

**WILLINGDON AND JEVINGTON**

**PARISH COUNCIL**



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2016 – 2017**

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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

The following is once again a brief résumé of my work as Chairman of the Council over the last year during which I have endeavoured to continue to represent the Council to the best of my ability, at the same time as keeping our residents informed and highlighting all the good work our Council has done:

- From last year's report, the Chain of Beacons that we were a part of on 21 April 2016 to celebrate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday was a great success.
- On 24 April Fran and I attended the yearly St George's Day Parade at the Bandstand which always involves our two local Scout Groups the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Willingdon who always turn out in force and of whom we should be rightly proud.
- I met with our MP, Caroline Ansell on 19 May to discuss issues in the Parish. I think it is very important to keep our local MP, whoever that might be, informed about projects and events in the Parish.
- On the 23 May a packed Planning meeting took place in Trinity Church to discuss the Brodricklands and Hamlands Farms Planning application.
- Our 2016 Music in the Park event was once again a tremendous success on 5 June.
- The AGM of 1<sup>st</sup> Willingdon Scouts took place at Bushy Wood on 21 June which I attended along with Fran.
- In the Queen's June Birthday Honours List I was delighted to receive the British Empire Medal for services to the community of Willingdon.
- On 30 June Willingdon Community School Fair took place for Year 7 students and I was grateful to have the help of other Councillors and our Clerk in letting the students know how the Parish Council conducts its business and responsibilities in the Parish.
- Friday 1 July I attended with Fran the District Scout AGM at Bushy Wood.
- 5 July I supported the 1<sup>st</sup> Willingdon Cubs and Beavers by planting some Impatiens (Busy Lizzies) I had donated in the flower beds by the Willingdon Memorial Hall.
- 7 July Fran, Stuart and I attended the Willingdon Branch of the Royal British Legion's concert in the gardens of Flint House.
- During July our Assistant Clerk, Nicola Williamson, Fran and I visited the Willingdon Pre-school Playgroups at Chalk Hill and Lower Willingdon to present the children with commemorative coins to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on behalf of the Parish Council. I used some of my Chairman's allowance to purchase additional coins to present to all Councillors.

- The Triangle Traders held their Summer Fair at The Triangle on 17 July where I judged the Scarecrow competition.
- On 10 September Councillors Andy Watkins, Fran and I attended the meeting of the Brodricklands Action Group against the proposals for the 390 houses on Brodricklands/Hamlands Farm. Following that a packed audience heard an update about the proposals and were all asked to attend the PCS meeting on 15 September where Andy Watkins and I spoke on behalf of the Council and Willingdon Residents' Association against the application along with Pam Oates, the Chair of the Brodricklands Action Group.
- On 7 October we opened our new Parish Office – a great achievement by all involved in any way and which has proved to be a resounding success.
- This year the Schools Public Speaking competition took place on 20 October at the Winter Gardens Gold Room when Fran and I went along to support our Willingdon Community School.
- 21 October I was presented with my BEM by Peter Field, Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex.
- On 23 October Fran and I attended the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the Cuckmere Community Bus along with Len Baker our Cuckmere Bus representative.
- 6 November we attended a Service of Peace at Our Lady of Ransom Church – a very moving event involving Eastbourne Silver Band, representatives of the Army, Navy and Air Force, the British Legion and choirs including a Polish Choir.
- At 11am on the 11 November a short service led by Father Kevin Agnew, assisted by Rev David Yule took place in front of our new Parish Office and the 100 year plaque commemorating the commencement of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War.
- The Parish Council's Christmas Fair took place at Wannock Hall on 12 November.
- The Remembrance Day Parade and Service on Sunday 13 November was one of the best ever with record attendance from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Willingdon Scout Groups, Guides and Brownies and representatives from St John's Ambulance.
- The Ruthless Memorial Service at Butts Brow took place in the afternoon which the Council also organises.
- On 30 November, with other Councillors I attended the Parish Conference.
- Our Christmas Carol evening on 15 December went very well and involved the Triangle Traders, and feedback from that suggested that having it focused round the new office was a good idea which should be extended.
- 17 January Councillors Andy Watkins, Fran Pritchett and our Clerk Stephen Keogh joined me in meeting with Inspector Wakefield in Hailsham to talk about policing in our area.

- I attended a meeting at Polegate Town Council offices on 31 January regarding parking problems in Wealden.
- I attended a Media Skills Course with Fran at Wealden on 1 February.
- 24 March Fran and I attended the Charter Event to officially launch Willingdon Community School's Rotary Interact Club. The aim of the club is to fund-raise as much money as possible to help and support local and international projects including the students' trip to Uganda in 2018.
- On 7 April I have been invited as Chair of the Council to attend the Licensing service of the new Deacon, Sue Wilkinson at my church St Mary the Virgin.

Finally I would like to say a big thank you to Steve and Nicola for their continued hard work and support in these continuing challenging times and to those Councillors who have supported our activities over the year, attended meetings and helped with various consultations, without whose help my job would be a much harder one.

**John Pritchett**

**Chairman**



## AMENITIES COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

This is a summary of some of the main areas & issues addressed by the Amenities Committee over the last year:

The Committee has increased the provision for replacing Lampposts as some of those owned by the Council reach the end of their useful lifespan. This will prove to be one of the more costly projects that the Committee will oversee & as such provision will be made on an annual basis in order to endeavour to ensure that the Council does not face a sizeable bill in any single year. Further changes have included the shifting of the Maintenance Contract to provide both savings and a better level of service to the Parish. We have also had issues with the removal & replacement of lights in Wannock Lane, where contractors were witnessed to be smashing lights off of electrical posts thus rendering them unable to be placed back on the new poles. One light has been replaced following a series of complaints to the responsible individuals, but we are still awaiting the replacement of the second piece of street furniture.

