

# Annual Report



**May 2016**  
Version 1

This report has been compiled by Abbots Bromley Parish Council using input from a number of different sources. Any views expressed are those of the original authors and do not necessarily coincide with those of the Parish Council.

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## Introduction

### ***The annual report***

The purpose of this annual report is to make freely available information about the work of the parish council and other community organisations. The council hopes that you will find the information useful and understandable.

This report aims to bring together in one place key details about the activities of the parish council.

### ***Summary to all homes***

A summary of this annual report from the parish council is to be included in the June 2016 ***Bromley Bulletin*** distributed to all households in the parish.

### ***Also available on-line***

An electronic copy of this report is available on the village website where you can view it or print your own copy – [www.abbotsbromley.com](http://www.abbotsbromley.com).

## Council Members and Officer – 2015/16

### ***Council Members***

- Caroline Ashton 841903
- Philip Charles 840251
- Paul Greenwood 841740
- Roger Jarman 840678 - CHAIRMAN
- Michelle Moore 840280 - VICE CHAIRMAN
- Rosamund Robb 840599
- Phil Ryan 840019
- Adele Wakefield 840128
- Bryn Walters 840976

### ***Officer:-***

Mrs Sarah Meads 01283 840891  
Clerk to the Parish Council  
Marsh Farm, Uttoxeter Road, Abbots Bromley, Staffs, WS15 3EJ  
Email: [parish.council@abbotsbromley.com](mailto:parish.council@abbotsbromley.com)

## WORKING GROUPS AND REPRESENTATIVES

### ***Working Groups***

The chairman and vice chairman are entitled to serve ex officio, on all groups

<b>Working Group</b>	<b>Member(s)</b>
Competitions	The Clerk, Cllr B Walters
Finance/Grants	Cllrs P Charles, P Ryan and A Wakefield
Newsletter	Cllr R Jarman The Clerk(Editor) Cllr P Charles (Distribution)
Planning	All Councillors
Recreation	Cllrs Charles, P Ryan, R Robb, P Greenwood
Traffic & Parking	Cllrs Charles, P Greenwood, B Walters
Village Property	Cllrs Charles, A Wakefield, R Robb

### ***Representatives***

Almhouses	Cllr Jarman
Finance Officer	TBC
Richard Clarke First School	Cllr B Walters
United Charities	Cllrs Charles and P Ryan
Village Hall	Cllr P Ryan
ABSA	Cllr P Ryan

## **Reports to the Annual Parish Assembly Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016 7.00 pm At the Village Hall, Abbots Bromley**

**Introduction:** Again this year for the Parish Assembly the various verbal reports are replaced with written statements. This document contains the reports submitted in advance of the assembly, and question on the contents may be asked during the open forum. Additional reports will be added after the meeting.

**Contents:**

Parish Council Report	Cllr Roger Jarman
Parish Council Finance	Sarah Meads
Village Hall Report	Mr Simon Wilson
Community First Responders	Colin Palmer
Richard Clarke First School	John Hough
Youth Initiative	Phil Ryan
Staffordshire County Councillor's Report	Cllr Philip Atkins
East Staffordshire Borough Councillor's Report	Cllr Greg Hall – to be added
Parish Council Financial Statement	To be added
Minutes of the Parish Assembly 2015	The Clerk

## PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

**Planning** – continuing from our report in 2015:

**Ashbrook Lane**: Fortunately this 80 house development was not approved by ESBC, but we have just heard of an appeal by the developer. The presence of an accepted Village Plan, outlining a maximum of 40 new houses, certainly helped ESBC make the correct decision for our village, and hopefully will continue to make a positive contribution to the appeal process..

**The Village Plan**. As previously stated our submission had been accepted by ESBC. But until the Borough wide plan had been approved by Central Government, we were still very vulnerable – hence the speculative Ashbrook Lane submission. Although this was approved by the Government on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015, and confirmed by the ESBC at a full council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> October, the fact that the developers of Ashbrook Lane consider it worthwhile to appeal must put in some doubt the strength of the Borough wide plan. The Governments approach to local development still appears to be developer lead. Hopefully this cynical view will prove to be incorrect

**Abbots Bromley Neighbourhood Plan**. Following on from the Village Plan, we decided in July to begin the process of developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parish. The process started with a well attended public meeting held in November. From that a working Group was set up including both Members of the Parish Council, and representatives of the community. The intention is to complete this plan and submit it to ESBC by November 2017. This is under the Chairmanship of Cllr Bryn Walters, who will discuss it in more detail later...

**Ivy House, High Street**. Still as a matter report, the development is well under way. Walton Homes have now bought further land from Abbots Bromley School, which should accommodate 4 addition houses. Because of the length of time it took to come to fruition, the original development did not count towards the 40 houses required by our Village Plan, these 4 will.

**Kentilee, Ashbrook Lane** We have been battling against this inappropriate development in the garden of Kentilee of 2 detached houses. This is a very small plot which will look out of proportion to the immediate area and will not be able to provide adequate off road parking, thus causing potential danger so close to a road junction. Unfortunately this has now been passed, with the 2 houses now being semi-detached, not detached. This does not address the problem of parking.

**Best Kept Village** – This year we were second to Yoxall in the large village category, with Tutbury third. As you will have seen as you drive through Hoar Cross, they won both the small village category, and the area trophy. Again, as with every year, we had a wonderful display of childrens posters.

**Bromley Bulletin** – This year we published in August, October, and February (with the Neighbourhood flyer).

**Christmas Tree** – Again, our thanks to the Brandrick family for donating an excellent tree.

**Parish Council Surgeries**. As with previous years, these bi-monthly surgeries have continued. As we said last year, the public attendance is not great, but we hope that those that have needed to discuss a problem have found them useful.

**Traffic and Parking:** WPC Josie Shepherd attended our July meeting to discuss speeding and parking on the pavement. She confirmed that she had been out with a speed camera, but found that although some people had been just over the speed limit, it was not enough to prosecute. Re parking, although the Police would take action if any one blocking the pavement was caught “live” (i.e. not just a photograph); the only way to tackle “one wheel on the pavement” would be to implement a total parking ban through the main streets of our village. As a Parish Council we confirmed that this would not be practical, or in the best interest of many residents.

**Mobile Library** We have now been downgraded from 3 stops to 1. Although there is a short stop in Bromley Wood, the best that we could get for the village was the Bagot Arms, but a longer stop from 3:15 to 4:45.

