

REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL TO THE VILLAGE CONFERENCE
TO BE HELD AT THE BELL CENTRE, GREAT BADDOW ON
THURSDAY 23RD APRIL 2009

This Council is pleased to make an Annual Report for the year 2008/2009. This is the 115th Anniversary of the formation of the Council.

GREAT BADDOW PARISH COUNCIL

Elections were held in May 2007 and the present Council is constituted as follows:

Baddow Road Ward

Sidney Bass
Angela Martin
Veronica Sadowsky

Village Ward

Chris Shaw
Diana Ronaldson
Andrew Sosin
Steve Martin
Keith Ronaldson

Rothmans Ward

Jannetta Sosin
Maureen Miller
Trevor Miller
Stephen Russell
Will Richardson

MEETINGS – Full Council Meetings are held on the second Monday evening in the month (except August when it is the first Monday) at 7.30 pm in Committee Room 1 of the Parish Hall, Maldon Road, Great Baddow. Other Committee meetings also take place normally on Mondays. Any parishioner may attend Council and Committee meetings. Agendas for all meetings are posted on the notice boards in the parish on the Wednesday before the meeting and a list of dates can be found in the Great Baddow Times, on the website and on the noticeboards.

The Parish Council has always encouraged parishioners present to address the meetings and there is a time allocated to enable parishioners to address councillors and ask questions or make statements. Further details can be obtained from the Clerk of the Council or can be found on the website at **www.greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk**

CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL – Councillor Mrs. C. Shaw

VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL – Councillor A. Sosin

COMMITTEES

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

Councillor Mrs. C. Shaw – Chairman

HIGHWAYS AND AMENITIES

Councillor A. Sosin – Chairman

ORGANISATION, METHODS AND PERSONNEL

Councillor Mrs. C. Shaw – Chairman

GROUNDS AND ALLOTMENTS

Councillor S. Martin – Chairman

PLANNING

Councillor S Bass - Chairman

PARISH HALL AND BELL CENTRE

Councillor Mrs. D. Ronaldson – Chairman

The Parish Council is also represented on The Great Baddow Parochial Charities.

ADMINISTRATION

The office is open from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm from Monday to Friday and on one Saturday morning a month, immediately prior to the monthly Council meeting day. The Clerk will be pleased to talk to parishioners about parish matters during these times or at a time outside these hours, by appointment.

The office telephone number is 01245 472937 and the e.mail address for general enquiries is **info@greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk**.

Miss Ann Wood, the Clerk, Mrs Elaine Bryan, the Assistant Clerk and Mrs Cheryl Cook, the Administrative Assistant currently staff the office.

Questions about the hire of the Parish Hall and Bell Centre and enquiries about the Lawn Cemetery and Old Burial Ground should be directed to Mrs Bryan on **bookings@greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk**

Questions and enquiries about Allotments and Planning should be directed to Mrs Cook on **planning@greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk**.

In December 2008, following the introduction of new criteria, Great Baddow Parish Council was re-accredited with Quality Council status. This status was originally awarded to the Parish Council in September 2003 and at that time, the Council was the 4th in England to receive the status. There are still only 668 Quality Councils in the country, out of a potential 8500, so Great Baddow Parish Council is part of a still select group of councils.

The Council has had a website for over 9 years and it is hoped that this is up to date and accessible. All minutes of meetings can now be found there and also dates of forthcoming meetings. Details of all the Council's services can be found on the website at **www.greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk**

As part of its commitment to local partnership working, the Council has again provided meeting space for partnership groups during the year.

Members of the Council have been very closely involved with the police in the local Neighbourhood Action Panel and they attend regular meetings.

Following its general policy of caring for the environment and trying to reduce its carbon footprint, the Council has continued to recycle paper and cardboard from the office, has installed low energy light bubs where appropriate and has undertaken energy audits of its premises. A new boiler was installed in August 2008 and plans are underway to replace some of the windows in certain areas of the hall with double-glazing and security doors are to be installed.

RECREATION GROUND

The Recreation Ground staff are Peter Jeffrey, the Grounds Manager, Kevin Gentry, the Deputy Grounds Manager and Groundsmen Nigel Smith, Alan Coleman and John Scott. The Recreation Ground Staff work to maintain the sports facilities in the Recreation Ground, Noakes Place, the Lawn Cemetery, the Old Burial Ground, Vicarage Lane Allotment site, Towerfield Allotments site, Meadgate Play area, the Centenary Roundabout and numerous bus shelters and other street furniture.

The Grounds Staff undertake many tasks around the village, from clearing troublesome weeds on footpaths to minor maintenance jobs on Council property. They can be contacted direct on 01245 473538. Any sports booking enquiries should also be directed to this number.

