

# **Wakes Colne Parish Council**

**Clerk: Mrs V. Burrows**

**23 Crossways**

**Colne Engaine**

**Essex, CO6 2JA**

**Telephone: 01787 221922**

**Email: wakescolnepc@yahoo.co.uk**

## **Clerks Report September 2008**

### **Things Ongoing in September**

This month has been very busy with meetings. Wayne and I were out twice in the month with highways, once with Malcolm Dade and Alan Blyth and once with George Ward. Both these meetings are covered later in the report. I also attended the Clerks Forum in Colchester at the beginning of September and had a training session with Andrew Weavers at Rowan House at the end of September (again both these items are covered further down the report) One other meeting that Hilda and I are attending on the 1<sup>st</sup> October is with James Firth a Planning Policy Officer and this is for us to gain a greater understanding of what will be required from us as a Parish council in respect of Agenda item 08/96 -4 - the village envelopes.

So moving on and catching up with what I have been doing this month:

#### **Joint Parish Meeting & the Village Hall**

At the September meeting, the date of the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008 was discussed for a joint meeting. The Clerk had e-mailed Sue Chamley asking the question but had had no response before our last meeting. The date was agreed by Wakes Colne and most Cllrs advised they would be able to attend. Following the meeting I checked Chappel Parish Councils Agenda and a joint meeting did not feature. I attended the Clerks Forum the day before Chappel's meeting and asked their Clerk (Mr K Butchers) to check if they wanted a joint meeting. Following their meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> September it was decided that Chappel did not want a joint meeting. For the record I would like it minuted in the October minutes that it was Chappel who have yet again declined that opportunity for a joint meeting and that we have tried very hard to get both Councils together to discuss joint issues.

#### **Rural Speed Restriction & the "Welcome to Wakes Colne" Sign at the top of Station Road:**

Following September's meeting I rang George Ward to find out what we as a Parish Council could expect to gain out of the new Rural Speed Restriction that were being introduced. A meeting was scheduled for Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September and Wayne and I spent

a good hour on the road side in the rain with George Ward! The top and bottom of the meeting was, as long as the motorist is clear as to why he is being asked to comply with speed restrictions then generally roundels, signs and any other traffic measures can be moved or altered. Following our meeting George then went off on his own and made notes on the stretch of road in question and he said he will e-mail his findings. As yet I have not heard anything but he said it would probably be week beginning 29<sup>th</sup> September as he was away on holiday until then. During the meeting it was discussed that the top end of Station Road was quite dangerous and therefore, suggested that we put up signage to say that pedestrians are on the road, or no pavement signs so informing the traffic of the dangers, also it was suggested that we look at the bend due to it being dangerous. Once George comes back to me hopefully before Wednesday I will bring an update to the meeting.

### **Final Accounts for Lubbock Fine**

I have telephoned to speak to Duncan Bolton to chase up the legal letter I have been told that it is still being done. So unless I get anything in writing before Wednesday we will not be able to sign off this years accounts.

### **Proposed Footpath Resurfacing / Footbridge Improvements**

Following the meeting I e-mailed Andrew Titcombe with the question about the Steps and the ramp and Andrew has replied with the following e-mail:-

**Thank you for your email. After receipt of your email, of 22 September, I had been intending to get some more information on the progress of the Safer Journeys to School Scheme (e.g. has the gate to the rear of the school playing field been installed?) before responding, but as you have re-sent the email today I thought I better respond to the step/ramp queries today! I can confirm that the steps adjacent to the road are to be removed, and will be replaced by a shallow ramp, when footpath 32 is upgraded to asphalt surfacing; the existing concrete ramps to the footbridge are to be retained (please note there are no existing steps to the footbridge). I can also confirm that the alterations to the footbridge itself have recently been completed. The rails have been moved from the inside to the outside, to give more clear crossing width, and mesh has been fixed to the sides of the bridge to remove the hazard of pushchair wheels veering off the edge and to prevent small children climbing through the rails. The footpath works should be programmed for sometime in November. The Parish Council will be informed when we have more accurate dates as a 5 day closure of the public right of way will be officially required to allow construction of the works. If you need more information please email me again or give me a call on 01206 838660**

### **Affordable Housing**

Following Septembers meeting it was agreed that the Clerk was to give the Village Reporter a call and ask the question about distribution. Noel Graham agreed that it was no problem to distribute and asked if I could drop them over. For an update I e-mailed Anne Bishop to ask how many questionnaires had been received back and she has advised four to date.

### **BT's Review of Pay Phone Provision within in Wakes Colne**

Following the meeting I e-mailed my contact at CBC to find out about the box on the A1124 and John Davies replied with the following information:

**Thanks for your e-mail. I forwarded a response to BT earlier this month indicating objection to the removal of the payphone based on the Parish's comments. Apart from an acknowledgement of my response I have not had an indication from BT of whether the box is to be retained or not. I am hopeful however that our objection will mean**

it is retained at least until the next review.