**Abbots Bromley Sports Association** As reported in both the October and February Bulletins, much progress has been made in making the new village sports field a reality. As a practical expression of our support we have awarded a grant of £5,000 towards the project

**Jubilee Cup 2014/5.** Last year’s worthy recipient was John Stevenson. Having been involved with Abbots Bromley Cricket Club for many years, this award was given in recognition of the work that John has done, with his fellow committee members/trustees, in getting the Abbots Bromley Sports Association off the ground, and making the possibility of the sports development on the Lichfield Road a real possibility.

**New Parish Councillors.** Having said farewell to 5 retiring Councillors last year, this year it is with pleasure that we welcome 5 new Councillors: Caroline Ashton, Paul Greenwood, Rosamund Robb, Adele Wakefield, and Bryn Walters.

**Cllr Roger Jarman  
Parish Council Chairman**

## **PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES**

The parish council has its own Financial Regulations, which set down the rules by which the finances of the council are managed. The council employs an independent internal auditor who reviews the financial records. At the end of the year an audit return is completed and submitted to the Audit Commission for the purposes of external audit. The council’s financial regulations can be viewed on the website or via arrangements with the clerk.

The approved financial statements for the council for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2016 will be tabled at the Parish Assembly.

**Sarah Meads  
Parish Clerk**

## ABBOTS BROMLEY VILLAGE HALL

The last 12 months has been relatively quiet for the hall management team. We have had consistent use by regular users however occasional evening use such as parties has reduced and with it income from providing bar facilities.

Work on securing the usage and ultimately the ownership of the field to the rear currently owned by the Gallimore family is progressing steadily with thanks going to Adele for all the work she has put in dealing with the legal paperwork

As the building ages so maintenance has increased. We have already refurbished the toilets but have since over winter had 2 serious leaks in the heating system added to which we have an ongoing repainting plan.

I would like to finish by thanking all of the committee and Rose for the time and effort they have put in to keep the hall functioning well and finally to thank Maureen for all her work as secretary as she steps down. Thank you !

**Simon Wilson, chairman – Abbots Bromley Village Hall Committee**

## Abbots Bromley Community First Responders

The group had another eventful year responding to approximately 300 emergency calls.

We have 4 responders and maintain coverage for approximately 65% of the time. Two of the four responders wish to retire in the foreseeable future. If the group is unsuccessful in attracting further recruits we will cease operations. This will be a pity after 11 years of continuous service to the community in this area. We are going to distribute flyers within the village in an attempt to get new recruits

Time is of the essence when an ambulance is needed.

Volunteers and volunteering can make the difference to you or your family.

**Colin Palmer  
Co-ordinator**

## Richard Clarke First School Report

Here is a brief summary of some key elements of the past 12 months.

**Financial:** The budget for 2016-2017 has been set and, as usual, provides sufficient challenge for the governors to keep us on our toes. Our income is almost entirely dictated by the number of pupils on the roll and our expenditure is predominantly staff costs, which are around 80% of income. In addition, we get a small Pupil Premium grant to assist potentially vulnerable children. The use of this will be vigorously challenged by OfSTED to make sure that we have a persuasive 'value for money' analysis. We do not plan for a deficit budget nor do we try to accumulate a surplus. Any surplus which accrues is invariably swallowed up in the following year.

We must give credit to our superb PTFA who continue to raise money for projects in RCFS. These extra resources enhance the richness of the educational experience of all pupils at the school. We are also grateful to the Parish Council for their donations. Tradition dictates that I also

propose a symbolic toast to the eponymous Richard Clarke, whose generous initial gift has provided centuries of income into his Endowment Fund.

You will be aware that the government have promised to rebalance the pupil funding mechanism so that it does not favour schools in London and the SE over the rest of the country. Staffordshire is towards the bottom of the funding league table, so this should be good news. However, there is to be no increase in the overall funding budget so I wait to see if, for example, Surrey can be persuaded to transfer some of its generous funding to Staffordshire.

**Number of Pupils:** We currently have 114 children on our roll and are expecting 27 to enter Early Years in September. This should give us a well-balanced number of pupils in all Year Groups. I'm not sure about the current state of play with regards to the proposals for new houses in the village. The impact that this could have on RCFS pupil numbers will have to be considered. A few years ago our problem was falling rolls, with the possibility of merged year groups, maybe even redundancies. How things have changed.

**Staffing:** The staffing structure has been remarkably stable for most of the year. We lost our Early Years teacher at the beginning of this term but have managed to secure an excellent replacement to take us to the end of the school year. Incidentally, the new teacher is an ex-pupil of RCFS who will see at first hand the changes that have been made during the 15 years since she left us. The staffing structure allows us to have a full-time teacher in every class, supported by excellent teaching assistants and, of course, parent helpers. We have a good range of expert staff skills which we try to transfer across the school by mentoring and sharing of 'best practice'. I must also thank our new site supervisor/ janitor/ caretaker, Allan Gray, who is well on the way to making himself indispensable.

**Resources & Premises:** There has been no major expenditure from our budget on RCFS premises, thank goodness, but we are always aware that 'disaster' can strike at any time. Like any sensible organisations we have a policy of planned maintenance and replacement, for which I must thank Steve Coxon and the Finance Committee. Good financial management is high on OfSTED's list of governors' responsibilities and we must maintain our good standing.

As part of our planned expenditure on learning resources, this year we acquired a dozen or so iPads for evaluation; for this we dipped in to the Endowment Fund. The evaluation has been a resounding success and the iPads are being used in very innovative ways in all years, including Early Years. Inevitably, therefore, we need to acquire more. This obviously brings into focus the challenges of e-Safety. RCFS pupils, staff, governors and parents are all made aware on a regular basis of the challenges and dangers associated with the internet. If you visit the school website you can read our policy and the advice provided. [www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk](http://www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk)

Finally, in this section, I must mention our new 'Timber Trail' for which RCFS secured £10,000 of lottery funding and which has replaced our existing, rather run-down, trail. Thanks must go to the Head-teacher, Mrs Kay Hanson, who discovered which buttons to press, and to the children who made it very clear in the pupil questionnaire what they thought of the old timber trail and what should be done.

**School Performance:** I can do no better than repeat what I said in last year's report. We are still waiting for our next OfSTED inspection which could be at any time during 2016, at very short notice. Our performance still shows sustained improvement and is amongst the best in the LA and better than most National results. We are also subjected to regular monitoring by the LA and the results have all been excellent.

Our major priorities for 2015-16 are:-

1. Implement the new 'Assessment without Levels' and monitor its effectiveness.
2. Continue to develop and improve quality of teaching and learning across RCFS.
3. Move towards an 'Outstanding' rating for Leadership & Management.
4. Develop and embed the new National Curriculum to inspire and engage all pupils

Our on-going priorities seek to maintain our outstanding OfSTED rating for safeguarding, pupil behaviour and health & safety; we must make sure that feed-back and marking are being effectively delivered and acted upon by pupils; we will make full use of outdoor resources in raising standards; and will help parents to become effectively engaged in their children's learning.