NOAKES PLACE

Since taking over the management of Noakes Place from Chelmsford Borough Council in June 2000, the Council has worked on many projects, including the upgrading of access facilities and footways, the installation of lighting, the installation of the kicking wall, the resurfacing of the car park at the Buckleys entrance, the construction of a disabled access ramp at Foxholes Road and the establishment of a sensory garden. During the year, the tarmac area at the Kicking Wall was extended and the car park at the Millennium Centre was white-lined.

The Council also granted a licence for the first time to a children's fun fair that was held in August and this proved to be extremely popular with residents.

Thanks are given to the Horticultural Society who helped by preparing a planting scheme for the sensory garden and to Essex County Council Community Initiative Fund for a grant towards the construction. Cllr. John Jowers of Essex County Council formally opened the Sensory Garden in October 2007.

The ponds were successfully cleared of weed again. This is an annual summer problem that the Council has to deal with.

CHILDREN'S AND TODDLERS PLAY EQUIPMENT

Children's Play Areas are situated in the Recreation Ground, one area for older children and one area for toddlers. Unfortunately, in the previous year the equipment for the older children had to be removed, as it had become dangerous. The Council had obtained monies as the result of a S106 agreement and had also precepted monies towards the cost of replacement equipment. Two smaller grants came from Essex County Council's Community Initiatives Fund and Fowler Smith and Jones Charitable Trusts. The Council's thanks go to these two organisations.

The Council undertook extensive consultation during the year about the installation of the new play equipment. A questionnaire was sent to the local schools and distributed to children's groups. Exhibitions were held on three days and councillors spoke with young people in the Recreation Ground on two occasions. This resulted in the Council choosing a manufacturer that was providing the type of equipment that was wanted and it is due to be installed very shortly after the start of the new financial year.

In 1997, a new play area was installed in grounds within Meadgate School, which was open to the public every day and had proved very popular. Unfortunately, due to the vandalism of all the pieces of equipment, the Council was forced to take steps to close the area to the public at the end of last year. Negotiations are taking place with the owners of the land about extending our lease and this will hopefully mean that some replacement equipment can be installed.

This Council pursues a policy of ensuring a high standard of safety. All items of equipment are covered by special insurance and a qualified engineer, appointed by our insurance company, makes an annual check on all our equipment. All items are the subject of daily inspection by the Grounds Staff and if any problems are found, the item is taken out of use until it can be repaired or if necessary replaced.

ALL WEATHER SPORTS COURTS

The Parish Council has four All Weather Sports Courts, including two built in 2000 with the help of Sports Lottery funding. All four courts are currently in use and teams and clubs can either block book them in advance or use them on an ad hoc basis, when payment is made at the time of hire. During the year, the Council agreed to give the Great Baddow Cricket Club a ten year tenure on one of the courts for them to establish high quality practice facilities to attract young players.

The courts are manned by a Games Attendant, Mr. Melvyn Malins. Special thanks go to Harold King who retired during the year after a total of 43 years service with the Parish Council, first as the Head Groundsman and then as a Games Attendant.

FOOTBALL

The football pitches are in demand and are used by a number of local teams.

The Council has also had success in the last year by lobbying Chelmsford Borough Council about the naming of the Bringey Playing Field and also the installation of goalposts on this area.

CRICKET CLUB

The Great Baddow Cricket Club lease the wicket from the Council and games are played on Saturday and Sunday. Arrangements can be made with the Cricket Club for young people to have coaching lessons at the practice nets.

BOWLING GREEN

The Great Baddow Bowling Club leases five rinks of our Bowling Green and one is kept for use by the general public. Arrangements to use this one can be made with the Grounds Staff for a small charge.

TENNIS

All courts, hard and grass were very well used last summer. The Great Baddow Recreation Ground Tennis Club hires courts on a regular basis throughout the year and welcomes new members.

SUMMER PLAYSCHMES

A Playscheme will be running as usual from 3rd to 7th August 2009, headed by Marianne Hamilton. This has always proved popular and parents can be reassured that their children are being taken care of by qualified personnel. There is no charge for the children to attend as the whole scheme is subsidised by the Council.

In addition, and in conjunction with Chelmsford Borough Council, the Parish Council arranges Sports Days and Play Days. Dates for the Whitsun Half Term are Thursday 28th May 2009 from 9.30am to 12 noon and Friday 29th May 2009 from 1.00pm to 3.30pm. The dates for the summer are not yet known and people should contact the office for details or look on the website at www.greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk. The Sports days and Play Days are sponsored by the Parish Council and are free of charge to all children.

