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PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This edition was delayed so the Parish Council could incorporate some issues that will be affecting us in the next few weeks, months and even years.

The single most important event that will happen within the next couple of weeks will be the submission of plans for the development of Little Chalvedon Hall Farm. The Parish Council met with the representatives of Meridian Strategic Land, the company who have put together the plans and we re-iterated our position of total opposition to any plan to develop the site for a new housing estate. Keeping a watchful eye on the local papers for any further developments the Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Resident Association, setup to fight the development, will also be holding further meetings to ensure everybody knows what is going on and is part of the fight. Details of their meeting dates can be found in the Parish Council noticeboards, a link on the Parish Council website and on the Resident Associations website.



DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

The Parish Council still have a Councillor vacancy. If you are interested in becoming a Councillor and would like more information on becoming a Councillor please contact the Parish Clerk, Christine Barlow, either by telephone on 01268 725236 (M)07758255621 or email: clerkbgnbparishcouncil@gmail.com

PARKING

Residents in Ilfracombe Avenue are once again under siege twice a day by the parents of St Margaret's school children. The Parish Council will be meeting with the school and other organisations to discuss and hopefully find a resolution to the problem. South Essex Parking Partnership (SEPP) are promising to clampdown on illegal, dangerous and obstructive parking and the local police will be providing the school with a leaflet to hand to every child advising they will be on the lookout for anyone who is in breach of traffic violations, so please make sure that everybody knows it is about to start.

WHAT NEXT

The introduction of the junior play area in Westlake Park has been an outstanding success and we are now considering the next step, if you have any preferences or ideas please contact any of the Councillors, the Parish Clerk, enter the discussion forum on the Parish Council website or complete the survey overleaf.

GOODBYE AND HELLO

Goodbye

Sadly the Parish Council has to say goodbye to Councillor Debbie Ward who has resigned as a Parish Councillor due to family and work commitments. Debbie canvassed tirelessly to help set up the Parish Council in 2010 and has been an integral part of it since. She will be very much missed.

Hello

The Parish Council say Hello to Rose Griffin and Brian Wall. Rose was co-opted as a Councillor in November and Brian will become a Councillor at the January meeting. Both have lived in Bowers Gifford for more than 18 years. Rose is interested in maintaining the environment for the community and developing a closer community spirit and Brian is interested in maintaining local services, local employment and meeting the needs of our older residents. They are both a very welcome addition to the Parish Council.



INFORMATION IN REAL TIME

Essex County Council is proposing to introduce new digital signs to its bus stops on its main routes based on GPS. The new system will give passengers live information which tracks the journeys of all buses operating on public services. During the major part of the conversion there will be no information available. Councillor Bernard Foster is campaigning to use the system in rural areas like Bowers Gifford. He has argued that passengers, especially the elderly, in rural areas where services are infrequent, would benefit from timely information, especially in the winter, enabling passengers to make informed travel choices and check travel information regarding the cancellation of buses. The Parish Council will be contacting Essex County Council Bus Passenger Transport Team to request being put on the new bus signs list and ask them to consider their request.

EssexWorks.
For a better quality of life

COMMUNICATING WITH YOU

The Parish Council now have notice boards at Ilfracombe Avenue, adjacent to the post box in Pound Lane and next to the Clifton Road bus stop. They will help to inform residents of information and events within the village.



NEW STREET NAME PLATES

Basildon Borough Council have agreed to replace some damaged or missing street name plates around the Parish after residents raised the issue at Parish Council meetings. With the help of residents the Parish Council drew up a list of damaged and missing signs.



The plans are:

To re-erect the signs at Pound Lane, junction of London Road and Kelly Road and to clean the signs at Bowers Court Drive, Canvey Road and Lawrence Road.

To renew the signs at: Page Road, outside 12 Page Road; Highlands Road, junction with Canvey Road and outside 55 Highlands Road; Osborne Road, Katherine Road, Homestead Road, William Road, junction of Westlake Avenue; Westlake Avenue, junction of William Road; Una Road, North Benfleet Hall Road.

FLOODING IN POUND LANE?

Once again the Parish experienced flooding during the recent heavy downpours. Do we really need large scale house building?



Have your say! log on to the Parish Council website www.essexinfo.net/bgnb-parishcouncil or Google: Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Parish Council

THE PARISH BUDGET 2013/2014

Councillors at their meeting on 19th December 2012 confirmed they would retain the overall Precept amount for 2013/2014 at the same level as for 2012/2013. The "Precept" and is an amount each household pays over and above their annual council tax.

However the Government has reduced the amount of money received by local authorities in relation to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2013/2014 and as a result of this change, the formula which calculates the number of Band D properties in the Parish, on which the precept calculations are made, has

had an effect to reduce the numbers and this reduction would have impacted on the overall amount of revenue the Parish Council would receive this year.

The Parish Council having chosen not to increase the overall precept amount Basildon Council has agreed to make up any shortfall by way of a grant so as not to put the Parish Council at a disadvantage. The impact, as a result, will mean if you have a property in Band D you will pay an extra 0.19p on last years amount of £16.74.