**School Self-Review: Parents' Questionnaire:** The great majority of parents agree that RCFS is an excellent, well-led school where children are safe and happy and enjoy learning. As usual, opinions differ about homework. Most think it's fine, and disagreement is split equally between 'too much' and 'too little'. Our efforts to improve communications also appear to be working. The weekly newsletter, which includes governor 'blogs' and the RCFS website attract favourable comments as does the LaunchPad system which gives pupils, parents, staff and governors access to a school-based information platform. The full results from the questionnaires are on the RCFS web-site, as is a link to OfSTED's Parent View, which confirms our findings.

[www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk](http://www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk)

**Summary:** It's been another busy year but we have managed to deal with it quite well. Our performance results continue to improve from an already good position, the school finances are under control even though the budget has been tight, and the staffing is how we would wish it to be. We expect to be able to deal effectively with whatever might happen in the next academic year. We owe this to skilled and dedicated staff; enthusiastic and effective governors; and supportive parents. We also have great children who love learning. I wish to thank them all for their contributions.

The latest news about The Richard Clarke First School can be found on our web-site ([www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk](http://www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk)) together with RCFS news, photographs, staff and governor profiles, OfSTED reports and statistics and other performance information.

**Footnote:** The politicisation of education continues apace, driven mainly by ideological assertions and seemingly unfettered by common sense, powerful evidence and expert advice. I refer, of course, to the compulsory academisation of all schools by 2022 which the government has recently announced and which will remove governors, parents and the local community from the decision-making process. We do not know if it will actually happen – U-turns are not unknown – but if it does RCFS will have its strong community links sorely tested and the nature of education in Abbots Bromley will change profoundly.

**John Hough**  
**Chair of Governors, Richard Clarke First School**

## Youth Initiative

2015 has been a year of Development for Abbots Bromley Youth Club.

A Big Thank You for the tremendous support both financially and in kind from Organisations and Individuals in Abbots Bromley during the last couple of difficult years.

In particularly our thanks to:-

Abbots Bromley Parish Council  
Abbots Bromley United Charities  
Abbots Bromley British Legion  
Abbots Bromley Football Club  
Abbots Bromley Cricket Club &  
Abbots Bromley Fire Service



Cllr Greg Hall ESBC and

Steve Manning &  
Nick Brayshaw & Sue Brittan

Without your support we would not be in the position we are today

We were determined to maintain our professionalism so we sought out an organisation to bridge the skills gap previously filled by Staffordshire County Council – we affiliated ourselves with SCVYS (Staffordshire Council of Youth Services)

They provide us with:

Support with Policies and Procedures  
DBS checks  
Support with Training needs &  
Grant Finder searches

I am pleased to advise that in December 2015 we were accepted as Full Members of this organisation

We currently have 27 youth club members all between 11 and 17 year of age.

We have had lots of new faces attending over the last 12 months – a direct response to our mail shot, directly canvassing local schools and the inclusion of a piece in the Bromley Bulletin.

The majority of young people are between 12 and 15 years of age.

The last 4 weeks have seen average attendances of 15 young people.

We encourage the young people to take responsibility for their club and wherever possible we empower them – for example, our tuck shop is run entirely by the young people and is self-funded.

### **Fund raising activities**

We have held a number of fund raisers during the past year of which the Horn Dance was the most successful raising a total of £335.

We have also helped to secured funding to support the further improvement to the five-a-side football pitch.

Our thanks to Councillor Greg Hall ESBC , Abbots Bromley Village Hall Trustees and Abbots Bromley Parish Council.

We generate some income from our weekly subscriptions (50p) and our own tuck shop (which the young people now manage).

We run the Youth Club to provide open activities for our young people, but we also plan sessions to include periodic enrichment activities, these may often be around calendar events.

### **Wish list**

Once the purchase of Gallimore`s field is finally completed it would be great if the grass could be regularly cut then it would be a great extension to our existing facility and a great open space for all young people in our village to use.

### **Summary**

Whatever we are doing the young people seem to be happy with our efforts despite the challenges we have had to deal with, particularly in the last 18 months.

Our volunteers of whom we have 9 (from 4) are wonderful and we have retained the services of Gemma Lanchester who was previously employed by Staffordshire Youth Services.

We have appointed a Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and Child Protection Officer and now hold regular management meetings.

Our aim has always been to keep our funds in excess of our annual expenditure (nominally our Village Hall fees) to ensure we have a reasonable buffer and can provide continuity for our young people over a foreseeable period. (It cost us £1,365 last year for the Village Hall alone).

We are extremely grateful for those who continue to support us both within and beyond the village, your financial contributions are critical to our survival, even the contributions of materials (books, gifts, etc.) are appreciated as they enable us to fund raise. We would as always appreciate any financial or other contributions from any appropriate source.

### **Finally**

We are always looking for volunteers  
Volunteering need only be for as little as 2½ hours per month (1 evening a month)  
Anybody interested should email [phil.rita@btinternet.com](mailto:phil.rita@btinternet.com) for more detail.

**P Ryan, AB 4 Youth**

<p><b>STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR UTTOXETER RURAL DIVISION – REPORT 2016</b></p>
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### **Uttoxeter Rural Division Annual Report April 2016**

With the Police and Crime Commissioner Election this year, it is now one year off the county council election. Still focusing on local matters as your County Councillor, I continue as Leader of the County Council with other roles on the council's behalf such as the Local Government Pension Scheme, Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Board, Midlands Engine and Midlands Connects. I also represent Staffordshire on the County Council Network and am a Member of the Local Government Association People and Place Board and the Cabinet Office's National Growth

Board. A busy life as I still farm at Abbey Fields in Rocester. This is a snap shot of the past 36 months.

## **The Staffordshire Economy**

We all agree and understand that people in gainful employment are healthier, safer and less crime is committed, which in turn reduces the pressures on vital public services. Unemployment in Staffordshire measured by Job Seekers Allowance is at a record low at 0.7 per cent, with 3,955 seeking work. Record numbers are employed with over 18,000 jobs created since 2010, 14,000 new jobs created last year alone - which brings fresh challenges to recruitment in certain sectors, including the council.