LAWN CEMETERY

The cemetery has been maintained to its usual high standards during the year. The Council staff has carried out a continuing review of the cemetery and further recommendations have been implemented to ensure the continued high standards.

During the year, 1800 hedging whips were planted in the cemetery, near the fence adjacent to the Bridleway and at the front and side of the new extension. The whips were free of charge, courtesy of Essex County Council, as part of a scheme administered by the Rural Community Council of Essex. The Council's staff planted the trees during November 2008.

Work continued on the new extension, which was first used in January 2007. Memorial trees, rose bushes and plaques can be purchased through the office.

OLD BURIAL GROUND

The Parish Council also maintains part of the burial ground behind St. Mary's Church and this has been maintained to the usual high standards.

ALLOTMENT SITES

The Council administers two allotment sites known as "Vicarage Lane" and "Towerfield". Representatives are appointed and they are Anthea Reeve for Vicarage Lane and Terry Hull for Towerfield.

There is a great deal of interest and demand for this leisure facility. Tenants are highly motivated and help each other with advice. The Best Cultivated Allotments competition was held again in 2008 and the judges were Eddie Cole and David Saddington. Trophies and prizes were won by the following:

Towerfield

1 st	Mr. T. Hull
2 nd	Mr. O. Buchholz
3 rd	Mr. D. Middleton

Vicarage Lane

1 st	Mr. Haldane
2 nd	Mrs. Julian
3 rd	Mr. Haldane

Cllr Mrs Chris Shaw presented the trophies to the winners at the December 2008 meeting of the Horticultural Society. This social evening is sponsored by the Council, to recognise the achievements of the winners.

GREAT BADDOW MILLENNIUM COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Centre continues to go from strength to strength under the stewardship of the Great Baddow Community Association. It provides numerous facilities and activities for members, and rooms are also available for hire.

PARISH HALL AND COMMITTEE ROOMS

The hiring and use of this complex remains high. Groups such as Keep-Fit Classes, Flower Arranging Classes, Theatre at Baddow, two WI Groups, Tai Chi Classes, a stage school and a dancing school regularly use the Parish Hall. It is also booked for weddings and private parties. There are some vacancies for daytime hires and this can be arranged by contacting the office. The bar is well run by the manager, Mr. Ian Kerr and the Designated Premises Supervisor is Miss Ann C. Wood.

Committee Rooms 1 and 2 continue to be very well used for meetings of all descriptions, both educational and social.

The Hall and associated rooms are maintained to a high standard and a lot of work has been carried out during the last year. The electric cooker and the work surfaces in the kitchen were replaced, extra fire detectors were installed and one of the boilers was replaced. A broadband Internet connection is now available, at no extra cost, to hirers in the hall and committee rooms.

The Council undertook two productions of "Essex On Tour" this year and was well rewarded with successful performances of "Old Mac and the Three Pigs" in November 2008 and "Conjuring Up Comedy" in February 2009. It is hoped to arrange more "Essex On Tour" performances during the next season.

The Council has also worked in partnership with Essex County Council for the first time on the Essex Book Festival and the poet and author Sophie Hannah spoke to an audience of over 50 people. It is hoped that this will become a regular event.

During the year under report, 810 bookings have been taken for the Parish Hall. Thanks go to the caretaker, Lynn Alderson, cleaner, Helen Bonner and handyman Mick Pratt, who also provides cover for both the caretaker and cleaner, for their fine work.

BELL CENTRE

The Bell Centre has two main rooms for hire, the Zoete Room and the Shaw Room. Present regular bookings include Art Classes, Guides, Adult Education and Coffee Pot. The Bell Centre is once again home to a Youth Café, which was restarted in Autumn

2005. It is staffed by the YMCA on behalf of a joint working group, which includes the Parish Council. The Council continues to make no charge for the hire of the premises for the Youth Café. In addition, this is a popular venue for children's parties.

During the year under report, 436 bookings have been taken for the Bell Centre. Thanks to caretaker/cleaner Lynn Alderson for her work.

YOUTH FACILITY

The Parish Council has been a partner since 2002, with many other agencies, in a project designed to establish a dedicated youth facility in the village. Although finding a dedicated place has been difficult, work with the other partners continued throughout the year and came to fruition in March 2009. The Youth Facility Partnership invited the Mayor of Chelmsford, Cllr Tom Willis to open the Youth Drop-In centre at The Vineyards Centre on 14th March 2009. The Parish Council is part funding the staffing here and at the Youth Café at the Bell Centre.

READING ROOM

In 2002, the Parish Council was asked if it would be willing to nominate two people to be appointed as Trustees of the Reading Room. Councillor Chris Shaw and Jim Hurrell represent the Council.