YOUR VIEWS – HAVE YOUR SAY.

The Parish Council is looking to improve the facilities in Westlake Park , now that the play area has proved so successful.

The Council need to demonstrate it has consulted with residents on each project, especially those residents who live in close proximately to each project and who may be adversely affected by each project.

A number of suggestions have been received over the last two years from residents and taking these views into account the Parish Council is obtaining your view on the suggestions and would like to hear your comments. We would ask you to please tick your choice and put in order of priority (circle 1, 2 or 3 in the box next to it). It would also be helpful to receive any comments from you on your choices.

Fitness Zone – Outdoor Gym Equipment (Teens - 75) 1 2 3

Multi Use Sports Area or similar (MUSA) (Ages 11- 18) 1 2 3

Other (please specify)

Please also tick your preference for:

Planting **Benches** **Other**

Comments

Optional: Name

Address

Tel: **Email:**

Please return your completed slip to Christine Barlow, The Parish Clerk, 15 Highlands Road , Bowers Gifford , SS13 2HR or scan via email: clerkbgnbparishcouncil@gmail.com or go to the Parish Council website and click on surveys.

**BOWERS GIFFORD & NORTH
BENFLEET RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATION ARE RUNNING A
FLASH FICTION COMPETITION.**

Prizes: 1st £150 2nd £100 3rd £50.

**Simply write a story, on any subject
using up to 500 words.**

**Entry fee £3 for first entry and
£2 for any subsequent entries.**

Rules and Entry form are attached on
www.bowersgifford.info and click the
“fundraising” tab or tel: 01268 726475

Final Judge: Syd Moore - author of
the Drowning Pool and Witch Hunt
- novels based on Essex witches.

Competition Sponsor:
Thread Writers - www.thread-writers.com

Profits to our “save our green belt campaign”

**LETTER FROM ALEX THURLBY -
HOSPITAL DIRECTOR , CLARE HOUSE**

I am delighted that our refurbishments at Clare House are now almost complete and I would like to thank everyone locally for their patience while this work has been in progress.

The project has taken just over 12 months, but has been well worthwhile. Our wards, therapeutic and staff areas and accommodation for the hospital’s patients have all been upgraded and it was a great pleasure to welcome member of Bowers Gifford Parish Council to our celebrations in December and to show them what we have achieved.

Before we began, we reviewed our services and facilities to make sure that we are providing the best for our patients. This led to a growth plan and a £5 million re-investment to meet our vision for the future, underlining our commitment to the area and our continuing role as a local employer.

The whole team are very excited about 2013 and about plans to include Neuropsychiatry services here in Essex to complement the care available at the National Brain Injury Centre at the charity’s Northampton site. We are all looking forward to the next 12 months.

**HELPING TO KEEP
CRIME AT BAY.**

Neighbourhood Watch has been a proven deterrent against crime and the causes of crime for over thirty years.



Neighbourhood Watch is about local people working together to create safe, attractive, friendly places to live where crime is less likely to happen and people are less likely to turn to anti-social behaviour.

By being more aware of local issues, sharing information and advice about ongoing crime, residents are able to develop close links while reassuring and supporting vulnerable households.

Anyone interested in joining an established Watch scheme, or considering setting up a new local scheme can get help and information by contacting Terry Fowles Tel: 101 extension 380389 or by email to terry.fowles@essex.pnn.police.uk.

Alternatively you can contact Harry Tucker, Chairman of the Basildon Borough Neighbourhood Watch Steering Committee by email to basildonboroughnhw@virginmedia.com

PARISH COUNCIL

Councillors

Robert Smillie (Chairman) 07790 907113
Cllr.robertsmillie@gmail.com

Bernie Foster (Vice Chairman) 07811 838115
Cllr.bernardfoster@gmail.com

Barbara Williams 07818 876270
Cllr.barbarawilliams@gmail.com

Cllr.Nigel Tyler 07850 192227
Cllr.nigeltyler@gmail.com

Cllr. Rose Griffin 07808 041825
Cllr.rosegriffin@gmail.com

Cllr.Brian Wall 07759 812852
cllr.brianwall@gmail.com

Parish Clerk

Christine Barlow c/o 15 Highlands Road,
Bowers Gifford, SS13 2HR 01268 725236

(M) 07758 255621 or

Email: clerkbgnbparishcouncil@gmail.com

REMINDER - WINTER SALT SCHEME

Once again the Parish Council is taking part in Essex County Council’s Winter Salt Scheme this year.

