

REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL TO THE VILLAGE CONFERENCE
TO BE HELD AT THE BELL CENTRE, GREAT BADDOW ON
THURSDAY 14th APRIL 2016

This Council is pleased to make an Annual Report for the year 2015/2016. This is the 122nd Anniversary of the formation of the Council.

GREAT BADDOW PARISH COUNCIL

The last elections were held in May 2015 and the next elections will be in 2019. The present Council is constituted as follows:

Baddow Road Ward

Veronica Sadowsky
Jonathan Fuller
Val Chiswell

Village Ward

Chris Shaw
Diana Ronaldson
Andrew Sosin
Keith Ronaldson
Keith Liley

Rothmans Ward

Jannetta Sosin
Maureen Miller
Trevor Miller
Sue Young
Gordon Jarvis

Despite another year of restricted budgets and falling income, the Parish Council has worked extremely hard to maintain its high standards across all its services.

MEETINGS – Full Council Meetings are held on the second Monday evening in the month (except August when it is the first Monday) at 7.30pm in Committee Room 1 of the Parish Hall, Maldon Road, Great Baddow. Other Committee meetings also take place normally on Mondays at 7.30pm or 8.00pm. Any member of the public 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 members of the public to attend the meetings and there is a time allocated to enable members of the public 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 J Sosin

VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL – Councillor Mrs C Shaw

COMMITTEES

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

Councillor Mrs C Shaw – Chairman

HIGHWAYS AND AMENITIES

Councillor K Liley – Chairman

ORGANISATION, METHODS AND PERSONNEL

Councillor Mrs S Young – Chairman

GROUNDS AND ALLOTMENTS

Councillor Mrs S Young – Chairman

PLANNING

Councillor A Sosin - Chairman

PARISH HALL AND BELL CENTRE

Councillor Mrs V Sadowsky – 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 members of the public about parish matters during these times or at any 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 Deputy Clerk and Mrs Michele Dixon, 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 Dixon on **planning@greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk**.

The Council has had a website for over 15 years and following its recent review, it contains even more information than before. It is hoped that it is also easier to negotiate. The Council would appreciate any feedback from parishioners. All agendas and minutes of meetings and also dates of forthcoming meetings will be posted there. Details of all the Council's services can be found on the website at **www.greatbaddowparishcouncil.co.uk**

Members of the Council are still very closely involved with the local Neighbourhood Action Panel and they attend regular meetings.

In September 2015, for the eighth year, the Council held a coffee morning at the Parish Hall for the Macmillan Cancer Charity. Thanks to residents' generosity, the total raised was £228.12.

The Council is holding its annual Community Celebration on Saturday 23rd April 2016. This celebration is to say thank you to all the members of the local community who give their time on a voluntary basis to provide individual help and to run groups and services for the people of Great Baddow. This year the format will be a traditional afternoon tea.

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 and LED lights where appropriate and has undertaken energy audits of its premises.

Clear recycling sacks and dog waste bags are available to residents free of charge from the Parish Council office. The Council is a member of the household battery recycling scheme and there is a recycling box in the foyer at the Parish Hall.

GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Peter Jeffrey, the Council's Grounds Manager for nearly 22 years, very suddenly and unexpectedly died in March 2016. He will be sorely missed by the Council and his colleagues and our thoughts are with Peter's family at this very sad time.

Kevin Gentry, the Deputy Grounds Manager left the Council's employment on ill health grounds in January 2016. He had served the Council for 21 years and he will be missed by the Council and his colleagues.

Groundsmen Nigel Smith, Alan Coleman and John Scott are working 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, the Centenary Roundabout and numerous bus shelters and other street furniture.

The Parish Council has continued its policy of maintaining and replacing equipment and the Grounds Staff have the use of up to date machinery. One new mower was bought during the year, as well as many smaller items, such as hand tools.

The Grounds Staff undertake many tasks around the village and undertake minor maintenance jobs on Council property. All sports booking enquiries should be made direct to 01245 473538.

RECREATION GROUND

The new play equipment for older children installed in 2010 has continued to be extremely popular. The outdoor gym equipment that was installed in May 2011 and was partly funded by a grant from the Big Lottery Awards for All and partly from S106 monies, also continues to be popular and very well used.

The play bark around the old swings was renewed during the year and the Council is investigating the cost of replacing the bark with a different kind of surface.

NOAKES PLACE

During the term of the management agreement for Noakes Place from Chelmsford City Council, between June 2000 and April 2010, the Council 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.

The agreement came to an end in April 2010 and negotiations are still continuing with Chelmsford City Council to re-negotiate the agreement. This is still taking some time, even though the necessary major works have been completed by Chelmsford City Council. In the meantime the Parish Council is continuing with day-to-day maintenance, such as grass cutting and litter picking.

Work took place on the dredging and repair of the ponds in March/April 2015. The cost was met by Chelmsford City Council with a contribution of some S106 monies from the Parish Council.