To answer that challenge the county council continues with its innovative approach to transforming the way public services are delivered. By reducing back-office costs, working closely with partners, reviewing contracts, and looking at new ways of providing or funding services, we have reduced costs by £155 million over the past five years and with the savings made across the county council it has been possible to deliver real outcomes. The way people want to live their lives is changing. Councils need to change with them.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Lowest County Council Tax in the Country**

I am mindful that the County Council has the largest part of your Council Tax. While the country remains under financial pressure as the public spending deficit is reduced, trying to keep spending the same as or less than we earn, the county council faces added pressures. These come from the growing cost of social care both for older people and vulnerable children. After last year's additional £20 million investment for social care for vulnerable adults and children, this year we have had 1.95 per cent increase in council tax and in addition the government has allowed us another 2 per cent extra council tax which is about £6 million to help with the ongoing pressures of our frail elderly resulting in a Band D council tax of £1,088.65, Staffordshire continues to have one of the lowest county council taxes in the country, only Hampshire and Somerset are lower. Council tax has been held at the same level or reduced for the past six years.

### **Facts about Staffordshire's Low unemployment and economic growth**

In Staffordshire just 0.7 per cent of the working population are on job seeker's allowance, with 329,574 now in employment, which amounts to an increase over the past year of 14,731. Self-employed, voluntary workers and those working their own business are not included in these figures.

"Better times" has put £750 million into our local economy in extra spending power, 16 per cent more people have better paid jobs - up from 149,000 to 173,000. There has been a 24 per cent drop in the levels of out-of-work benefits claimants and business start-ups increased to 2,865 a year.

Our Staffordshire LEP has been successful in being awarded significant taxpayer funds: Staffordshire's Powerhouse Central Growth Deal with government will see £98 million for the period 2015-20. In addition we have access to £140 million of European Structural and Investment Funds. The intention of these funds is to lever significant private sector investment. The Growth Deals aim to create 7000 jobs. This year saw Enterprise Zone status for the Ceramics Valley.

Key projects include: £2.5 million to support creation of an "Enterprise Quarter" in Tamworth, £800,000 refurbishment of London Mill in Leek for employment and housing, £1.29 million for Improvements to Rugeley Town Centre, £2.2 million Regeneration of Friarsgate in Lichfield for retail and leisure.

## **A50 Growth Corridor update: April 2016**

Preparatory work has been continuing apace in recent weeks and overnight lane closures on the A50 to allow the surveying of drains and clearance work were completed safely and successfully.

At the same time we have cleared land north of the A50 for the site compound, erected fencing and laid down an access road from the A522 for the compound. Temporary utility supplies are currently being installed in the compound area.

BT has also completed cabling realignment works alongside the A522, south of the A50. All businesses were consulted with minimal disruption.

The A50 is the most important transport link between the East and West Midlands and the planned improvements will also benefit major employers and their employees between Stoke-on-Trent and Derbyshire, making journeys quicker, easier and safer.

Highways England's investment in this key highway is part of a huge £1.8 billion investment to modernise the Midlands strategic road network. This investment will help create a safer, more accessible network and keep traffic moving, while unlocking economic growth with support for new jobs and homes. Staffordshire County Council is delivering these improvements on behalf of Highways England.

### **Sport**

The next generation of Adam Peatys are being helped as 31 of Staffordshire's most promising young athletes have been recognised for their sporting achievements and awarded a share of £14,000 in grants. The young people received their awards from the county council fund to help with the costs of training and competing in their chosen sports.

After assessing over 80 applications, grants of £750, £500 and £300 were awarded to young people in 16 different sports, reflecting the broad range of sporting talent in the county.

The Staffordshire Talented Athletes Fund supports young people with the cost of their training and participation in competitions, including expenses such as travel, equipment and accommodation. The awards are given in three categories, gold, silver and bronze, including two awards to young people with disabilities.

The Scheme is supported by Sport across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

### **Highways Defect reporting**

The highways call centre will no longer be accepting emails as a way of **reporting defects**. They are encouraging the public to use the new reporting systems in place as well as the 0300 111 8000 number.

The first link below is to the 'report it' page on the website and the second link goes to the 'Mystaffs' app page which has separate links to download the app through Google Play store or iTunes.

<https://apps2.staffordshire.gov.uk/web/reportfault/#top>

<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/MyStaffs-App/MyStaffs-App.aspx>

The report it system is easy to use and if you want to attach photos you can. Once reported this goes straight in to the system ready to be directed to the correct team without having to go through the call centre.

If you want further information please contact Cheryl Makeham, Community Highway Liaison Officer e-mail: [cheryl.makeham@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cheryl.makeham@staffordshire.gov.uk)

As part of the national **Pothole Action Fund**, the county council has been awarded just over £1 million to help towards its work in repairing potholes across the county.

As part of the pothole fund, local authorities in England will receive £50 million a year over the next five years, with allocations based on the size of the network. Staffordshire has around 6,400km of roads to maintain.

### **Mentoring New Drivers and keeping them safer**

Parents will be able to benefit from a new campaign to help make their children better, safer drivers. Research shows that one in five newly qualified drivers is involved in a road traffic collision within the first six months of passing their test.

The 'Mentoring New Drivers' campaign at [www.newdrivers.info](http://www.newdrivers.info) aims to provide parents and guardians with all the information and resources needed to help avoid their child become a part of this shocking statistic.

The new website has advice and resources on things like choosing a good driving instructor along with useful tips for parents when practising with their child in the family car. Downloadable guides with hints for first-time car buyers and help with finding the most appropriate insurance are also available for free.

The campaign hopes to reduce the number of road collisions involving newly qualified drivers and is being delivered by the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership who have teamed up with the 'Honest Truth' campaign and FirstCar.

Driving Instructors are also playing their part in the campaign by registering to become one of the team of Honest Truth Instructors which already has over 100 instructors signed up across Staffordshire.

Some top tips from the website include:

- For parents, spend as much time as possible sitting with your child as they practise their driving in the family car. It's essential that they get in as much practice as possible, but this must be alongside professional tuition, not instead of it.
- Encourage your child to invest in some post-test training.
- When your child buys their first car, with or without your help, explain to them how a newer car needn't cost a lot more than something older which will cost much more to run – and which will be much less safe. Newer cars have more tech that helps to prevent crashes, but in the event of a collision a newer car will protect your child much more.
- When choosing car insurance, steer your child towards a telematics (or black box) policy. Not only can this save them a lot of money quickly but it could also make them a safer driver.
- Driving too fast, taking drugs or drinking alcohol can all lead to carnage and it's the same with using a mobile phone or not wearing a seatbelt. These are known as the Fatal Five and its key that you spend time talking to your child about these dangers.

