



RIVENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF RIVENHALL AND RIVENHALL END IN
THE BRAINTREE DISTRICT IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX

ANNUAL REPORT

RIVENHALL PARISH COUNCIL - DETAILS

You are hereby invited to attend the ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

To be held on Tuesday 20th April 2010, in the Village Hall, Church Road, Rivenhall,
Commencing at 7.30 pm.

Representatives from local organisations will be present to give a brief presentation, prior to answering questions from the floor. Invitations to speak have been forwarded to District and County Councillors, Essex Police and Highways among others. Information regarding many other local organisations will also be available at this meeting.

The Parish Council hopes that you will make every effort to support this important annual village meeting, which has proved very successful in previous years.

Your Parish Council meets each month with Agendas advertised on the village notice boards.

Residents are welcome to attend the meetings and to question Councillors or comment upon local issues.

CHAIRMAN:

Mr. James Abbott: (01376) 584576

COUNCILLORS:

Mr. Dennis Clark (01376) 512418

Mr. Jack Prime (01376) 514255

Mr. Malcolm Salmon (01376) 514377

Mr. Bob Wright (01376) 503983

Mr. Howard Bills (01376) 521316

Mr. Stanley Brailey (01376) 512062

PARISH CLERK:

Mr. Keith P. Taylor

23 Mersey Road, Witham, CM8 1LL

Tel: (01376) 516975

Email: clerk@rivenhallparishcouncil.co.uk

Budget for 2010/2011

At the Precept Meeting, held in November, the Parish Council agreed the following budget for this financial year:

Parks & Open Spaces: £4850

(Incl. maintenance, grass cutting & litter picking, consumables bulbs and trees etc.)

Agency Arrangements: £250

(Street cleaning & grass cutting)

Administration: £7700

(Clerk, insurance, office consumables, Audit fees, subscriptions, Hall hire etc.)

Section 137: £100

(British Legion, CPRE etc)

Major Works: £12000

(Taken from balances)

TOTAL BUDGET £12900 giving a **PRECEPT** figure of £9309 - an 8.12% increase on the previous year's figure.

Parish Council Meeting Dates 2010:

4TH May (VH) 8TH June (HDH) 6TH July
(VH)

3RD August (VH) 31ST August (HDH) 5TH
Oct (VH)

2ND Nov (VH) 7TH Dec (HDH)

Chairman's Report 2009/2010.

It has been another busy year for Rivenhall Parish Council and there are lots of issues to be discussed at this year's Annual Parish Assembly on 20th April. Compared to other parishes, Rivenhall residents usually attend in good numbers – so we hope to see lots of residents at the Village Hall once again this year.

To briefly summarise the work of the Parish Council this year, the two main areas have been the ongoing major planning battles and the efforts to secure local improvements to our environment and facilities.

On the planning front, the application for the Rivenhall Airfield waste site, a series of major gravel quarry proposals and the suggested housing at Forest Road/Rectory Lane have dominated. There have also been many smaller but important planning applications that the Parish Council has commented upon and often these are acceptable.

On local improvements, we were very pleased when the County Council carried out the long requested works at the recycling area and to the nearby junction of Rickstones Road/Church Road/Oak Road. Braintree District Council (BDC) has recently installed new play equipment at the Albert Moss Playing Field, following the earlier consultation. The Parish Council welcomes this and has also secured the agreement of BDC that they will reinstate the basketball posts and nets soon.

Bulb and tree planting has continued. As ever, we are grateful to all those who help improve our local environment, including those working for the Parish Council, the BDC Clean Team and grounds maintenance staff, the Parish Ranger and the many residents who pick up litter – it all goes to make Rivenhall a good place to live.

James Abbott (Chairman)

RIVENHALL PARISH COUNCIL		
INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR 2009/10.		
<u>INCOME</u>		
<i>Precept from Braintree District Council</i>		<i>£8610</i>
<i>Parish Support Grant from Braintree District Council</i>		<i>£1737</i>
<i>Street Cleaning Grant from Braintree District Council</i>		<i>£1591</i>
<i>Other Grants</i>		<i>Nil</i>
<i>Vat Refund</i>		<i>£600</i>
<i>Bank Interest</i>		<i>£10</i>
<i>Donations</i>		<i>£Nil</i>
<i>Total</i>		<i>£12548</i>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
<i>Administration</i>	<i>2008/09</i>	<i>£6638</i>
<i>Major Works</i>	<i>[£7717]</i>	<i>£3995</i>
<i>Agency Arrangements re grass cutting</i>	<i>[Nil]</i>	<i>£416</i>
<i>Parks, Open Spaces & Maintenance</i>	<i>[200]</i>	<i>£3760</i>
<i>Local Govt. Act Section 137 (Special payments)</i>	<i>[4109]</i>	<i>£74</i>
<i>Local Govt. Act Section 137 (Special payments)</i>	<i>[78]</i>	<i>£74</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>[12104]</i>	<i>£14883</i>