CHILDREN'S AND TODDLERS PLAY EQUIPMENT

This Council pursues a policy of ensuring a high standard of safety. All items of equipment are covered by insurance and a qualified engineer makes an annual check on all our equipment. All items are the subject of a visual 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.

The new equipment installed in December 2014 in the Toddler's Play Area continues to be extremely well used.

ALL WEATHER SPORTS COURTS

The Parish Council has four All Weather Sports Courts, including two built with the help of Sports Lottery funding. Three of the 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.

Negotiations were completed during the year 2012/2013 with the Great Baddow Cricket Club and a licence between the Council and the Club was signed. The fourth court now houses the high quality cricket practice facility that was built in July 2013 and was opened by the Mayor of Chelmsford Cllr Trevor Miller, accompanied by the Mayoress Mrs Maureen Miller in September 2013. This community facility is used by the Cricket Club and it is hoped that it will help to attract new young players to the club.

An application was made in January 2016 to the Inspired Facilities fund for a grant to convert one of the courts to a 3G surface. News of the success (or otherwise) of the application is awaited.

The courts are manned by the Games Attendant, Melvin Malins.

FOOTBALL

The football pitches are used by a number of local teams. The pitches have been maintained in a good condition over the year.

CRICKET CLUB

The Great Baddow Cricket Club leases the wicket from the Council and games are played on Saturday and Sunday. The Colts also use the pitch for games and practice. 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 the 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. The Council has been negotiating with the Great Baddow Bowling Club to renew the lease on the land on which the clubhouse stands. The lease expired in September 2015 but due to the staffing difficulties during the year, this has not been progressed as quickly as either party had hoped. The lease negotiations should be completed in the coming year.

TENNIS

All courts, hard and grass were available last summer and usage was higher than in the previous year. Unfortunately, the Great Baddow Recreation Ground Tennis Club, which hired courts on a regular basis, closed due to falling membership.

During the year, the Council continued to promote the Tennis for Free scheme for children under 16 on weekdays during the school holidays. Despite the general fall in usage of the courts over the last ten years, this scheme continues to be popular and will be running again in 2016. The Council has been contacted by the Lawn Tennis Association to work in partnership to improve the facilities and further negotiations will be taking place in the coming months.

SUMMER PLAYSCHEMES

The Parish Council's Playscheme ran in August 2015 and was very well attended with over 100 children attending. It will be running again from 1st to 5th August 2016, headed by Tracey Peters. The Playscheme has always proved popular and parents can be reassured that their children are being taken care of by qualified personnel, who have all been DBS checked. It should be noted that due to a lack of accommodation, parents cannot stay with their children during the sessions. There is no charge for the children to attend as the whole scheme is subsidised by the Parish Council.

In addition, and in conjunction with Chelmsford City Council, the Parish Council arranges Play in the Park sessions. This year the scheme provides Play in the Park for ages 6–11 and takes place in the Recreation Ground. Each session offers two hour multi activity sessions of sports, games, art and crafts and free play during the Easter and summer school holidays. There was one date during the Easter holiday but this has already taken place.

The dates for the summer holiday are:

Tuesday 9th August 2016 - 13.30 - 15.30
Thursday 11th August 2016 - 10 - 12 noon
Monday 15th August 2016 - 13.30 - 15.30
Friday 19th August 2016 - 10 - 12 noon
Thursday 25th August 2016 - 13.30 - 15.30
Friday 26th August 2016 – 13.30 – 15.30

Because these sessions are sponsored by the Parish Council, they are completely free of charge to all children. There is no need to pre-book – just register on the day.

LAWN CEMETERY

The cemetery has been maintained to its usual high standards during the year. There is a continuing review of the cemetery to ensure that these high standards are maintained at all times.

Memorial trees and rose bushes and plaques can be purchased through the office.

OLD BURIAL GROUND

The Parish Council also maintains 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. Terry Hull represents the tenants at the Towerfield site and Mike Harris represents the tenants at the Vicarage Lane site. Both are thanked for their input into the management of the sites.

There is still a great deal of interest for this facility but there is currently no waiting list. Tenants on the sites are highly motivated and help each other with advice. Any resident interested in applying for an allotment should contact the office for further information.

An updated version of the allotment regulations was re-issued in 2014 and it was reviewed in August 2015.

The Best Cultivated Allotments competition was held again in 2015 and the judges were Eddie Cole and Ted Dyer, accompanied by Cllr Trevor Miller and Cllr Andrew Sosin. Trophies and prizes were won by the following:

Towerfield

1 st	Mr T Hull
2 nd	Mr A Hills
3 rd	Mr R Kilvington

Vicarage Lane

1 st	Mr E King
2 nd	Mr R Robb
3 rd	Mr L Haldane

Half Plot at Vicarage Lane

Mr Rayner

Cllr Mrs Sue Young presented the trophies to the winners at the December 2015 meeting of the Horticultural Society. This social evening is sponsored by the Council, to recognise the achievements of the winners.

CENTENARY ROUNDABOUT

The roundabout has been maintained to its usual standard and the new planting has now become established.