There was a BT Consultation on telephone box closures, the key development from which was the proposal to close the Jevington Telephone Box. The argument was the lack of use of the Phone Box, the counter argument being that the telephone has been out of order for a considerable time. Negotiations are on-going, but it is hoped that BT will agree to an extension of the consultation period to include a full period of time with a functioning telephone. Should this be unsuccessful, the Parish will look to adopt the Telephone Box in order to preserve it in the current location.

The wooden Bus Shelter at Farmlands Avenue was vandalised and has subsequently been rebuilt in a more sturdy & vandal-resistant fashion. It is hoped that this will prevent any recurrence of the damage caused earlier in 2016 which necessitated the repairs.

Memorial Hall Garden and The Triangle both require work on either renovating or removal of paving as appropriate for the area. Additionally, further spend on flowers and bulbs in the village has been provided to ensure that Willingdon & Jevington continues to present a pleasant environment in which to live and work.

The issue of Dog Bins continues to appear on the majority of agendas, with the usual queries about insufficient emptying, wrong positioning and bin sizes being received on a regular basis. These issues are monitored and addressed accordingly. Further complications have been raised by the increasing use of Parish facilities by Dog Walking Companies, a situation which is being monitored.

The grass cutting contract is chased on a regular basis by our Clerk to ensure that the Parish gets the required number of cuts to ensure the area maintains a presentable level of tidiness. Similarly the ad-hoc clearing of Rights of Way which should be undertaken by ESCC has not been performed adequately.

Unfortunately recent cuts to public services across the area by East Sussex have necessitated the Parish picking up some of the areas which are not historically ours, but despite attempts to recharge ESCC for the work undertaken we expect the financial climate to increase the pressure on the Parish rather than decrease it. At which point the decision becomes one of whether the Parish Council decides to invest in

maintaining the environment or leaving it to ESCC & accepting the shortfall in service and resultant risk to the Parishioners. The Amenities Committee have reached the opinion that maintaining the Parish is the overriding concern and intend on acting accordingly.

**Clr Jim Gleeson**

**Committee Chair**



## CEMETERY COMMITTEE

The committee met 4 times during the year, to discuss and make recommendations concerning maintenance, policies and charges. We have found it necessary to increase charges for 2017-2018, both to cover our costs, and to bring our charges into line with neighbouring burial authorities. The cemetery will continue to be an expense to the Parish for at least 75 years after the last interment.

During the year we have repaired and completely re-surfaced the access road and parking areas. This has improved both the safety and appearance of the roadways.

We have recently extended the areas for cremated remains, both in the Memorial Garden, and the Garden of Rest. The new areas are designed to blend seamlessly with existing sections, and the paths and walls in this area have also been repaired. We have also replaced taps with those which turn off automatically, in order to reduce wastage of water.

Tree surgery has been necessary during the year to a number of mature trees within the Cemetery.

During the next year we are looking to repair and re-surface the paths in the upper part of the grounds. It is anticipated that this will improve safety, as we will remove possible trip hazards, and expect to use a non-slip surface. It will also improve the appearance of this part of the cemetery.

We continue to seek for further grounds, either to extend the existing cemetery, or to replace it when it becomes full.

Our Cemetery continues to be well maintained, and is a popular place to remember loved ones.

My thanks go to our Cemetery manager for the professional and sympathetic service which she provides to users, and for her management of contractors. Thanks also to our contractors who work hard to provide a good reliable service for interments, and to keep the grounds looking good.

**Cllr Martin Cooper**

**Committee Chair.**



## **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Committee is made up of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council, Chairmen of all standing committees and three other councillors to ensure the Committee is fully representative of the council as a whole. The Chairman is elected annually by Council.

Our terms of reference from the Council requires us to formulate and regularly review Parish Council policies; to put together annual budget recommendations to the Council; to look at long term objectives of the council and formulate business plans; to ensure that proper financial policies are in place and to oversee day to day management of the councils finances and assets; and to deal with any matter not delegated to another committee or subcommittee such as consultations from the County and District Council and other bodies. The increasing number of other matters being dealt with led to Council agreeing during the year to change the name of the committee to Finance and General Purposes Committee.

To assist with dealing smoothly with business we have two Sub Committees; the first chaired by Cllr Jo Carr deals with all staffing matters and the second the Strengthening Local Relationships subcommittee chaired by Cllr John Pritchett which is where councillors meet formally with County Council officers and County Councillors on a full range of subjects where the County Council affects the lives of parishioners. It has been disappointing that only one of our two County Councillors has attended these meetings during the year.

A “task and finish” Sub Committee to look at proposed electoral boundary changes which I chaired resulted in objections from the Council to proposals for change by the District and County Council and subsequently the Boundary Commission but at each stage the Parish Council's views were ignored.

In consequence from the May 2017 County Council elections, a new County Division has been created and named Willingdon and South Downs The village of Alfriston has been added to the Division but at the same time part of Willingdon – Watermill Ward, although remaining in the Parish of Willingdon and Jevington has been removed to a separate Division named Polegate and Watermill. That Division also includes part of Stone Cross.

From the 2019 District Council elections, Willingdon and Jevington, excluding Watermill Ward, will be divided in to two Wards Upper and Lower Willingdon with Jevington and Filching being in Lower Willingdon. Watermill Ward of Willingdon will be joined to Polegate South to form one of three Wards where the councillors will be primarily representing residents of Polegate.