## Cultural News

Uttoxeter Library took part in a countywide celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare. 'The Bard' is studied by around half of the world's schoolchildren every year. He has been hailed as the UK's greatest cultural export, and the foremost reason why people are proud to be British. The UK Society of Chief Librarians and partners, including the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust have successfully secured a grant from Arts Council England for £95,500. This funding will enable high-quality artists to work across the national library network, celebrating the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of England's most famous writer together as one.

Whilst the main activities will run between May and October libraries in Staffordshire have already started their celebrations with activities such as Shakespeare mask making, treasure hunts and even library Baby Bounce and Rhyme sessions have included a Shakespeare lullaby.

## Plan that will Sustain the Future of all our 43 Libraries

Uttoxeter Library remains virtually unchanged as a library. Elsewhere volunteers have taken a greater role in running 23 libraries, but supported by paid library staff. Shropshire and South Staffordshire Health Trust are running eight Libraries. WiFi has also been installed in all 43 libraries across Staffordshire. These plans for the overhaul of the library service will save £1.3 million or 5 per cent of the budget. While visits have declined and issues of physical books have reduced, online loans have increased. The purpose of the public consultation on the libraries' future was in the face of reducing demand for library services was to create a service relevant and sustainable to communities for the next 10, 15 or 20 years. In Lichfield we have plans to move the library to St Mary's Centre in the town centre and preserve the Grade 2 listed Friargate building.

## Education School places

Nine out of 10 parents in Staffordshire have been offered their first choice primary school, despite rises in pupil numbers putting pressure on school places. Figures revealed this week show the majority of parents have been allocated their first choice school, with 98 per cent in total allocated one of their top three preferred schools.

A total of 9,278 places have been allocated, with 8,565 of those receiving their first choice primary school and 9,110 getting one of their top three. This is despite a rise in birth rate of up to 11 per cent in Staffordshire over the past decade putting more pressure on school places. Parents have an automatic right of appeal for a school of their choice even where they have been allocated their second or third choices. Key contact numbers are:

For information on the **Admissions** process – 0300 111 8007

For information on the **Appeals** process – (01785) 895335

## Public Health

The County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council have launched a joint consultation on their **Healthwatch** service, to make sure the service is making a real difference to the future of health and care. They are legally required to provide an independent Healthwatch service to ensure local people's voices are heard when it comes to health and social care matters, and that their views and experiences are used to improve existing services.

Where concerns and problems about health and care services have been identified, Healthwatch will ensure that the right people know and check that action is taken to resolve them and prevent them from happening again. It also helps people get independent support to help them complain about a health service.

The current service is up for renewal and both councils want to see the service provided in the future is the best fit people's needs.

### **Extra Care and Flexi Care for Independent Supported Living**

After raising concerns about funding for independent, supported living, the government has reinstated the funding streams which support Extra Care. Older people in Staffordshire are getting access to more than in any other county in England. Staffordshire currently has 19 extra care housing schemes in operation, giving older people and people with disabilities the opportunity to live independently. Since 2009, Staffordshire has created 1,500 new places in extra care housing.

Staffordshire is already the number one county for extra-care housing provision in the country, with two schemes newly opened in Cannock and Stafford and a further 10 schemes planned, including in Uttoxeter.

Northfield Village in Stafford is an innovative community centric project providing housing, care and support.

Details at [www.northfieldvillage.co.uk](http://www.northfieldvillage.co.uk)

The development includes a Community Hub including a community cafe, community rooms and shops, 80 apartments for people over 55 with a care need, a specialist dementia care facility, a dementia hub, a replacement GP Surgery and Pharmacy, Courtyard housing, general needs housing and supported living housing

£3.3million has been invested into the latest five schemes by the county council, attracting a further £47 million from housing trusts and other partners to help build them. With 80,000 out of a population of 350,000 in Staffordshire over the age of 75, there is increased demand for homes specially designed to meet the needs of older people and those with disabilities.

### **Locally JCB Announced Last Year they are to Invest £150 million**

JCB is extending its operations in Staffordshire, creating an extra 2,500 jobs. The ambitious plans for expansion include two new purpose-built factories; a new in-house training facility and office accommodation have been approved by ESBC. Besides the 2,500 jobs, most of which will be in Staffordshire are 7,500 new jobs in the supply chain. The investment plan includes a new 350,000 square feet factory for JCB Cab Systems at Beamhurst, an additional 126,000 square feet of manufacturing space at Rocester, new JCB Finance building and a new 220,000 square feet factory at Cheadle. Besides local, this is both national and regional importance. Work is already under way on a Ryder Cup standard golf course at Rocester.

### **IRONMAN 70.3 Staffordshire will take place on Sunday 12 June 2016**

Over 2,500 athletes from more than 40 countries will compete in a 1.2-mile swim in Chasewater Lake, a 56-mile bike through the picturesque Staffordshire countryside and a 13.1-mile run through the historic Shugborough Estate.

This high profile event is part of a global series of races that will highlight the best of Staffordshire on an international platform, bring a huge amount of economic value into the area, mobilise over 1,000 local people to volunteer, and raise over £750,000 for charity.

Temporary road closures will be in place across the county to ensure the safety of athletes and the wider public. Please use the below information to plan your journeys in advance and to help your carers navigate the roads safely on race day. Essential access for carers can be facilitated.

- The bike course is live between 07:00 – 14:30. The one lap course leaves Chasewater Lake towards King's Bromley. It travels along the A515 and circles the Needwood/Hanbury area. It then heads east along the B5017, then south along the B5013 towards Cannock Chase, before concluding in Shugborough Estate.
- The run course is live between 10:00 – 17:30. The three lap course takes athletes out of Shugborough Estate via Essex Bridge, then from Great Haywood to Little Haywood. The course then travels down Meadow Lane to re-enter Shugborough estate.

You can find a link here to the IRONMAN 70.3 Staffordshire website and copies of the road access information for residents. These include maps demonstrating the road closure timings and the best diversion routes for each part of the course:

<http://eu.ironman.com/triathlon/events/emea/ironman-70.3/staffordshire/residents/road-access.aspx#axzz42VBraw85>

If there are any issues or questions please contact [staffordshire70.3@ironmanroadaccess.com](mailto:staffordshire70.3@ironmanroadaccess.com) or call 033 3011 6600.

### **Stramshall to Spath**

Two years ago the 30 mph speed limit was extended at Spath with the final part of the traffic calming to be put in place as part of the new JCB factory conditions. This will deter motorists from taking a short cut from the B5030 to Beamhurst. While construction of the A50 is underway we will have to continue to watch for drivers taking short cuts. The six lanes planned on the A50 improvements between the two projects should provide a better way of getting there in the future.

