleague of his who will hopefully be able to help us.

During the bad snow and ice of last winter West Sussex County Council delivered 2 bags of grit, one to the bottom of School Lane and one to the Village Hall car park, for use by residents. WSSCC are now asking for feedback on this service and if we would require the same amount of bags or if we would need more. They are also asking if there is anything else that we think would benefit Ashurst should the situation arise again.

The annual precept for 2011/12 has been set at £5,700.00. This includes £1,000.00 grant for the Village Hall Trust for the New Village Hall. This brings the total of funds being held by the Parish Council for the Village Hall to £2,330.00.

The other main costs to the Council are the recreation ground grant and the Council's administration. The Steyning Area Mini Bus Association was given a grant for £150.00, Steyning Parish Council were granted £20.00 towards the costs of the swimming pool at Steyning Leisure Centre. The total income for the year 10/11 was £5,734.43 and the expenditure was £4,854.04.

A summary of receipts and payments for the year ending 31st March 2011 can be viewed once the Internal Audit has been carried out in May.

Work has been ordered to restore the finger post on the School Lane/B2135 junction. The work will be carried out during the summer months.

Half the cost is being met by a grant from West Sussex County Council.

The Parish Council receives copies of all planning applications for Ashurst and are able to give their comments to Horsham District Council. However Horsham District Council does have the final decision. Residents are welcome to attend Parish Council meetings and have their say on any planning applications. It is now possible to view applications and also leave comments on line at www.horsham.gov.uk.

Horsham District Council is at present trying to reduce the amount of paper plans that they receive and in-turn send out to parishes. The talk of E Consultation has been going on all year by Horsham District Council and we appear to be no further forward with receiving plans via the internet.

The Chairman thanked George Cockman and Len Warner, our District Councillors, and Derek Deedman our County Councillor for their help and support in Ashurst issues over the year. They all manage to attend the Parish Council meetings to listen to our views and give their advice wherever possible.

The Parish Councillors were thanked for their work and support during the year. Thanks were given especially to Councillor Jim Rucklidge, who unfortunately is not re-standing for Parish Council, for all his hard work on the council for the last 20 years including 5 years as Chairman. Many thanks go to Hazel, the Clerk. Details of all Parish Councillors and the Clerk will be attached to the Chairman's report and are also permanently posted on the Parish Council Notice Board.

Parish Councillors:

Alan Griffiths (Chairman) 01403 711544

Jim Rucklidge 01903 815869

Nick Hedley (Vice- Chairman) 01403 711373

George Stevens 01403 710232

Chris Jesse 01903 815089

Linda Thornton 01403 713123

Roy Powel 01403 710419

Clerk Hazel Roxby (Office hours 01903 812042) other times

01903 814802

Email: hroxby@hotmail.com

BRAMBER PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Two long-serving Councillors decided not to stand for re-election at the recent elections and the Parish Clerk also decided to move on to pastures new. On behalf of the Council and the wider community I would like to express thanks to Betty Pierce and Ted Jones for the commitment and dedication shown during their years in office and for the support they have given to many worthy causes. I would also like to thank Anne Hyde for the tremendous support she has provided to the Council during her time as Clerk. She has been a very willing and efficient servant to the Council and community and we all wish her well in her future activities.

At the same time I would like to extend a warm welcome to Rachel Rainbow, Sandra Bignell and Matthew Bennough-Drake as new Councillors and hope they will enjoy their time on the Council. They all have different experience and backgrounds which I am sure will bring benefit to the community, and Rachel and Matthew were heavily involved in the production of the Bramber Plan.

Finally I welcome Paddy Robson who will be replacing Anne as Clerk to the Council. Paddy has lived in the area for 2 years and brings with her a wealth of relevant experience that I am sure we will all feel the benefit of in her new role. Paddy can be contacted on 01903 879140. Email paddyrobson@hotmail.com