



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 12th May 2015, in the Village Hall, Church Road,
Rivenhall, Commencing at 7.00pm.

This Annual Meeting will precede the Annual Parish Council Meeting and will,
therefore, end just prior to 8.00pm thereby allowing time for the Parish
Council Meeting to commence at the usual time of 8.00pm.

*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, usually on the first Tuesday.

Agendas advertised on the Council notice boards and website.

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. Bob Wright (01376) 503983

Mr. Howard Bills 07749 251 838

Mr. Robert Turner (01376) 512908

PARISH CLERK:

Mr. Keith P. Taylor

23 Mersey Road, Witham, CM8 1LL

Tel: (01376) 516975

Email: parishclerk@rivenhallparishcouncil.net

Website: www.rivenhallparishcouncil.net

Budget for 2015/2016

At the Precept Meeting, held in December 2014, the Parish Council agreed the following budget for this financial year:

Parks & Open Spaces: £5,500

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

Administration: £8,537

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

Section 137: £106

(British Legion, CPRE Essex Air Ambulance)

Capital spending: £7,000

(Taken from balances)

TOTAL REVENUE BUDGET £21,143. This being reduced by a Grant from BDC and use of reserves, resulting in a **net Precept of £9,540.**

The Parish element of the Band D Tax Rate for 2014/15 is £36.28, an increase of £0.04 per week.

Parish Council Meeting Dates 2015/2016

12th May (VH) 2nd June (HDH) 7th July (VH)

4th August (VH) 1st September (HDH) 6th October (VH)

3rd November (VH) 1st December (HDH)

16th December (VH) Precept Meeting

5th January (VH) 3rd February (VH) 1st March (HDH)

5th April (VH)

VH = Rivenhall Village Hall

HDH = The Henry Dixon Hall, Rivenhall End

**RIVENHALL PARISH COUNCIL
INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR 2014/15.**

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>2014/15</u>
<i>Precept from Braintree District Council</i>	£8,780
<i>Parish Support Grant from Braintree District Council</i>	£2,559
<i>Street Cleaning Grant from Braintree District Council</i>	£1,753
<i>Vat Refund</i>	£122
<i>Bank Interest</i>	£13
Total	£13,227

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2013/14</u>	<u>2014/15</u>
<i>Administration</i>	[£7587]	£7589
<i>Major Works</i>	Nil	Nil
<i>Parks, Open Spaces & Maintenance</i>	[£4016]	£4336
<i>Local Govt. Act Section 137 (Special payments)</i>	[£99]	£106
Total	[£11702]	£12031

Chairman's Report 2014/2015.

As highlighted on the front page, the Annual Parish Assembly will be held on Tuesday 12 May 2015 at 7.00pm in the Rivenhall Village Hall and, as ever, residents are very welcome to attend and to raise any issues relevant to Rivenhall Parish.

It will be another busy year ahead with some major planning and highways issues to consider. Braintree District Council (BDC) has started to consult on its new Local Plan. A number of new sites have been submitted for development in our parish and there will be a series of consultations on these. Government has announced its intention to widen the A12 to 6 lanes, which would obviously have significant implications for Rivenhall End, though we don't know any details and were not consulted about that announcement.

On local highway issues, there is more certainty and some good progress, with a number of schemes now completed and others planned. These schemes will reduce flooding, improve safety and pedestrian access and provide some new areas of parking.

For several years the Parish Council has been able to hold down the Parish Precept. However the grant that the Parish Council receives from BDC is being reduced each year in line with the reduction in BDC's grant from Central Government. In order to maintain services, the Parish Council has resolved to increase the Precept by a modest amount for 2015/16.

Finally, thanks again to all those who work to maintain the appearance of the parish and who contribute to village life. For the 4th year in a row Rivenhall was placed in the Essex best Kept Village competition.

James Abbott, Chairman

Planning

Braintree District Council (BDC) has started its new Local Plan. BDC was close to completing its previous plan, the Local Development Framework (LDF), but due to changes in Government policy, had to abandon it and start the new plan, with a requirement for much higher housing development targets.

