



ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2013 - MARCH 2014

FOREWORD BY THE CHAIRMAN

Over the past four years I have tried to highlight the changes in local government and local services and this was highlighted in the main presentations from our emergency services at our recent Annual Parish Assembly (April 2014). In a year's time, we shall be going back to the polls to elect our District, Town and Parish Councillors for another four years and it would be nice to have some more residents come forward and contribute to the village by standing as Parish Councillors.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL At the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2013 Cllr Curtis was re-elected as Chairman and Cllr Pethick was elected as Vice-Chair. Cllrs Baker, M Brice, Catt and Jolly were elected as members of the Planning Committee. Following the resignation of Cllr Marsh in April 2013, the vacancy was filled by the co-option of Kevin Abbott at the Annual meeting in May 2013. Following the death of Cllr Jolly in September, Cllr Baker was elected as chairman of the Planning Committee and Cllr Abbott joined the Planning Committee. The council vacancy was filled by co-option of Peter Prebble at the February 2014 meeting.

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 Councils, and the A257 group. Conferences and training were also attended by Councillors and the Clerk in order to keep abreast of changing legislation. Until his death in September, 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 made representations on the council's behalf regarding the Aylesham Development and the Richborough Connection Project by National Grid. Cllr M Brice led the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) Committee and oversaw the installation of the new projector. Cllr Baker chaired the Planning Committee from October 2013 and represented the council on the Recreation Ground committee. Cllr E Brice represented the council on the Dover area KALC committee and on the Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr Catt also represented the council on the Dover Area KALC Committee, sat on the planning committee and organised the village Christmas tree. Cllr Hudson carried out audit checks in his role of Internal Financial Control Officer and made investigations on the council's behalf into the WC Maintenance contracts. Cllr Abbott carried out regular inspections of the play area from October 2013 and sat on the planning committee.

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, a public budget meeting was held on 2 December.

The Annual Parish Assembly was held on 22 April 2013. Following the Annual Report given by the Chairman of the Council, and questions from the audience regarding displayed reports, Cllr Curtis introduced the topic for discussion, Parish Council Tax Increase Explained. Cllr M Brice first gave an update on the MUGA and Play Area projects and this was followed by a PowerPoint presentation by Cllr Pethick, summarising the statistics and figures for the current precept, the opportunities for resident input, and the reasons for the increase to the precept. District and County Councillors also explained the changes for local councils and savings required by both Councils.

ACHIEVEMENTS The KALC Community Award Scheme was adopted in April 2013 and the first award presented to a very worthy recipient at our Annual Parish Assembly in April 2014. Working with the Primary School, our first 'Welcome to Wingham' poster competition was held for years 5 & 6 in the New Year, and the successful entry has been printed and displayed on the commemorative wooden planter in the High Street. The A257 traffic group continued to meet regularly and is proof of successful working in partnership.

In collaboration with our local association, the council is leading on a proposal to Government under the Sustainable Communities Act that town and parish councils should be made statutory consultees in the application process for Vehicle Operator Licence Applications and Renewals.

LAND AND PROPERTY In addition to Elgar's Field and the Recreation Ground, 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 2014, all was found to be in order with non-urgent works suggested.

During the year, the youth shelter and glass bus shelter were cleaned, the roof of the Canterbury Road bus shelter replaced, and guttering added to the brick High Street bus shelter. The two benches in The Paddock were re-stained and lettering added to the Recreation Ground sign.

Our new digital projector was purchased and the council, jointly with our County member, paid for the B2046 zebra crossing to be improved with the installation of lit columns. New noticeboards were also purchased for the 'Welcome to Wingham' poster, and to replace the damaged board at Staple Road. A new twinning sign was paid for, due to be erected in the 2014/15 financial year. The grass verge outside central stores was re-turfed and rose shrubs planted.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES 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. The Community Carols in the High Street were supported by members of The Salvation Army band and was a well attended and successful occasion.

FINANCE The Precept for 2013/14 showed an increase of £30726 compared to the previous year.

The expenditure for 2013/14 was within the amount budgeted for the year. The budget for the year 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; IT fund for IT improvements; the Pension fund; and to Reserves.

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 for tents and to St Mary's Church for a laptop.

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 and public event refreshments.

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."

The public budget meeting held on 2 December 2013 was reasonably well attended and residents were asked for their ideas for future village projects and given the opportunity to comment on the council's budget plans.

SUMMARY OF PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2013/2014

RECEIPTS	£
Balance in hand at 1 April 2012 <i>including earmarked funds at 31.3.13</i>	66130
Precept	69876
Interest on savings account	663
VAT Refund 2012-13	1253
Allotment Rents	306
Recreation Ground Rent	1
Donation to MUGA project	2336
TOTAL	140565

Administration (detail)	£
Clerk's salary & expenses	7385
Annual subscriptions	738
Insurance	1183
Audit	240
Office supplies	348
Post and telephone	289
Hire of Village Hall	184
Water allotments	89
Tax Payments	0
Reference books	144
TOTAL	10600

EXPENDITURE	£
Administration (as detailed above)	10600
Grants to village organisations	6630
Land maintenance	3153
Property maintenance (inc. shelter cleaning, bus shelter roof, WC maintenance, benches, signwriting, play area maintenance)	11451
Councillor's allowances	63
Chairman's allowance	56
Training and conferences	432
Trees and verges	1033
Capital expenditure (inc. projector, zebra crossing lighting, noticeboards, signage)	7307
Contingencies & Section 137	182
Miscellaneous	8
<i>NB. These totals include £1992 VAT - to be reclaimed</i>	
TOTAL	40915

Earmarked Funds at 31.3.14	£
Reserve for contingencies	20583
Pension Fund	3275
Partnership Funding	9663
Youth Development	43159
Village Organisations	190
Election Fund	1772
Play Area	15669
IT Fund	3850
TOTAL	98161

END OF YEAR BALANCE	£	99650
<i>(total receipts minus total expenditure)</i>		

NB. This total includes the earmarked funds noted above