

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Again, the past year has been quieter than previously, although the Parish Council continues to work behind the scenes on behalf of the community it represents. I was honoured to have again been elected as Chairman and to have been involved with the work of the Council during this time.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my fellow Councillors, the Parish Clerk and our County and District Councillors for their continued support over the past year.

I hope you enjoy reading about some of the highlights of the year in the Parish Council's Annual Report.

## **THE PARISH COUNCIL**

Membership of the Parish Council has remained unchanged over the year; and Sue, our Clerk, is now in her 17<sup>th</sup> year with us.

District Councillor Paul Mackey resigned at the end of last year and following a by-election, we welcome District Councillor John Andrew, who lives in Loxwood, to represent us.

The Parish Council has continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis and this is working well. All meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees are open to the public and everyone is welcome to come along.

## **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

In 2008-2009 we set a precept of £27500 but due to the strength of our Reserves we budgeted for a deficit, as we anticipated expenditure to be £34,011. Our actual expenditure is anticipated to be just under £30,000.

The main reasons for the saving were that we spent 9% less on administration, our new office equipment was not as expensive as budgeted, we did not update the Parish Plan and there were not the requests for grants from the Community Reserve Fund that we anticipated.

During the year we completed the replacement of notice boards in the Parish. This project was not without its difficulties, as our original supplier went into administration.

We carried out various village maintenance works, including installing a soft surface under the roundabout in the play area at a cost of £1200 and contributed nearly £1000 to the cost of the footpath repair between The Drive in Ifold and Loxwood. This latter item had been outstanding for some time and was the responsibility of the County Council. They claimed, however, that they did not have the funds to meet the whole cost and the work would not have been completed without the Parish Council contribution.

Grants were given to Kelsey Hall of £1120 to assist with the cost of new curtains and internal redecoration; and £1500 to Winterton Hall to assist with the cost of new flooring.

Unlike some local authorities we had no money on deposit with Icelandic Banks. The less than anticipated expenditure meant that when setting the precept for 2009-2010 we were able to budget once again for a deficit.

### **PLANNING MATTERS**

The Parish Council this year, again considered some 90 planning applications, together with a number of other planning issues.

The three-weekly Planning Committee meetings held at Winterton Hall, Plaistow continue to be very successful, with both the Parish Council and local residents. Plans are available to view for 15 minutes before each meeting, which also gives residents an opportunity to engage with Councillors.

The Parish Council are keeping a watchful eye on events at Dunsfold Park, which is currently at the appeal stage.

### **TRANSPORT MATTERS**

Road Safety for both motorists and pedestrians using the Parish roads continues to be a major concern of the Parish Council and we continue to fight on .....

Parking at the School continues to be a major problem and the School are working with West Sussex County Council, as part of their School Travel Plan, to provide a solution. In the meantime, the Parish Council would most strongly urge those parents who drive their children to School to ask themselves whether that journey is absolutely necessary; and if it is, to park sensibly and with consideration for other road users.

The County Council's Highway Budget continues to shrink and yet again, the minor and unclassified rural roads bear the brunt of this. This winter is a case in point ....

That said, however, we understand that there is to be an extensive surface dressing programme for most of the roads in the Parish and those in the surrounding villages. There has also been some work at Costrongs to help alleviate future flooding problems there.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

The Parish Council again participated in the Annual Spring Clean Day, which is a District Council initiative. Working parties were also held for pond clearance work at Coxes Pond, which have been popular with local residents. That said, however, there is always room for another pair of willing hands ....

In the summer, after much pressure from the Parish Council, the National Trust stepped up to the table and assumed responsibility for Todhurst. This area, at one of the gateways to the village, has invariably been neglected. This became a public event with many residents helping to clear and tidy the area; and take advantage of free hay for their pets.

Incidents of minor vandalism and fly tipping, although less than in the previous year, continued to occur. Both are forms of anti-social behaviour and in a small rural community are particularly noticeable.

There was yet another major water leak, this time in Rickmans Lane, which was relatively swiftly dealt with by Southern Water.