The Boundary Commission has also decided to change the Parish Council Wards and have decided to have three Wards Upper Willingdon (9 councillors), Lower Willingdon (8 Councillors and Watermill Ward (2 councillors) This means that Jevington and Filching will no longer have a separate Parish Councillor and those residents will be represented by councillors in the Lower Willingdon Ward.

The Parish Council made it very clear that we did not support any of these changes and felt they would worsen governance for residents. Without sufficient support from County and District Councillors, however, the Boundary Commission did not accept our representations.

It is not proposed so far to change the boundaries at Parliamentary level but it has been requested that the name of the Constituency be changed to "Eastbourne and Willingdon".

A further Sub Committee has been looking at producing a Business Plan for Council and residents will be consulted on the content at the Parish Meeting. The draft, which is now subject to public consultation, represents much hard work by our Parish Clerk and we look forward to hearing the response from residents.

Continued prudent management of the Council's resources has enabled Council to make only a small increase in Council Tax of just 86p for 2017/18 for a Band D Council Tax payer. This charge compares very favourably with other similar sized Town and Parish Councils. It also represents a very small part of the overall Council Tax charge. It is pleasing that this management has enabled Council to finance the new Parish Council office and to commence major projects at Huggetts Lane and Jevington Recreation Grounds.

Parish Councillors continue to vote to carry out their responsibilities without remuneration which compares well to Town and Parish Councils of a similar size many of whom do accept remuneration. In contrast, our three District Councillors each received over £3,850 plus expenses and our two County Councillors each received over £11,000 plus expenses.

During the year we have continued to carefully consider with our Responsible Finance Officer, Stephen Keogh, the way in which we manage and control our finances and where necessary have refreshed and brought up to date our Policies. Our Audit reports during the past year have again been good.

We have again recommended grants to organisations serving the local community in accordance with our Policy. Council determines the amount to be made available each year and it is recognised that this does result in some organisations being disappointed.

We continue to have concerns about the level of policing in this area and make those views known to senior police officers at every opportunity. We regret that the liaison with police is now much reduced from that which we have enjoyed in the past but welcome the fact that the Parish is continued to be viewed by police as a low crime area.

My thanks go to my Vice Chairman, Cllr John Pritchett, all Councillors who have served on the committee, to Stephen Keogh, our Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer and Nicola Williamson, our Assistant Clerk and Cemetery Manager for their hard work during the year.

**Cllr Andy Watkins**

**Committee Chair**

## **REPORT FROM CHAIR OF PLANNING TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The following is a brief bullet point précis of planning issues over the past year. We have had some challenging issues with planning applications both major and minor in the Parish and during the year have attended Planning Committee South meetings at Wealden with Councillors Andy Watkins and John Pritchett speaking against applications with varying degrees of success.

A meeting took place on 5 October to discuss proposed boundary changes. These have now been confirmed as the Parish Council having 9 Councillors for the Upper Willingdon Ward, which in future will include Jevington, 8 for the Lower Willingdon Ward and 2 for Watermill Ward. For District Council there will be 2 District Councillors – one for the Upper Willingdon Ward and one for the Lower Willingdon Ward and the Watermill Ward will go in with Polegate South. There will also be 1 County Councillor for the two Willingdon Wards and the South Downs and the Watermill Ward will go into the Polegate County Council Ward. Hopefully whoever is elected at the forthcoming County Council elections in May will make sure the Parish Council receives adequate feedback about County issues.

Another big issue during the year was the Brodricklands/Hamlands Farm planning application which initially resulted in a deferment for a site visit on 30 September attended by me, Councillors Andy Watkins and John Pritchett on behalf of the Parish. District Councillors Douglas Murray and Stephen Shing were also present. An outline planning application was subsequently passed on 13 October subject to a variety of conditions. Since this date a challenge has been made by the Brodricklands Action Group which is still ongoing. Should this planning application go ahead we have been assured that the weight restriction of 7.5 tons on the roads in our Parish to the site will be upheld and no construction traffic allowed through Huggetts Lane, Seven Sisters Road etc.

The new Wealden Local Plan was made public on 9 March and contained some surprises in that the original 700 houses intended for the Mornings Mill site have been taken out as well as the proposal for an employment area (which is now going to Hailsham). Because of the risk of pollution in the Ashdown Forest area the proposed building in our Parish will now only be on the land owned by the University of Brighton (Hindsland) and East Sussex County Council which has been earmarked for a new medical centre, a school and other community facilities. Consultation on the plan is set to commence in May until early July. Our Planning Committee will do all we can to ensure there is an exhibition of the plans in Willingdon.

The Planning Committee continues to let their views be known to Wealden about the worrying loss of our bungalow stock in the Parish by extensions and loft conversions which turn them into houses. This reduces the amount of housing available for our elderly residents to downsize to.

As ever I thank all members of our Committee especially those who have gone to Wealden's Planning Committee South to support residents, and also our District Councillors. Everyone has an input to Planning meetings and that is always appreciated.

**Fran Pritchett**

**Chair of Planning**

## RECREATION COMMITTEE.

The committee has met regularly during the last year and a working party charged with Pavilion re-development has met and arranged site visits many times during this past year.

### Huggetts Lane

Historical drainage problems with adjoining residential properties have finally been resolved by the discovery of damaged drains near, but not on, the Recreation Ground.

We are very close to agreeing final plans to renovate our ageing Pavilion and I hope that this summer will see its completion.

### Jevington

Jevington Sports Club continue to manage and maintain the grounds and building.

The planned cricket Pavilion project mentioned in last year's report had to be abandoned due to escalating costs. A new project to adapt and extend the existing 'tea room' is progressing quickly and it is hoped to start next autumn.

### Tott Yew

The play area continues to be very popular and several items have needed repairs this year.

We are currently investigating the possibility of some adult exercise equipment being installed but this is a very early stage.