### **Pinch Point Funding for Highways**

The Government pinch point funding SCC secured has improved our highways locally with three roundabouts at Rocester and Denstone on the A50-Rocester corridor to JCB and Alton Towers with additional funding allocated by SCC to this busy route. Other schemes have also been put in place such as at Beaconside in Stafford or Meaford near Stone.

### **Exciting New Prospects for Education in Rocester**

Construction work is well underway for the new school off Ashbourne Road Rocester to replace the existing Ryecroft CE Middle School and Dove First School Rocester. This would allow the Rocester-based firm to consider building a University Campus on the Ryecroft site.

This is an exciting opportunity for education in and around Rocester. It will mean local children get new and improved facilities in which to learn, while at the same time making a key site available for further skills expansion.

Plans are being drawn up to ensure a safe route to the school from Rocester with a footway along Ashbourne Road and a footway at the Queens Arms.

As part of the planning conditions a footway will be constructed from Denstone on the B5031 with Toucan crossings across the B5030 and a drop off zone for transport at the school.

### **Superfast Staffordshire Website Shows When New Broadband Will Arrive**

Householders and businesses in East Staffordshire can find out exactly which areas will be getting faster internet speeds—the first communities benefiting now. You can find when and where the faster fibre broadband will be available at the Superfast Staffordshire website [www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk/](http://www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk/)



Staffordshire County Council, BT and Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) are working in partnership to deliver superfast broadband services across Staffordshire as part of the national programme managed by BDUK.

The Superfast Staffordshire project will see 95 per cent (circa 476,000) of premises in the County receive speeds in excess of 24 Megabits per second (Mbps) by the end of 2017, when added to the commercial roll-out.

The superfast broadband coverage across Staffordshire (including City of Stoke) has recently reached 90 per cent. The project has fibre enabled nearly 450 roadside cabinets providing access to services to approx. 82,000 premises, with a further 12,000 premises are in the planning stage.

Unfortunately there was insufficient funding available to achieve 100 per cent coverage, which means that additional funding and further developments in technology will be required to address the remaining 26,000 premises (final 5 per cent). I am well aware that this affects Uttoxeter Rural.

Recently BT has made £2.4 million “gain-share” funding available to Superfast Staffordshire to reinvest in extending the network further. This will be used to start and reduce the number of premises in the final 5 per cent. This reinvestment is taking place much earlier than anticipated, as the demand for superfast broadband services has been greater than originally predicted.

### **Funding allocation methodology**

The primary objective of the project is to address the gaps in superfast broadband provision of the Next Generation Access (NGA) network. The public funding is targeted on the areas that commercial providers (e.g. BT, Virgin Media et al) consider commercially unviable, and thus will not be upgraded without public subsidy.

To this end the Staffordshire County Council undertook an Open Market Review (Oct 2012) to establish where the commercial suppliers were delivering fibre networks, or where they had plans to deliver Next Generation Access networks by October 2015. This information was used to define the gap in provision, establish the project intervention area (91,291 premises) and was subject to a 1 month public consultation.

The Open Market Review (OMR) exercise was undertaken at postcode level and then used to form the basis of the Invitation to Tender (ITT) through the BDUK procurement framework. The contract was awarded to BT plc in May 2013.

The main objective for the project was to deliver fibre connectivity to as many premises in the intervention area, for the fixed funding available thus ensuring best value for money and maximum connectivity.

The allocation process involves entering the intervention area postcodes into the BT Chief Engineers Model. The algorithm is set up to identify the most efficient solution to connect the premises of each postcode to the fibre network, and then rank them in order of cost per premise. The allocation is based on the “next best value for money” principle, where as many premises as possible are upgraded for the funding available.

The key cost drivers for building a fibre network are “distance and density”. Where distance is the length of the fibre spine that needs to be built between the fibre cabinet and the fibre enabled exchange, and the number of premises that are set to benefit.

The Chief Engineers Model takes into consideration many factors, including the capital build costs, operating costs, number of premises; take up at 20 per cent and a return on investment period of 15 years. The output of this determines the “funding gap” and the required amount of public subsidy to bring each structure into use.

This is an “arm’s length” process which allocates the funding based on the “next best value for money” premises. This ensures that the project provides superfast broadband access to the

maximum number of premises for the funding available, and provides best value for money for the tax payer.

This nationally approved approach also serves to mitigate a “digital civil war”, and the county has deliberately chosen not to prioritise one community over another or business users over residents. It is likely that all affected communities and key stakeholders could make a compelling case for investment. This is why central government and local authorities are involved in this activity.

When Superfast Staffordshire undertook the second Open Market Reviews (2014) it asked a different question of the suppliers. Rather than asking which postcodes are connected to the NGA network, it asked the suppliers to identify the postcodes where the premises are not expected to get a minimum of 15Mbps by the end of 2017. This then formed the basis of the revised intervention area (28,815 premises), and was used to repeat the procurement process for Contract 2.

The contract was awarded to BT plc in April 2014 and will see further 3,200 premises gain access to superfast broadband services.

By the end of Contract 2 (December 2017) 95 per cent of the premises in Staffordshire will have access to the broadband services in excess of 24Mbps. The “final 5 per cent” equate to approximately 26,000 premises widely distributed across the county.

Recently BT has made £2.4 million (gain-share) available to the project, earlier than anticipated. On this occasion there is no need to repeat the Open Market Review exercise as the project is aware of the identity of the “final 5 per cent” postcodes. These are being used to undertake the modelling exercise similar to the previous two occasions. The outcome of the modelling exercise will be known this spring.

### **Work to Start on New £7 million Innovation Centre at Keele University**

Work started last May on a multi-million pound state-of-the art innovation centre for existing high growth businesses and new companies locating to Staffordshire. It is the first new facility of its kind to be built on this scale in the area for 10 years thanks to a partnership between Staffordshire County Council and Keele University. The £7 million centre will provide 30,000 sq. ft. of office and workshop accommodation and is expected to create 130 jobs via the growth of existing business and inward investment from international business relocating Staffordshire. Opening this year.

### **MyStaffs App and the shift to digital**

You can access all your council services on the move with the ‘My Staffs App’, free and available on Apple devices, android and Google platforms from the Apple App store and Google Play.

What is the MyStaffs app? It’s a much quicker and easier way in which customers can talk to us with new technology using smart phones. If you need to report an issue, make a transaction, or request information, with the free app you access key services anytime, anywhere.

You can even specify your location so that you receive information about the services which just apply in your area.

What’s more is that the app doesn’t just feature key county services but some at district and borough level too, which means you can access everything all in one place, at the touch of a button.