The 20 kg bags of salt, which are free to residents, have now been delivered so if you would like to volunteer to spread the salt in your road or any road in the village, which is not covered by Essex County Council’s gritters during icy and snowy conditions and you are able bodied to carry out this task, please contact the Parish Clerk, Christine Barlow, by text, email or telephone or Councillor Barbara Williams. (See Parish Council details for contact numbers)

If you would like this newsletter in larger print or require information of the topics mentioned please contact the Parish Clerk
email: clerkbgnbparishcouncil@gmail.com or
Tel: 01268 725236 **(M)** 07758255621

COUNCIL MEETINGS CALENDAR

Date	Day	Meeting at 7:30pm
30th January 2013	Wednesday	Full Council
27th February 2013	Wednesday	Full Council
27th March 2013	Wednesday	Full Council
24th April 2013	Wednesday	Full Council
22nd May 2013	Wednesday	Annual Parish Meeting
29th May 2013	Wednesday	Annual Parish Council Meeting

Meeting are open to the public and press to attend and minutes and agendas are published on the Parish Council website and noticeboards

We’re on the webwww.essexinfor.net/bgnbparishcouncil or google Bowers Gifford & North Benfleett Parish Council

IN AND AROUND THE PARISH

Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Residents Association

www.bowersgifford.info

“FIGHTING TO KEEP OUR GREEN BELT GREEN”

Provisional* Meeting Dates

Wednesday 20th February

Wednesday 20th March

All meetings are 7.30 pm at the Benbow Club, Pound Lane.

*All dates are provisional due to potential wakes – please check the Resident Association website for any update.

THE NEW POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER WILL BE PAYING A SHORT VISIT TO BASILDON ON FRIDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY.

He will be holding a Public Meeting in The St. George's Suite at The Basildon Centre from 12 noon till 2 pm.

Space is limited, so an early arrival is recommended.

Produced by Basildon Neighbourhood Watch



Drop-in Sessions to Discuss Future Gypsy and Traveller Needs

LOCAL people will have the opportunity to discuss the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller sites at a series of drop-in sessions around the Borough. The sessions will be facilitated by Opinion Research Services, an independent research company who are conducting Basildon Council's 'Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Local Needs Accommodation Assessment' which is necessary to inform the council's 20 year plan for the Borough and is a Government requirement.

The consultation events provide an opportunity for residents of Basildon to discuss the role of the study with the project team and to highlight issues that it should consider.

The local events are set to be held on three dates:

- The Wick Community Centre in Silva Island Way, Wickford on Friday 25th January from 2pm - 8pm.
- Frypa Hall, The Fryth, Basildon, on Tuesday 29th January from 2pm - 8pm.
- Billericay Day Centre in Chantry Lane, Billericay, on Friday 1st February from 2pm - 8pm.

There is parking available at the Wick Community Centre and Frypa Hall. Parking is limited at Billericay day centre (only 6 parking spaces) there is however paid parking behind Waitrose or Santander.

Meetings with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in the Borough and their representatives are also being arranged and will take place in due course.



These events are not being run by Basildon Council. For more information please call Dr Claire Thomas at Opinion Research Services on 01792 535337

FOLLOW THE COUNTRY CODE - RESPECT, PROTECT AND ENJOY



In Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet we have public footpaths which enable our beautiful countryside to be shared by everyone.

Protect the natural environment-

- By keeping to the public footpaths - if you step off without the land owner's permission, you are trespassing
- By taking your litter home - leftover food doesn't just spoil the countryside it can be dangerous for animals and wildlife.
- By keeping dogs under effective control - on a lead at all times, within sight of you and making sure your dog return to you on command so as not to cause harm to wildlife and animals.
- By clearing up after your dog and taking it home – Bag it! Bin it!

www.naturalengland.org.uk

Any of the above actions can cause problems to farmers and land owners and can provide an argument that the farmland is no longer suitable for agricultural use and better used for development.

THIS FLOOR WAS MADE FOR WALKING

St Margaret's Church has reopened after being closed for a few weeks for repairs to the nave and sanctuary floors.

Like most old buildings there is no damp course and as a result the wooden floor around the outside edge of the nave and across much of the sanctuary had been badly damaged by rising damp.



Work in progress

Thanks to grants from Veolia Pitsea Marshes Trust, Friends of Essex Churches Trust, Allchurches Trust and the Headley Trust, work replacing the affected areas with unglazed tiles similar to those already down in other parts of the chancel, is now complete. The tiles will not only help reduce the damp problem, but also look good! Heartfelt thanks go out to the charities mentioned for helping maintain a building which has served the local community for at least 700 years.

Of course this is not the end of the work; there are still plenty of other things that need repairing, not to mention mowing the church yard regularly once the spring arrives.

Looking after a Grade 2 listed building is a bit like painting the old Forth Bridge.

Hopefully there will be pictures on the Church website soon – please do check them out at www.st-margarets-church.co.uk



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

JOIN BOWERS GIFFORD U3A

Membership is open to all retired or semi-retired people men and women who want to improve their lives either socially or through learning. We have a range of Interest Groups ranging from Book Club, Local History, Creative Writing, Discovery, Gourmet Dining, Scrabble and Walking and our aim is to set up many groups in the coming months.

Meetings are held at the Gun Public House, London Road, Bowers Gifford on the 4th Wednesday each month from 2 - 4pm and new members are welcome. For further information contact either: Ann Horton (Secretary) 01268 473191 or Christine Lockwood (Chair) 01268 458268.