We continue to explore alternative avenues of funding through grants etc. to enable the burden on tax payer's money to be reduced.

My thanks to our Clerk, Asst. Clerk, committee and of course our contractors for their hard work in keeping our three Recreation grounds open and safe for our residents.

**CLLr Richard Nunney**  
**Committee Chair**

## **ESCC REPORT TO WILLINGDON & JEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Dear Chairman, Councillors and Residents,

We are, as ever, especially pleased to have been invited, as your County Councillors, to provide a brief annual report. Time goes by quick, this is my fourth-Annual Parish Assembly Report of this council term.

As you know, our County councillor terms are coming to an end in May. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those residents in Willingdon & Jevington, Watermill and Polegate area for their support. In addition we enjoy the good working partnership with our parish clerks and colleague Councillors.

There are a number of big issues that I would like to highlight them again, as you know we have regularly reported them to this parish council in our county councillor reports, and throughout our Feedback newsletter to residents.

### **STANDARD OF HIGHWAYS REPAIRS**

We have reported about the poor quality of highways works being carried out, not being value for money or satisfactory.

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) has agreed with us that remedial works will take place this summer and are required after the recently completed road surfacing works in Farmlands Way were not satisfactory. The costs will be met by the subcontractor, thus incurring no further costs to ESCC.

As ESCC does not check all the highways work after completion by a contractor, we therefore urge people to report any newly completed highway works that are of a poor standard, to County Highways and copy to us.

Contact details for ESCC Highways are 0345 60 80 193 and

customer@eastsussexhighways.com. Reports can also be filed on the link titled 'Roads, paths and verges' found on the ESCC website.

### **HIGHWAYS REPAIRS TO FOOTWAYS AND HIGHWAYS**

Over the last 12 months we have reported a large number of highway and footway defects for ESCC highways, who have investigated and repaired on each occasion.

We received many calls regarding the 'rapidly' deteriorating condition of the C40, especially the two stretches from Wannock to Filching Corner and from the entrance of Butchers Bottom Car Park to the junction of Old Willingdon Road, and the potholes at the Wannock Triangle. Those reports were forwarded and most repaired.

## **POLEGATE YOUTH CLUB – INITIAL FUNDING CONCERNS**

Concerns were facing the essential Youth Club in Polegate due to a proposed reduction in their ESCC grant. County Councillors Daniel and Stephen Shing discussed this with ESCC to enable this important service to continue. As such, we are pleased to announce that the issue was re-considered and funding will now continue.

## **NEW PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE**

We are pleased that our new parish council office and public toilets at the triangle are well used! it has been satisfying that we were able to work with East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council and our Parish Council to reach an agreement where the Wealden transfer the building and the land could be secured through a long lease at peppercorn rent with East Sussex County Council, which has been a good result for all the parties.

## **PROPOSED COUNCIL TAX INCREASE 2017/18**

ESCC Councillors discussed options to save £17 million from the County's budget. ESCC's cabinet agreed proposals to include raising the three per cent levy allowed by Central Government to meet part of the rising cost of social care, and raising the general council tax by 1.99 per cent to meet the cost of other services.

The savings suggested in the draft budget for 2017/18 were £7million less than the £24million the council had estimated in October last financial year. The budget would see £360million spent on services for East Sussex in the coming ahead.

Funding from central government did not fall as much as expected for this year, though the overall trend is sharply down, to £27m now from £124 million six years earlier. At the same time there has been a significant increase in the number of people relying on council services, especially with the county's ageing population and young people with a high level of special needs.

Since 2010, ESCC has reduced its expenditure close to £100 million through measures including sharing services with other local authorities, cutting senior staff by thirty per cent and working more closely with such partners as the NHS.

ESCC is asking residents to pay the maximum increase that central government allows. To achieve the funding gap of about £23 million, they propose a maximum increase of 4.99% - to raise £6 million. This means they will reduce expenditure by £17 million in 2017/18 and, as such, face considerable challenges and tough choices which will impact on front-line services."

The request for this increase is very disappointing. The majority of people are being asked to dig further into their pockets are those who have suffered most to subsidise the government's drastic austerity measures - measures aimed at reducing a deficit that, despite the sacrifices of many, appear quite mis-managed and, clearly, to be failing."

## **A27 EAST OF LEWES IMPROVEMENT SCHEME – CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

The A27 from Polegate to Lewes is long overdue for traffic and safety improvements – any would be welcome. The options in the consultation appeared to cost too much in relation to the predicted improvements for users, and the length of time the works will take will also cause substantial delays. With increased housing development in South Wealden and Eastbourne, the proposed options appeared unlikely to cope with the increase in traffic that will arise nor provide the desired infrastructure to support it.

At a public meeting, local MP Maria Caulfield, said a review for a dual carriageway on a section of the A27 would be held soon. If that review takes place, the current options would appear incompatible with that scheme so any work undertaken would be a waste.

The long term solution is to alleviate delays caused mainly at junctions with the other main roads (A27, A22 and A2270). The preferred suggestion, long identified, is to construct the Folkington link road with the current allocated funding. Ms Caulfield indicated she would work for a dual-carriageway proposal here.

The public consultation closed in December 2016 and the public feedback generated will be combined with further technical analysis which Highways England will use to decide their preferred option. Their preferred option will be recommended to the Planning Inspectorate when they seek planning permission.