HIGHWAYS AND AMENITIES

The Highways and Amenities Committee considered proposals from Central Government, the Essex County Council and Chelmsford Borough Council and made comments, proposals and representations as appropriate. Extra litterbins have been installed at various locations.

The Council obtained a grant from Essex County Council to replace the bus shelter near The Beehive PH and it was installed on 24th March 2009. Unfortunately, a vehicle again (for the third time) demolished the bus shelter near Chelmerton Avenue and although an insurance claim was made, it is taking some time to agree a design. The Council is determined to make the shelter as long lasting as possible and as all bus shelters have to be built individually, the approval of the design has slightly delayed the installation.

CENTENARY AWARD

The Council's fourteenth Centenary Award was presented to Pat Vickers by the Mayor of Chelmsford, Cllr Tom Willis at the Community Celebration in January 2009. This was in recognition of her voluntary contribution to the community, particularly her work with the Farleigh Hospice, Community Care Group and Tuesday Luncheon Club.

HONORARY BURGESS

The Parish Council established this award to recognise contributions by parishioners to the world at large. The current recipients are Joan Beard, Eric Withams, David Watson and Eileen Hance MBE, who received the award this year for her work with Farleigh Hospice. There is a board recording the names of the Honorary Burgesses, which is displayed in the Parish Hall.

LITTER

The Council employs two Litter Collectors to clear up areas of the parish on a rota basis. Thanks to Don Hood and Mike Passfield for their work.

GRANTS

The following grants were made by the Council under The Local Government Act 1972, section 137 for the year 2008/2009, in response to applications submitted by parish organisations.

Baddow Hall WI	£200
Farleigh Hospice	£1000
Great Baddow District Guides	£180
1 st Great Baddow Guides	£290
Great Baddow Community Care	£250
Great Baddow Flower Club	£380
(For provision of flowers in the Parish Hall Foyer)	
Great Baddow Flower Club	£100
Great Baddow WI	£200
Hargrave House	£200
1 st Great Baddow Rainbows	£100
Great Baddow Community Care Luncheon Club	£400
Meadgate Church Youth Group	£1500
Essex Police	£200
(For Great Baddow Youth Project)	
Total	£5000

PLANNING

The Planning Committee sits fortnightly throughout the year to examine and discuss all applications for this area. If parishioners wish to offer comments to the Committee, they are welcome to attend and make their views known. The Planning Committee aims to ensure that the character of the Great Baddow village is preserved and if possible, enhanced. The impact of any planning application on the people who live in Great Baddow must be fully considered. The Planning Committee is determined that this will be the case. Written observations and recommendations are made for each application and whilst these do not carry the power of final decisions, Chelmsford Borough Council as the Planning Authority accord them due consideration.

The Planning Committee has considered 124 applications this year. The Council has worked hard to keep residents informed of any developments and represent their concerns to Chelmsford Borough Council.

The Council is supporting a project to produce a Village Design Statement and is represented on the Steering Group. It is hoped that parishioners will become involved in various parts of the process. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact the Chairman Brian Roscoe on 01245 353083 or the Secretary Keith Ronaldson on 01245 471568.

TREE WARDENS

After a number of years of searching for people to take on the role, three residents of Great Baddow came forward to volunteer to act as Tree Wardens for the parish. Unfortunately, two of them had to give up but we still have Chris Kavanagh. He is writing a series of articles for the Great Baddow Times and the first two of these are available on the website at www.greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk. A dedicated e.mail address is available for residents to contact the Tree Warden about issues concerning trees.

The e.mail address is treewardens@greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk

LUXFIELD

The Parish Council created Bylaws to regulate the use of this field. The Bylaw prohibits motor vehicles from using this land, following complaints from parishioners regarding motorbikes.

The Council has been drawing up plans to take on more management of this area and has been searching for grant funding to help towards the cost.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Mr Dan Glading is the Village Co-ordinator for this busy organisation.

VILLAGE MAGAZINE

The Great Baddow Times was launched in 1996 and continues to be very popular. During the year our 50th issue was published. Over 7000 copies are published and distributed to houses in the parish, four times a year.

The Council does its best to make sure the magazine reaches every household but recommend that you do not throw the advertising materials that accompanies the Weekly News into the recycling sack without first checking to see if the magazine is inside it. You should only need to do this in March, June, September and December. If all else fails, you can view the magazine on the website at **www.greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk**. Spare copies are available in the library and at the Parish Council office.

Contributions and advertisements are always welcome. John Emery is the Editor and the Council thanks him for his hard work on this publication.

April 2009