The first part of the process was a call for sites. Approximately 300 sites were submitted to the council across the District; 11 of these new sites are in Rivenhall Parish, and are additional to those already agreed.

BDC will assess all the sites and it is likely that many will fall away at an early stage due to being unsustainable. You can view the sites on BDC's website, on the Planning Policy page.

Rivenhall parish already has a site allocated off Forest Road/Rectory Lane for at least 300 houses, so there will be concerns about the identity of Rivenhall and Rivenhall End as villages if further large-scale development is allocated.

The Parish Council considers all planning applications in the parish, and some of the larger ones just outside, before submitting comments to BDC or Essex County Council. Residents are always welcome to raise matters about applications at the monthly council meetings. Two on-going large applications are the waste site at Rivenhall Airfield and the quarry at Colemans Farm.

Highways

Maintenance of local roads has improved compared to last year. New defects are reported regularly and these include potholes, damage to verges and footways, streetlights not working and damaged street furniture.

The Braintree Local Highways Panel projects for Rivenhall and Rivenhall End are now being delivered. This has unfortunately led to some inevitable disruption due to road closures. The Parish Council has been liaising widely to try to minimise disruption, particularly with local schools and the bus company.

The main schemes completed/going ahead are:

Rickstones Rd: To prevent further flooding and widen the road to allow buses to get around the bend without hitting the bank - completed.

Oak Rd: To introduce priority one-way working under the Railway Bridge (with priority from the A12) and widen the footway under the bridge.

To introduce a 7.5T weight restriction towards the A12.

To repair and improve the grass verge outside nos. 51-53.

Church Rd: To extend the 30mph speed limit northwards from the Church for approximately 100 metres. This is to slow down traffic as it enters and leaves the village near the School and Church.

To improve the layby at church.

To improve the highway signage for the low bridge and weight restrictions.

Additional railings outside the Primary School - completed.

A12: Survey the PRow truncated by the A12 and draw up a plan of action.

Recycling

Braintree District continues to be one of the best performing districts in Essex for recycling, with the 60% mark having been reached thanks to good support from residents. The development of a Transfer Station at Cressing and other changes means that the collection days for Rivenhall have been changed. There has been an unofficial rumour circulating that the E.C.C. recycling site in Perry Road, Witham is scheduled to close, this rumour must be discounted as the Parish Council has received no notice of this from Essex County Council.

The recycling banks at The Oak junction continue to be well used although there have been some instances of fly-tipping. All such incidents are investigated and if material is found that identifies those responsible, BDC will take formal action. Similarly any litter thrown from cars that can be traced back will be investigated. There has been a recent fine issued for littering from a car in the parish.

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE.

The Rivenhall Parish Council Website is regularly being updated with information relating to Parish Council business and activities.

On the site you will find meeting dates, agendas and minutes, the annual budget, information regarding local issues that are being dealt with by the Parish Council and the Parish Clerk's monthly reports upon action taken between meetings. Contact details are

also included for other local organisations such as Essex County Council and Braintree District Council; emergency contact details for Police, Gas, Electricity and Flood etc. Annual Reports and official documents such as Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and many others – all of which can be downloaded (in pdf format).

To contact the Parish Council you can email
parishclerk@rivenhallparishcouncil.net or
councillors@rivenhallparishcouncil.net

GENERAL MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP WITHIN THE PARISH.

During the year 2014, despite the wet/dry conditions the Parish Council's maintenance contractor has been busy keeping the parish neat and tidy.

Work has continued with such tasks as litter picking - a never ending task throughout the parish, particularly debris from Galleys Corner to the A12 bridge at Rivenhall End. Much of the debris being 'Take Away' food containers. Where possible a record of its original source is being recorded and the Parish Council is notifying Braintree District Council for possible further action.

During the year new oak posts were ordered and have been received to replace those posts on the Village Green, which have deteriorated. Work on their installation recommence in February 2015.