### **EXCEAT BRIDGE**

ESCC Highways is proposing to install temporary traffic lights again this year at Exceat Bridge during Eastbourne Airbourne weekend after its success last year. However the cost this time round is to be placed on the event organiser rather than being shared among the interested parties. Stephen said, “I’m pleased that ESCC Highways found the feedback from the last exercise very valuable. Most importantly, it is good that they are recommending this continues for this year’s Airbourne event.” We thanks East Dean Parish Council for the opportunity to negotiate with Eastbourne Borough Council, ESCC Highways and Sussex Police for the temporary traffic signal lights to be used during the last Airbourne weekend. Stephen also expresses his appreciation for the immense support from all parties and for sharing the cost of the temporary traffic lights.

ESCC have discussed a petition requesting permanent traffic lights and reported that such a scheme would actually result in further traffic queues on the eastbound approach from Seaford to the bridge. The bends on this approach would obscure any queues here and it is likely that this would lead to “shunt” type crashes on the approach. In addition, to meet current design best practice, they would be required to signalise the access to the car park for the Cuckmere Inn as well as the bridge. Signal heads would need to be placed so that they are clearly visible to drivers approaching on the A259, but this would mean that they could not be seen by drivers leaving the car park. As a consequence this would need the car park access to be separately controlled. The type of traffic signals that would be required have a maximum capacity of some 750 to 800 vehicles per hour and council surveys on the A259 have shown flows in the

order of 1,000 vehicles during peak hours. Therefore they say that permanent traffic signals would compound the issue of queuing rather than resolve it.

ESCC Highways have investigated various other options including the introduction of a new 'off-line' bridge at Exceat - north of the existing one. This would provide a two-way traffic flow on this section of the A259 and also improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. Any such scheme would need to take into account the surrounding area which, of course, lies within the South Downs National Park.

The estimated cost of a new 'off-line' bridge is £2m. At present, there is a sum of £0.5m allocated in the council's Capital Programme towards the structural maintenance of the existing bridge but ESCC made bids for funding on this project through the South East & Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnerships in the Government's previous round of the Local Growth Fund but were unsuccessful. ESCC is therefore now exploring over avenues of funding.

### **FLOODING IN OLDFIELD ROAD**

Since the release drain was put in several years ago, it has caused flooding problems in Oldfield Road, and residents pleaded with Southern Water to rectify the problem. Local residents said, "we are pleased that finally the work has been completed to slow down the pressure in the main sewage line connected to Broad Road. We'll monitor this in time of excessive rain, which is when the problem arises. Our thanks to Councillor Stephen Shing for arranging the meeting with Southern Water's managers, ESCC and WDC representatives. This involved around thirty households attending to voice their concerns and grievances on the issue."

We would like to thank the Parish Clerk and all of my colleagues for their co-operation, advice and assistance. All the best.

**East Sussex County Councillor**

**Daniel and Stephen Shing**

## DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT TO WILLINGDON & JEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Precept:** The Wealden precept for 2017-2018 of less than 2% or £5 for a Band D property was confirmed.

**Planning:** Wealden has issued a draft "Local Plan" and following the findings of high nitrogen disposition in Ashdown Forest has reduced the number of dwellings it expects to allow built by about a half. The proposed number is 11,456 up to 2028 (previously a period to 2037), of which 7392 have already been 'approved'. In effect, there will be no new building allowed in the Ashdown Forest area and further afield only where there are 'credits' and required mitigation can be effected.

The number for new dwellings in the Polegate and Willingdon Development Area is just 108. The traffic on the A2270 and A27 with little scope for road improvements is one factor. This would not accommodate the Hindsland/Morningsmill Farm plans for residential (700 or 1100) or employment space (8,600 sq m). These plans are still in the draft stage and after further consultation come to Full Council for confirmation probably in June.

The Minister has been informed and the dire position of infrastructure especially the A27 was raised. Since the A27 in particular is a pivotal point the Minister was interested.

Wealden DC sued Lewes DC and the South Downs National Park Authority (they, joined by the Sec. Of State) over the new regime for protecting the Ashdown Forest and Wealden won. Having won the Appeal by the Steel Cross developer and Secretary of State, Permission for the proposed Medical Centre to come forward is still confirmed.

The problem with the reduced building development is that there will be less money for investment in community projects, such as roads, schools, etc.

**Parking:** Further discussions have taken place and Wealden want free off street parking to continue. ESCC may unilaterally introduce on street charging but the costs will be significant.

**Waste Management:** The performance remains very good with few missed bins and these often due to parked vehicles preventing access to dwellings. Recycling is at 49% which remains good. What is not so good is the street cleaning and this is the subject of an ongoing conversation with Kier as well as East Sussex Highways to try to link grass mowing and litter collection. Highways England (A27) is another issue.

**Business Rates:** The Council has been working to ensure that it does what it can to ameliorate and help business owners.

**Annual Procurement:** Wealden DC spends almost two-thirds on procurement of goods and services in East Sussex. Over one third is spent with SMEs well above the Government target of 25%.

**Cllr D Murray**

**District Councillor.**

## DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT TO WILLINGDON & JEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Dear Chairman, Councillors and Residents,**

The end of the Council year marks a time for us all to reflect on the challenges of the previous council year. It has been a pleasure for us to work with our fellow Parish Councillors and local residents about issues in our area.

**Motion** - Wealden District Council's car park maintenance cost

In Wealden we have 42 towns and parishes, we all know that many of the towns and parishes do not have a council car park. For this reason, large portions of Wealden council tax payers within the District get very little benefit from this service and it seems very unfair.

We asked Wealden District Council to consider a motion to investigate its fairness for all of our residents and to support asking Cabinet to investigate this to result in fairer council taxes.

This Council notes the significant ongoing cost of car parking provision (£322k in 2016/17) to the council tax payers of Wealden. In view of the fact that some tax payers within the District derive very little benefit from this service, Cabinet is asked to consider this issue and bring forward proposals, in consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny committee, to see how these costs could be better recovered and the service provided on a more fair and equitable basis across the District.