### **Money paid to Colchester Borough Council in respect of Leisure Services**

I have written a letter on behalf of Chappel & Wakes Colne Cricket Club to Cllr Chillingworth requesting £6.500 for the drainage project. As yet I have not heard anything back, however the letter only went on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September. This in part was due to being out every week at meetings and also that I attended the Clerks Forum and one of the presentations was about the section 106 agreements.

### **Clerks Forum Meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> September**

At the meeting on Wednesday I will hand out a copy of the Section 106 Agreement presentation that we were able to bring away with us. This agenda item was very interesting as we are just in the process of applying via Cllr Chillingworth for funding in respect of the Section 106 Agreements for the Cricket Club. Within the presentation it gave a definition of what Section 106 Agreements are and who they are agreed with. Mr Geoff Kirby who presented to us, basically said that until a few years ago monies in respect of these agreements were not enforced, but since he came along he has change the system and now all money agreed is payable and chased by his office. On learning a little more about these agreements, I thought I would ask various questions on how the system works. The questions asked were as follows:

- 1) How do we as a Parish Council find out about money requested in respect of Section 106?
- 2) At present we are aware of one planning application that money is owing how can we find out when the money is paid?
- 3) How many section 106 Agreements have there been in Wakes Colne over the last 3 years?
- 4) When is the money supposed to be paid or is that determined on an individual basis as per each planning application?

Geoff Kirby answered with the following answers:

Thank you for your e-mail.

Please see the attached report; I do believe that your Parish is within the Great Tey Ward boundaries, the attached S106 reports shows the state of SPD S106 funds, and are sent out at the beginning of each month to all of the Ward Councillors.

Do you have contact with any Great Tey Councillors who could pass on this info?

To my Knowledge no monies are owed, they are all potential payments in that they are only payable if the application is built; when a payment is made it will appear on the attached monthly report, if you know of a site where you think S106 money is outstanding; then please provide me with the details and I will follow the matter up.

Unfortunately the S106 reporting system is based on Ward applications, however you can look up the Great Tey applications and work out which ones fall in your Parish, the report shows all of the Undertakings since the policy came into effect; July 2006.

On S106 Undertakings that provide 65% for Ward projects, these type of payments are always paid prior to commencement.

Items also covered in the meeting were the process of Licensing applications and the fact that most Parish Councils are not aware that any licences have been granted – we now receive a weekly e-mail with all Colchester Borough Council granted licences. During the month of November we should be receiving an updated version of a Clerks Guide to help us with the daily running of the Parish Council from a Clerks perspective. All in all a good meeting, although I was hoping the Police were also going to attend. We could have found out when the monthly reports were coming out and also when they

are proposing to attend our monthly meetings. Sadly it was not to be and the Police cancelled at the last minute due to nobody being available!!

### **Local Assessment of Complaints Training Session with Andrew Weavers**

I am sure most of you will remember back in January of this year, some of us attended a training session to update us on the Code of Conduct at the Town Hall with Andrew Weavers. At that training session it was mentioned that later in the year i.e. May 2008 the Standard Board of England (SBE) would no longer be responsible for processing complaints against Councillors but it was going to be handed down to a local level. Our training session last Tuesday at Rowan House was to update the Clerks as to how the system, that is now up and running, is doing from a local point of view. Andrew Weavers seemed very positive that the system was running smoothly, this was endorsed by one of the Clerks as she had been through the process due to a complaint being received against a Cllr in her Parish. I have put a copy of the presentation in the Correspondence File. Something else that was raised at the training meeting was that we should soon be receiving a consultation document to re-adopt a new code of conduct by May 2009. As yet I haven't received anything but watch this space!!

### **VAS Sign in Station Road**

During our meeting with George Ward, Wayne and I realised that the VAS Sign still seemed not to be working! Since reporting it again to Jennifer Gudka I have now been told that the radar has been adjusted and it is working correctly – if anybody would like to try it out I would be grateful to hear your thoughts!!

### **Highways Meeting with Malcolm Dade and Alan Blyth**

This meeting was scheduled again with Wayne and myself for Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September. Wayne and I spent about 2 hours on the local roads with Malcolm trying to identify any improvements that can / will be made by our local rangers. Once the meeting was over I e-mailed all the issues over to Malcolm and hopefully in the next couple of weeks we will see the improvements being done. Along side this meeting Alan Blyth attended so we could get some more information about the ditches and what our responsibilities are as far as a Parish Council is concerned. Alan agreed that being proactive about getting the ditches cleared before the winter sets in is a fantastic idea. He suggested that we identify all the current land owners and write in the first instance from the Parish Council requesting that all ditches are cleared out as a matter of course. If this is not done and problems occur then Alan Blyth was quite happy to get involved and take it further. Once I get extra copies of our local map (I should be able to get a couple more from CBC on Wednesday) and with everybody's help we can try and identify all our landowners and then write them a letter in the next month or so.

### **Community Speed Watch:**

Following last months meeting I have managed to get another person who will be interested in helping out on the community speed watch programme. I now have his number (Stella's next door neighbour) and intend to call him but unfortunately due to a very heavy work load this month I have been unable to sort this out. I am hoping

before the meeting, I will have compiled a rota and be able to distribute it for next month and everybody will be aware of what is happening.