



WINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2012 - MARCH 2013**

Foreword by the Chairman

I have in the past few years tried to highlight changes and what they will mean to this village, and to highlight the way our community needs to change in order to deal with these changes. I hope, and we are beginning to see, that my words have not gone unheeded. Central government have cut government spending and as a result, whether it is County, Unitary or District councils, their money has not just been cut, it has been torn apart. They can no longer fund or supply the services we have been accustomed to since the end of the second world war. Authorities are going to stop or wind down services that are not statutory for them to do. If we want these services, then we are going to have to take them on, and as a result work in partnership much more.

Members of the Council

At the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2012 Cllr Curtis was re-elected as Chairman and Cllr Goaten was re-elected as Vice-Chair. Cllrs Catt, Jolly, Marsh and Pethick were elected as members of the Planning Committee. There remained a vacancy on the Council in April 2012 following the resignation of Cllr Cook in December 2011 and this was filled by Cllr E Brice who returned to the Parish Council in May 2012. In December 2012, Cllr Goaten tendered her resignation having represented the Council as Vice-Chairman and on the Village Hall Management Committee for many years. Notice of Casual Vacancy was given and as ten electors did not request an election in the given time period, the vacancy was filled by co-option in February by Cllr Hudson. Cllr Marsh was elected as the Vice-Chairman.

In addition to his Chairmanship of the Parish Council, Cllr Curtis was also the parish representative on the Dover Local Development Framework Committee. Throughout the year members of the Council were able to further the interests of the Wingham community at meetings of the Dover District Towns and Parishes, the Kent Association of Local Parish Councils, and the A257 group. Conferences and training were also attended by Councillors and the Clerk in order to keep abreast of changing legislation. Cllr Jolly made regular inspections to ensure the safety of the equipment in the children's play area at the Recreation Ground and chaired our Planning Committee. Cllr Pethick sat on the planning committee and made representations on the council's behalf regarding the Aylesham Development. Cllr M Brice led the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) Community Group to take forward this project. Cllr Baker chaired the Jubilee Committee for the successful Queen's Diamond Jubilee Fun Day Celebrations in June 2012 and represented the council on the Recreation Ground committee. Cllr Marsh represented the Council on the Dover area Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) committee and carried out audit checks in her role as Internal Financial Control Officer. Cllr E Brice also represented the council on the Dover area KALC committee and on the Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr Catt sat on the planning committee and organised the village Christmas tree.

Meetings

Parish Council meetings were held every month, with the exception of August. A public session was held prior to each meeting to enable questions from members of the public. In addition this year, an extraordinary meeting was held on 25 June to approve the new Kent model Code of Conduct and a public budget meeting was held on 3 December.

The Annual Parish Assembly was held on 23 April 2012. Following the Annual Report given by the Chairman of the Council, and questions from the audience regarding displayed reports, Cllr Curtis introduced the topics for discussion in groups:- Play Area Improvements and MUGA; Youth activities and Activities for older residents. Feedback was received from both groups and it was agreed that the MUGA should be completed before improvements to the Play Area but both were supported. Set up of a voluntary community group was proposed and suggestions made on security. An open discussion followed on a Wingham in Bloom village competition and general questions taken.

Achievements

The A257 traffic group continued to meet regularly and is proof of successful working in partnership. Though most of the A257 is now 50mph, there is still work to be done. The village was awarded a prize tree of our choice in the 2012 Kent Men of the Trees village competition plus an English Oak tree to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee. Following a social media meeting in December, the Parish Council set up a twitter account in February 2013 - see: <http://twitter.com/winghampc>.

Land and Property

In addition to the Recreation Ground and Elgars Field, both of which are owned by the Parish Council, the Council continued to arrange for the grass to be cut at Wingham Green and in the Garden of Remembrance in the High Street.

Following the Annual Safety inspection and Risk Assessment of the equipment in the play area in March 2013, all was found to be in order with minor works suggested for the swing seats and some surface patching under the See-Saw.

During the summer property maintenance was carried out on all parish council street furniture including notice boards, seats and benches, and the picnic table at Elgar's Field. Minor works were carried out to the allotment fence and tap, plus damaged bollards reinstated, and some added, to protect the High Street grass verges.

A wooden commemorative planter was purchased, thanks to a grant from Cllr Riding's KCC members' fund, as a permanent commemoration to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and two salt-grit bins were added in St Mary's Meadow to ensure the salt is kept dry for use with our grit spreader.

Community Activities

The Diamond Jubilee Fun Day celebrations on 4 June 2012 went well, despite the weather, and positive feedback received. Members of the Parish Council took part in the Remembrance Day Parade and Service in November. During the service the Chairman of the Council, on behalf of the village, laid a wreath at the war memorial. Unfortunately the Community Carols in the High Street were cancelled this year due to the weather.

Finance

The Precept for 2012/13 showed an increase of £2444 compared to the previous year.

The expenditure for 2012/13 was within the amount budgeted for the year. The budget for the year also included money for earmarked funds for future projects: the Youth Development Fund for the provision of a MUGA at the Recreation Ground; the Play Area Fund for future maintenance and new equipment; the Election Fund to cover future election costs, IT fund for a projector and IT improvements, and to the pension fund.

During the year financial support towards running costs was given to the Recreation Ground, the Village Hall, the Community News and to Dover District Council for the Public Conveniences in St Mary's Meadow. A grant was given to St Mary's Church for the upkeep of the burial ground and small capital grants were given to the Wingham Scout Group and See-Saw Pre-School.

All Members of the Council declined to take the Councillors' Basic Allowance. Travel expenses for Councillors attending meetings on behalf of the Council were reimbursed. The Chairman's Allowance to defray the expenses of office was used to purchase a wreath for Remembrance Day.

The Internal Auditor of Accounts report stated, "There is a robust framework of controls and appropriate actions are taken to manage risks within all areas reviewed. Controls are applied consistently and I found no significant risks to the achievement of parish council objectives."

SUMMARY OF PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2012/2013

RECEIPTS	£
Balance in hand at 1 April 2012 <i>including earmarked funds at 31.3.12</i>	63161
Precept	39150
Interest on savings account	352
VAT Refund 2011-12	1142
Allotment Rents	213
Recreation Ground Rent	1
KCC Member Grant	500
Donations for Jubilee Fund	549
TOTAL	105067

Administration (detail)	£
Clerk's salary & expenses	6710
Annual subscriptions	625
Insurance	1260
Audit	285
Office supplies	269
Post and telephone	212
Hire of Village Hall	186
Water allotments	47
Tax Payments (Gratuity)	1479
Jubilee celebration costs	179
TOTAL	11252

EXPENDITURE	£
Administration	11252
Grants to village organisations	6334
Land maintenance	2069
Property maintenance	11954
Councillor's allowances	24
Chairman's allowance	40
Training and conferences	523
Commemorative Planter + costs	526
Committee Name Badges	10
Hi Viz jacket	3
Salt-grit bins + costs	345
Tree Planting + plaque	121
Miscellaneous inc Jubilee costs, gratuity payment, plaque	4484
VAT (refundable)	1253
TOTAL	38938

Earmarked Funds at 31.3.13	£
Reserve for contingencies	10583
Pension Fund	612
Partnership Funding	13103
Youth Development	30818
Village Organisations	190
Election Fund	1772
Play Area	6276
Jubilee Fund	<i>closed</i>
IT Fund	1263
TOTAL	64617

END OF YEAR BALANCE	£	66129
(total receipts minus total expenditure)		