At the March Wealden District Council (WDC) Full Council meeting, the Council agreed to investigate the off street parking. A report will go on the cabinet agenda later this year.

**Wealden District Council General Fund Budget and Council Tax recommendation to Council 2017/18 – opposition amendment**

Our group submitted an amendment at the Full Council meeting in February.

To remove the “£5” and insert “1.94%, an increase of £3.44, and provide an additional £47,000 to employ an additional Planning Enforcement Officer funded by reducing capital expenditure charged to a revenue account by £95,000 and increasing the contribution from the General Fund Balance by £51,000”.

Unfortunately Conservative Councillors supported the large increase Council Tax which would increase the unnecessary surplus into reserves and not to employ an additional Planning Enforcement Officer.

**WEALDEN LOCAL PLAN UPDATE**

Wealden District Council's draft local plan had previously identified Morning Mills farm (Hindslands playing fields) as a permitted mixed use site amounting to some 700 dwellings, at the Full Council meeting of 22 March, an updated draft was discussed and that current draft has removed the reference to the 700 dwellings as previously mentioned in the earlier draft, the proposed distribution of dwellings for the district is now 11,456 a reduction of 808 to 108.

Whilst the proposal is still a draft which will return to full council at a later date, we would urge local residents to take part in making their views known during the public consultation period which is anticipated to run later on in the year.

We will be fighting to ensure any essential infrastructure needs are in place before, and not after, any houses are constructed!

### **PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR DOG**

Residents have been in touch over a problem that is felt to be escalating locally. The majority of dog owners are responsible but it is the smaller proportion and repeat offenders that we are appealing to, to eliminate this issue.

In response to concerns raised, in 2013 WDC made it an offence under The Fouling of Land by Dogs Order for those who do not to clear up immediately after their dog. Dog fouling is, of course, anti-social and the waste is associated with diseases including toxocarasis (roundworm found in dogs and almost all puppies). Eggs from the roundworm pose a health risk, particularly to small children, and remain active in soil for years. Dog owners who are witnessed in failing to clear up after their dog(s) will be offered a Fixed Penalty Notice to pay £75 within 14 days or face prosecution in the Magistrates' Court. The maximum penalty is £1,000.

No one wishes to see dog mess, nor someone out of pocket when simple action will suffice. There are plenty of dog bins in the area and if residents feel there should be more are to contact us or the Parish Council for further attention.

### **MISSED RUBBISH BIN COLLECTIONS**

In the last 12 months, we have received more complaints from local residents about their rubbish bins not been emptied as scheduled.

On reporting this to WDC, residents were told that the collection crew would return a few days later, or were advised that, in some streets, vehicles were blocking access, thus preventing the collection. Very often it appears the crew have not returned as promised, with some bins not being emptied for over a month. It also appears that there are more and more vehicles parked across access points and junctions and this makes it difficult, or impossible, for the dustcart to enter the street; and with dustcarts getting larger this does not help this situation. As residents are aware, the Police are unable to enforce illegal parking, so we are asking County Highways, Police and WDC to work together for the long term resolution.

### **390 HOUSES – BRODRICKLANDS**

Following the report in our December edition of Feedback about Wealden District Council granting the outline permission for land at Brodricklands, local residents are unhappy with the decision but have little alternative other than to accept it. It is a little release that East Sussex County Council highways confirmed that the development delivery vehicle prohibit use Seven Sisters Road.

As we understand it, the landowner is not going to build the houses, but it is likely that the land could be sold off to developers. It remains essential that we continue to fight for the best contributions possible for our community. It is We can confirm that East Sussex County Council Highways, Eastbourne's MP Caroline Ansell , the District Councillors and Stephen Shing recently had a meeting about this important development and we will keep you updated with further news.