PLANNING

In October, Rivenhall Parish Council joined forces with BDC and five other parishes in presenting a case to the Rivenhall Airfield Inquiry. A lot of preparatory work went into the Inquiry and we are grateful to all those who assisted. Unfortunately, permission was granted for the waste site as the Secretary of State upheld the Planning Inspector's report, which had recommended approval. However, this is subject to 63

binding conditions and a legal agreement. It is not a certainty that the plant will be built and the Parish Council will continue to closely monitor events.

During 2010 we face a series of consultations on proposals for huge gravel quarries in and near the Parish, as well as the 300 plus houses that could be built in the Parish on the land off Forest Road/Rectory Lane. The Parish Council is not opposed to all development - we support local affordable housing if a suitable site can be found within the village - and we proposed such a site to BDC several years ago but, unfortunately, BDC did not take this forward. The 300 plus housing proposal is a major challenge for Rivenhall and could double the population of the Parish. If built, it would eat into the Golf Course and would reduce the gap between Rivenhall and Witham by 45% and bring development much closer to village houses in Rectory Lane and Rickstones Road. Of major concern is the extra traffic that would inevitably come through the village. The Parish Council is working closely with Witham Town Council who share our opposition to the scheme and agree with us that much better sites are available - including land off Conrad Road which is nearer to important services such as schools. An Inquiry into the housing plans could take place in November of this year.

HIGHWAYS.

The Parish Council met with representatives of the Highways Agency last October to try and persuade them that the current HGV 7.5 tonne weight limit should be extended from the railway bridge to the A12 junction with Oak Road. Over the years residents have consistently raised their concerns about the ever-larger HGVs using Oak Road, causing vibration, mounting pavements and damaging street furniture. It is expected that within the next few years the A12 through Rivenhall End will have a major maintenance scheme. We are strongly requesting that as part of that work, Oak Road should have a weight restriction along its whole length, with re-routing of HGVs away from the village. We are also pressing for other safety improvements when the A12 work takes place, including a barrier along the whole length of the A12 from Witham to Kelvedon – and this does look likely to be installed according to the latest plans. Another proposal in the Highways Agency plans is to move the bus stops on both sides of the A12, and we are seeking clarification on locations and safety aspects of this.

The Police have been regular attenders at monthly Parish Council meetings and this has been welcomed as we then get regular updates on crime, which, thankfully, remains at a low level. It also gives residents and Councillors the opportunity to pass on to officers local traffic issues. Speeding is often a cause for concern and with the warmer weather we can expect the 'motorbike season' to restart. The reckless behaviour of some drivers and riders has resulted over recent years in many incidents of vehicles leaving the road at speed, often along the more rural roads through our Parish. Usually when this happens the vehicles end up in the fields or smashing through fences, which is bad enough, but it is only a matter of time before something much worse happens, unless they are persuaded to slow down. The Police and our local Community Speedwatch team have a key role in helping with this.

Anti Social Behaviour and Vandalism.

Rivenhall Parish Council has become increasingly concerned at the number of instances of anti social behaviour and vandalism that have occurred throughout the Parish over the past 18 months. Councillors are aware that the vast majority of people who live here want it to stop and they are now working closely with the Police and other authorities to put a stop to it once and for all.

The Parish Council need your help! If you see or hear anything taking place that causes you undue worry and concern then phone and report it either to PCSO William Gladwell on 07974 457258, or Witham Police on 0300 333 4444.

Anything you say will be treated in strictest confidence and the matter looked into without exception. Rivenhall Parish Council is committed to delivering the very best in services to everyone in the Parish but cannot do this without your help. **Don't just put up with, report it** and help keep this a lovely safe place in which to live and of which to be proud.

Should you have any non urgent worries or concerns and would like an informal chat with a Parish Councillor then you will find individual contact details within this Annual Report and on the Parish Council notice boards.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP WITHIN THE PARISH.

