

## **FRINDSBURY EXTRA PARISH COUNCIL**

### **ANNUAL REPORT 2008/9**

It's time once more to review the Parish Council's activities over the last year. The main project continues to be the Lower Upnor Riverside Project. All partners apparently now agreed on the scheme, it was submitted as an outline planning application and the feedback sheets for the last public exhibition were included as part of the consultation. We then heard that the Environment Agency – who had already supplied us with a certificate that we could carry out environmental enhancement works within a certain distance of the riverbank – were going to object to the application and that this would cause refusal of planning consent. Rather than cause this to happen, the application was withdrawn and negotiations with the Environment Agency opened. A site meeting was arranged and after they had looked at the area (never having visited it before), they asked for a biodiversity plan. This was undertaken by the Director of Greening the Gateway, Kent & Medway and eventually the Environment Agency withdrew their objection. The application has now been re-submitted and we hope outline consent will be given. At present we are working on a landscape scheme for the green at Lower Upnor. If carried out following outline consent and if the details are accepted by the planners, this will commence the project. We will be applying for a community grant towards the cost of this.

Other on-going projects are a village sign for Wainscott, some sort of youth facility on the recreation ground and an extension for the hall. The sign has been designed by the same artist as the Upnor sign. We have identified a location on the grass between Frittenden and Wainscott Roads. This will of course be subject to consultation with the residents and planning consent. This will be funded out of Medway Council's rural liaison grant for parish councils. The youth facility is still under investigation, but again will be funded from the rural liaison grant. The hall extension is still in the early planning stage and will be funded largely from money provided by the developer of Liberty Park for community facilities. Medway Council has asked the Parish Council to co-ordinate this in conjunction with the Hall Management Committee.

A major controversy recently has been a proposed boot fair on the field adjacent to Anthony's Way and immediately in front of the Sans Pareil pub. The Frindsbury and Wainscott Community Association conducted a campaign to prevent this from taking place. The Parish Council received comments both against and in favour. The promoters attended a parish council meeting, which was also attended by our local police officers. The proposals were all within the law. The promoters answered all questions in an open manner and the police confirmed they were happy with the traffic management and parking issues.

Two future developments that will affect the parish is the restoration of the Tithe barn and surrounding buildings and the major development at Chattenden. An Upnor resident is leading a consortium to restore the barn and bring it back to use. He explained his initial ideas to the parish council and will be keeping us informed. Major developer Land Securities has been appointed to develop the former army land in Chattenden and they are now consulting widely in the area before drawing up plans, which will again be subject to consultation.

During the year the parish council considered about 45 planning applications. This is noticeably fewer than in some previous years.

Grants were made to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, St Dunstan's, Kent BCTV Tree warden scheme, Hilltop School patio project, Victim Support, Macmillan Cancer Care, "Medway Queen" Preservation Society and the Memorial Hall. As usual, a ceremony for laying of the poppy wreath was held in the hall foyer on Armistice Day.

We have had regular reports from our PCSO, Sean Brooks and beat officer, PC John Fallon. During the winter there was a problem with youths hanging round the hall and twice the police had to be called while parish council meetings were in progress. We were pleased that the police eventually resolved the problem, although fear the young people may just have moved on and are annoying another community. Cllr Miller has continued to attend the police liaison meetings, neighbourhood watch meetings and has reported back.

Cllr Moore is Chairman of the local area committee of the KALC and sits on the executive committee. Cllr Hicks with his Medway Councillor hat on is chairman of Medway's Rural Liaison Committee and Cllr Coomber is the parish representative and also the committee vice-chairman. The Parish Council's interests are well represented at both KALC and rural liaison meetings. In January the Parish Council hosted one of the rural liaison meetings and several members attended as observers. We would like to thank the Headteacher and Governors of Hilltop School for making us welcome in the school for this occasion.

Rochester Rangers continue to play football on the recreation ground and will be joined next year by Borstal 88. The playpark equipment was repainted which should help to prolong its life but the parish council has started a reserve fund towards the eventual replacement of much of the equipment. The spring animals were removed as they had become unsafe and were replaced by a see-saw.

We received constant complaints about parking in Lower Upnor. Galleon Way, Schooner Walk and Cutter Close are still in the ownership of the developer and have not yet been handed over to the local authority. As such they are private roads and, apart from complaining to the developer, nothing can be done. The police are no longer responsible for parking offences; this is now the remit of the local authority. We have asked that they make an attempt to enforce the single and double yellow lines, especially at weekends. Traffic wardens patrol Rochester on Saturdays, could they not extend this to Upnor too? The sight of a warden and the issuing of fines where necessary would please several residents. Elsewhere there are problems with parking in Wainscott Road and Hilltop Road, associated with school times and also recently it has been noticed that vehicles are parked on the pavements, causing an obstruction for pedestrians, especially for mothers with prams and push chairs.

It has been a busy past twelve months and the next twelve months look just as busy.

Roxana Brammer  
Parish Clerk