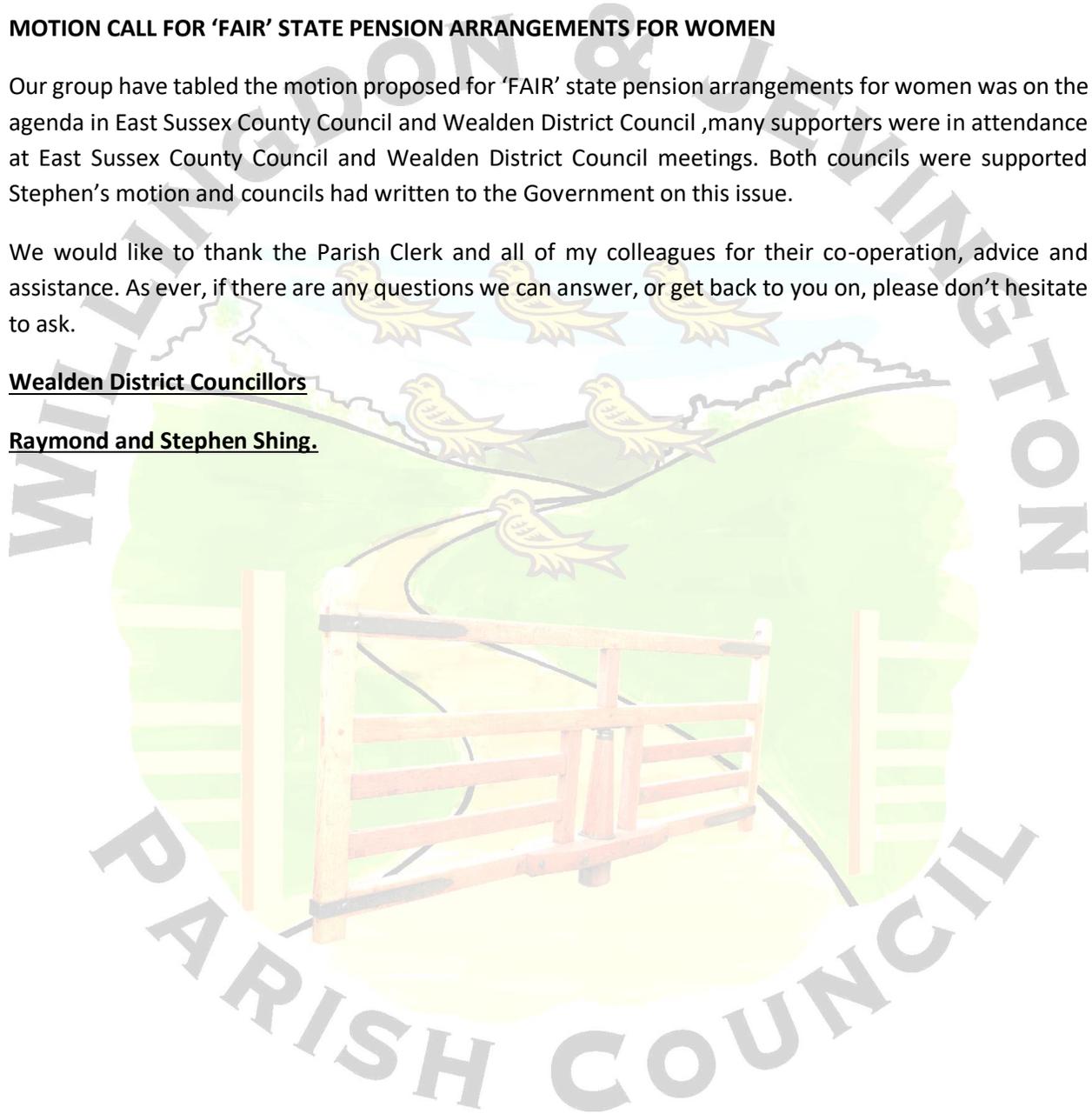
**MOTION CALL FOR 'FAIR' STATE PENSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR WOMEN**

Our group have tabled the motion proposed for 'FAIR' state pension arrangements for women was on the agenda in East Sussex County Council and Wealden District Council ,many supporters were in attendance at East Sussex County Council and Wealden District Council meetings. Both councils were supported Stephen's motion and councils had written to the Government on this issue.

We would like to thank the Parish Clerk and all of my colleagues for their co-operation, advice and assistance. As ever, if there are any questions we can answer, or get back to you on, please don't hesitate to ask.

Wealden District Councillors

Raymond and Stephen Shing.



## CUCKMERE BUS REPORT

### **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tea**

The big news of the last year was that October 2016 marked forty years since The Cuckmere Bus Services started. To celebrate the anniversary an Afternoon Tea was organised at The Cavendish Hotel in Eastbourne on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016 for nearly 200. The Tea was largely financed by the sponsors of The Cuckmere Buses, the suppliers of the buses. The drivers, officers, suppliers, village representatives, local civic dignitaries and their partners were all invited to the tea with HM Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex Mr Peter Field. An excellent tea was accompanied by several short speeches of thanks to everyone connected to running the Volunteer Bus Service. Mr Philip Ayers, The Organiser of Cuckmere Buses explained how the organisation came about emphasising the role of the local Women's Institute in campaigning for its formation and the history of its development. Philip's speech appears on the CCB website under the tag "Happy Birthday to Us". It was a very enjoyable event to mark an historic occasion.

### **Stakeholders Meetings**

The Cuckmere Buses Stakeholders have met four times in the last year in Arlington Village Hall. The most significant work during the year was the commissioning of three new buses. The total fleet is currently eight buses so nearly half of the fleet has changed during the year. As a new bus can cost about £90,000 this has a huge impact. Luckily two of the new buses have been financed by grants. Costs of repairs and maintenance should see a reduction as the new buses hopefully will not need so much attention. Two of the former buses have been sold and one has been retained to cannibalise for spare parts.

The grants for the new buses meant that the Cuckmere Buses finances are healthy. Without the grants the new buses would need to have been financed by loans. Most of the organisation's income is derived from grants, apart from the capital grants these are to finance particular routes, reimbursement for the use of pensioners' bus passes and donations from local authorities, including Willingdon & Jevington's generous grant.

A further grant during the year was for new digital ticket machines for all the buses. These came into use in September and involve the bus passes being held over the reader. Passengers seem to have easily adapted to this and the new system is working well. The machines also enable the buses to be tracked by "geographical positioning systems" and hopefully the service information will be added to the real time information displays at bus stops as with other bus services.

Three main services travel through our parish during the week. The service 41 runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays through Wannock, Jevington, East Dean and Friston on a circular route into Eastbourne in the mornings and returning the other way round in the afternoons. Service 126 runs several times on Sundays between Eastbourne and Seaford on the service that is provided by Compass Buses on Mondays to Saturdays. Service 125 runs between Eastbourne and Lewes via Alfriston on Saturdays on the service that is provided by Compass Buses on Mondays to Fridays. The timetable booklets are available from the Parish Office and the Library.

Services have suffered from disruption caused by redevelopments during the year. The work to the road system around the Arndale Centre in Eastbourne is likely to cause problems for at least another year with bus stops being moved into Cornfield Road and Gildredge Road. The redevelopment in Hailsham has caused major disruption to the High Street and George Street. The disruption has meant diversions to routes and unreliability in timing. This is thought to be the main cause of a significant fall in passenger numbers during the year that has been most marked in Hailsham. A campaign to encourage more passengers is planned for when the works are completed.

