

Foreword by the Chairman

Each year the Parish Council faces new challenges and 2010/2011 was no exception. The year saw the introduction of the concept of the Big Society and also of the Localism Bill which was introduced to Parliament on the 13 December 2010. The Localism Bill will bring changes, not only for the Parish Council but also for the Community of Wingham. Indications are that more powers will be given to parish councils and that communities will be able to have a greater influence on issues that affect their daily life.

Members of the Council

At the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2010 Cllr Curtis was re-elected as Chairman and Cllr Audrey Goaten was re-elected as Vice-Chair. Cllrs Goaten, Pethick, Catt and Jolly were elected as members of the Planning Committee.

In December 2010, Cllr Sheila Woolliscroft tendered her resignation due to ill health. As elections for the Parish Council were to be held the following May, it was decided not to co-opt a councillor for the intervening period. Cllr Woolliscroft joined the Council in February 2006 and represented the Council on the St John Management Committee and the Friends of St Mary's Committee. Cllr McGorin decided not to stand for re-election in May 2011. Cllr McGorin represented the Council on the Recreation Ground Committee and played a major role in projects for the refurbishment of the club house and the improvement of the facilities available at the club.

In addition to his Chairmanship of the Parish Council, Cllr Curtis was also the parish representative on the Dover Local Development Framework Committee and on the Dover District Standards Committee. Throughout the year other 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 Parish Councils and Kent County Council Forums. Cllr Jolly made regular inspections to ensure the safety of the equipment in the children's play area at the Recreation Ground and Cllr Brice has continued to work on plans for the provision of facilities for youth in the village. Councillors also attended training sessions on Finance, Play Area Management, Chairmanship and Planning.

Meetings

Parish Council meetings were held every month, with the exception of August. A public session was held prior to each meeting to enable members of the public to express their opinion and/or ask questions.

The Annual Parish Assembly was held on the 26th April 2010 and was well attended by members of the public. Mr Nadeem Aziz, Chief Executive of Dover District Council gave a talk on changes in local government and the possible affect of these changes on local communities. This was followed by reports by the Chairman of the Parish Council, the County Councillor, the District Councillors and the Community Police Officer. The Assembly was then given an update on the Parish Plan. Members of the Recreation Ground, the Environmental Group, the Traffic Action Group and the Neighbourhood Watch reported on the actions which had been taken by their group to address various issues which had been raised in the Plan.

Achievements

In November, the Parish Council, together with members of neighbouring parish councils, formed a consortium to try and find a solution to the traffic problems on the A257. Also present at the meetings were the County Councillor, District Councillors, the MP Laura Sandys and representatives of the Kent Highways Department. The County Council was to investigate the introduction of 50mph speed limits from the Casino Garage to Canterbury. Lorry routes and route indications on SAT Navs were also to be investigated and signs at Sandwich were to be reviewed with the aim of diverting heavy vehicle traffic away from the A257. The meetings have already resulted in the installation of interactive speed signs at Bramling and Shatterling.

Unfortunately the joint project with Ash and Preston to provide a youth club for each of the parishes had to be abandoned due to a lack of funding. It is now the intention of the Parish Council to provide more facilities for youth at the Recreation Ground.

An application has been made to have the Recreation Ground designated as a Queen Elizabeth II Field to mark the Diamond Jubilee. In addition to providing a focal point for the celebrations in 2012, the designation will ensure that the Recreation Ground will always be an area for outdoor recreational activities.

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.

In partnership with Kent Highways, bollards have been installed at Wingham Green to prevent the erosion of the grass by vehicles parking on the Green. Also in partnership with Kent Highways, the pathway which runs from the High Street to North Court is to be renewed.

A new pedestrian gate to the children's play area at the Recreation Ground was installed in July and the service gates to the area were replaced in October. Following the Annual Health and Safety inspection of the equipment in the play area in January, repairs were made to the horse mobile and the fire engine mobile and the decks on the multi-play unit were replaced.

Community Activities

Members of the Parish Council took part in the Remembrance Day Parade and Service in November. During the service at St Mary's Church the Chairman of the Council, on behalf of the village community, laid a wreath at the war memorial. In December the Parish Council and St Mary's Church again hosted the Community Carols in the High Street.

Finance

The Precept for 2010/11 showed an increase of £3,435 over that of the previous year. This was due mainly to the increase in the cost of the maintenance of the public conveniences.

The expenditure for 2010/11 was within the amount budgeted for the year. The budget for the year also included money to be added to funds earmarked for future projects: the Youth Development Fund for the provision of facilities at the Recreation Ground for young people; the Partnership Fund for large projects to be done in partnership with other authorities; the Play Area Fund for future resurfacing and new equipment.

During the year financial support towards running costs was given to the Recreation Ground, the Village Hall and the Community News. Grants was given to St Mary's Church for the upkeep of the burial ground and to the Wingham Scout Group for a new tent. A small grant to purchase helmets was also given to the Nonington Colts Cricket Club, the members of which include young people from Wingham.

Once again 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 to provide refreshments for the Community Carols.

SUMMARY OF PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2010/2011

<u>Receipts</u>	£	<u>Administration (detail)</u>	£
Balance in hand 1.04.10	46,472	Clerk's salary & expenses	5,050
Precept	40,057	Annual subscriptions	578
Interest on accounts	133	Insurance	1,258
VAT refund 09-10	2,019	Audit	285
Allotment Rents	150	Office supplies	271
Rent Recreation Ground	1	Post and telephone	237
Welcome to Wingham	11	Hire of Village Hall	194
Grass cutting refund	70	Water allotments	90
	88,913		7,963

<u>Expenditure</u>	£	<u>Earmarked Funds (detail)</u>	£
Administration	7,963	Reserve for contingencies	10,583
Grants to village orgs.	6,631	Gratuity Fund	4,063
Land maintenance	1,944	Partnership Funding	12,900
Property maintenance	12,255	Youth Development	18,807
Councillors' allowances	53	Village Organisations	1,240
Chairman's Allowance	67	Election Fund	1,460
Training and conferences	190	Play Area	3,000
Purchase of Salt Spreader	1,011	Parish Plan	863
3 Bollards Wingham Green	662		
VAT Refundable	1,393		
	32,169		52,916

End of Year Balance

Including earmarked funds £56,744