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 has fallen in recent months but groups such as Keep-Fit Classes, Pilates Classes, the Great Baddow Flower Club, the Great Baddow Horticultural Society, Theatre at Baddow, a Theatre and Dance Group and a dancing school still regularly use the Parish Hall. It is also booked for weddings, private parties and charity events. There are some vacancies for daytime hires and for function hires and these can be arranged by contacting the office. The bar is well run by the manager, Gavin Edwards 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. The handyman has continued to carry out minor repairs over the year.

The outside of the hall was painted at the beginning of the year and has freshened up the look. New flooring was also laid in the foyer, corridor and office, which has done away with the patchwork effect that had developed over the years due to repairs.

A broadband internet connection is available, at no extra cost, to hirers in the hall and committee rooms.

The Council did contact the organisers of the Essex Book Festival about hosting future events but no reply has been received.

During the year under report, 612 bookings have been taken for the Parish Hall. Thanks go to the caretaker, Lynn Alderson, and to the Parish Hall cleaner, Nicola Whipp. We would also like to thank our handyman, Michael Fisk, for his work on the premises and his role in providing cover for both the caretaker and cleaner.

BELL CENTRE

The Bell Centre has two main rooms for hire, the Zoete Room and the Shaw Room. Currently, there are very few regular hirers but the Bell Centre is home to the Youth Café and the Drop-In, which are both staffed by the YMCA, with the Parish Council providing the accommodation. The Youth Café is held on Tuesday evenings and the Drop-In on Wednesday evenings. In addition, the venue is available for children's parties.

During the year under report, 216 bookings have been taken for the Bell Centre. Thanks to caretaker/cleaner Lynn Alderson for her work. The Council is still in negotiation with Essex County Council concerning the lease of these premises, which expired in 2007 but progress is now being made. During the year, the Parish Council commissioned a feasibility study and had meetings with the planning authority as part of a possible re-building/refurbishment project for the centre. It has been decided not to go forward with the original plan and other options are being investigated.

YOUTH FACILITY

The Parish Council has been a partner since 2002 in a project designed to establish a dedicated youth facility in the village. The Council works in partnership with the YMCA and is supported by the local police. The Youth Drop-In Centre, previously at The Vineyards Centre, was opened in 2009 and continues to be very popular with the young people. The Parish Council continues to part fund the staffing for the Drop-In and fully fund the Youth Café at the Bell Centre.

In December 2015, the YMCA was given notice to vacate the premises in Marrable House and now the Drop-In meets on Wednesdays in 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 Essex County Council and Chelmsford City Council and made comments, proposals and representations as appropriate.

A new bus shelter was installed in Galleywood Road, near Bells Chase by the Parish Council and the bus shelter in Tabors Hill was replaced by Essex County Council.

CENTENARY AWARD

The 2015 Centenary Award was awarded to David Saddington and he will be presented with this at the Community Celebration in April 2016.

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, Eileen Hance MBE, Sidney Bass and Robert Hendrie. There is a board recording the names of the Honorary Burgesses, which is displayed in the Parish Hall.

It was with great regret that the Parish Council learnt of the death in December 2012, of the first recipient Joan Beard and in May 2013 of David Watson.

In January 2016 a new Honorary Burgess was appointed. He is Howard Parris and he was chosen for his voluntary work in collecting foreign coins for Farleigh Hospice, which raised over £100,000.00.

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.

The Council would also like to express its good wishes to Don Hood, who has decided to retire from the post and to wish him a well-earned rest.

GRANTS

The following grants and payments were made by the Council under The Local Government Act 1972, section 137 for the year 2015/2016, in response to applications submitted by parish organisations.

1 st Great Baddow Guides	500.00
Great Baddow Flower Club	390.00
Meadgate Church Youth	545.22
Great Baddow Community Care	250.00
CGC Christian Growth International	135.00
Great Baddow WI	100.00
TOTAL	1920.22

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 City Council as the Planning Authority accord them due consideration.

The Planning Committee has considered 131 applications this year. The Council has worked hard to keep residents informed of any developments and represent their concerns to Chelmsford City Council.

The Council supported a project to produce a Village Design Statement and was represented on the Steering Group. The Village Design Statement was adopted by Chelmsford City Council as a Supplementary Planning Document in March 2011 and the published document is available on the City Council and Parish Council websites.

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 worked with the Environmental Group to draw up a management plan, which was agreed in 2014. Working groups have been undertaken by the Environmental Group to prevent the paths from becoming overgrown, although due to the recent staffing difficulties, the winter work by the Council's Grounds Staff could not be undertaken.

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. It celebrates its 20th Birthday this year. Over 7000 copies are published and distributed to houses in the parish. The Council cut the publication and delivery from four times a year to three and it is now distributed in March, July and November.

The Council changed its distributor during the year, to try and make certain that the magazine reaches every household. At the same time, councillors and volunteers deliver to those roads where the distribution network does not reach. Even with this system, there appear to be continuing difficulties in some roads and the Council is constantly in touch with the distributors to try and resolve these issues.

If for any reason you do not receive a copy of the magazine you should report the matter to the Parish Council office and you can also 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 2016