Those residents who walk in Ifold cannot have failed to have noticed the deterioration of the footpath between Ifold and Loxwood. After much negotiation, the Parish Council made a contribution of £1825 towards the re-surfacing of the path, to be paid in two instalments over two years. West Sussex County Council paid the balance of £2500.

## **COMMUNICATING WITH RESIDENTS**

The Parish Council's Newsletter, Parish UpDate continues to be well received. The edition due for circulation in late January was, due to unforeseen circumstances, not produced. The next edition is to be circulated very shortly.

The Parish Council is extremely grateful to all those who deliver Parish UpDate to almost 95% of homes in the Parish. Once again, we would like to make special mention of Pat Smith who, with her band of willing helpers, covers the whole of Ifold. Thank you, Pat.

The Parish Community Directory, launched in March 2006 is currently in its second edition. Towards the end of 2009, the Directory will be re-printed.

New notice boards have very recently been installed at Winterton Hall and Oak Tree Stores. This now completes the refurbishment programme.

The Parish Web Site has undergone some changes and whilst there is still some 'tinkering' to be done, the new layout is even easier to navigate around than before.

### **PARISH ACTION PLAN**

The Parish Action Plan was launched in January 2006 and identified a number of actions to be addressed and undertaken. The primary action was the formulation and publication of a Village Design Statement. Following some extremely hard work by a number of people, the document was submitted to Chichester District Council, with the aim of the document being used by the Planning Authority as Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Parish. It was most disheartening when the Village Design Statement was rejected.

This rejection did not bode well for revisiting of the Parish Plan. Following a long period of inactivity in this area, the Parish Council will host a variety of meetings in the new Council year to work on this Project again.

### **SOCIAL ISSUES**

Despite the best efforts of the community and the Parish Council there was, sadly, a reduction in Post Office services in the village. The hours of opening of the Post Office have changed from those originally put in place and the plea is still the same – Use It Or Lose It .....

Last year's Plaistow PreSchool Maypole Fete was unfortunately not held in the village but in Kirdford. This was because of the dreadfully wet condition of The Green, which prevented use on the day. To avoid disappointment this year, to both the PreSchool and the Parish, meetings are taking place to keep the Fete in Plaistow.

The Parish Council has continued to support local groups and organisations by way of donations; and also by way of grants from the Council's Community Reserve Fund.

At this point, the Parish Council would like to make mention of Don Smith, who sadly passed away last year. Don was a leading light in Ifold Estates Ltd. and knew everything there was to know about Ifold. He was also a staunch supporter of the Parish Council and with Pat, his wife, he attended almost every Parish Council meeting. Don is missed by us all ....

## **PARISH COUNCILLORS**

John Kirby (Chairman) – 7, Oakfield, Plaistow (871310)

David Lugton (Vice Chairman) – Owlwood, The Close, Ifold (751712)

David Clement – Clements Cottage, Rickmans Lane, Plaistow (871246)

Stuart East – Foxdale, Plaistow Road, Ifold (753795)

Vivien Forwood – Tiplers Retreat, Newhouse Farm, Shillinglee (01428 707717)

Brian Gravestock – Jesmond Dene, The Ride, Ifold (752789)

Tom Laidlaw – Dunham Hogwood Road, Ifold (753640)

Ronnie Perrin – Berrylands, The Lane, Ifold (752591)

David Ribbens – Green Shadows, Durfold Wood (01483 200688)

Pauline Ruder – Old Red Hatch, Back Lane, Plaistow (871321)

Dean Wheeler – The Old Chapel, Rickmans Lane, Plaistow (871129)

## **HOW TO CONTACT US**

By contacting any Councillor directly

By contacting us through the web site –  
[www.plaistowandifold.net](http://www.plaistowandifold.net)

By writing to the Parish Clerk –  
Sue Kemp, 28, Cornwood, Kirdford, West Sussex, RH14 0NP  
Tel. 01403 820617

By e-mail – [plaistowclerk@aol.com](mailto:plaistowclerk@aol.com)

## **FEEDBACK**

The Parish Council would welcome any comments on the content of this Report and would be pleased to hear any questions you may have.

Please contact any of the Parish Councillors or the Parish Clerk