A number of young trees planted over the last few years are now well and truly established and work is ongoing to raise their crowns to give free access under the trees to enable ease of grass cutting. Approximately 30(plus) Hawthorn hedging plants were planted along Oak Road, Rivenhall End to establish a new hedge where a section of fencing had collapsed. A programme has been established for additional planting of a further 20(+) plants to take place during the 2015 planting season.

Bulb planting, now an annual event, has continued during 2014 and well over 500 daffodil bulbs were planted at various locations throughout the parish. The Parish Council welcomes any suggested locations for further bulb planting in the parish - please contact the Parish Clerk in the first instance.

Plant containers at both Rivenhall and Rivenhall End have been well planted and maintained by local residents and the maintenance contractor and they give a great deal of colour right through the spring and summer. With the dry periods during the summer keeping the plants well watered was a regular undertaking.

It should be noted that the Horse Chestnut trees along Henry Dixon Road, Rivenhall End, planted when the road was first opened, are suffering from leaf lichen infestation, which now occurs annually. This leaves the trees distressed as the summer progresses causing early leaf fall. There appears to be no easy solution to this particular problem. The Crack Willows also along Henry Dixon Road, planted at the same time as the Horse Chestnuts, will by their nature shed twigs and branches

on the footway and road after strong wind conditions. Braintree District Council and Essex County Council are both aware of this problem and, again, there appears no easy solution to this problem.

Once again thanks must go out to the Parish Council's maintenance contractor and to all those in the parish who give their time and effort in keeping the parish tidy and attractive, and it is hoped this will continue into the future also.

E.C.C. WINTER SALT BAG SCHEME

We were lucky in that the parish was relatively unaffected by snow and ice during the winter. We now have a goodly reserve of salt and grit in secure storage and we intend to remain part of this County scheme for the foreseeable future.

A big thank you must go to our 'salt volunteers'. They each had a supply of salt and grit and were on 'stand by' throughout the winter months to keep the slopes and walkways clear should the snow and ice descend.

We will publish contact details in the autumn for those of you who might feel that this is something you would like to become involved in. Helping the community help itself is a positive way forward that is open to us all.

Community Policing Team

The Parish Council and the local Policing Team have now firmly established clear and open lines of communication. We work closely together to ensure that Rivenhall Parish has its fair share of police time covering everything from Household security advice to traffic speed control. You can contact the local team directly as follows:

Non-emergency report number – 101

Neighbourhood police mobile – 07791 398 227

(If you have to leave a message, don't worry, an officer will return your call as soon as possible.)

In an emergency always dial 999

Community Agents Essex

We all need a little extra help and support as we get older. That's where your Community Agent (Lydia Howat) can offer you help and support with things such as:

Getting out and about

Problems in your home
Filling in various forms
Meeting people
Healthy living
Caring for someone

Community Agents offer a free visit for a confidential chat to discuss any of the above and more. To arrange a free visit call 08009 775858 or 07540 720 606.

For further information you can visit www.villageagentsessex.org.uk alternatively, you can email Lydia.howat@vaessex.org.uk

Whatever the problem, the Community Agent can help or if not, they know someone who can! Lydia will be at the Rivenhall Coffee Morning the last Friday of each month.

COFFEE MORNING 'SURGERIES' – RIVENHALL VILLAGE HALL.

The Committee who are responsible for running and maintaining the Village Hall hold a Coffee Morning that all are welcome to attend every Friday from 09.00 to noon. A member and/or the Clerk of Rivenhall Parish Council is often in attendance from 10.30 'til noon, should anyone from the parish have a concern or problem that they think the Parish Council may be able to assist them with.

Rather than make a formal appointment to speak to a Councillor or the Clerk, why not pop in for a chat over a cuppa if there's something that you think we may be able to help you with.

It's a nice, friendly coffee morning and everyone is welcome so do pop in and say hello.

Public Footpaths are inspected regularly, but should any parishioners encounter damaged or missing 'Way Signs' and/or 'Posts' and should any Public Footpath be impenetrable, please contact the Parish Clerk in the first instance.

A selection of Parish Footpath Walks is included on the Parish Council website (www.rivenhallparishcouncil.net)