Recruitment and training of drivers is a continuing function of the Cuckmere Buses officers. With around 70 drivers at any one time there is always a need for new drivers. All drivers, and also everyone associated with Cuckmere Buses, are volunteers so they tend to be in the older age range with naturally some leaving every year. Once a month in Hailsham Farmers' Market there is a bus and driver present. Being off road this gives anyone the opportunity to have a go at driving in safe conditions to see if they have the aptitude to become a driver. Several new drivers have been recruited in this way. If you visit the market on one of these days then "Have a go!"

**Len Baker**

#### **WILLINGDON MEMORIAL HALL**

The Hall continues to be a very important and social activity hub for our Parish and beyond.

At present 32 group's have regular bookings covering all social groups and ages. From Rainbows and Brownies to Flower Club and W.I. In addition each year the Pantomime team stages our ever popular local Panto.

The Hall has been in use for very nearly 100 years and an enthusiastic team of volunteers manage to keep it running and in good order, all at no cost to the Hall, everyone an unpaid volunteer.

Recent works has seen the Gents renovated and redecoration carried out in both toilets and the kitchen. The floor will have a new sealant coating this Easter, other maintenance to electrics, plumbing and the main structure on going all year round.

The Hall is financially stable and manages to generate sufficient profits to maintain the upkeep of this fine old building

The local community owe a great thank you to the 'Team' who so ably manage this asset.

**Cllr Richard Nunney**  
**Parish Representative**

## **WEALDEN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

With Cllr Martin Cooper, I was elected by the Council at last year's annual meeting to serve for another year on the Wealden District Association of Local Councils.

The object of the Association is to act as a collective body to work together to the mutual benefit of all Town and Parish Councils in the Wealden District.

Minutes of full meetings of the Association and of the Management Committee may be found on the Association's website.

The Association elect members each year to the Management Committee of which Cllr Martin Cooper is a current member and I have remained this last year on the Wealden Standards Committee and the Wealden Planning Panel.

The Wealden District Council Standards Committee's principal role is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. It is independent in the way it operates and meetings are attended by the Monitoring Officer for the District. The Committee is made up of seven Wealden District Councillors, two Independent Persons and three Parish Council co-opted representatives and oversees the conduct of 55 District Councillors and 461 Parish and Town councillors

The Committee's main responsibility is the assessment and possible investigation of complaints about District and Parish/Town Councillors in relation to potential breaches of the Code of Conduct. Complaints in the District generally continue to run at a low level. It is worth noting, however, that some matters concerning councillors can be extremely serious and may be dealt with by police such as the case of a Derby City councillor who was jailed for two months for using a false address on his election declaration.

Meetings of the Committee are webcast and minutes are published – links are given on the District Council website.

The Planning Panel enables Parish and Town Councillors to meet directly with the Head of Planning and other planning officers to receive and discuss information and to raise areas where members have concerns. A very useful Forum. Notes of meetings are distributed to councillors via the Parish Clerk.

**Cllr Andy Watkins**  
**Parish Representative**

### POLEGATE WINDMILL

Membership remains stable at approximately 50. As with many organisations there is a reluctance for Members to be prepared to fill the Committee vacancies.

There is particularly urgent need for someone to take over the newsletter as Mrs Stevens illness means that she is no longer able to do this task and it is the means of communication to the membership.

As usual essential maintenance work continues with the wooden lintel over the window on the 'Stones Floor' being replaced.

It has been decided that due to the lack of volunteers that the Mill will only open on the second Sunday of each month during the summer months, and that the cost of entry has to be increased to £2.00 for adults and £1.00 for children and concessions. Any donations would be welcome.

This year marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the windmill, but unfortunately due to a lack of volunteers and helpers the annual fete will not take place. However the following events are planned:

- Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May – Mills Day
- Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> July – Cream tea and music
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September – Anniversary Tea Party.

Mrs S Creasey (Acting Secretary) must be thanked for her hard work in addition to the extra responsibility for co-ordinating the planned events.

**Cllr Christina Lynn**  
**Parish Representative**

Parish Councillors attendance up to end of March 2017

Councillor	Total Meetings Due to Attend	Total Meetings Attended	Apologies Received	Absent without Apologies	Attendance % (Excluding Apologies)	Attendance % (Including Apologies)
B Beck	16	10	4	0	62.5%	87.5%
J Carr	21	10	6	4	47.6%	76.2%
M Cooper	34	28	2	0	82.4%	88.2%
H Coote	41	31	10	0	75.6%	100.0%
E Curryer	15	8	4	1	53.3%	80.0%
S Freeman	23	9	3	11	39.1%	52.2%
J Gleeson	15	13	2	0	86.7%	100.0%
S Hunt	19	5	12	2	26.3%	89.5%
C Lynn	33	22	7	2	66.7%	87.9%
J Martin	21	10	5	5	47.6%	71.4%
L Moor	33	29	0	0	87.9%	87.9%
D Murray	35	23	8	2	65.7%	88.6%
R Nunney	29	21	5	1	72.4%	89.7%
F Pritchett	32	23	9	0	71.9%	100.0%
J Pritchett	47	42	5	0	89.4%	100.0%
D Shing	10	7	1	2	70.0%	80.0%
R Shing	10	7	1	0	70.0%	80.0%
S Shing	12	6	4	1	50.0%	83.3%
A Watkins	31	26	5	0	83.9%	100.0%
<b>ALL</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	<b>88.7%</b>



**Willingdon and Jevington Parish Council**

**Parish Office**

**The Triangle**

**Willingdon**

**BN20 9PJ**

**01323 489603**

**[www.willingdonandjevington.org.uk](http://www.willingdonandjevington.org.uk)**