So far, we have partnered up with South Staffordshire, Lichfield and Tamworth to deliver this service.

What's available on the app?

Services available through the app include:

- School Term Date Information
- School Closures
- Childcare
- Advice and information for parents of under 5s
- Local Venues and Attractions
- Waste Services
- School Meal Menus and Pricing
- Registration Services
- Council Tax Information (only available in Lichfield and Tamworth)
- Roads and Highways

So, if you're always on the go – save time today and download the MyStaffs App for Apple and Android devices

## **Welcome to the Staffordshire Marketplace**

The Staffordshire Marketplace is an online directory of local care, support and wellbeing services, activities and events across Staffordshire aimed at the whole family at [www.staffordshiremarketplace.co.uk/](http://www.staffordshiremarketplace.co.uk/)

Launched by Staffordshire County Council the Staffordshire Marketplace makes it easier for people to find and access support and wellbeing services from hundreds of organisations, all in one place. With just a few clicks of a button, you can browse, compare, book and buy activities.

## **Integration of health and social care in the UK**

The government are looking for Community Health and Social Services to work more closely together by 2020. Four years ago the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS Trust was created with social care staff creating the largest integrated health and social care organisation in the UK. It is responsible for all adult social and community healthcare within Staffordshire and all community health care in Stoke-on-Trent, delivering everything from physiotherapy to day opportunities.

Removing duplication and streamlining the delivery of integrated care saved £30 million in costs which has been reinvested in care services. This is about improving the experience of citizens while making best use of tax payers' money. The next stages are to further improve on this.

## **Casserole Club**

A Staffordshire community meal sharing project is encouraging people to think about their older neighbours. Casserole Club helps local people share extra portions of their home cooked meals with other adults, like older people who may experience difficulty in cooking for themselves and also may feel lonely.

Research shows us more than 50 per cent of those over 80 years of age in the UK are lonely. This same research also suggests that malnutrition amongst older people is increasing, which most of the time is preventable.

Staffordshire's Casserole Club currently has 56 cooks signed up and 48 diners. Joining Casserole Club is easy and can be done at [www.casseroleclub.com](http://www.casseroleclub.com) or by calling 0300 111 8006. The website has a simple search engine so that once an application is confirmed it is easy for nearby diners and cooks to find each other.

## **Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS)**

SCVYS is a charitable company limited by guarantee committed to supporting excellent outcomes for children and young people in the county since being established in 1982. Through a Service

Level Agreement grant arrangement with Staffordshire County Council, SCVYS provides support services to over 100 voluntary youth organisations delivering in over 700 places.

They are seeking to create a dynamic voluntary youth sector demonstrated by strong organisations run by capable people who are meaningfully engaged in effective partnership working providing safe environments which enable young people to maximise their personal potential.

Between 2011 and 2013 overall participation in SCVYS member organisations rose by 4.5 per cent to over 36,000 children and young people aged 5-25. The average attendance has also risen by 3 per cent to over 19,000. Volunteer levels have grown by 25 per cent to almost 6,000, whilst the number of paid workers has risen from 94 to 253, most of whom are part time/sessional staff.

More details at [www.staffscvys.org.uk](http://www.staffscvys.org.uk)

### **A515 and HCVs**

With economic growth comes traffic and the issue of Heavy Commercial Vehicles (HCVs) and I have been in extensive discussions to find a solution to issues around HCVs using the A515 as a shortcut from the A50 to the A38.

This is not proving as easy as it sounds, as alongside powers come duties. The trunk road network, including the A50 and the A38, carries the majority of HCVs through Staffordshire. However the A515 also forms part of the country's Primary Route Network and provides an important sub regional route that facilitates the direct and efficient movement of people, goods and services; contributing to the economic prosperity of the area.

The county council has a range of powers and duties as the Local Highway Authority including the power to prohibit or restrict HCVs from using certain routes and the power to reclassify a route; but this sits alongside a duty to secure the movement of traffic ensuring efficient use of the network.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the county council to ensure traffic can move quickly and freely on its own highway network and that of nearby local highway authorities. The county council and Highways Agency has agreed emergency diversion routes in place along the A515 in the event of a closure on the A38. It is not possible to divert non-motorway traffic onto the higher class motorway network during such a closure. The A515 is also a national priority route for high sided vehicles.

Having acknowledged the position, the county council is committed to engaging with and empowering local communities, placing great emphasis on the insight parish councils and community groups can bring when developing both wider strategic policies and more local bespoke improvements. The County Council has a difficult balancing act taking account of these views while assessing, reviewing and maintaining the highway network and take account of all traffic flows and the local context of roads.

Proactive re-directing of HCV traffic from the A515 would be difficult to enforce and could ultimately lead to a concentration of HCV flows in other localities, making the situation even worse for those affected communities.

If we take a more holistic approach, we should support initiatives such as local product sourcing, the promotion of rail freight, better working practices such as load-sharing and back-loading, and working with the Highways Agency to ensure journey time reliability on the motorway and trunk road network. We should also provide strategic advice to the Planning Authority regarding the location of future employment and industrial development sites

I have continued to press for additional deterrents on top of the traffic lights on Dove Bridge and the speed cameras in Draycott. These measures are in the form of the average speed cameras on the A515, village gateways and better access from the A38 to Fradley. The aim is to deter

HCVs by hindrance and delay from using the A515 while improving their passage on the A50 and A38.

## Uttoxeter HWRC

East Staffordshire Borough Council served a notice which required the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) on Pennycroft Lane in Uttoxeter to be made vacant in August 2015. The temporary HWRC at Hockley Crossing opened in December 2015 to provide a temporary facility until the development of the new site has been completed. Construction has started on the new Uttoxeter Household Waste Recycling Centre, located on the A518 Dove Way and is proposed to open in the summer 2016.