During the year, maintenance works have been undertaken by the Parish Council's contractor, members of the Parish Council and County Highways and these included the following:

Painting the posts around the Village Green together with their replacement where necessary; repairs to the Parish Council owned sheds including replacing the roof covering to one shed and taking preventative measures to reduce damage to the sheds by means of anti vandal paint; removal of redundant concrete fence posts adjacent to the Village Hall car park plus replacement of the boundary chain stolen from the Albert Moss Playing Field car park. The installation of the salt/gravel bin and contents adjacent to the steps in Church Road proved to be most fortuitous over the winter period. Grass cutting has continued throughout the year and approximately 600 daffodil bulbs have been planted at both Rivenhall and Rivenhall End. County Highways have been busy in the Parish this year with major work to realign the junction of Oak and Rickstones Roads, plus giving the recycling site a major facelift which included the consolidation and resurfacing of the area next to the recycling bins; this has encouraged car parking on a regular basis. The Parish Council, in collaboration with County Highways, agreed sites for additional dog waste bins within the Parish and these will be purchased and installed in the current financial year. Work is being undertaken by the Parish Council's contractor to tidy up the areas around the Rivenhall End Play Area; to maintain the steps and slopes from Henry Dixon Road up to the A12 on a regular basis and maintain the area of land in Oak Road just past the bungalows at the junction of Oak and Rickstones Roads (this land being in the ownership of Essex County Council).

The Parish Council extend their thanks to their contractor for all the effort put in by him during the year, without this, it would be very difficult to maintain the high standards of litter removal and general maintenance throughout the Parish.

HOW ABOUT A TEENAGER'S SHELTER?

How do Parishioners, especially teenagers, think of the idea of having a teenager's shelter in the village? These shelters are more meeting points than shelters, in the sense that they are not generally waterproof, simply frames with seating. There are such shelters in several villages in the area and are intended for use by teenagers specifically as places where they can meet with their friends, being sited to ensure minimum disturbance, particularly noise, for other residents. There is a lack of facilities other than football pitches for teenagers in Rivenhall, as the existing play equipment is meant for the under twelves.

Such shelters do cost several thousands so grants would need to be sought if a shelter, on a suitable site, was to be considered. So, how much support is there for a shelter? Please let the Parish Council know how you feel regarding this.

PARISH COUNCIL 'SURGERIES'

The Rivenhall Playing Field Association hold a Coffee Morning every Friday between 10am and noon (all are invited and made most welcome) and this is where you'll find at least one Parish Councillor in attendance.

If you have a worry or concern that you think the Parish Council could help you with, or should know about, why not pop in for a cuppa and have an informal chat? The Parish Council exists to serve this local community the best way it can so do please let us know what you think.

Community Speed Watch

If only people would adhere to the speed limits in our village. They are not such that your days driving is extended by an unnecessary time. Even driving at the upper end of the speed limits, the time from the railway bridge to the Oak is 52 seconds, the Church to the Oak is 41 seconds and the longest, Forest Road to the Oak, is 103 seconds. So, using the longest route, a driver can be in and out of our village in less than three minutes. With this in mind, why do people risk injuring our children en-route to school or our elderly folk walking to the shop or the Church by driving at speeds well in excess of the statutory speed limit?

From time to time, the police set up a radar speed check outside the village shop. They have the power to stop any offending motorists and take the necessary action against them, on the spot. Rivenhall has access to a radar gun and volunteers can log the speed of traffic through the village. They obviously don't have the power to take any action against offending motorists but they can note the registration number and type of car and the details are forwarded to the authorities. The authorities then issue a letter to the offender stating the fact that they were logged at a certain speed. A large number of letters will prompt the police to set up a speed trap at the same location at the same time of the day.

As well as having a speed gun, we also have warning notices that we are operating a speed check and all our volunteers are kitted out with a yellow high visibility jacket whilst carrying out their duties. We have the equipment but as with all voluntary organisations, we are short of operators. Can you help?? On each occasion we have three volunteers working together. One operates the gun, the other two note the type of vehicle and its colour. Each session is about an hour long but that is up to the group.

If you require further information, or would like to join us, please contact me.

Malcolm Salmon. 01376 514377.

***For further details of Parish Council activities, together with the published Minutes of all Parish Council meetings, please go to:
www.rivenhallparishcouncil.co.uk***

PERSONAL NOTES.