## Snapshot of ongoing work

- **Transport** – concessionary free bus travel package 24/7 for older people and the disabled and over 34,000 young people have taken advantage of discounted travel for just £1 per journey to travel around the county.
- **Libraries** –we have kept all libraries open and all 43 libraries are community resource centres encouraging more people to use them.
- **Efficient waste management**— W2R completed and delivering major savings to the tax payer over the next decade, of up to £250 million. Veolia operates the new Waste to Energy Plant at Four Ashes. This project, the largest ever undertaken by the council at the time will save its cost many times over its 25-year lifetime from avoiding paying Landfill Tax and from energy generation.
- **Voluntary sector**—Adult social care is the service area where we make our major contribution around £18 million per year. We have increased overall funding, targeting in particular smaller community support groups through our innovative Community Wellbeing Fund
- **Winter highway maintenance** —we routinely salt over 43 per cent of the county road network compared to 25 per cent nationally.
- **Staffordshire highways network** — with £50 million invested in road reconstruction over five years, there is still more maintenance to do.
- **Road safety** —we are the second safest county in the country
- **Staffordshire Business Support Fund**— investing £5 million to help 165 small businesses, saved over 1,100 jobs and created 170 new opportunities
- **Created new business parks** at Redhill, Stafford; Meaford, Stone; Branston Locks, Burton; Liberty Park, Lichfield; Bericote, Four Ashes; helped town centres thrive with the Newcastle Hub, Tamworth Gungate, Leek Mills and Stafford make its mark as the County Town
- **Families First**, dedicated family support to give young vulnerable people the best start in life, integrating services at a local level and ensuring those who most need our support have the right access to it.
- **Extended concessionary bus travel** to 24/7 for older people and the disabled and introduced £1.20 per journey bus rides for young people within the county
- **County farms**—we are not disposing of our farm estates to maximise short term receipts. Our estates business generates over £1 million a year of profit to support the council's services.
- **Freezing the rents** of over 200 business who are tenants of the county council's enterprise centres
- **Expanding SCC's apprenticeship scheme** to help over 400 young people into work and support other organisations who wish to take on apprentices.
- **Invested in Automatic Number Plate Recognition**, Staffordshire crime levels are down
- **20mph safety zones** One of the first to introduce outside schools
- **Taken a tough stance on quarrying and large scale wind turbines**, to stop intrusive development in our countryside.

- Invested £3 million in the National Memorial Arboretum to lever in £15 million and helped the Mercian Trail for the Staffordshire Hoard
- Helped save the Wedgwood and Minton Collections for the public

Locally last year's **Staffordshire Local Community Fund** went to:

Denstone Bowls Club	£74.99
Talbot First School	£134.00
Marchington Woodlands Village Hall	£600.00
Rocester Football Club	£522.00
Mayfield Recreational Association	£1,000.00
Marchington Tennis & Bowls Club	£1,000.00
Dove Valley Swimming Club	£500.00
Abbots Bromley Pre-school Playgroup	£350.00
Rocester Parish Council	£300.00
Kingstone WI	£300.00
Friends of Staffordshire & SOT Achieve Service	£500.00
Wootton Cricket Club	£730.00
Rocester & District Camera Club	£250.00
Abbots Bromley, Uttoxeter & Burton NFU	£3,739.00

The funding to the NFU is for marketing the whole area through a Town Deal. Much is happening in the area. If anyone wants to apply for funding from this year's £7500 for local schemes, the forms are available from the County Website.

This is only a snap shot of the many things that I come across in a year and if anyone wishes to know more on any subject do not hesitate to contact me.

Philip Atkins

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## EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCILLOR BAGOTS WARD - REPORT

Not available at time of going to print.

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 at the Village Hall, Abbots Bromley, pursuant to notice having been given

Present:

Cllr R Jarman, Cllr D Burrows, Cllr P Ryan, Cllr P Charles, Mr T Wheeldon, Mr J Stevenson, Cllr M Moore, Mr K Webb, Mrs V Webb, Mrs M Williams, Mr D Wharton, Mrs M Shaw, Mr J Hough, Mrs A Blower, Mrs J Elkington,

Mr A Elkington, Mr S Phillipson, Mrs M Allaker, Mr A Knipe, Cllr E Roy, Mrs C Wallace, Mrs P Causer

In attendance: Mrs Sarah Meads – Parish Clerk

Apologies: Cllr Clive Cook, Mr D Moore, Mrs M Tonking

## **1. Chairman's Welcome and Report.**

Cllr R Jarman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Cllr Jarman read out some highlights from his annual report which had already been circulated. He also mentioned that screening for Ashbrook Lane development was taking place and proceeding to a degree. He highlighted that the Parish Council had managed to get Abbots Bromley downgraded to a Tier 2 village in the Local Plan and therefore a lower allocation of new homes, however, the plan had not yet been approved by the inspector.

Further thanks were given to the Brandrick family for the Christmas Tree.

Parish surgeries continue on a bi-monthly basis and, although not well attended, concerns are often raised about dog fouling, traffic, parking and highways issues.

Mr T Wheeldon mentioned that the Conservation Area review and planning seem to be at odds with each other. He said that all topics within the report have an impact on our village. Cllr Jarman said that we were able to downgrade from a strategic village down to a local service village.

Cllr Jarman confirmed that the new council would be in position from 11<sup>th</sup> May. Unfortunately going forward five councillors have decided not to stand again. Thanks to all those that are stepping down this year for all their hard work over the past four years. Four councillors remain from the present council plus two new ones. We will then need to co-opt three new members.

## **2. Presentation of the Jubilee Cup**

The Chairman said that a certificate will be presented to the previous year's winner of the Jubilee Cup, Mrs Mithra Tonking and thanked her again for her contribution to the village.

The Chairman presented the Jubilee Cup for 2015 to Mrs John Stevenson. He thanked John for all his hard work with the cricket club and also with the development of the new sports ground.

## **3. Abbots Bromley United Charities**

The accounts of the United Charities were presented. 54 parishioners received monetary gifts during the year and donations were made to the Scouts and Youth Club. The accounts were signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

## **4. Parish Council Accounts**

A draft summary of the un-audited accounts for the parish council to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2015 were tabled.

## 5. Open Forum

The Chairman invited questions or updates from village groups on any topics relevant to residents within Abbots Bromley:-

Mrs Allaker asked if anything can be done about the speed of cars going up Ashbrook Lane. Cllr Jarman responded and said that we have tried to get people involved in the speed watch but unfortunately nobody was interested. Cllr Jarman reiterated that it is important to take number plates. Cllr Roy said that only four people have been prosecuted.

Residents raised the issue about Ashbook Lane development. Cllr Jarman said that there is little else that can be done at the moment until an application has been put in to ESBC planning and then action can begin.

Mrs Blower said that there are still issues regarding dog fouling, particularly in the Harley Lane area. The Clerk said that she would ask if it possible to get another bin in Harley Lane

An update was provided on 'Gallimore's Field', at the back of the Village Hall. It was reported that the owners of the field have said that they will produce a document to say that the village has use of the field. The aim is for them to get planning permission for two houses but will then gift the rest of the field. The issue of the 'ransom stip' still needs to be resolved by the owners of the field.

Mr T Wheeldon thanked the Parish Council for their support for the Nostalgia Group. Nostalgia Day will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and there will also be a VE Day commemoration in the village.

With no more questions the Cllr R Jarman declared the meeting closed..

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_